

## ***The lamp and light as a factor of fire***

Something clicked this march (2018) in my head. In 2017 I formed an image of fire as energy, water as form, air as the foreseen result and earth as the unforeseen result of ones actions, let's say the flow of an alchemical process. You put energy – the father – into form – the mother - **electricity** into a **lightbulb**, fire in water. On the other end out comes the result, **light**, and the element air – the alchemical son –. As a side effect out comes the daughter, or **warmth**. I had read the lines below but my mind rejected the message it contains. Until, during a historia meeting in march I remembered this phrase while we were discussing the 1<sup>st</sup> level piece in the study material: “the knowledge of the lamp”.

*"With the Wand createth He.  
With the Cup preserveth He.  
With the Dagger destroyeth He.  
With the Coin redeemeth He.  
Liber Magi vv. 7-10."*

The suit of wands in tarot represents amongst other factors also the element of fire. The cup represents water, the 'dagger or swords' suit is air and the 'coin, disks and pentacles' suit is the earth element. Grossly overgeneralizing and simplifying the fire creates what the water preserves what the air destroys and what the earth redeems. The circle of life in a nutshell: creation, preservation, destruction and redemption. This will help my understanding of the development of the separate suits tremendously.

With that in mind, think of the lamp. A lamp has more than one property, for example those summed up in “the knowledge of the lamp”. Traditional lamps lit up the place by means of fire, the first of the elements, the will. The lamp is a representation of the will because of the fiery qualities it possesses. On the other hand the study document states:

*“The lamp represents illumination. Each traveller must light his own way and offer his light to help assist others along their respective paths, should that be their wish. Illumination is not knowledge or wisdom, it is merely the mechanism by which one can see. It is the precursor to wisdom, but only if the traveller has the will to learn about what he observes.”*

So the lamp illuminates but does not bring wisdom. It lights the path for those with Will. At the same time the lamp is Will as it's made of fire. For those that attended the march 2018 meeting: “Each traveller must light his own way and offer his light to help assist others <.....> should that be their wish.” In this way the hermit, is not obliged to help others to still be a proper hermit in the tarot sense (?)

A lamp is both a precursor and a representative of will, by it's fiery character. I'll file that in my head: To accomplish anything in a proper alchemical way you begin with Will. And for that you need light and fire.

During the meeting we also stopped at the last line of the document *“there is an additional and secret meaning to the lamp that is revealed in the 4<sup>th</sup> degree hinted at by the dragon and will be known to those who have taken their creativity to hand.”*

Someone added to that by telling about one of her teachers giving assignments in art: first create something properly with attention. Then (preserve) look at it or admire it. Then (destroy) break it up. If you look at that assignment it's the cycle of create, preserve, destroy and redeem. The rationale behind it, according to the teacher, was to keep it flowing. By hanging a piece of art on the

will you break the process that is inherent in creativity and keep it from fulfilling its destiny, to flow into the new. Another idea was to keep that in mind while working on a piece of art. During the creative process you come to a point where it starts to be something nice, if you're lucky. Then something creeps in. You might even lose flow of the process. Because, what happens if you mess it up from there? It would be a waste or shame. That could keep you from continuing the process. Here we identified that in the aspects of 'preserving' hides fear. Fear of moving forward is hidden somewhere in the suit of water.

I'm thinking of indolence here, the 8<sup>th</sup> sefira in the suit of cups. The 9<sup>th</sup> sefira in the suit of cups is happiness and indeed I remember feeling happy after a period of indolence and then continuing or "giving it up" on several occasions in my life. There's also the 5<sup>th</sup> sefira disappointment, but that needs more meditation on my part.

Time is very present without a state of flow. You're aware of what happened in the past and of what could happen in the future. The now plays no role outside of flow. In flow there is no time, just the present moment. Time disappears when you're not worried about breaking something.

Another added jokingly at the end of this discussion with rolling eyes, but nonetheless very true: "the traveling is also part of the journey."