

# 14: Old One; Temperance.



Our reference to the Tarot defines Temperance, as “represent[ing] the path of direct mystical ascent to a state of spiritual illumination” (Nevill Drury, The Tarot Workbook). It would be interesting to note, therefore, that the description of Card 14 in the HP Lovecraft Tarot, can be seen as being the most confusing. The Old One is quite largely concerned with the issue of the human Spirit as concerned with the issues of nature and science. It says little, however, to concern ‘mystical ascent’ or ‘spiritual illumination’, as the definition that follows will explain. It continues with our defined concept of the

soul.

If the previous Card is about the human soul as a part of the person, then this Card concerns the power of the human individual to affect acts of religious magick. In this, Card 14 is involved with the theories of Aleister Crowley and the power of magick as controlled by True Will. It opens by saying, “having realised Matter as a secondary condition to Spirit, it now becomes incumbent on the individual to make the material into a medium for their personal spiritual expression.”

This is quite a difficult first statement. How can the individual make the material into a medium? Surely the metaphysical aspect of the spirit cannot actually affect anything that is material? This concept is difficult, but the further description of this Card goes further to explain: “Science is... a result of the... observation of Nature... Art, however, is

the ability to mould Nature into an expression... of the individual spirit.” So here we are moving from the idea of the human being as a perceptive spirit, towards a force for perceptive creation. What exact relevance this has to the Tarot is not exactly clear in this sense, but this is the nature of the Lovecraft Tarot as opposed to all others. I don’t think that this statement needs to be broken down, but it refers to the intelligence of humankind as opposed to other species, and to how we naturally manipulate nature towards purposes made by our own understanding.

The idea continues, as this Card defines it that: “Nature already has a myriad of spiritual influences operating through it, but these are not recognised by science.” Everything in nature has an internal life force within it, but science can never emulate nor define what this spirit is. As humanity has defined science,

it is purely a creation of the human mind, and to create an object which does have spiritual life is something that humanity can never do; it is purely an act of the creating force that is within nature. Attempts to create life through stem-cell research, and so on, are a bastardisation of this creative force, and are not a creation of the life force, here defined, by science.

“The harmony & beauty of the natural order are the... expression of a spiritual reality.” And, with this said, whilst our religion does not go as far as to define specifically what this creative force should be accredited to, we do acknowledge the natural order to be a uniform manifestation of beauty. As this manifestation is spiritual, the Tarot tells us that “[M]atter is a vehicle for spiritual expression, and can always be made to conform to spiritual Will.” I do not believe that this relates to the spiritual power of

the Will of mankind, but to the Will of those combined forces which have created humanity, the World and the Cosmos. This is therefore a difficult Card to be understood in this context.

It comes back to having a direct meaning to the reader of the Tarot now, when the Introductory Book defines it that, “[W]e must not let our... desires be determined by conditions imposed on us by forces outside of ourselves.” So, whilst the Planet is a mass of scientific and natural creation, this exists outside of our perception. We are, therefore, in control of our own actions and emotions, and it is this that we should be conscious of as we lead our everyday lives. The above now begins to make sense as the definition of the Old One is described. This Card concerns ourselves as part of the natural World. It is clarified now, as the last paragraph explains:

“[W]e have the obligation – as

spiritual beings – to recognise the... spiritual world as truly defining our necessities... [T]hese necessities are unique to each individual... [A]s explained in the last card – we must not rigidly adhere to models of action if they no longer suit our individual needs... [W]e should recognize when it is time for ourselves, as individuals, to move on to new models.” It is only in this last paragraph that the actual meaning of Card 14 becomes clear. As this definition here is quite self-explanatory, I will not break it down in terms of meaning. But it is to be said that in this, Card 14 relates to our responsibility as people to the World around us, but more importantly to ourselves. We, as people, create the World around us, but the decisions that we make by, and for, ourselves, are more important than what happens to us. What happens to us is external, whilst our personal decisions are more importantly what

effects our lives.

This Card is recognised immediately, as the Old One is a symbol that is representative of our religious Gods. Therefore the Card that represents the Old One – as one of our Gods – can be seen to represent an ultimate conquest within our lives, and a new major realisation of goals. The Old Ones are cosmic entities, and They live outside of any reality that can easily be grasped by the Worshipper, and outside of any dimension that can be in any way be proven by the Magus. This worship, however, can lead us towards a frame of mind whereby They can be comprehended. If this Card, on description, seems to say this as its entire statement, we can ask ourselves whether this Card is making a statement, in a greater sense, that this ongoing research and investigation, is a justification for us to establish ourselves as a new religious



view?

**POSITIVE READING:** Both of the Readings here can be considered relevant to our use of the occult. But, properly speaking, successful use of the occult is about our self perception and perception of the spiritual World around us. Further, these descriptions of Readings primarily regard the Card of the Old One as the Card of human expression. Therefore issues of expression are defined here as being prominent.

“Healthy models & patterns for spiritual expression” are forecast. If we are expressing ourselves properly in terms of the creative thinking and creativity in our everyday lives, we are becoming closer to the chosen Gods of our religion. “Spiritual expression” can relate to anything from writing and artistic pursuits, to daily systems of occult visualisation. These activities are, on the

greater level, acts of Worship, and it is these acts in which we acknowledge our Gods, and become closer to them. “Realisation of aspirations” is forecast, and this is the act of the Card for human creativity and material action in our lives. “Finding ones vocation” is defined. With this Card, anything creative in the Worship of the Old Ones is forecast as being successful.

“Spirit in material expression; art, music, performance, etc.” is defined. With all of these being acts of Worship, as defined here, they will go well. The forces will support us in these activities; art will be inspired, music will be spontaneous, and performances regarding creativity will be successful. It could be seen that in these pursuits we will be ‘inspired by the divine’. “Proportion, design [and] sacred geometry” are defined, and although this statement is obscure, it probably refers to creativity and the application of the mind.

The definition now moves towards the more esoteric, and forecasts “Alchemy, direction of diverse spiritual influences into practical manifestation; the Philosophers Stone.” In the history of magick these issues have been those which are the closest to ritual practice, and in terms of the creative mind, this defines the practice of magick by the human hand. Alchemy and “influences in... practical manifestation” are both terms which involve magick in this sense, and this goes back to the day when Enochian magick was considered a scientific art.

The issue of magick continues, and the statement concerning the occult as represented by this Card comes into play, when Card 14 defines, “Harmonious group efforts in spiritual works; clan, coven, church.” This statement concerns any work of ceremonial magick as performed by the individual or the group.

Acts of ceremonial magick will be successful, with acts of Worship in the occult being recognised, and with good results as regards communal and ceremonial union as regards the religion as defined in our system of the Worship of the Necronomicon Gods.

**NEGATIVE READING:** The Negative definition here starts by raising the issue of human failiure as its meaning. “Indeterminate & / or haphazard spirituality; spiritual irresponsibility & dilettantism” is defined. If this comes up in a Reading, then, we must evaluate ourselves, and our own failings as regards our spiritual selves. These are problems with ourselves and our attitude to our belief in the Gods of our system. We must take time to step back and ask ourselves what, exactly, these failings are? If this is to be considered a problem with ourselves, then it is up to us to sort this

out.

This statement continues by signifying the opposite of what was defined in the Positive Reading, above, by saying that “Artistic work or performance as a merely mechanical act; artistic form devoid of spiritual content” is part of our lives. In getting involved with artistic work or performance, we are engaging ourselves in something that requires the full application of our spiritual selves. If this form of expression does not have the emotion that such work demands to be at its best, then it is probably the case that we should take some time off or spend time doing something else. This is not always obvious to the artist or musician, and this Card may be making this statement without our being entirely aware. It continues further by warning us, in this context, of the danger of “trying [to] physically turn lead into gold [and] uncentered spiritual quests & journeys.”

All of these statements are trying to tell us that, in the Worship of our chosen religious Mythos, we are doing this without the full application that is needed to properly do so. And, in concluding this statement, the HP Lovecraft Tarot tells us that the Negative meaning with Card 14 means, “religious practice without benefit: recitation of all formulae without even knowing what they mean.” The Worship of the Necronomicon system of Gods requires the full application of the mind. We should step back to evaluate magickal acts.

