

Trump Cards as Timing Indicators

I've been working for a while now with the various ways of determining the possible timing of events using tarot cards. None of them have really satisfied me (although the timing spread I created is showing some promise).

Elemental, numerical, astrological and hierarchical sequencing all have weaknesses. But the one I object to most is the idea that the trumps can't be used for timing because they show conditions that one has to confront and resolve before there is any possibility of moving forward, making the situation too open-ended to predict. This strikes me as a bit of a dodge, like telling the sitter "Go away and come back when you have it sorted out," when all they wanted to know was "When will the cat come home?"

To the contrary, I think all of the Major Arcana hold clues that suggest their inherent rapidity of action, and therefore the relative amount of delay to be expected. (It was the Hanged Man that got me going on this.) Elemental correspondence by sign and planet is one obvious factor, as is the visible degree of movement shown in the imagery itself, but I also see posture as something that can be brought to bear: sitting, kneeling, standing and mounted or otherwise mobile, in a manner similar to the court cards.

I sorted all of the trump cards first by elemental association, and found that there are five each of Earth, Water and Air-related cards, and seven of Fire. Twelve are by sign, seven are by planet and three are by primary element. So I lined them all up in a four-tier array, with Earth at the top and Fire at the bottom. Then I sequenced each line according to the posture and motility of the central figure: static to the left, progressively more dynamic to the right.

The idea is that Earth is the slowest-moving element, and seated Earth-card figures are the least expeditious when forecasting events, while Fire is the most vigorous, and mounted or mobile Fire-card figures are the fastest-acting of all – especially the planetary ones. Water is the second most deliberate and Air the second most volatile. The level of activity displayed or assumed is taken as an indication of how soon an event tied to the card is likely to transpire. I fine-tuned it some by adjusting the sequences according to the implicit energy of each card's outward mode of expression. The usual "day/week/month/year" divisions apply, with their customary caveats.

Anyway, I had some fun with this, putting together the following layout. It's really just a brainstorming exercise to offer some kind of rule-of-thumb for trump-card timing, so don't take it too seriously at this point.

