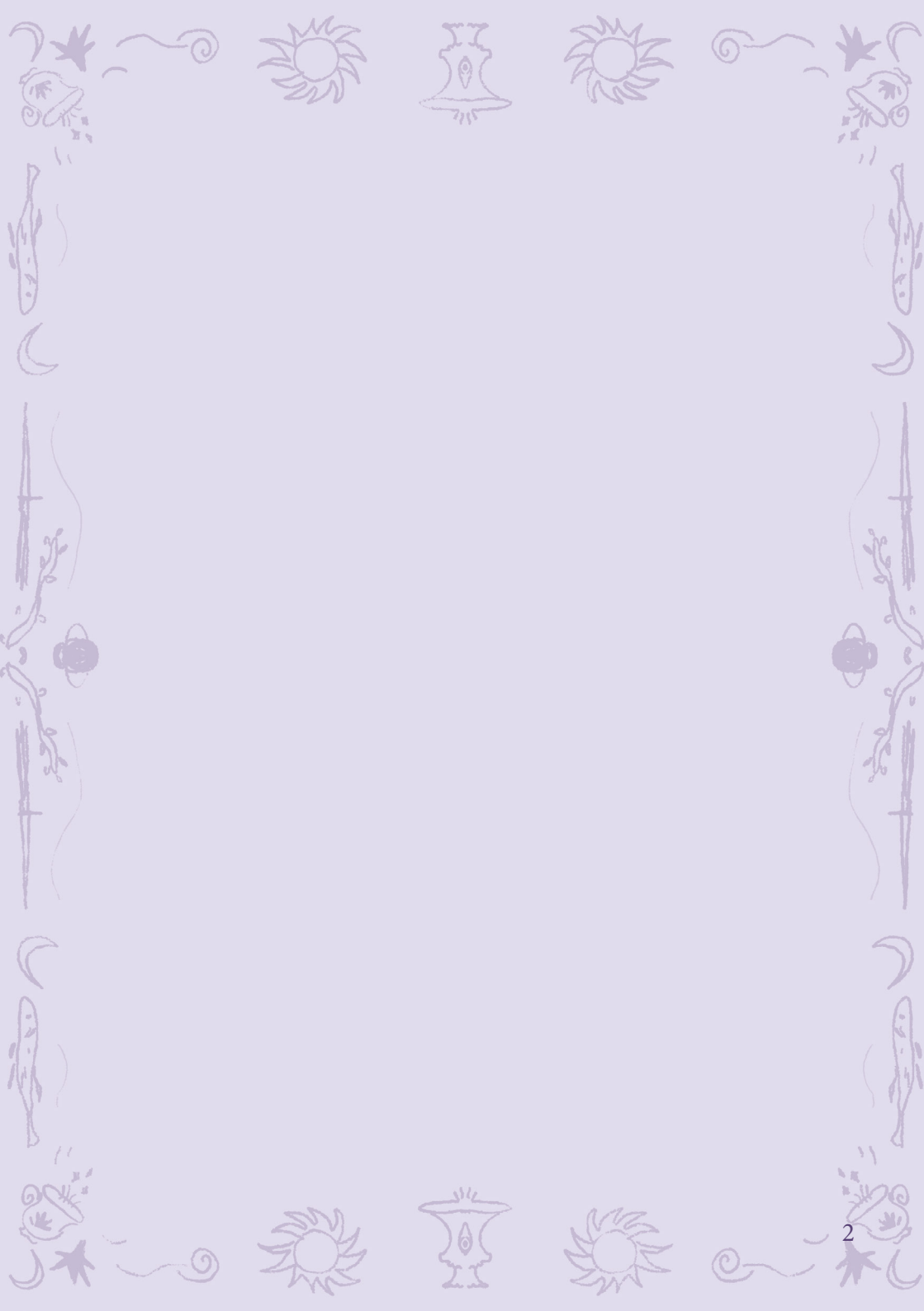




# AID OF MAGIC, THE PRACTICE OF TENDING

YEGANE MEHRZAD





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*My gratitude to the guidance of Mercury, my tea leaves, and Tarot deck,  
and to all the witches, scholars, and artists who generously shared their  
wisdom*



Notes:

The three Tarot Cards used at the beginning of each chapter are referenced here: (Rider–Waite-Smith, 2024)

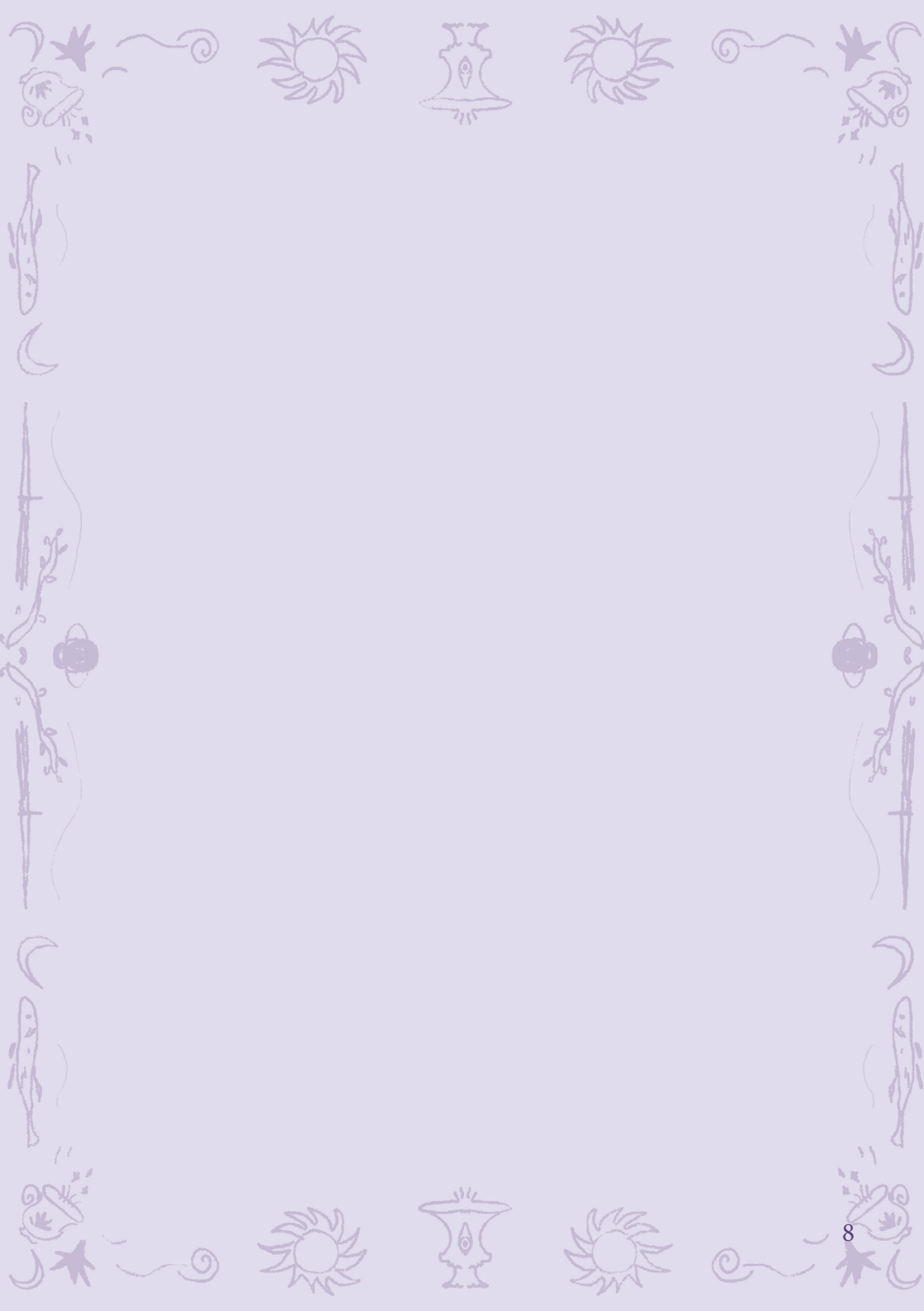


*For my mom, the teller and writer of tales and my utmost inspiration*



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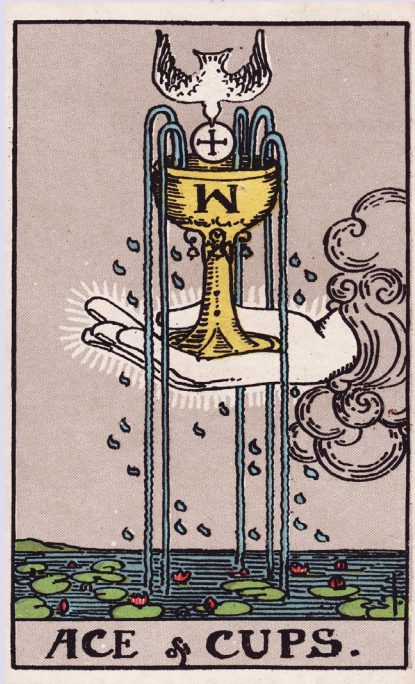
# ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to first unravel how Magic and its tools shape the methodology of resistance and liberation through care and further illustrates the manifestation of Magical resistance through care in my practice of Magic Reading.

By starting from myself, situated in the well of cynicism and hopelessness caused by leering forces of violence, oppression, and crushed movements of resistance, I embark on the journey of how Magic as a gateway to resistance and liberation found me. Further, I explore the intersection of Magic and Resistance by shaping a definition for Magic and painting examples of Magical resistance through history.

Through drawing parallel lines between myself and my reality and examples of liberation through Magic, I define care as the method of magical resistance.

Guided by theories of Magic, Liberation Psychology, and care, alongside examples of artistic practices, I arrive at the manifestation of Magical resistance through care, in my artistic practice, crafting Magic Reading. A practice inspired by Divination and fortune-telling methods of Tea reading, Tarot, and astrology by illustrating how each tool and experiment contributes to Magic Reading through my projects, I further conclude how Magic reading acts as my tool of connection, understanding, wisdom, and transformation, aiding me through my journey of resistance.



# ACE OF CUPS

## Magical Resistance

*Come away, O human child!  
To the waters and the wild With a faery,  
hand in hand,  
For the world's more full of weeping than you can understand.  
(Yeats, 1889)*

Nestled<sup>1</sup> in the bight of this research is my fascination with Magical and fantastical stories. These tales have always bewitched me. One of my most beloved is the story of the serpent king. This evil snake-like king invaded and took over the land of the tale unjustly, and ruled with twisting shadows of darkness, so cruel that the sun did not rise on this land's horizon anymore, with no room for resistance as every attempt was instantly killed. As his unusual power was linked to the snakes on his shoulder, the need to feed them to preserve his force of ruling was crucial. The serpents however were only hungry for one thing, the brains of young adults. So to keep them satisfied the king would hunt down 2 innocent people for each meal, killing them and feeding their brains to his serpents. Eating away the young generation day by day. To see the parallels of this cruelty, versions of him scattered and spread violence and fear, and yet the attempts of resistance dragged into a hurricane of oppression, whirling around violently, getting lost and distanced. The brains of the young, imprisoned, fed to the snakes of lies or on the run escaping, creating the cycle of bloodshed and oppression. To get caught in this brutal force over and over again pushed me towards cynicism, looping me in the well of numbness, and wavering my hope towards change, turning me dazed to my reality and the world I was living in. I could no longer hope for change, for light and happiness. I remained stagnant in this well, callous and paralyzed with fear and detached from the world.

Nevertheless, my love for Magical stories continued even as poisonous ivies of apathy grew a confining spiral around me. They became my companion as I found solace in them, offering

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<sup>1</sup> Nestle, verb, past tense: nestled; past participle: nestled  
settle or lie comfortably within or against something.

me a different reality with an enchanting hand, yet the stories touched me with their narrative of fighting for liberation. As I re-visited the tale of the snake-like king, I was captivated by the way tellers of this story criticized the injustice of their time, through the Magical and fantastical elements. Their critique was cleverly not direct due to the danger of getting in trouble with the authorities of their time, and yet powerful and relatable.

As the piles of these stories grew thicker on my bookshelves, so did my fascination with the element of Magic in them, as it marked the beginning of the journey of crafting the threads of Magic, not only as an enchanting element in these tales but as a component for protection and resistance. Inspired, I began to engage with Magical elements, thinking and hoping that if I could tap into the element of Magic, I could finally change something about my reality.

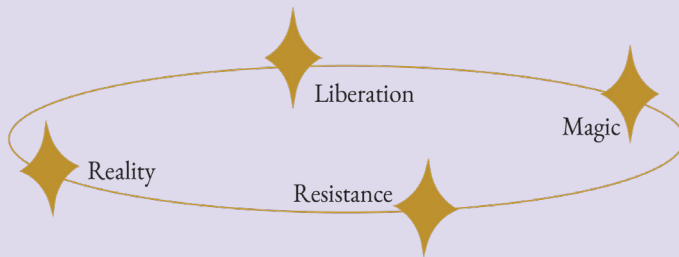


Figure 1. Illustration of the Design Methodology

Of course, this circular approach has its irony. Magic has been mostly affiliated with otherworldly, supernatural, and from a different reality, yet it found me with a gateway to care for my world and act toward liberation.

Historically, Magic is painted as an irrational, or pre-rational, and primitive way of interacting with the world, practices by the group of society who had little to no access to other forms of power and control: women, adolescents, racial and ethnic minorities, as a tool to give these practitioners a sense of control of their reality. (Magliocco, 2020)

Magic, through the lens of etymology, has its root in the threads of old Persian *magu(š)*, usually used as a title by a high-ranking priest of the Achaemenid Empire.

Magic as different ways of knowing, doing, participation, perception, and relation, expands into a complex web of knowledge and practices, used as a source and a tool to build various systems. Older than the drawings of the first humans, it lives electric and vibrant to this day, yet there is no exact definition for this word.

In “Defining Magic, A Reader” by Otto and Stausberg, they write of various theories of explaining Magic, each complex and from a different angle. From Taussing speculating, that reality and trickery (what he calls Magic) have no contradiction, the reality is laced heavily with trickery, and therefore Magic “is a quality of Realism for dealing with the power of the ways of the world”, to Alfred Gell’s “technologies of Magic”, as a kind of technical strategy, the “apotheosis of ideal” and “costless production”. (Otto & Stausberg, 2014). Although an intriguing read, I was left breathless and struggling to digest all of the theories of magic.

What I found inspiring in the pursuit of my artistic practice and writing this thesis is how Greenwood draws the body of Magical thinking as creative thinking, “that goes beyond the immediately apparent”. She continues, “If a wide perspective is

taken, it is possible to investigate what lies beyond the horizon of the here and now by venturing into the imaginal mind.” (Otto & Stausberg, 2014) This statement offered a guiding hand to me, to look beyond the well of constriction and request the aid of Magic to bring change to my reality.

She explains in her book “The Anthropology of Magic” (2009), the concept of Magic, as part of the experience and participation of imagination and consciousness. She is not only a writer of Magic but a practitioner as well, theorizing “Magical consciousness”, “imaginal mode of mind” and “holistic engagement with material and non-material realities” (Otto & Stausberg, 2014). In her conversation with a Witch from San Francisco, whom she calls Leah, she explains that Leah uses her stories as spells, as they have the power to work and alter the conscious and the unconscious. This practice, like many examples in this book, is what Greenwood puts as part of the Magical consciousness, as a legitimate form of knowledge. (Greenwood, 2009)

But perhaps it is Starhawk that offers the most heartfelt definition of Magic that has deeply touched me in my research and practice.

She names Magic as “the art of liberation”, aligned with the definition of Magic as “the art of evoking power from within”, Magic is the Hermit<sup>2</sup>, guiding to unwinding the mysteries of our world and beliefs, accompanying us into the founding layers of “deep space” where the vast “life-generating powers” reside.

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*2 The Hermit Ninth card of the Major Arcana. The Hermit is drawn as an old man standing alone at the peak of the mountain while holding a lantern in one of his hands and a staff on the other. The mountain denotes accomplishment, development, and success. The hermit tarot card refers to the level of spiritual knowledge that he attained, and that he is ready to impart that knowledge to everyone. (Gong, 2024)*

“to practice magic is to tap that power, to burrow down through the systems of control like roots that crack concrete to find the living soil below.” (Starhawk, 1989)

As I arrive at the intersection of Magic and resistance, I begin to explore some examples of Magical resistance, as there are many, all woven differently in the circle of time. The first one, the one that is binded with the word of Magic, is the figure of the witch.

“Witch comes from the Anglo-Saxon root *wic*, meaning to bend or shape—to shape reality, to make magic. Witches bend energy and shape consciousness. We were—and are — shamans, healers, explorers of powers that do not fit the usual systems of control. Those powers are rightly perceived as dangerous to the established order, and so we have been taught to view them as evil or delusionary.”(Starhawk, 1989)

The Witch painted with brushstrokes of horror and hate, oppressed by the patriarchy and colonialism, has always practiced wisdom, love, and freedom. Questioning leering powers, and not yielding to their sharp fangs and claws, therefore, being hunted and killed, for the threats of what she represents, believes, and does: resistance, revolt and independence.

Federici, in “Caliban and the Witch” (2004), unravels how the Witch hunts were a way of hammering the skeleton of a thorny

clasp by the state and church to build the system that ensures their power, by terrorizing “independent women and rebellious colonial and slave subjects”

“Both groups were defined as more in thrall to their irrational bodies than dominant class and race men. Systems of legal and economic sexism (women relegated to downgraded, “nonproductive” domestic labor and productive motherhood) and racialization (European white men defined as citizens with full legal rights while indigenous and slave populations were not) created state authority thought to be justified in imposing imperialist and slavery regimes on backwards populations for their own good.” (Fergusun, 2006)

Witch hunting in the new world, acted as a tool of terror, to horrify communities into submission and silence with its violence, weakening the bonds of collective resistance and dehumanize. With the bloody blades of Witch hunts, women’s reproductive rights, expression of sexuality, bodies, and territories, were stripped. (Fergusun, 2006)

As today’s witch hunts continue running the parallel lines of terrorizing violence, the Witches rise taller, equipped yet still learning, to fight for liberation. Witches, as the practitioners of knowledge, form their covens, communities that they thrive in, where support, care, love, and wisdom are exchanged and

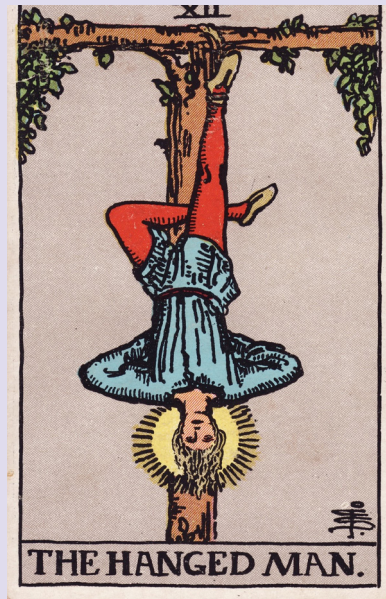


operate in their queer ways. Bustling away from the capitalistic system and some on an independent economic exchange. In many ways the witches of the New World to the witches of the contemporary, have practiced Magic and lived in rebellious ways of life, existing against the oppressors, suppressions, and erasures.

The power of the collective witches resurges strongly, in moments of terror and panic in the timeline of history, like in 2016, as a new wave of practicing Magic for resistance arose with the election of Donald Trump as the president of the USA. Witches and practitioners each held Magical rituals, united by this occurrence. Hexes, spells, songs, and chants, moving together similar to a protest, attempting to gain control and hope over the slippery situation of their time by calling upon the guidance and help of Magic.

Magical resistance lies in the shifting riverbeds of cities, nature, and the cosmos. As the wheels of time turn, darkness eventually gives away to the first buds of light. In the tapestry of certain lives, it unfolds as celebrating the coming of spring, marked by the equinox. Fishes of Pisces swimming under the setting sunset of winter, as the Ram brings the color of the season of the Aries. Fires of purification burn before the equinox, as people jump over the flames of rebirth singing the songs of revival. Apples of health, symbols of love, hope, and age glowing in the twinkle of the sunrise. Light over darkness, this age-old symbolism, etched into the walls of the palaces of ancient civilization, celebrated the transition of the seasons just as now. To linger on the cusp of this equinox and dare to hold the rituals of this transformation alive, to hope for light after a frigid winter of darkness, and to celebrate the promise of spring and the warmth of summer and

honor the l, despite the looming threats of inky shadows, is to resist.



# THE HANGED MAN

Resistance, Liberation, and care

*A night jet-black dark with its face covered in tar  
Neither Saturn was visible, nor Mercury nor Mars—  
The moon had so differently adorned its sight Passing upon its forehead a streak  
of light.*

*(Ferdowsi , circa 997)*

The Hanged Man's card is on the table. Dangling comfortably, one leg crooked, gazing at me, inviting me to look through his eyes. A different angle, yet he is calm. Moving with the gentle rhythm of the blossoms in the wind, he shows me where to look, helps me understand how to see, to find a way of looking at the sphere of my world, caring again.

With the aid of Magical resistance, I move towards liberation, and Starhawk, writer, feminist, and a witch, again offers a hand; bringing me A psychology of liberation, a guiding light in the journey of finding my way to autonomy.

she writes:

“Magic can be called the art of evoking power from within. Art implies skill and knowledge that empowers us to create. The skills of magic are the techniques of moving and shaping energy, of work, celebration, and ritual, of making the proper offerings and giving the right gifts.

The knowledge magic teaches is that reality is deeper, more complex, more intricate than it appears. We can swim, but not measure its depths. What we call magic is a body of knowledge compiled from many sources, and a tool that has been used to build many systems, some of them as hierarchical as any construction of mechanistic science. A liberation psychology understands the principles of magic and uses its tools to challenge hierarchies that

keep us unfree and create structures that embody values of immanent spirit, interconnection, community, empowerment, and balance.”

In the theory of Liberation Psychology by Starhawk, the community, which includes humans, plants, animals, and “elemental communities of the natural world”, becomes the center of liberation’s attention. No longer just focused on individual selves (although they are important), but mostly troubled with the structures that shackle and mold communities and the methods of creating collective change and communal healing. (Starhawk, 1989)

Of course, formations of oppression are experienced differently between diverse groups and each group comes up with and creates its own strategies for change and transformation. (Moane, 2003)

Liberation Psychology brought the Hanged Man card from the deck and gave me the eyes, courage, and understanding to question the concrete-looking gates of oppressive structures and move toward a method of change. Through this theory, I am able to envision my individual practice as a collective one, shaping it in a way that becomes communal, unlike before when I was stuck in thinking in circles of myself, desperately wanting to participate in the collective change yet unable to find how to start the journey of reaching the collective. It also offered a way of understanding where I’m situated, in this intricate carpet of reality, where the fear of the claws of violence is constant, it is okay to start from smaller steps, because although collective steps are to be made for an impactful revision, here and now I can only start from me. To change the confining structures, the

first attempt begins from the inside, so with the hope of sharing my methods and reaching a collective practice of liberation, I began my method of defiance, as I start tending to the world, caring through Magic becomes my strategy of liberation and change.

“A psychology of liberation can become our athame, our Witch’s knife, the tool of magic that corresponds with the East, the element air: mind, clarity, vision. It is the knowledge and insight we need to carve out our own freedom.”  
(Starhawk, 1989)

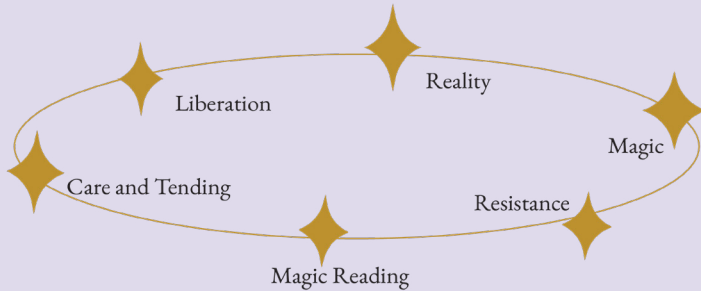


Figure 2. Illustration of the Design Methodology

To care as a method of Magical resistance is to participate in creating the renewal. Re-visioning and re-creating the world in ways that are no longer like the tricky swamps of oppression. To care, tend, create, and move with empathy, are the activities that can lead to reshaping, preserving, and liberating the world. The circle of care, to receive and tend, requires a certain openness, to care but refusing to receive it, in itself creates a blockage, preventing the ebb and flow of caring. To learn that

to achieve collective care, I must not resist the receiving, this learning became crucial, unraveling a series of knotted strings in my practice of care through Magic reading.

“In the most general sense, care is a species activity that includes everything we do to maintain, continue and repair our world so that we may live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, ourselves and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web.” (Tronto & Fisher, 1990)

*Caring is difficult, the labor of care in callous systems becomes almost transparent, mainly invisible, as caregivers are usually the oppressed and the individuals that receive the least amount of care themselves,*

*Caring is not always nice or easily possible,*

*It is not possible to care directly sometimes.*

Magic cares for me as I do for them.

Through the herbs in my tea, soft and healing when I drink them, later the remains in my cup, speaking to me, swirling and shaping messages of knowledge and reflection.

Through the plants and trees, pollens, gradient skies, rain, and wind and fire. Through the earth, I lay on. Nature itself, is magical.

Words and questions of tender care, invitation of knowing, relationships growing through leaves of love and touching of friendship. Helping hands, offered tea blend for remedies,

listening eyes and nodding heads.

The stars, the emperor, the sun. My deck of tarot next to my bed, solace, and thoughts, keeping me steady to ponder and digest tears of big emotions.

*If we have courage We can be healers; hike the sun, We shall rise.  
(Starhawk, 1994)*

“To care about something, or for somebody, is inevitably to create relation. Caring is more than an affective-ethical state: it involves material engagement in labours to sustain interdependent worlds, labors that are often associated with exploitation and domination.”  
(Puig, 2016)





# THE MAGICIAN

*you covered your soles  
and the heels of your  
hands  
bid coins in the lining of  
your coat  
let this not be the last  
that I have, you thought  
let it not, let it not, let  
it not*

*a too-tight lid obstructs  
air, traps steam, what  
breathes  
bubbles over or must  
perish*

*you did not perish  
raised the heels of your  
hands  
to the sky and said I can  
hold this  
to anything that you  
were given  
and for a time you did,*

*even juggled to make  
room  
for more until your arms  
grew tired*

*still, you did not perish  
raised the heels of your  
hands  
to the sky and said what  
flows*

*through me is huge,  
which is how*

*what I hold now weighs  
nothing*

*-(Sarah Lyn Rogers,  
2018)*

“Magic creates participatory consciousness, an inherently inspired, participatory way of perceiving the universe as animated and interconnected, that can be a gateway to new ways of perceiving things as well as creative expressions. Magic, in other words, is an art form.” (Greenwood, 2009)

Looking into the shared knowledge and projects of artists and practitioners, to take my steps in this research stronger, more confident, and guided a comforting hand on my back, encouraging. Flowing magic in the works of artists, swirling around, vibrant, and generously shared to sustain and nourish.

## Like MAGIC

October 29, 2023 – August 2025

Curated by Alexandra Foradas, Curator, MASS MoCA. USA



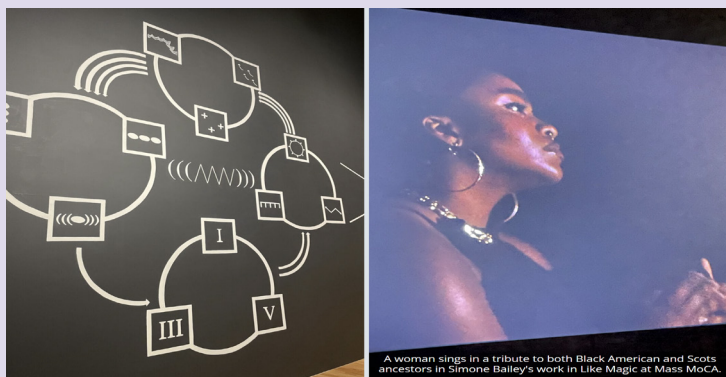
*A full moon shines in an arched window in Grace Clark's healing space in Like Magic at Mass MoCA*

In Like Magic, a group exhibition, artists explore Magical tools and technologies for transformation, seeking Magic as a holder of understanding and hope. Kate Abbot writes about this exhibition with the title “Artists conjure hope and Resistance”.

(Grace Clark, Like Magic — btwberkshires, 2024)

Here each artist approaches Magic in their unique way, illustrating how Magic can be a method of care and liberation. Grace Clark, for example, created a healing space, inspired by seeing the night sky on a dark road in New Mexico when she was recovering from a series of injuries, as the twinkling night sky offered her warmth and care, she inspired, created a space for reflection, with a window to the night sky full of stars. The museum opens its doors every month during the full moon to the audience, inviting them to this space to experience the magical and healing essence of the night sky and the moon.

Raven Chacon, a Diné (Navajo) artist, maps his musical scores as images honoring and preserving the knowledge and heritage of his ancestors. The musical scores are gates to other worlds, realities where women have always been the leaders.



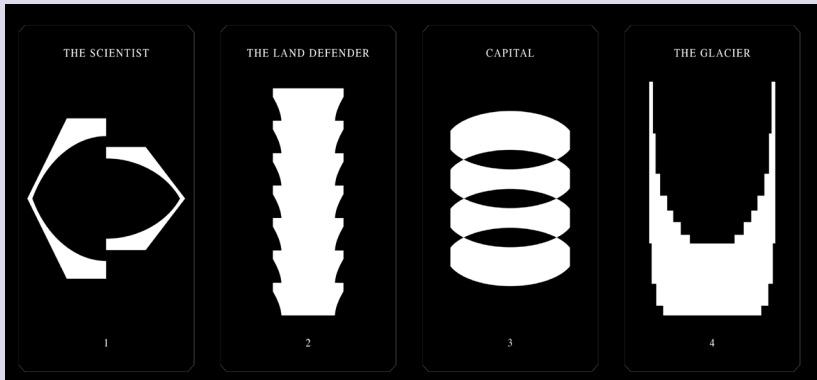
(Raven Chacon, Like Magic — btwberkshires, 2024)

Through these musical portals along with images of women singing, he explores the hope of the other worlds, bringing it to ours, guiding us to imagine and learn of what could be, creating

spaces of many voices and perspectives, and making these aspirations bloom.

As each artist situated themselves at a crossroads of Magic and other areas, magic as the curator of this show Alexandra Foradas explains becomes “ an act of independence and resistance” particularly when “ artists feel people in power threaten their existence.” (Abbott, 2023)

## 22 mirrors



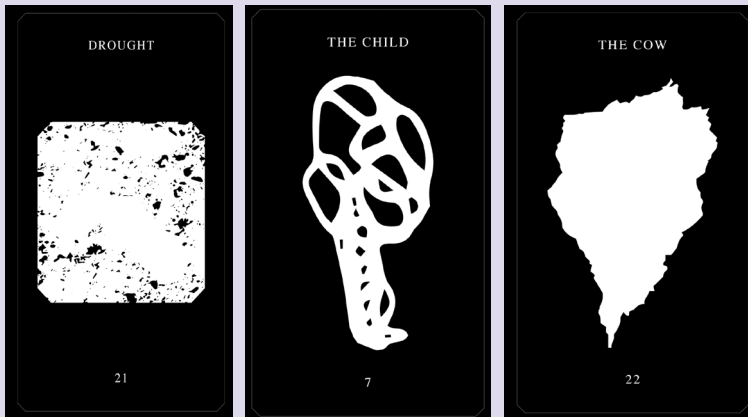
(Tapia, D., 22mirrors — Digital Witchcraft, 2022)

This project explores the various dimensions of climate emergency. It's a divinatory device with 22 arcana making a deck that paints the urgency of climate change and destruction. Through creating narratives you can explore possibilities and imagine solutions and alternatives through reading the cards. (22mirrors — Digital Witchcraft, 2022)

*“Capital, Lithium, The Farmer, The Child. Their voices resonate at intimate, local, regional, and planetary levels. Ours*

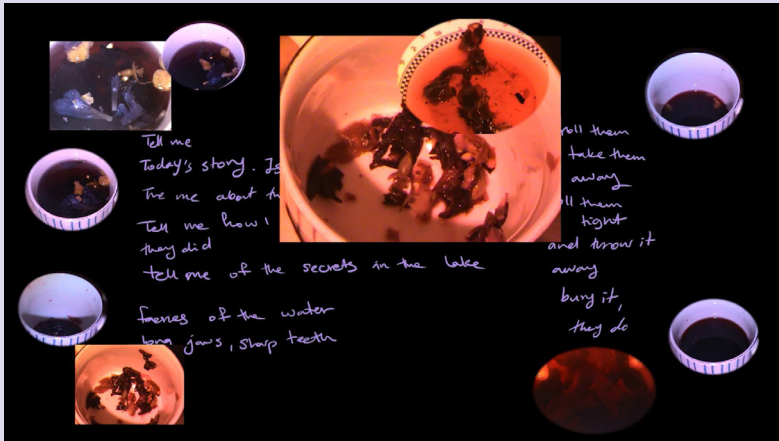
*is a holistic proposal and those utilizing the oracle are invited to observe the presence and effects of their own reflection in every corner of the planet.”*  
(V2\_Unstable Media, 2022)

Through the guidelines on the website, I engaged with them, choosing cards, and reading them together, reflecting on one another. The name and design of these cards made the reading profound and impressionable. I was stuck, pondering over them, thinking of what it was asking me and telling me. A mirror, reflection of myself in the world, my actions and their impact, and how caring can be the footholder for steps of transformation.



(Tapia, D., 22mirrors — Digital Witchcraft, 2022)

# MAGIC READING



(from rosehips, echium, hibiscus, rose buds: Reading May 3, 2023, 2023, video)

Fortune-telling being as old as humans, and interlaced with Magic, has always created a space for resistance and reflection. The devices of divination have great insights into how everything is interlaced.

“We can simply observe that people can and have told fortunes with anything - the smoky innards of slaughtered beasts, bird patterns across the sky, colored stones, tossed coins, anything. The practice stems from the simple

desire to know, in advance, what is going to happen, and more subtly, from the inner conviction that everything is connected, everything has meaning, and that nothing occurs at random. The very idea of randomness is really very modern. It developed out of the dogma that cause and effect is the only valid connection between two events. Events without this logical joining are random, that is, meaningless. Previously, however, people thought in terms of ‘correspondences’. Events or patterns in one area of existence corresponded to patterns in other areas. The pattern of the zodiac corresponds to the pattern of a person’s life. The pattern of tea leaves in the bottom of a cup corresponds to the outcome of a battle. Everything is connected.” (Pollack, R., 2007)

Correspondence, and connection, everything is connected. My struggle and oppression are part of a chained tapestry, and our movements and care maneuver us, affecting the net of systems of injustice.

Through fortune-telling ideas and words of critique in places where they were not allowed, were discovered, created, and exchanged. To arrogant and cruel kings advice and opposition were delivered through the words of the stars and planets combined with bones and fire, so that the resisters could survive, protecting themselves with the cloak of Magic while working towards their liberation.

Inspired by practices of fortune telling, specifically Tea reading, astrology, and tarot, Magic reading became my methodology of care and resistance.

These practices, with their own Magic system, have unique qualities. One of which is their perception of time, that is different from us humans. Time is not linear for the methods of fortune-telling. Past, future, and present are fluid, as the present is constantly flicking to the past and future. This difference in perceiving time laces to my method of using them, as not to predict the future, because there is no concept of linear time in these tools, but to look through the looping strings of time. Gazing with these devices of divination is to see differently, to engage and imagine the possibilities of what we are reading and ourselves through them. Together, we are looking beyond the restrictions of the dimensions of our world, reflecting and understanding ourselves and the world outside of us, the skeletons of human-time, and the grey structures of societies and systems.

“Our challenge is communal, but to face it we must be empowered as individuals and create structures of support and celebration that can teach us freedom. Creation is the ultimate resistance, the ultimate refusal to accept things as they are. For it is in creation that we encounter mystery: the depth of things that cannot be wholly known or controlled, the movement of forces that speak through us and connect us at our core. To value the mysteries we must describe the world in ways that make



possible encounters with mystery. When we view the world through the lens of that description, the old systems and structures may themselves be revealed as distortions.” (Starhawk, 1989)



(from Chai and Nabat (Tea and Sugar rock), 2023, video)

Tea reading is the practice of brewing loose-leaf tea, pondering over the cup and drinking it, flipping the cup once its content is reduced to the very last dregs and flipping it back again, peering into the cup to see what the tea has left for you, the drinker. Shapes and beings and words. Reading the cup is deeply intuitive, letting go of the messy strings of doubt and flowing in the cup with clumps of tea leaves, listening, seeing, reflecting, and communicating.

Tea in itself has a knotted and intricate journey and history. It has existed in my household in many forms. Black tea, for energy and joy, and variations of damnoosh<sup>3</sup> teas that do not contain theine and are a mix of herbs and plants, leaves, roots, bark, fruit, seeds, skin, stems, and flowers. The knowledge of what herb for what purpose, was available to me through my grandmother and centuries-old cultural heritage. I began foraging, drying, and collecting herbs and plants, and soon my cabinet was full of jars of wondrous smells. To mix my tea and

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<sup>3</sup> In Farsi, damnoosh is referred to hot drinks that are mixes of herbs, flowers, plants. Etc.

read the cup, it braided a bridge between nature, my world, and me. Allowing me to talk to and hear from nature.

*It is circular, where you begin, what you see and interpret, seeking the matters and being in the process, circulating and grounding.*

In *Chai and Nabat (Tea and Sugar Rock)* I invited two of my friends for dinner and then tea. I have told them that I want to do a reading, and they have seen me do tea and coffee readings before. But here, after I prepared the Tea, I asked them to read their cups. Marking the shift to Magic reading for us to experience the process of the reading together and learn from each other. For them to read their own cup is to offer the agency of transforming their reality, reflecting, and breaking out of cynicism. Flowing care on the table, between us and their cup, shared words and vulnerability, to be invited into each other's reality, trust each other to be vulnerable and tend to our world, together.



(from *Chai and Nabat (Tea and Sugar rock)*, 2023, video)

In *rosehips, echium, hibiscus, rose buds: Reading May 3, 2023*, I tell the tale of my struggles to find my narrative and



*fairies of the water  
long jaws, sharp teeth  
landscapes of my dreams  
beheaded wolf hanging upon the maze  
circles and circles drenched in the glaze  
burning red burning blue  
down in the cup  
hanging tight  
staining my mug  
fairies of the water  
swimming towards me  
chasing my toes under the sheets  
circles and circles drenched in tea  
circles and circles  
rotate the cup  
read the leaves and make them stop  
Tell me today's story. Is it mine or there's?  
Tell me about the moon and the waves  
Tell me about the teas and the cups  
Tell me about the personas of the day  
(from rosehips, echium, hibiscus, rose buds: Reading May 3, 2023)*

With Tarot, the layers of fear of trusting the cards came easier, perhaps it was the more tangible guidance of visual elements and tarot's design system that eased me into the shedding process of Magic reading. To slowly trust myself and the grasp of the reading, to loosen my hand on the threads of control. In Tarot, the cards are alive with me all the time. Where Tea is my tool of connection, Tarot is my companion. Always in a corner of my mind, living and breathing. The origin of Tarot is not certain, some locate it in 15th-century Italy, and some in Egypt.

I own only one deck (for now), the Rider–Waite-Smith tarot deck, which is widely used and beloved with 78 cards in total. Major arcana with 22 cards and minor arcana of 56 cards. I enjoy the layers of them, of the characters and the sceneries, of how they sing to me. Trustworthy friends, wise, and a bit mischievous.

Astrology is surrounding. The cosmos. Complicated, numerous versions, and altered. It is the stars and planets that ancient civilizations have looked upon. Archetypes and gods and goddesses. I seek the planets as guides, to understand and practice being aware. Where I am, my measurement in this universe, my relation. To see and experience the process of Magic reading through astrology, broke the constraints on myself and my mind. Showing me that if it's the control I'm seeking, I have to let go of it to do the reading, otherwise, the Magic reading will not happen. That caring while refusing to receive it will not circulate, and for me to care and tend to my world, to resist and create liberation, I have to be, truly and completely in the current, the stream of the Magical universe, open to giving and receiving.

All together and combined, methods of Magic reading as the methods of resistance. Guides for finding elephant paths of liberation, and practicing care.

*I wait for the full moon  
and it's his sign to come this month  
knocking on my window  
impatient,  
under the lake  
I see the ghosts in the rivers of underwater  
terrified, guilty, helpless*

*clutching his hand*  
*gasping for the air of the earth*  
*“you need to feel sometimes”*  
*“let the water flow in you”*  
*- what was the lesson again?*  
*(From the project Bewitched, 2024)*



(from *Put the kettle on, I'm on my way*, 2024, Installation)

In *Put the kettle on, I'm on my way*, through making a Tea Reading guide, along with a table and chairs, a space with hot water, and various teas, I laid my invitation. Welcoming participants to serve themselves a cup of tea and to engage in crafting Magical readings together, Creating a space for collective reading. Through this project, I discovered my place in the collective practice of Magic reading.

At first, I was shaky and unsure. Lingered on the edges, trying to understand when to step in and offer guidance and explanations. On this table, there was no certain theme of reading, the participant had the authority to ask their questions to the cup and steer their ship, exploring, discovering, and understanding, yet I failed to guide them properly, to tell them what it required to do a Magic reading, to reassure them that feeling vulnerable sitting in front of your cup is part of the process, it is intimate the conversation of the reading, to let go and be open. Of course, this failure was not intentional, as I believe it was a crucial experience for me to finally grasp all the hanging threads of my research and practice together and make sense of it.

To reveal that although I have this knowledge, this experience, I am not aware of it yet, I am not seeing it clearly yet. Therefore, when the lenses are cleaned and my mind is no longer blurry, everything snaps into focus, and it's then that I can verbalize and contextualize what has been already brewing in me, the teapot. The moment of pouring the tea and serving it arrives.





Enjoy your Tea,



With friends,  
companions,  
or alone

and if you have a specific thought  
or question bring it forward while  
you are sipping on your tea.



Before finishing your tea, give it a little swirl,  
and if you want flip the cup upside down on a  
saucer or a plate.



Flip the cup back and it is  
ready for you to read.





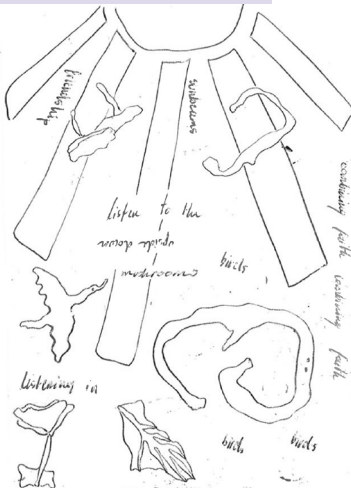
→ I see a bunch of insects  
crawling over  
↳ a little gathering of  
small creature



it seems like ~~there's~~ there's  
a push inside my self to  
create something, to let  
the fire burn and use  
that energy to make something



My Cup



- smoke of a fire going up  
(I think I've already seen this  
before)
- the smoke is creating something  
like something is materializing
- ↳ maybe I'm trying to create  
things out of my ideas  
feelings, emotions
- rocks falling down a mountain  
↳ a danger coming? or  
maybe a sort of weight  
liberation from my shoulders
- a spider → woman creation?  
creativity  
↳ maybe it is pooping  
also a liberating  
action  
or maybe it is  
spreading eggs

(From Put the kettle on, I'm on my way, 2024, Installation)

(Notes of participants' Magic reading)

The animated process of magic reading, having to let go and move with its flow is the process of getting out of cynicism and stagnating.

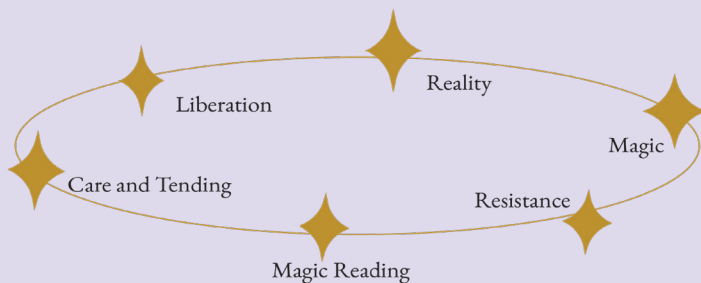


Figure 3. Illustration of the Design Methodology

Reading the climate, earth and its destruction, political climate and its terror, and the climate of our societies, the web of connection between them.

Reading the geopolitical, the context, subjects of resistance, and movements of liberation is required, to steer the ship in the direction of transformation.

Reading the cards of this text; Aid of Magic, the practice of tending.

The Ace of Cups tied to the symbol of water is the love that gives our world its significance and values. Following the water of the rivers, ever-changing in their shape and current, yet the water is always true to its form. The foundation below all the changes in the journey of the self. It also represents passivity, when action is required, it is apathetic, showing the beginning of my journey

from being stuck in the stagnant water of cynicism to the flowing water of imagination and revision.

Then comes the hanged man, holder of the peace of acceptance, understanding, and new perspectives. The hanged man is the illustration of the process rather than the moment, representing independence and channeling the knowledge of the universe.

The magician, trickster-witch, is the artist, the creator, moving with purposeful action. Taking the realities of the world and making something meaningful out of it.

She is the connection, opening herself to the wisdom and current of the universe, drawing them into herself and the earth. The agent of transformation.(Pollack, R., 2007)

The process of acceptance of what the reality is, my position in it, the issues, the causes, and moving from cynicism and stagnant into animated revisions is situated in the current of Magic reading, through their flow, it brings us the waves of new gates to engage with the geopolitical. Read for our word, the layered folds of time.

It is the experience of becoming one with the flow and beat of the universe, to look through the gaze of Magic through their tools, exchanging and peering into our cups, over the cards, and to the starry skies, and creating moments of care. To discover ways of knowing and understanding. “to burrow down through the systems of control like roots that crack concrete to find the living soil below.” (Starhawk, 1989)

*The Fairies said nothing  
And still, they wept  
And their tears were like rains from Spring clouds  
I patted the Fairies on their backs  
I wanted to send them back to their world  
But then they started to scream  
They were magical and they began to fly about.  
They became old, they became tears,  
They became young, they became laughter,  
They became master and slave,  
They became fruit, they became seed,  
They became both hope and despair,  
They became a bad omen  
These magic tricks did not affect me  
I watched their games  
But I was not influenced by them  
Their jinxed star did not sway me  
And when they saw I did not turn into a stone  
by any of their sorcery, they changed  
One of them became a bottle of wine  
One of them became a sea of water  
And one of them became a mountain  
rising up into the sky  
I drank the wine  
I swam the sea  
I climbed the mountain  
There was singing and dancing  
in the City beyond the mountain  
'Ha-Ha-Ha' we are happy!  
No more slavery! We are free!  
We destroyed injustice  
We held freedom as our Mecca.*

*Since the City stood firm,  
Since the living became ours,  
We'll be happy forever!  
We'll be free forever!  
We have achieved our goal!  
We have reached our home!  
This is the end of our tale!  
This is the end of our jail!  
(Shamloo, 1953)*

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