

OK, so why 5 Elements Forge, I hear you ask? There is no really simple answer, but if you will follow along, I'll try to get there.

In a large part the answer is; Magic. I have always wanted to be a wizard. Since I have an inquiring mind, (read, a mind full of stuff, some useful, a lot of junk), I've spent a fair amount of time thinking about Magic. Not the stage illusion, poof the girl is gone stuff, but the deeper, more elemental thing that we call Magic.

Magic is transformational, it changes the nature of reality. Magic is not easy or quick, it is subtle and hidden, occult in the truest sense of the word. What I do is transformational. I take an idea and make it manifest. I do it with fire and steel, hammer and anvil, with my intent and attention to detail, and it is Magic, if I pay attention.

Many of the ideas here come from Western Magical thought. Aleister Crowley¹ said "Every intentional act is a Magical Act." By paying attention, attention to detail, attention to intent, we create Magic. I am not much of a baker, but I know that you can take flour and sugar and cinnamon and shortening and eggs and apples, and, with attention to detail, turn them into Apple Pie. And I also know that the same things combined with a lack of skill, and a lack of attention, you can turn them into something icky. Ask me how I know this, go on, ask me, you tell me that apple pie isn't Magic.

But Western Magical thought has only 4 elements, Water, Fire, Earth, Air. Well, I don't restrict myself to the west. I have studied Eastern martial arts and philosophy, T'ai Chi Ch'uan for the most part, for the better part of twenty years. T'ai Chi aims to transform the self by means of disciplined intent. When you see films of people doing these strange slow motion exercises, they are paying attention to a single thing, attempting to make it perfect. This is also Magic. The Daoist sorcerers believe that proper diet, proper exercise, proper thought, proper behavior, could make them immortal, could transform the mundane into the extraordinary.

Japanese sword makers, and in fact, swordsmiths all over the world, have thought of their craft as a sacred act. Many Japanese smiths perform a ritual cleansing of the forge before starting a new sword. Intent, attention to detail, Magic.

In the West we call the martial arts Kung Fu, which should more properly be called Wu Shu (or War Arts). But one translation of Kung Fu is "time and energy". Seat time, intent, practice, hard work, Magic. The Daoist believe that the universe is made up of five elements (finally, you say, stay with me just a bit longer, and I'll try to tie this all up).

Wood to Fire, Fire to Earth, Earth to Metal, Metal to Water, Water to Wood, a cycle of creation. These are the things I use to make my knives. In Daoist thought the universe is incomplete without the infusion of spirit, of Shen, the element of Wood. In Western thought the elements are dead, inert. In the East the elements are part of a living cycle, informed, altered, transformed by the spirit and the intent.

¹ In "Magik, in Theory and Practice", Dover 1976, introduction, pg xiii.

So there you have it, sort of. My logo is five interconnected rings, a symbol of the universe, of order from chaos, of four elements linked by the intent, by the spirit, Magic. Thanks for sticking around.