



QUAREIA—THE INITIATE

Module IX—Working with the Spirits of
the Land

Lesson 3: Gods and Goddesses of the
Land

BY JOSEPHINE MCCARTHY

WELCOME

Welcome to this lesson of the Quareia curriculum.

The Quareia takes a magical apprentice from the beginning of magic to the level of adeptship and beyond. The course has no superfluous text; there is no dressing, no padding—everything is in its place and everything within the course has a good reason to be there.

For more information and all course modules please visit

www.quareia.com

So remember—in order for this course to work, it is wise to work with the lessons in sequence. If you don't, it won't work.

Yours,

Josephine McCarthy



QUAREIA—THE INITIATE

Module IX—Working with the Spirits of the Land

Lesson 3: Gods and Goddesses of the Land

In magic, most magicians focus on deities that flow from temples and religious or magical systems. The deities found in temples, as you know, are vessels that have developed interactions with humans in a formalised and systematised way. Many are subdivided, and have specific and predictable *habits, wants, and needs*. Their actions are clearly understood, and they work well with magicians in a temple space or magical setting.

Raw deity power out in nature is different. Some temple deities flow from these natural features, but structured interfaces have developed for the magician to work with, and if the magician has knowledge and common sense then those working relationships can be very fruitful.

Raw deity powers in nature cannot be boxed into an image or statue and worked with in a magical space. Like the rest of raw nature, they flow through the landscape with powers we cannot even begin to understand.

To work magically with these powers you need to go to them. You have to work with them out on the land, in tune with the land, and within the needs of the land and its creatures. Whereas a temple deity will help you with magical acts, rituals, visions, practicalities, and so forth, a wild land deity will teach you about the power of the land you live on and the inner powers that flow through them. They may offer you protection, individual help, and guidance in return for your offering assistance when

needed. They also like simply being respected and acknowledged, and for you to conduct yourself on the land in a way that respects their power and the land itself.

Like all magical work with deities, you do not blindly worship, entreat, beg, or flatter; nor do you command, control, or expect. You approach the relationship with respect, honour, co-working, and mutual upkeep.

A temple deity will most likely already know a human's needs, limitations, and available skills. They will draw on them as needed and in return offer help. But a wild land deity often has little understanding of human needs and limitations. This can sometimes put the magician in a difficult situation. Bear this in mind in your work with wilder deities. You have to tell them your limitations, your needs, and your skills. You must also ask them about their needs and powers.

An adept should work with both temple deities and wild ones, not only to keep balance but also to live productively on a landmass. An adept must stay in tune with both the land and the streams of mysticism and magic that they draw on. Being an adept is a constant balancing act between various different powers, beings, and places.

Whereas a temple deity will look after your material *needs* while you work in service and with them, a land deity will protect you from dangerous land powers and damaging storms. They will also play a major part in giving you the help you need to achieve whatever it was you came into life to do as a magician.

What they will not do is get involved in petty spats, greedy wants, or smiting magical enemies. The lower levels of human consciousness are of no interest to them: they leave all that shit to the parasites and bottom feeders that such magic usually dredges up.

If as an adept you choose not to interact much with the land, if at all, then you will likely not come into contact with its deities. Once you do start to interact with the nature powers around you and make yourself useful, though, you will slowly come to their attention. And once one land deity has noticed you and likes you, then your energy signature changes slightly: you become marked energetically as "one of the useful ones." Then when you visit other land areas the deity powers there will recognise you as a human worth interacting with.

This is why working on the land in service came so early in the apprentice section. Now that you are in your initiate studies, deities

all over will recognise you as someone worth looking at and potentially communing with. This is the root cause of the experience that many adepts have when they travel: they are contacted, given help or jobs during their stay, and they are watched over. For many years now, wherever I go, I end up being given a job to do—often a very small one. In return I get protection, learning, and sometimes wonderful gifts.

So who are these land deities? You have met some already in your land work; now it is time to delve a bit deeper, both practically and theoretically.

In truth, every bit of land and sea has a consciousness that we would categorise as a deity. Some of these are too far removed from human consciousness to understand and connect with; others are not so obvious. But some are very present, very communicative, and willing to interact with us. Some have powers that tick away in the background and are never really noticed by us, and some have a very immediate power and presence that is hard to ignore. The latter are the ones that humans have formed understandings, and sometimes relationships, with over time, such as deities of rivers, mountains and so forth.

These nature deities are never found in isolation. They are usually surrounded by faery beings, land beings, creature spirits, and so forth. This is why it is important for a magician to get to know the local land beings, guardians, and so forth, as well as the deities: they are a family.

In this lesson we will look at some of the more obvious types of land deities that you will come across in magic. You will learn how to approach them, and how they and you fit together in a magical working relationship. We cannot cover all the types of deities, as there are so many, but learning some of the more obvious ones and applying what you learn practically will open a road of expanded learning for you that you can develop further yourself. Draw on what you have already learned to make full sense of this lesson and the others in this module.

Trees

One of the oldest forms of deity connections humans have had is with deities that manifest through trees and forests. Remember, trees are a communal consciousness: what happens to one tree is communicated to the others. When working magically with trees and tree deities, you can work with a *foundation tree*, both physically and in vision, to affect all the trees around you. So what is a foundation tree?

In the inner pattern of forests, there is one tree that is the root, anchor, foundation, and mother of all the other trees. While deities that flow through trees can be connected with through a variety of physical trees, going back to the source in vision, and then finding the exteriorisation of that source in a physical tree, puts you in direct communion with the deity.

In your historical research and practical work you will have discovered certain goddesses closely connected with trees: Hathor, Asherah, the Yakshis, and so forth. These nature goddesses have over time moved into temples, but their roots are within the forests.

You will also find legends and stories that link king-gods and trees: for example the story of Osiris and the Tamarisk tree, and the Celtic stories of kings in trees. You will look at some of these in your research tasks.

But in practical magical terms, you learn the most by working with them, first in vision and then by visiting them. If you have already made connections with trees and forests through your Quareia training, this next step becomes a lot easier. First you find the root tree with the deity that flows out into the forest, woodland and individual trees in an area.

You can still do this work if you live in a city and do not have access to a forest by working through the inner landscape of the land. Although trees might have been physically cut down, their inner collective still stands. If you are lucky enough to live in, or near, a forested area then all the better. I have done this work in the Pacific Northwest's temperate rainforests, and it was one of the most beautiful experiences I have ever had. I also learned a great deal and was able to be of service to the rainforests.

Before we get to the practical work, remember that for the most part the deities within trees, and trees' consciousnesses, tend to be female. If you come across a male presentation then a goddess is still likely to be behind it, so look further.

Task: Trees: Practical work

Working in vision is the first step, and you have done something similar in the past. Set up your work room, open the gates, greet the contacts, then still yourself. When you are ready, settle into vision and walk around the space's directions with the intention of seeking the direction

that is the gateway to the foundation tree of the land you live and work on.

Once you have identified the direction, step over the threshold with the intention of going out into the land's inner landscape. Keep as your focus that you are looking for the tree at the centre of all trees for that land. Walk until you find yourself walking among trees. The further you walk, the older and taller they get.

Pause every so often to touch a tree. Greet it respectfully, then move on. As you continue forward the trees get denser and the overgrowth thicker. At the point you have to push through bushes and undergrowth you spot a small, dilapidated cottage deep in the woods. This is not your destination in this vision, but you need to pay your respects to its occupant before you go further in. Fight your way through the overgrowth until you come to cottage door. Knock and tell the person inside your name. Say you are on a quest to seek the foundation tree.

An old woman opens the door. She looks like a bag lady off the streets, wrapped up in lots of warm clothing, with wild hair and strange eyes. She welcomes you in and tells you to sit by the fire to get warm. You sit in the only chair and she settles herself before a loom and continues weaving. She does not answer any questions, and she does not ask you any: she simply weaves and smiles. Every so often she finishes a small weave, and as she cuts the thread the weave turns into a bird or a creature that vanishes through the door and out into the forest. Now you know who she is.

You feel you have to get up and continue on your quest, but you are stuck to your chair so you simply have to wait. She finishes another short weave, cuts the thread, and holds it up to you. It is a coat with many different colours that flash and shine like gems. She holds it out and motions for you to put it on. She helps you get your arms in, then she checks to make sure it fits well. Once she is happy with the fit she puts her hands on your shoulders, looks deeply into your eyes, and says:

“This coat of many colours is an honour for you to wear. Wear it with respect. Never abuse it, never boast of it, and never take it off: this is the bark of the goddess so that all creatures and beings may know of your path and your work. Its weave tells the true story that your heart speaks, so that others will know who you are. Its skin will protect you, and its strength will uphold you.”

Look down at the coat, which has beautiful coloured threads running through it. When you look back up at the old woman to thank her, you find that she has vanished. You stand alone in the cottage whose walls are covered with tapestries and weaves. As you look at them you see that each is a creature, and as you touch them you can feel the creature's life under your hands.

As you look at the weave something touches your leg. Looking down you see a large, muscular snake watching you. Be careful: this is a powerful guide and guardian. Be respectful to the snake, and when it moves away from you and out the cottage door, follow it.

The snake glides through the dense forest and waits for you to catch up: each time you reach it, it moves ahead again at speed, clearing a narrow path for you through the forest.

Eventually it reaches a clearing and stops to wait for you. When you reach it, the snake tells you to take off your shoes, and asks to inspect the soles of your feet. It is checking to make sure there is nothing untoward on your feet that could contaminate the ground before you step into the sacred grove. Once the snake has checked your feet it moves its head to a small spring at the clearing's edge and tells you to wash your feet.

Before you touch the water greet the spring. Reach into your pocket and pull out a gift for it. As always, when you give a gift to an inner power, whatever appears in your hand is the gift. If it is something you own in life then drop it in a spring or river after you have finished the vision. For now, drop whatever appears in the water and ask the spring if you may wash your feet. Dip your feet gently in the water one at a time, left foot first.

Once your feet have been cleansed by the water the snake moves into the grove. You follow. As you tread on the soft moss you can feel it 'reading' your feet. The moss detects what sort of path you walk through life by reading the soles of your feet, then relays its conclusions to the grove. This ensures that the grove's guardians will not attack you.

In the centre of the grove is an ancient tree. You have visited this tree before, and you recognise its feel. Once you arrive at this ancient, vast tree, the snake curls itself around the tree and watches you. Kneel down and place your hands on the tree: you will feel a slow, defined heartbeat—that of the goddess within the tree. You will also feel something moving within the tree: someone is residing in the tree and reacting to your touch.

Carefully insert your hand into the tree: if you touch the tree with

intention then your hand will pass through its skin and touch whatever resides within it. A hand grasps yours and holds on. The snake curls itself close to you and talks to you:

“What lies within is the king within the tree, the living consort of the goddess, the man who is ancestor to you all, the man who governs the land with the agreement of its people. Do you wish the king to return?”

Before you answer, think carefully. The sacred king within the tree brings the rule of Ma’at, or sacred balance, to the land and its people. His power will flow into the line of leaders who rule a land. Still yourself and reach deep within yourself for an answer. If the answer is yes then pull on the hand to pull him out of the tree. If the answer is no then withdraw your hand. You must make that choice for the land you live on.

If your answer was yes, then when you pull the king’s hand he will step out of the tree and stand before you. Bow respectfully to him, then look at him. He is a union of power between the humans and the land, a son of the goddess, and a power that will flow through generations of leaders. With each generation of leaders his power will grow until a leader is filled with his power. After that it will slowly decline until the king’s power withdraws back into the tree.

Look at his appearance. This will tell you what his power is, what animal spirits are strong within him, and where his power flows from. Whatever animal features are present in the king will tell you what to look for in the physical world: the animal whose features he bears will become a signal to humans of the active power of the king.

When a leader carrying the king’s power comes to rule in a country then that animal will start to appear around you, either in physical form, in vision, or through images that you keep seeing. It will also tell you about the nature of the leader’s rule: sometimes the sacred king power will manifest through peaceful rule, other times it can be harsh—whatever is necessary to establish the flow of Ma’at. The key is that a human must release the king: we *choose* that rule.

The king strides off out of the grove, leaving you standing before the tree and the snake. This tree is the foundation tree for all the world’s forests. It is the tree that the goddess power flows from and manifests in many trees out in the physical world. Still yourself and clear your mind. When you are still, place your forehead on the bark of the tree.

Many different colours, sounds, sensations, vibrations, words, and images flash through your mind. You are communing with the Tree of Knowledge, and you are experiencing all its sacred knowledge at once. Let everything flow into your mind, but do not try to fix on anything; just let it fill you. It will unfold in your consciousness as necessary. Just when you feel your mind cannot take any more input, a woman's face appears in your mind: the face of the goddess within the tree.

She will speak to you. Take careful note to remember what she says. Also remember that whenever you are around a tree you are around one of her children. If you need to take anything from a tree then always ask it first and warn it. When she has finished speaking her face will withdraw. Step back from the tree, bow deeply to her, and thank her for talking to you.

The snake hisses loudly and you look at it. It coils itself, then straightens itself flat out. As you watch, it turns into a large staff—a straight branch from the tree. Pick up the staff and hold it in your right hand. It will be long enough to touch the floor and also rest in your hand. Take a step forward with your left foot, then look at the staff: it may stay as it is or it may form its tip into a particular shape, which will indicate its power. This is the staff of the adept. As an apprentice you did not work with a wand—in fact you learned not to work with that power. But now, on the threshold of adeptship, you will learn to take up the staff which will be your magical companion but not a tool.

Stand and feel the power of the staff, and the power of the snake within it. Feel the power of the goddess flow through it, and how your right arm, the arm of the scales, feels the power flow into the arm. A magician never makes vows, but understands boundaries. Recognise that the power you now hold is greater than you. It must be handled with respect and never abused. If you misuse it then it will be taken from you and never returned.

Bow to the tree and walk away carrying the staff. With each step, as you touch the staff to the floor as you walk, you become aware of the moss beneath your feet reacting to the staff's presence as though it is greeting an old friend. Look down to the moss as you walk: you will see small clumps of flowers springing up to form footsteps through the forest: these are the footsteps of the sacred king who has walked through the forest on his way to the physical world. Follow those footsteps through the forest until you come to the landscape near your home and workspace.

Cross over the threshold into your magical workspace and lay the staff

across the southern altar. Go around the directions and bow to the inner contacts that have been holding the space for you to work, then go to your body and sit down. Be still and silent for a while as you go back over in your mind everything that has happened. When you are ready, open your eyes. Write down everything in your journal before you do anything else.

When you have finished, get up and close down the directions. Keep an awareness of the inner spirit of the staff lying across the south altar: you will bring that out into physical form in the next module, but for now the inner staff needs time to adjust to the physical world.

Type up your notes on computer and keep them in your files.

A note about coats

The coat you were given by the weaver goddess in the cottage is something that will stay with you. Over time you will forget about it, but it will remain on you throughout your life unless you choose to remove it in vision and return it. Sometimes these inner coats manifest in the physical world and find their way to you. They will appear as a coat of many colours made of natural fibers, and sometimes they can come to you in the strangest of ways.

When you wear the physical coat it will strengthen and ‘switch on’ the inner coat: it becomes a robe that can offer a layer of shielding, and it will ‘talk’ to those who can ‘hear.’ It tells those who can hear who you are, and that you a magician who walks a mystical and magical path. This in turn protects you. Should a powerful Underworld being rampage across the land or through its people then the coat will tell it to ‘pass over you’ and not harm you, as you are protected by the land’s gods and beings.

The coat works in many ways, most of which you will have to find out for yourself. It will not protect you from your own stupidity or from things you need to experience, but it will protect you from unnecessary incidents, and it marks you out as one walking the Path of Hercules. The coat is not a tool; it is a being, deeply connected to the land and faery beings. It is a companion that will stay with you throughout your life from now on, and it will work with you.

My coat does all sorts of interesting things. I guess it will take me a lifetime to fully understand it. A physical version did come to me a while after the inner coat did, a few years later, and I wear it when it tells me to put it on. The coat seems to know far better than I when it needs to be worn.

A note on staffs

Now is the time to start keeping an eye open for a staff or branch that is straight, of hard wood, and that will not crumble. You cannot buy one; nor can you cut one using metal of any kind. You will either find it on the floor by a tree while you are out walking, or it may be given to you unexpectedly.¹ Or you may find a tree with a straight branch of hardwood that you can break off. If you find one still on a tree then ask the tree if you can break it off to become a staff. If you get a negative feeling back then it is not the staff for you: the tree must be willing to give you the branch as a gift.

You have plenty of time to find one, as you will not learn what to do with it until lesson six of the next module. When you do find it, place it in the south of your magical work space and just leave it there to adjust and tune to the inner staff.

Task: Tree research

Research goddesses from around the world who are connected to trees. Also look at mythology and legends from the land where you live about trees, tree spirits, deities, and so forth. In a country like the USA, or in any country which still has tribal peoples, the tree power may not be called a deity but rather a powerful spirit of the trees or forest: it's the same thing in most instances. Type up your notes.

Task: More tree research

Look up and read the story of Osiris and the Tamarisk tree. Find a good source for the story—not a New Age book or website—and read it. Then reread it in magical detail: look for the magical aspects, which you will have to find within the overall story. Often deeper magical truths are hidden within stories. Type up your notes.

¹And you cannot ask or suggest it as a present to anyone!

Task: Hills, mountains, and caves

Hills, mountains, and caves feature a great deal in magic that works with nature. You have done various bits of work with these land features; now it is time for you to explore further. When you come to work with such features you will find that they are very strong faery aspects of the land and often have very old legends attached to them.

Instead of me outlining all the different variables, you are going to do this work as an individual exploration to teach you how to discover such outer and inner powers yourself. I will talk you through the various steps that will take you from research to contact.

First find out what is in your area. You should have a good idea of this by now. If you find nothing appropriate nearby then look further afield.

Look up legends and myths of fairies, hills, mountains, and caves. Then take out the word 'fairy' from your search and look up mountains or caves with myths and legends. You will find all sorts of things from all over the world. This will give you a general idea of the sorts of powers people have encountered in the past, and what wisdoms they passed on through legends. Usually I would suggest going in vision first before doing research so that you do not subconsciously project what you read onto the vision. However, some mountain and cave powers are very strong and can be rather dangerous, so in this case it is better to have some background knowledge first. By now you should be astute and skilled enough not to let what you read affect what you will later see.

Go in vision down to the Foundation Stone at the centre of the Underworld, the place where mountains are connected, and talk to the contacts there. Tell them what you are working on and studying, and ask for their advice and guidance. They can tell you how to conduct yourself safely and may give you other advice or help.

In a separate vision, go to the Goddess in the Cave and do the same thing: ask for advice and guidance.

If possible, visit the land feature physically before you approach it in vision. Do not do anything magical there, simply go, hang out, explore, leave gifts, observe, then leave. See how things react around you, see what the weather does, the creatures, and so forth.

Approach the land feature in vision. Either walk through the inner

landscape or fly there as a bird. Be very cautious and respectful, and take note of everything you see and encounter. Be very careful not to get glamoured. The powers and beings that reside in these places can be very powerful while seeming benign. They may try to entrance you, get you to stay, get you to make promises, or ask you to eat with them. All these are dangerous for you and you should avoid such things. You are going there to make alliances and to learn; nothing more.

Once you have finished your vision work, think carefully about how you could be of service to the powers you contacted, and also how you can work with them magically. Each feature is different; hence you have to make these discoveries for yourself. These powers can be worked with at a faery level, or you can work more deeply with the 'king' or 'queen' there, who are deities. There is also a level of work that can be done connecting those powers with the deep Foundation Stone, which will teach you a lot and also inform your general magical practice. Figure this out yourself.

Write up all your findings in a computer log. Anything you discover or do that is strictly personal to you, put them only in your private journal. Also, go back to these notes and add to them as things surface in your life directly connected to this work.

Working with these powerful features can open up a huge amount of magical work and learning for you, and can change your life. Because of this it is best that you are not guided too much with this work; rather you should make the connections and contacts for yourself: you have a good foundation in nature work from all the inner and outer contact you have already made upon the land in your earlier studies.

Trees come and go and are strongly connected to life and death in a timescale that we can cope with. Mountains, caves, and hills operate on a very different timescale, and have a very different power to them which can make them dangerous to us while also providing immense learning opportunities. The danger with these powers is not that they are 'bad,' just that they are very different, and are the fabric that makes up the ultimate vessel of creation.

Draw on what you know of the dynamics of creation when doing this work, and understand that the mountains, caves, and hills are the receptor for the combined powers of creation. What resides on the surface physical manifestation of these features are inner beings, but once you dig deeper you will come to a whole new level of power. You will learn a great deal about the natural deities of the land, about how stone

works magically in its vast form. From there you will have to figure out how to convert that knowledge into magical terms.

As an aside, you will also start to spot commonalities in this aspect of work: weavers, sound, serpent power, bright light, wind, 'kings and queens', time changes/flows, and the power of Restriction. These dynamics pop up in the stories connected to mountains, hills, and caves all over the world: the stories tell of how these powers have been experienced before by others, and developed into creative stories that are then added to. Learn to sift through the stories to find the creation dynamics within them, which will tell you about the magical aspects of these powers.

Finally, remember that some of the caves, hills, and mountains are entrances to the Underworld, places where Underworld powers and vast beings can come to the surface. Use your knowledge to inform your work and keep yourself safe.

Springs and rivers

Springs, rivers, and waterways are also powerful natural features where faery beings reside and where nature deities can be found. They are a more surface power than those found in mountains, and more immediate. They can be worked with more easily as a magician.

Sometimes we get lucky and find myths or stories attached to a waterway which helps us understand what deity power resides there; other times we have to figure everything out ourselves. Water is a strange element to work with in vision, as its inner power flows from the same power pattern as visionary work. You would think that this would make it easier to work in vision in water, but I have found the reverse to be true.

Flowing through water in vision can be very odd, as the beings and powers within it have no defined boundaries, and it can be difficult in a practical sense to discern what is what and who is who. Because of this I have found it better to work magically with the water itself: when I am trying to make contact or understand the deity, I work magically through succussion and ingestion, through working with tools in semiritual actions, and through visionary work with the beings that come out of the water or reside nearby.

You already have quite a body of work to draw on as you have worked with water in so many different ways, and you have met guardians,

beings, etc. from springs. But an interesting way to learn in depth the power of a particular waterway and the deity power that runs through it is to potentise water and ingest it, then observe what changes it causes.

As you know, some springs are healing, and some are not and have other powers such as battle power, learning power, etc. Some of this can be identified through the methods you have already learned, but here is a project for you that will teach you directly and will be personal to you. It is externalised work which brings it into your own body, and therefore gives it a vessel and boundaries to work with.

Task: Experiment with water

Before you do this experiment, do a reading using the Quareia deck and the landscape layout to ask how it could affect your body and life. There are really two experiments here: one is a daily experiment and one is a monthly one. You will choose one to do. Read the cards for each experiment to ensure that whichever you choose doesn't affect you very badly.

If the reading shows some problems but is okay in the longer term then still do the experiment, as it will teach you about subtle connections with water deities. If the reading is a total disaster then do not do the experiments. Instead do a mystical map layout reading to look at the overall power of the spring and the deity that flows through it. If you discover a battle or war goddess then it may not be such a hot idea to take her into yourself; but if the reading shows that it would not be a total disaster but just a rough ride then it is worth doing for the learning that will come from it.

Visit a waterway like a spring or river, and make sure it is one not badly polluted or abused. Take a clean, sterile bottle with you and a gift for the water. Talk to the guardian of the spring in vision and ask if you can take some of the water to learn about the deity power of that particular spring or river. Drop your gift into the water and fill the bottle: take it from part of the water that is flowing and not stagnant.

Take the water home and use the dilution and succussion technique you have already learned, diluting it with distilled water. Once you have decanted it into a sterile bottle, which you will store in the fridge, then each evening impact the bottle using the succussion technique on a hard book ten times, and take ten drops under your tongue. Do this every

night for seven nights, and pay close attention to dreams, emotions, and any shifts in your personality, health, and so forth.

After seven days switch to taking the water in the mornings, using the same methods. Again keep a close eye on how you feel and what, if any, changes occur, and so forth. After the seven days, pour the rest of the water away. Keep a close eye on your moods, actions, dreams, and how people react to you for a few months after the experiment. If you have absorbed a strong resonance from the water deity then it will peak and then fade. The timing of this is very individual to the person: it could last days, weeks, or even months.

Another way you can work with this water, which works over a longer period of time, is to take it monthly at the full moon rather than daily. Because of the length of time you will have to add alcohol to the succussed water to preserve it. Use alcohol of 44% proof or more, adding in one third alcohol to two thirds water. Bang the bottle on a book ten times and take ten drops on the night before the peak of the full moon, and do this for six months.

Working with the full moon potentises the water's effect so that it works on a different, deeper level from taking it daily. When water works more deeply, it first travels to your depths, and then slowly but subtly rises through the layers of your being.

So what can happen with this work? It all depends on your level of sensitivity. If you are pretty dense then the effects will be subtle and you will have to be very observant to feel them. For those with less defined energetic boundaries the water can shift how you feel, how you act, and how everything around you acts.

What you are basically doing is taking in an 'essence' of the deity power of the water. The power and personality of that deity will filter into your body, mind, emotions, and inner energies. By experiencing this directly you will learn about the power and personality of the deity that runs through that water. It can cause subtle shifts in how you feel, what you do, and how others react to your personality: you are taking an aspect of that deity into yourself.

In this way you will learn about the power of that water feature, which will show you how you can work with it. If you discover a female warrior power then you can build a relationship with her and work with her magically when you need to access that sort of power. Similarly, if it is a healing spring, then you can learn to work with the water in terms of healing people, animals, and the land.

If you have not already come across an Irish healer called Bidy Early² then look her up. She was a very famous witch/healer who worked closely with faery beings and with the healing powers that came from a spring by her home. Various books and websites talk about her, and you will find that some have been ‘damped down’ to conform with a Christian viewpoint. Early books about her talked about her work with springs, wells, and small lakes; more recent ones tend to gloss over these things and make light of her work. If you search for a book on her, then some small Irish presses from the 1960s and 1970s produced books on her: those are the ones you want. I had an old book about her and stupidly gave it away, and now I can no longer find that book. It went in depth into her life and actions, and there was enough detail to be able to understand magically how she was working. It was a collection of interviews by people close to her.

One thing that stood out was her blue bottle. She would use it to draw water from the spring when someone needed healing, and when she died it was cast into a local lake. Think: vessel, magical water.

Here is a clip from an article held by the library in County Claire, Ireland:

Bidy was visited also, for her great healing potions which it was said healed most ailments. Bidy had a well at the side of her house, the water from which possessed the most magical powers, and *if given with her consent* could cure a person of any affliction. Animals were of enormous importance, the death of a cow or pig could mean failure to pay rent and the death of a working horse could mean destitution. In this time of no vets, Bidy was relied on to cure the most serious of animal ailments of which it was said she could cure very effectively with a drop of water from her well, or one of her potions. Bidy, not being a selfish woman, did not make a great fortune from her powers, she only accepted a jug of poiteen or whiskey, or perhaps some food for her services but never money. It was said that never was a tired traveller turned from her door and many a passer-by was given a jug and a seat in front of her warm fire.

Another great power which Bidy is accredited with her ability to talk to and cure the wrath of the Fairies. People used to come to her who had been bewitched by the “little people”. One man had his entire herd of cattle cursed by the

²Date of birth 1798—I think I mentioned her earlier in the course.

fairies and they all became violently ill. On the advice of one of his friends he went to see Bidy. After looking in to her bottle, she saw the problem. He had planted a whitethorn bush along a fairy path in his field. She instructed him to go home and remove the bush. As soon as he had done this, his entire herd immediately returned to full health.

—<http://www.clarelibrary.ie/eolas/coclare/people/biddy.htm>

Task: Shinto

As a final task on the subject of deities, spirits, and land features, look up folk Shinto. Look at the versions of Shinto that are not the heavily formalised temple ones, but rather the folk Shinto where ordinary people interacted with the deities and spirits of the land. There is a lot in there you will recognise. Look at different sources of information to get a good overview. You will learn a lot, and gain a lot of insight into how another culture built—and still sustains—a relationship with the powers around them.

From that research, and from the various things you have learned in these lessons, you will be able to develop your own working method of befriending and interacting with these powers. You will also start to understand how these powers around you are part and parcel of your magic. They are affected by magic you do, just as the land is affected by magic, so not only do you need to take these beings into consideration, but you should include them in your magical actions and work when you are doing magic that relates directly to the land.

Learn how to work within your work space with the gates and these beings, and also work out on the land with them. Slowly the bridges will be built, and you will become a part of that very magical community of land beings.

QUAREIA

COPYRIGHT

© Josephine McCarthy 2016

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher.