

The Primal energy of Traditional Magic

By Thomas Smith

Imagine walking along a modern tarmac road, around the middle of a hillside. The hill is steep. If you walk up it, it would be difficult, if you walk down, it would be dangerous. The road is nice and easy. But up ahead you see a new path. It's a dirt track, small and trodden into the earth. You see it stretch far, into the woods, going up and down the hillside. You know the tarmac road is more easy... but you feel drawn to the dirt track, as if it is calling you, as if you can feel it in your bones. You take one step onto it, then another, and another, each step more reassuring than the one before, until by the time you are looking back at the tarmac above, you can't think of walking on it ever again.

This is, what some call, "The Path". It's that initial energy that calls you out into the landscape. The land itself is both spiritual and physical. When you walk through a cityscape you can feel the energy of Spirit in the people, and in their constructions, but when you walk through the landscape of nature, you feel a more Primal energy. In Traditional Magic, this raw and primal force is the fuel for the magical workings.

Primal energy is its own type of energy. Other have called it nature energy, and also sprowl. When you begin to tap into this energy it feels like a familiar language that you cannot speak. It offers fulfilment, and a sense of elation. You can never get enough of it, and you can carry it back with you, in both yourself and your tools.

The other type of energy that is used in Traditional Magic is Spirit energy. This encompasses energy relating to presences, spirits, and sentient life. A lot of this is very mainstream, and is present in the vast majority of western magical traditions, so you are most likely familiar with it.

These two types of energy will feel different. At first you may find Primal energy to be quite overpowering, especially when you tap into it for the first few times. With Spirit energy you may get quite a chill if you jump in the deep end with it. Both of these things are nothing to be alarmed about, neither is if you struggle to sense, or use, one or the other. The development of working with these energies comes naturally as you walk along The Path. You may not feel them at first, or maybe only feel one or the other, or maybe feel one more than the other, and that is fine. You just need to keep walking.

Primal energy is used to empower and inform workings within Traditional Magic. Nature is animated by this Primal energy. It is present absolutely everywhere, even in the non-sentient. It's a flowing energy, like water, and because of the way The Path winds its way around the landscape it is sometimes referred to as the Serpentine Flow. Some people have also linked this energy into ley lines, others have to the medieval concept of mana. All these are equally valid, and they point towards the same broad spiritual theory.

When you are out in the landscape you want to be drawing in as much of this Primal energy into yourself as possible, willing it to be drawn into you, and you can even infuse some of your magical tools with it. You want to do this because Primal energy is like a battery, it's absolutely fundamental to fuelling the magical process. The energy does replenish over time from nature, but what this means is that you often find built up places don't have much Primal energy compared to the wilderness. So you kind of have to get out more! The best time to draw upon Primal energy is during the full moon, when the energy swells and replenishes the landscape, but this isn't *always* the best time to do magic!

As a bit of homework why not venture out into the wilderness yourself? See if you can feel this Primal energy, and when you come back to a town or city, spiritually feel the difference. It may seem like the most obvious of things, but for every step one takes down The Path, the more obvious the contrast between Primal and Spirit energies becomes.

If you reach this far, and want to know more about working with Primal energy, then be sure to ask for a recommendation at The Cave!