**Crossroads Magick**

Acts of magick performed during times and at locations where two or more energies meet can be especially successful. This is sometimes called “liminality”. Ever wonder why so many old-time spells take place at midnight, or on Midsummer Eve, or at a crossroads? The reason is because places and occasions of duality or convergence seem to be more powerful than other locations or times. Any time or place where one condition begins and another ends, or where there is a meeting between two or more directions or circumstances, contains a special magickal force.

In the old days, witches or magick users were sometimes called “hedge-riders” or “style-jumpers”. A style is a wall or fence separating two rural fields, and thus symbolizes dual or variant states of being. The hedge or style represents the boundary between the visible and the unseen world. It is the borderland between the known and unknown, the tangible and intangible. The Witch straddles the physical world and the realm of the psychic. He or she may jump or transcend the familiar world of form, thus entering the world of force; making the change from an untenable condition to a more actualizing state of being. Another metaphor is the veil, or sheer fabric. Wiccans often say that on Samhain / Halloween, the “veils between the worlds are thinnest”. Symbolic veils are found in locations and at times where two conditions meet or overlap. One side of the veil is concrete and available, the other side is obfuscated or mysterious. The image of the style, hedge, fence or veil between day and night, indoors and outdoors, above ground and underground, between the worlds, or a time when seasons begin and end, is a powerful ritual tool.

If you wish to add extra power to your spells, workings and rituals, try performing magick during times and in places where the veils are thinnest or where energetic boundaries occur. You may want to consult an almanac, and seek the exact moment when these situations occur – when summer ends and autumn begins, planets align, the sun rises, the moon turns full, or the sun moves from one Zodiac sign to another. Likewise, you may intentionally locate your ritual in a place where two conditions meet, such as the doorway between your home and yard, or at the shoreline of a lake. Even envisioning the image of a door, or picturing a crossroads in your mind, can increase your energy. Ideally, the symbolic time or location should reflect the intent of your rite. For example, you may wish to perform a banishing at the exact time the moon turns from full to waning, while standing on the basement stairs, both of which represent a “drawing away” or diminishing. These occasions of duality or convergence are also beneficial for transformation magick – creating intentional change from a certain life condition to a new situation or to greater awareness.

Locations that are on the edge between the visible world and the land of magick can include the abovementioned crossroads, doorway, fence, wall, or hedgerow. Other representations of this magickal boundary are a window, a fireplace hearth or chimney, bridges, thresholds, alleys and gateways. Many older rituals and spells include hiding a poppet in a chimney, placing a Witch’s bottle beneath a threshold, or putting old shoes inside a wall for a protective talisman. Inside a wall, up the chimney, beneath, under or above are locations of duality. Basements and attics are also optimal, especially those where people do not dwell on a regular basis, rooms used only for storage. These locations have the dual aspect of being within the home but not an actual living space, empty yet full. Basements have the manmade features of a building, and the natural aspect of the earth, while attics have the elemental feeling of air with the manmade quality of structure. In popular literature, there is the story about the wardrobe in the nursery with Narnia beyond… the closet or wardrobe being a place that is between the land of concrete reality and fantasy. Gay people and Witches are said to “come out of the closet” when they tell their loved ones about their lifestyle, thus emerging from a situation of hiding and anonymity into a spotlight of truth and hopefully, acceptance. Any manmade place of duality or convergence is useable for crossroads magick.

Mirrors are especially powerful for journeying rites, as they represent a transparent boundary between the visual world and the spiritual realm. Many of us have heard legends of magickal beings who dwell within a mirror. Alice went through the Looking Glass to enter Wonderland. A spooky Halloween story tells of lighting candles before a mirror to envision the ghost of a bloody queen. Jewish folk cover mirrors when someone passes away. All of these legends speak to the belief that a mirror is a borderland between this world and the next, a reflection of this reality yet a container for the mysteries. The image seen in a mirror is also a vision of duality: there when we seek it, non-existent when we do not look, a semblance in reverse. Mirrors can be used to “capture” an image and magically retain it, such as focusing the glass on a representation of success. They can also be useful in a binding ceremony. A box lined with mirrors can reflect infinitely back on itself, and create a situation where a harmful influence is nullified. Care must be taken to not entrap one’s own image in the mirror’s borderland.

Natural locations can be used for crossroads magick, including the mouth of a cave, the entrance of the forest, the tideline of the ocean or large lake, the edge of a cliff, a swampy place that is neither fully land nor water, and under certain bushes or trees. In literature, magickal beings often inhabit thorn bushes, Rowan trees, elderberry groves, marshes, or hide beneath toadstools or mushrooms. These places all are thought to have the distinction of being gateways between the magickal realm and the mundane world. Alice fell down a rabbit hole to enter Wonderland. Dorothy was swept away by a tornado to Oz. Of course, during high winds or lightning storms, you should find shelter, but you can still work magick by using the energy of wind meeting earth, or a bolt of electricity connecting the air and the ground, to power your ritual.

You can also stand in these physical locations that represent a boundary while mindfully journeying between the known world and the hidden world, seeking wisdom. Wade through a flowing stream from one bank to the other. Cross a bridge. Travel a woodland pathway. Stand at a crossroads at midnight – this became a magickal cliché because so many of our ancestors did it – because it works! The “force lines” or “ley lines” of earth can also be tapped, as the spots where these energetic fields converge are especially powerful. The folks who constructed the stone monuments in Europe and the pyramids of Egypt and Mexico were likely using the “crossroads” energy of these locales, further connecting the earth and air with their buildings.

You can also seek magickal tools that have the benefit of two or more conditions meeting, converging or diverging, ending and beginning. The first snow of winter can be used for purification, a lightning-struck branch can make an excellent wand, the water of a fast-moving river can be used for a cleansing rite, the dirt from a crossroads can facilitate a binding, and so forth. Manmade items can also be utilized – a brick from a building that is being demolished, for example. One symbology of the May Pole is the connection between land and sky. Objects that take on the aspect of two locations, such as a seashell, can be used for crossroads magick, where the elements of both water and earth are needed. If you wish to ask for cooling, healing, grounding, and quenching of thirst, the seashell is a perfect talisman. Autumn leaves can be used to start a ritual fire, symbolizing the past being used to fuel a new, brighter situation. Another image that we can use for our magickal rites is a butterfly emerging from a cocoon, symbolizing growth. Any duality, polarity, convergence or a dividing principle will suffice.

As mentioned previously, times when the veils are thinnest, or when two or more natural occasions conjoin, are also advantageous for energetic workings. Gerald Gardener’s “Charge of the Goddess” tells us that the Lady is most responsive during the hour of the full moon, and thus we should make our requests to Her during the Esbat. The time of the full moon is actually very short, when one side of the moon is fully exposed to the sun, facing the earth. However, its influence can be felt for nearly three days, the most powerful being the actual day when the moon is fully reflecting the sunlight. Check your almanac for when the tides turn, and use the symbolism for your magick, as well as the feeling of the moon pulling on the water. Astrologers can predict optimal times for rituals, and will inform you of a “cusp” situation, when one planetary influence seems to overlap another. For instance, if you’re arguing with a loved one, you may wish to perform a rite when Venus aligns with Mars, and then Mars moves slowly “away”, taking with it your heated emotions. Eclipses can be the best time for creating positive change – our family did a ritual for gaining a new home during a total solar eclipse. We used the darkening of the sun behind the moon to symbolize the ending of the time in our current dwelling, and the emergence of the sun to represent acquiring our new homestead. Planning for your ceremonies, and using the most beneficial occasion possible, can do much to strengthen your magick.

The times of magickal crossroads include the Wiccan Sabbats, especially those of Beltane and Samhain. Shakespeare wrote about traditional belief in Fairy activity in his “Midsummer’s Night Dream”; and yes, the magickal entities really do seem to be more lively at certain times of the year. Spirits of the departed seem more inclined to visit on Samhain, at night, when legend speaks of a gateway opening between our world and the realm of the dead. This may be because the Sabbats are held during midpoints or times the seasons end and begin. The solstices and equinoxes are particularly good for some workings, as the longest day or night, or a time of equal darkness and light, sunshine and night time. These dates have an astrological significance as well; for example, on the Autumnal Equinox, the sun enters Libra. Many older spells state that the Witch should perform a working at midnight, but dawn, dusk, and noon are also perfect for certain rites. Just like the new, waxing, full and waning phases of the moon, the daily phases of the sun can create specific magickal situations.

Many legends of the Gods, Goddesses, and ancestors correspond with times and locations of duality. The crossroads are a symbol of Hecate, the Celtic Maeva / Mab / Macha and Brighid / Brid / Briget, and Boann are represented by rivers, Aurora is the Goddess of the dawn, Nix the Lady of sunset and night time. Charon carried dead travelers on a boat across the River Styx, Janus guarded a gate, and many magickal beings stood as a watcher or guardian of a doorway. When planning your ritual, you can look up any Deities or entities that symbolize particular times or places. Ask their permission to be there, and of course bring them a gift of a stone, food, drink, a poem or song. Good luck and blessings in your quest for the Crossroads!