



QUAREIA—THE INITIATE

Module IX—Working with the Spirits of
the Land

Lesson 7: Working with Substances II:
The Transmutation of Matter

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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.

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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 7: Working with Substances II: The Transmutation of Matter

Alchemy and working with beings are heavily entwined, as you are beginning to learn. In the last lesson we looked at highly dilute substances and their catalyst effects, uses, and applications. In this lesson we will look at another form of alchemy, the transformation of substance using the elements.

Substance is a vessel, and land spirits are a consciousness that for the most part do not have a physical vessel: that is the key to this line of work. Through the transformation of substance you can align a vessel's frequency to a land spirit's inner power and apply that application in magic.

Transmutation via homeopathy or inner vision is probably the most subtle energetic way to transform a substance, but there are other ways, and they often rely on introducing an element or power to bring about change within a substance. This can be a fascinating branch of magical work, but it is important to do this work for some end, not for the glamour of the process itself. To be glamoured by alchemy is a common trap, one many magicians get stuck in as they endlessly experiment in a homemade laboratory with substances for the sheer joy of it. There is nothing wrong with that in general, but for a magician, doing something for the allurements of the process itself is *playing*, not *doing*.

In the apprentice section you learned a lot about the various traps and dead ends that can catch the magician and take them out of the loop of learning. Alchemical processes are one of those traps. Learn this work so that you can actively apply it, not for the glamour that can accompany different forms of alchemy.

The different methods of transforming matter will become valuable tools for you. Every situation and being is different: there are no hard and fast rules here. The magician must always use their knowledge and wisdom to ascertain what is needed, when, and how.

These methods are used for a variety of reasons in magic: preparing a vessel for a being, removing a being from a vessel, bringing in an energy signature's influence, altering an energy signature, tuning a tool to a specific power, antidoting or treating energetic impacts and infestations, drawing a certain power or class of being to a space, or defending a space against certain types of beings. They can also be used to alter the magician's energetic signature so that land spirits can see them better, to hide themselves (or someone else) from beings, to enable better communication with beings, and so forth. The applications are wide and many, and each application will alter the magician's relationship with land spirits and certain other powers.

The magician chooses the right method by knowing the power levels or energetic frequencies of different altered substances. A highly tuned and highly dilute catalyst will affect something deeply, often slowly, and at a pure energetic level. A substance that has gone through more physical transformations, like a spagyric, will trigger a more superficial and immediate change. The element used within the transformation also indicates the catalyst's power level. Water, for example, will hold very delicate, yet deeply powerful energies, whereas fire releases and opens up pathways. You have already looked at a very deep and energetically delicate method with homeopathy, so in this lesson we will look at a more immediate form of transformation: *spagyrics*.

Spagyrics

Spagyrics is a cornerstone alchemical method of preparation. The word Spagyria comes from two Greek words: σπιάω 'spao,' which means to draw, as in draw out or extract, and ἐγείρω 'egeiro,' which means to arise or restore.

This method essentially extracts, or breaks down, a substance, then restores it by using elements to transform it and its actions and energies. Like homeopathy spagyrics can be used medicinally or magically, and it has a wider-ranging application in magic.

We first come across the term *spagyrics* in the writings of Paracelsus, a sixteenth-century scholar who worked within alchemy, the occult, and medicine. If you have not already read him, then you may find his alchemical and hermetic writings very interesting. He was of his time, but he was also a genius who began to understand the relationship between nature, its consciousness, and humanity. One of his sayings, very pertinent to this work, was *dosis facit venenum*: “the dose makes the poison.”

His understanding of substance, dose, and effect became a cornerstone of various transformative cures, including homeopathy; it is also very relevant in terms of power, energy, and magic. What can be a catalyst for positive change in a particular dose can become a poison at another dosage. Paracelsus also used the phrase *similia similibus curantur*: “like cures like.” This is another major key, not only for medicinal cures but also for magic. Remember these two sayings and apply them in all your magical work: they are basic principles of energy.

Spagyric preparations use plant matter prepared, at first, in the same way as a herbal tincture. The plant is bruised or macerated with a stone, put in alcohol, then left for several weeks and shaken daily. After this the preparation becomes specifically ‘spagyric’: the plant matter is taken out of the alcohol, which is put to one side. The plant residue and matter is then burned to a fine ash. This ash is mixed back into the set-aside alcohol and the result strongly shaken or succussed five or ten times. A set number of drops are then deposited in an ounce of water, shaken vigorously, and drunk.

Timing is everything with spagyrics. The time the tincture rests, the day the matter is burned, the moment at which the ash and alcohol are recombined, and the number of impacts all correspond directly to the number of drops taken; and all these processes are conducted according to certain numbers, times, hours, seasons, lunar cycles, and so forth. The process can be timed in with planetary spirits, astrological peaks, hours, certain solar peaks of the day, or certain lunar cycles of the night.

Let us look at an example of magical spagyrics before we get to the practicalities of making spagyric substances.

Spagyric use of Rhododendron Tomentosum: Ledum palustre

Magical reasoning example: a magician has just moved to part of a city built on an ancient burial ground that also has capped springs. He noticed a lot of parasitical activity when he moved there, and he has struggled to push that back and establish a clean magical work space where he can begin his inner work to tune the space and work with the land issues.

During this magical cleaning he is attacked and bitten in vision by a hostile land spirit. The area's heavy parasitical element heavily depletes his inner energy as he works continuously to try and clear the space. The inner bite manifests physical symptoms, including feeling cold and unable to warm up; yet heat irritates him. His ankle and knee joints have started hurting and he cannot get a sense of grounding and foundation through the ground in his magical work: he is feeling 'cut off at the knees' and aggressive, wishing to be alone.

The magician recognises that the bite has affected him, and when he looks up the symptoms in a homeopathic repertory (symptom listing) the substance *Ledum* stands out. It has the picture of a bite, an action against physical (and therefore energetic) parasites, and has the coldness and other physical symptoms he is suffering from.

He does a health reading to see if homeopathic *Ledum* would stop his symptoms, and restore balance in the space if he applied it to the room. The reading shows the remedy's inner energy is too visible energetically to the beings and they would adjust around it, rendering it useless. So he looks at using the substance spagyrically. This looks better, particularly if used in the space as well. The reading also shows that he is missing something, a hidden wisdom, that will come to light later (the use of local plant preparations used in the space to normalise it to the area).

He has a tincture of *Ledum* made from the fresh plant that has been sitting in alcohol for six weeks. He decides to make a spagyric preparation on the next full moon, in four days time. He keeps a little ash to one side, then uses the rest for the spagyric preparation. In the meantime he takes a homeopathic preparation of *Ledum* at a potency of 30c as a short-term solution to tide him over until the preparation is finished.

He also looks at his astrological chart to see where the planet Mars

features in its current transit. It is currently sitting in his fourth house, home and hearth. Mars is one of two planets that rules over Ledum, the other being Saturn, too slow a planet to harness its action fully; but he takes note that it is in his sixth house, service and health.

The day before the full moon he prepares the ash, and the night after, the night of the full moon, he waits for the moon to rise, prepares the spagyric remedy, then uses the number 8 (balance) for the succussion and drops for dilution. Once he has the spagyric preparation he sets out his magical space, places the sigils of Mars and Saturn on the floor in their current transit positions relative to his chart, and opens the gates. He calls on the planetary spirits of Mars and Saturn to work with him, then places the magical sword by the Mars sigil on the floor.

Standing in the centre of the room, he does the Fulcrum ritual using only sigils and no tools, then picks up the vessel and places it on the Saturn sigil so that his work, harvest, and scales are under the protection of Saturn's planetary spirit. He asks the planetary spirit of Saturn to oversee his inner scales, to review them, and to offer protection based on his continued work in magical service.

He then puts eight drops of the spagyric preparation in the vessel and fills it with water. He stirs it with a glass rod and takes eight sips. He closes his eyes and welcomes that substance's energy into his inner body. He asks it to heal the inner bite that made him ill. Standing up, he takes the vessel in his right hand and walks around the space sprinkling the water in the directions. He then places the vessel on the Mars sigil next to, and touching, the sword, refills it with water, puts eight more drops in the vessel, and stirs the water. He asks the planetary spirit of Mars to put in the water whatever is necessary to restore balance, protect him and the wider living space, and banish the parasitical beings.

On picking up the vessel he goes around the house and sprinkles the water across thresholds, around toilets (a major entryway to a house), sink plugholes, and beds. This puts down an inner 'scent' of the Ledum in the space, a first layer of clearing parasites and 'biters.' He puts his last bit of leftover ash in an open dish, adds some consecrated water, and leaves it beside the bed where he sleeps.

Going back to the magical space, the magician picks up the sword and stands on the sigil of Mars. He focuses on the powers of the Light Bearer and Restriction, bringing them behind him and through his arms. He moves his left foot forward. In vision he then asks the planetary spirit of Mars to *temporarily* infuse the sword with the power of Mars, and using inner vision he sees the spirit put its hands on the sword's hilt.

The magician stays in that position until the spirit moves its hands away and vanishes.

Once the spirit has withdrawn from the sword, the magician sprinkles some undiluted spagyric on the sword and washes it in the substance. He then takes the sword to a central place in the living space, places it point down, propped up against something, and tells it to guard the house against all hostile, parasitical, or destructive inner and outer beings. This means that any beings compatible with the magicians work will not be challenged by the sword's power.

The magician goes back to the work space, picks up the two planetary sigils, and puts them on the central altar with the vessel between them. He puts eight drops of the pure spagyric substance in the vessel and kneels down before it, facing south, so that his face is level with the vessel's lip. His eyes closed, the magician sees the pathway form in the south and feels the Light Bearer and Restriction behind him. He takes a deep breath and blows slowly over the vessel's top, seeing in vision the tincture's energy flow from it and infuse the path ahead. This distributes the preparation's inner energy along the magical path ahead in the future, which deters inner interference.

The directions are left going and both vessel and sword are left in place: everything stays in position overnight. Before the magician goes to bed he puts a drop of the tincture on the back of his neck, on his forehead, over both his kidneys, and on his palms and soles: eight vulnerable points.

The following day he ritually cleans the whole living and working space with the salt water ritual, doing each room individually. Then he takes a ritual bath. The tools are put back in their sleeping places and the remaining spagyric preparation applied, undiluted, across the thresholds of doors and windows and around the outside of the toilet bowl, sinks, and fireplaces with chimneys. It is also applied in each direction, on the edges of the floor, in the magical work room.

Now the magician has a space he can start to tune and energise. He will open the directions and gates daily, perform a Fulcrum ritual, and burn frankincense in the workspace and house. If any physical symptoms persist then he will now be able to take homeopathic *Ledum* at 30c, once a day for a few days, until any physical symptoms leave.

This whole process is used when a magician moves somewhere with parasitical and hostile land being problems. How intensively and regularly this work must be done depends largely on how bad the

situation is.

So to recap, let's just list the stages of this work.

1. Identify the problem, and the potential nature of the being involved, with divination. Find out what it is, what it wants, why it is causing problems, and the longer-term effects on the magician if the situation goes unresolved. Sometimes all that needs to happen is an adjustment over time: a magician moving to a difficult or infested space can sometimes adjust, then become naturally immune, to the beings. Starting regular magical tuning work will sometimes suffice to clear a space and settle territorial disputes between land beings and humans.
2. Identify an appropriate plant that correlates with the problem. Identify the planetary influence that aligns with the plant. Use divination to see whether a Spagyric is needed or just hanging the plant around the space will suffice.
3. Identify a homeopathic substance of that plant as a temporary remedy. Using divination, work out the dosage, and the regularity of that dosage, to help you while the Spagyric remedy is prepared.
4. Prepare the Spagyric remedy (see below).
5. Work in ritual and vision with the substance and planetary spirits, wash the tools, and do the thresholds and space.
6. Let the treatment sit overnight with the tools out to establish a frequency.
7. Ritually cleanse the area and do a ritual bath.
8. Keep the space clear by burning frankincense.
9. Daily ritual tuning of the space and the magician, build up the directional gates, bring in the contacts, use the Fulcrum ritual, and establish the magical pattern in the space.
10. Longer-term management would be weekly or biweekly tuning with the Fulcrum and by working the directions, gates, and contacts.
11. Address any lingering issues with the land spirits: do they need work doing? Is there something you can maintain or upkeep for them while you live there? Using divination and what you know, identify any regular

work that may need doing out on the land or in your own workspace to ensure that the immediate area is brought into a better balance.

12. Upkeep the local creatures: feed the birds, pick up trash, tend to any waterways, ensure you are not adding to problems by putting chemicals on your land, plant things that need to grow there, and slowly, carefully, build up a relationship with the land spirits to get rid of their hostility.

As you can see this can be quite a time-consuming process, and you may still have occasional issues with hostility from the land beings, or other disturbances. It's like moving into a dangerous neighbourhood. You cannot completely shut it out of your space, so you have to establish boundaries, then make friends with the local hostiles while pushing out the parasitical ones. This all takes time and effort, but it can be worth it.

You will now also come to realise that it is worth keeping tinctures of key plants in store. Buying them for magical purposes is not a good idea unless there is no alternative: the plant needs to be local to the area whenever possible, or grown by you. When it is truly not possible to find the plant alive, get dried plant matter from an organic herb farm. Do not use powdered forms of the herb; get the whole dried plant, or dried leaves/roots/flowers.

If you can get it locally then you need to pick it while asking the plant to work with you, and the process of preparation is a very magical one. Keeping stillness while going through the stages of preparation helps the energy stay in the plant as you work with it. Now let's look at the actual process and stages of preparing a Spagyric remedy.

Making a Spagyric remedy

The method I will outline is the oldest known form of Spagyric preparation and the simplest one to use. There are other methods, some of which need a variety of tools such as glass flasks, condensers, pots, burners, and so forth. If you love playing the mad alchemist then look up the more complex methods of Spagyric preparation: there are lots of websites and books that outline them. But in truth, these are not really necessary and spagyric methods have become overcomplicated. Like

most areas of life, when something complicated is also glamorous, it tends to become the main method.

But simple also works well, and the simple approach gave birth to the whole method. The magician can use this when they simply need the remedy without all the traps and glamour that go with it.

1. Choose the plant and pick it yourself. Rinse it in water and leave it out in sunlight for a few hours to absorb daylight after it is cut. Bruise the plant matter with a stone on a hard, clean surface. If it is dried then pound it with a stone before using it.
2. Take a sterile glass jar with an airtight, sealed top, and sterilise it by boiling, not with chemicals. Also acquire a glass rod, as you will need it for stirring later. Nearly fill the jar with plant matter if you are using a fresh plant; three quarters full if dried. Then fill the jar to the very top with alcohol at least 44% proof: leave no air space. I use brandy.
3. Seal the jar and give it a good shake. Put it somewhere dark and not overly cold, and shake it well each day. Keep it like that, shaking each day for a minimum of six weeks. Nine is best. This creates a herbal tincture or *mother tincture*.
4. Strain out the tincture in another sterile jar and seal it. Get the plant matter and spread it out on a baking tray. Put it in the oven on a low setting and leave it overnight, or longer if necessary: you need the plant matter to be completely dry.
5. Once the matter is completely dry and crumbles when you touch it, put it in a heatproof glass cooking bowl with plenty of room up the sides to stop the dry matter blowing out of the bowl. Get a burner: I use an electronic trigger and flame designed for lighting ovens and barbecues. Light the matter and let it smoulder. You are not looking for a fire; rather you want the dry matter to smoulder until it is reduced to ash. Keep relighting until it has all smouldered down to ash. It will create smoke, so open windows strategically so there will be no breeze to blow the ash, and turn off any smoke alarms. Stir the ash with the glass rod.
6. Tip out the ash into a long, shallow, ovenproof glass baking dish, and spread it out with the glass rod so that

it can reduce further. Put it in the oven and bake it on a medium heat until the ash turns white. It is better to use medium or low heat to whiten the ash rather than high heat: it takes longer, but there is less impact on the substance.

7. Once all the ash is white, take the glass dish out of the oven and let it cool. Then move it around with the glass rod and tip the ash carefully onto some paper. Carefully add the ash back to the tincture. Seal the jar once more and shake it well for your chosen number of times. Put it back in the cupboard and give it a number of good shakes each day. The ash will settle as sediment at the bottom of the jar. Work out how long it should stay in the cupboard (divination and astrology)—usually a week will suffice—and when the day and time is right, carefully pour the mixture into another sterile glass jar without disturbing the sediment. You should be able to get out about half or more before you need to filter the rest. Pour the rest through a cheesecloth or coffee filter a few times until the sediment is all out, then add it to the glass storage jar.
8. Give the mixture some strong shakes—your specific number—and your spagyric remedy is ready. This is a Spagyric mother tincture. You can either use this directly on a surface or tool, or add drops to distilled water, succuss numerically, then take it as a remedy.

Timing and numbers is everything. The key times are when the plant is harvested, when it is added to alcohol, when it is strained and ashed, and when you add the ash back to the mixture. Each plant has a particular rhythm in terms of moon, solar hour, and planetary influence. The solar/lunar/planetary influences can be found in various books, as well as in the *Lotus Materia Medica*. I will also put these in a book.

Using astrology, once you identify the plant's planetary alignment or solar/lunar influence, you can look at your transits to see in which house of your chart it is currently exerting an influence. You can use this information to choose how to time the ritual work and the dispensing, as well as to find where in your life pattern it will have the strongest influence. If you are using this method for a home then look at what is in your fourth house. For illness, sixth house. For magic, houses eight, nine, and twelve. You should be able to draw on what you know of the houses and

the planets currently transiting them to choose which plant to use and when.

Also look at the current planetary transit positions for your area, by running a chart of that location on in the present time. Look at the pertinent planets and what houses they are in, then compare your chart with the land's to see the varied influences the planets are having. For example, if you have a key planet in a house then look at where it is in the land chart and see what the relations are like.

You can also do a progressed chart for yourself for that time period of work: look up progressed astrological charts, what they are, how they work, then use the online software mentioned in the apprentice section, or any other software/books to produce a progressed chart for your next few months. See what planets are having an influence and where. Gather together and assess all the astrological information to help make your decisions.

When making a plant choice, you will find that many plants have similar planetary influences. *Ledum* has a Mars, Saturn, and Moon influence, but many other plants have the same planetary signature. To narrow your search, find one which grows within a reachable area and check its symptomatic picture and personal rhythm. Look at when it flowers and under what conditions. When does it seed, how does it distribute its seed, when does it go to sleep, and what land and water conditions does it like? Get to know the personality of the plants you plan to work with, as it too is relevant to your decisions, and it contributes to the influence the plant will bring to bear.

In the more modern alchemical approaches to spagyrics all the focus is on the chemistry side of the preparation, with little, if any, understanding of the plant's own individual nature. You should know its life cycle, what time in the morning it opens its flowers, when it goes to sleep, how it reacts to the moon's cycles, what insects it likes to help it pollinate, what insects it repels, how much sun and water it likes, what type of soil, what type of creatures it attracts, what smells it give off and why, its magical connections, and so forth. All this should be considered before you even look at the plant's curative or poisonous aspects.

By working this way you will build up a detailed picture of the being that is the plant, which will tell you a lot about how it affects and interacts with the land spirits—and subsequently, the magician. You will also learn a great deal about the land around you and how nature keeps its balance there.

Task: Spagyric practice

In this experiment you can practice Spagyric preparation and learn more about the relationships between land spirits and plants in your area. You can do this an ongoing project as you move onto other lessons.

Plant work

Spend some time wandering around your area and see which plant naturally appears a lot, be it a weed, herb, wild flower, etc. Even in a dense city there will be natural weeds and plants that force their way up through the concrete—which incidentally tells you a great deal about their tenacity and strength.

Pick some of the leaves and take them home with you. Identify the plant, learn as much as you can about it, and find out whether it is poisonous and any medicinal properties and planetary relations. I do not always trust the planets assigned to a plant, as sometimes writers can come to conclusions in the strangest of ways or simply copy them out of other books.

If you are not sure, or can find no planetary attributes for the plant, then use divination to look at what planetary power runs through or is aligned to it. Use a Tree of Life layout and go by the last card. Look at the planets in turn, and also think about each planet's cycles: the Moon has a short influence, Pluto has a very long one, and so forth.

Astrology work

Having checked the plant's planetary influences, run charts to look at current transits and progressions, and run land charts to see where that planet is currently exerting an influence. Also read up on the planet itself and its qualities and powers. Then look at the planet's personality in relation to the plant and think of possible applications.

Divination work

First do a Mystical Map layout to look at the big picture of the creative and destructive influences filtered through the plant: to what powers and beings does it connect? Then do a Landscape reading to look at the

plant's influence in your area. After that, use Tree of Life readings to look at its overall impact on a human when taken as a herb, homeopathic preparation, and spagyric remedy. Remember the wisdom: *dosis facit venenum*.

Then do health readings to look at how it would affect you directly if you took it for a few days as a herb, homeopathic remedy, or spagyric remedy. Take careful note of the different effects the different preparations would have. These readings should give you an idea of the plant's inner and outer action, and how it affects a person's spirit and body. You should be able to see how the plant effects different changes in a body when taken in different forms. This will indicate how its different forms can be applied for sickness.

Then do readings to look at the plant's magical action: use the same series of readings to look at how the plant would affect a magical space, a magical tool, and a living space when applied as a straight tincture diluted and dispensed through water. Then do readings for a homeopathic preparation and a spagyric preparation. Look at the plant's different influences when brought into the magical space and prepared and dispensed in different ways. A tincture is a heavy dose, a spagyric is a medium dose, and a homeopathic preparation is a minute dose. Also look at what effect this use would have on local beings friendly to humans, as well as those which are destructive or parasitical.

This line of enquiry will tell you a lot about how local plants affect a local area; and how they bring through either creation (cure) or destruction (poison) to the living creatures and beings there. This in turn will tell you a lot about the local land power and how nature attempts to keep a balance. A great deal can be learned about an area through by studying and experimenting with local plants in relation to their actions.

Vision work

You can visit the Library in vision to gain a greater understanding of the plant, and to connect with the collective consciousness of its plant family. You can also use the methods of vision work that you have learned to move into the plant and feel into it. You cannot really converse with plants, but you can learn a great deal from how they feel when you move into them by observing their reaction and sound/vibration frequency.

When you connect with one plant you connect with all of them in an area, so working in vision with one plant will teach you a lot about the land spirits that reside in the area. This is pure experimental work and

by doing it you will figure out how the connections between plants, the land power, and the land spirits all come together.

Spagyric work

Make a spagyric preparation of the plant and apply to yourself,¹ your space, or both. Keep records of your observations over a four week cycle.

Type up all your findings in a file, and do any drawings or photographs of the plant you are working with so that you have a full record to refer back to in the future. Also type up your conclusions as to why the plant grows so predominately in the area. Why has that one survived the human colonisation so well?

¹Check its possible effects first, through divination.

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