
Astrology of the Ancient Druids

Part 9

The Cosmic Rulers

I – MOON

The Moon is ruled by the great heavenly Queen Mother. It has many surnames in the different Celtic cultures and languages.

In Gaul, she was known as Matrona, the matron, the mother of gods and mortals. Some of her other Gallic names were: Diuonna, “bright water,” Epona, “the equine,” and Rosmerta, “providence.” In Ireland, her many names were: Medb, “drunkenness,” Macha, “the plain,” and Morrighu, “the great queen,” among others, her British names included: Rhiannon, “the majestic,” and Arianrod, “the silver wheel.” Queen Medb, along with her little companion sunny Aillil, is the allegory of Sovereignty and the Dominion of the earthly world.

II – MARS

Mars is the lord of war and of the heavenly hosts. He is a very ancient pan-Celtic, proto-Celtic or Italo-Celtic deity and was also highly regarded in ancient Lazio. The Gauls and Gaels identified him under the same name, Ogmios in Gaul and Ogma in Ireland. As it was generally proposed, the name does not come from the Greek ogmos, “furrow, straight line,” but the Celtic Ogmios, “(mystic) champion, magic hero.” In Gaul, he had several nicknames including: Albiorix “king of the world,” Camulos, “active servant or warrior,” Caturix, “the king of battle,” Corotiacos, “the circular,” Lenos, “the influx, the profusion,” Loucetios, “bright one,” Mullo, “heap, pile of loot,” Nabelcos, “the cloudy,” Nodens / Nodons, “the angler, line fisherman,” and Olloudios, “the totalitarian.” Nodens had the same name in Ireland, Wales and Brittany with the following forms: Nuada, Nudd or Llud and Nuz.

III – SUN

Apollo had several names in the different Celtic languages. In Gaul, he was called Maponos, “the son,” Grannos, “the radiant,” and Belenos, “the brilliant.” In Ireland, he was called Mac Óc, “the young son,” and Aongus / Oengus, “the first choice.” The Welsh knew him as Gwalhaved, “the summer hawk,” or Gwalchmei, “the hawk of May,” or Galahad, French Gauvin, in the Arthurian tales.

IV – JUPITER

Taranis, the Gaulish Jupiter, was called “the amazing,” or Uxellimos, “the supreme.” The Irish called him Dagda, “the good God,” Rofessa Ruadh, “the red to the great wisdom,” or Donn, “the tan or dark Lord.” In Welsh mythology, he was referred to as Brân, “the raven.”

V – MERCURY

Mercury was called Lugos or Lugus, if not Lugios, in Gaul. He was a very ancient pan-Celtic deity and his name is also found in Celtiberian, Irish, and Welsh texts as well. Regional variants of the name are declined as such: Lug or Lugh, in Ireland and Lleu in Wales. Among his many Gallic epicleses the

following names are found: Artaios, “the bear-keeper,” Cissonios, “the charioteer,” Gebrinios, “the frost,” Moccus, “the pig or boar,” and Uisucios, “the crafty.”

VI – VENUS

Minerva in Gaul also had several names, these included: Belisama, “the very clear,” Brigindo, “of nobility, of sublimity,” and Nantosuelta, “flittering in the valley.” In Ireland, she had many names: Brigit (or Brigantia in the British Isles), “of nobility,” Etaine, “poetry,” and Boann, “the ultimate cow or the white cow.”

VII – SATURN

The Gallic Saturn was Toutatis or Teutatis, which Julius Caesar in his *Gallic Wars Commentaries* called Dis Pater, who was the father-god of the people. In Ireland, he went under the name of Bress, “the cleft, the split.”

VIII – THE LUNAR NODES

Cauda Draconis, the Dragon's Tail, the South node (descending);
the Moon under the influence of Venus.

Caput Draconis, the Dragon's Head, North node (ascending);
The Moon under the influence of Saturn.

Irish Zodiacal and Planetary Cosmic Forces:

Libra, Venus: 6	Capricorn, Saturn: 7
Scorpio, Mars: 2	Aquarius, Saturn: 7
Sagittarius, Jupiter: 4	Pisces, Jupiter: 4
Aries, Mars: 2	Cancer, Moon: 1
Taurus, Venus: 6	Leo, Sun: 2
Gemini, Mercury: 5	Virgo, Mercury: 5

Footnotes:

1. Ufferen < Inferno, “hell,” in Latin; Celtic designation: Annwn < Andumnon “the non-world, the underworld.”
2. Seneca, *Natural Quaestiones (Natural Questions), Causes of Comets*, Book VII, translated by John Clark, MacMillan and Co., Limited, London, 1910.
3. Taliesin, Llyfr *Taliesin XXXVII*, “Book of Taliesin XXXVII,” Yspeil Taliessin, “The Spoils of Taliesin, a song to Urien.”
4. Llwyvenydd < Lemania, “the elm grove.”

5. Red < Redia, “course;” usually translated as “necessity,” should be written Anken < Ancena. This is one of the important traditional concepts of Druidism also found in the *Barddas* of Morganwg, in wordplay with Ancu, “fatality,” found implicitly in Ogham as: 'NC/U' > NG/V' for NCU < 'Ncu < Ancu.
6. Ankon, Ankou, “death;” Ancauos / Ancouos, “death inevitable downfall;” Ancouo > Ancu, “death personified,” also Dis < Dits, “death, dissolution, the inevitable decline;” thus the folkloric Breton character, Tad ann Anken < Tatis Ancena, “the father of grief, sorrow and pain, a late version of the Gallic Dits Ater or Belios; who according to Caesar was the Father of death in Gaul.
7. “Two bulls yoked to a shell,” this because the ancient Gauls imagined the world as consisting of two bowls, one inverted and the other to the place. This sphere was powered by two oxen and turned on a shaft or an axis (axis mundi). The Ox was taken as a symbol of the days of the world divided into dark and light periods. A similar pattern is found in the Vedic texts.
8. “Three parts in the world;” these being, the upper world, the middle world, and the underworld.
9. “Three beginnings and three purposes;” that is, a beginning for each world and a birth for every man, and a beginning for each of the three components of being: body, mind, soul / spirit.
10. Marzin < Moridunios > Merlin, “the seaman, the sailor.”
11. “Four grinding stones;” which are the four summits, which were: Artuana Alba, “the hard top as stone,” the winter solstice; Elaris Alba “the lively summit,” the spring equinox; Eruina Alba, “the agrarian summit,” the summer solstice; and Eluetias Alba, “the autumn summit, fall, the autumnal equinox.”
- “The whetstones of Marzin that sharpen dull swords!” This grouping of four suggests the four material realms: mineral, vegetable, animal, and human, but then in the context of the stones, these strongly suggest the four directions and the four seasonal solar stations. Finally, an allusion to the four elements is also very likely. In light of these insights, the sword represents the will, courage, purpose, and direction. In druidical symbolism, the sword is one of the four sacred objects from the cities of the North and is the allegorical symbol for the north wind. This is the infallible sword that gives death (Ncu, Dis) and that belongs to the god-king Nudonos / Nodons and that comes from the mythical city of Finias (Uindia, “the white”). This was a small bronze ceremonial sword.
12. “Five girdles of the earth;” that are the five climatic zones.
13. “Five ages in the period of time;” that are the four ages in addition to the middle age.
14. “Five stones on our sister;” being the markers of the cardinal points seen as macro-cosmic land Chakras (the material world) on the deified earth seen as the mother goddess. In Celtic philosophy, Chakras were seen as pebbles (caliuoi).
15. “Six herbs in a small pot;” which were the six traditional herbs of Saint John's day.
16. “Potion blended by the dwarf;” that is, mead (< Medu / Medus), the Ambrosia or Soma of the Celts.
17. “Seven suns and seven moons, seven planets counting the Hen;” this being, the multiplication of seven in order to express time and space: the seven directions, East, South, West, North, and the above, middle ground, bottom, etc... Yar < Iara, “hen;” Yarig Wenn he c'chec'h Evned < Uinda iara (Canti) Esias suexs aunate, “the white chick and the six birds (or chicks);” a euphemism for the asterism of the Pleiades in Taurus.

18. "Seven elements along with the flour of the air;" that are, the four main elements: earth, fire, water, air, and ether, the flour of the air also connotes the three states of being: thinking, individuality, and free will.
19. Great Fire, in Breton: Tan-Tad < Tepneton, "fire;" Belotepnion, "bright fire, bonfire," that were the May fires, Christianized as the fires of St. John.
20. "The deep island;" that is, Dubnon or Dumnon, "the low world, the earthly plane, the material world."
21. "The eight white heifers of the Lady;" in reference to the eight convents of the Druid priestesses of the Isle of Sein or Sena of the coast of Brittany.
22. Lezarmeur < Lethoaremori, "the seaside court or palace enclosure by the sea."
23. "Nine Korrigans who dance," that is, korrigan, from corrigenoi, "the dwarf people."
24. Nantes < Nantiacon, "the valley field;" the capital city of Nantes, (Namnetes, "people of the Valley") in Brittany.
25. Vannes < Uindana, "the white, the dazzling, the splendid," the capital of the Veneti (Uenetoi / Uenetes, "the federated, the beautiful and beloved").
26. "And hazel crosiers;" a euphemism for the pilgrim's staff or crook of bishops. Coll < cosla, "hazel," in the Ogham. It is traditionally associated with divination and in this context, is an omen to the treachery and repression to come.
27. The Constellation of Sagittarius, Dumanni Prinnios, which in Celtic literally stands for: Dumannios, "darkening," and Prinnios, "tree branching, and having the technical meaning of "constellation."
28. The twelve signs of the zodiac, in reference to Taliesin's Cad Godeu < Catu Uiduion, "the battle of trees," a euphemism for the phonetic classification of letters.
29. Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, French translation by Laurence Mathey-Maille, p. 173.

Chapter XII

Themes and Predictions

"The world's profit (is) small, the heat of the sun is lost.
 The Druid will prophesy what has been will be.
 Sky of Geirionydd, I would go with thee gloomy like the evening,
 in the recesses of the mountain."
 (The Praise of Lludd the Great, *The Book of Taliesin LII.*)



A Hibernian Druid astrologer sitting on a bull skin divining from the fedha, “wood,” cusps, on a shamanic drum called a bodhran in Gaelic. Drawn by the author.

Divining by the stars

“The Gallic nation is entirely given over to religious practices...”
(Caesar, *De Bello Gallico*, Gallic War Commentaries, VI – 14, 16)

According to Caesar, the Gallic nation is entirely given over to religious practices and this includes magic and divination. Others such as W. A. McDevitte and W. S. Bohn (1869), have translated this passage as meaning: “The nation of all the Gauls is extremely devoted to superstitious rites.” We also know through Caesar, “that the druids had lengthy discussions on the stars and their movement and on the dimensions of the world and of the earth, on nature, and on the power of the immortal gods...” This power possessed by the immortal Celtic gods was described by the other ancient peoples, their neighbours, the Teutons, the Romans, and the Greeks in very similar terms. The qualities of their celestial abodes, the planets, also differed little.

Cicero (106 BCE – 43 BCE), in *De Divinatione*, “On Divination,” reported that he had a hearing with the famous Aeduan Gallic Druid, Diuiciacos¹ (or Diviciacus / Divitiac), who spoke on many topics. According to Diuiciacos, the Druids were very careful observers of nature as a whole.

“Nor is the practice of divination disregarded even among uncivilized tribes, if indeed there are Druids in Gaul – and there are, for I knew one of them myself, Divitiacus, the Aeduan, your guest and eulogist. He claimed to have that knowledge of nature which the Greeks call 'physiologia,' and he used to make predictions, sometimes by means of augury and sometimes by means of conjecture.”²

Another classical writer, the Greek historian Plutarchus (Ploútarkhos, ca. 46 CE – 120 CE), writes in *Morals, Of Fate*, the role of divining practices on the island of Ogygia. Ogygia was said to be located “five days to the West of Great Britain.”

Therefore, Ogygia was the Greek name for the land of the Ogygoi (Greek Ogygos, a mythical ruler of the sea at the time of the Deluge), that were, the Scots or Gaels of Ireland.

“For they affirm the nature of the island (of Ogygia) and the mildness of the air which environs it to be admirable; and that there have been some persons who, intending to depart thence, have been hindered by the Divinity or Genius of the place showing himself to them, as to his familiar friends and acquaintance, not only in dreams and exterior signs, but also visibly appearing to them by the means of familiar spirits discoursing and conversing with them. For they say, that Saturn himself is personally there, lying asleep in the deep cave of a hollow rock, shining like fine gold, Jupiter having prepared sleep instead of fetters and shackles to keep him from stirring; but that there are on the top of this rock certain birds, which fly down and carry him ambrosia; that the whole island is filled with an admirable fragrant and perfume, which is spread all over it, arising from this cave, as from an odoriferous fountain; that these Daemons serve and minister to Saturn, having been his courtiers and nearest attendants when he held the empire and exercised regal authority over men and Gods; and that having the science of divining future occurrences, they of themselves foretell many things; but the greatest and of the highest importance, when they return from assisting Saturn, and reveal his dreams; for whatever Jupiter premeditates, Saturn dreams; but his awakenings are Titanical passions or perturbations of the soul in him, which sleep altogether controls, in order that the royal and divine nature may be pure and incontaminate in itself. This stranger then, having been brought thither, and there serving the God in repose and at his ease, attained to as great skill in astrology as it is possible for anyone to do that has made the greatest progress in geometry; as for the rest of philosophy, having given himself to that which is called natural, he was seized with an extraordinary desire and longing to visit and see the great island; for so they call the continent inhabited by us.”³

Again, Plutarch gives us the key to unlock the mysteries of divination by the astrologers of Antiquity along with the role played by the planets Jupiter and Saturn in the formulation of predictions. That is, Jupiter was the ruler of the daytime sky while Saturn is one of the night sky. Those questions which were blurred by the light of the day found their answer in the serenity of the star speckled night. This mythological and cosmic theme involving planetary gods survived into the late medieval days in Irish and Welsh literature. The following passage was taken from the *Historia Regum Britanniae*, or “History of the Kings of Britain,” by Geoffrey of Monmouth. This excerpt is from the chapter entitled “*The prophecies of Merlin:*”

“The planet Mercury from Arcadia shall change its shield and the helmet of Mars shall call to Venus. The

helmet of Mars shall cast its shadow; the fury of Mercury shall pass the bounds. Iron Orion shall draw his naked sword. Oceanic Apollo shall whip the clouds. Jupiter shall emerge from his established bounds and Venus shall abandon her salutary tracks. The Star of Saturn shall rush forth in lead-coloured (rain?) and with a crooked sickle shall kill mortals.”⁴

An exegesis of this passage gives us a glimpse on the planets behaviour. It is therefore possible to better understand the occult meanings of the strengths and roles granted to each of these planetary gods by the British Celts.

The planets are in a good position when they are in their given houses. Things get complicated when they come in conjunction with other planets. As we have previously seen, some conjunctions, or yokes, are then considered beneficial while others are baleful.

1. Jupiter, the wise judge, projects cosmic fire into the aether which are perceived as thought forms by mortals in their dreams. Jupiter's borders are defined by the length of the day: starting from dawn to dusk. It is flanked by the two manifestations of Venus (the Dawn Goddess): the Morning Star and the Evening Star.
2. Saturn, the soothsayer, captures the cosmic rays (thought forms of dream and imagination) thrown by Jupiter and send them down to Earth at the humans who then experience violent passions.
3. Mercury, can shield himself from the rays sent by Jupiter and with the help of Venus, ensure peace and livelihood.
4. Mars possesses a war helmet that casts a shadow (obscuring sunlight) over the Earth. He can throw cosmic rays at humans in the form of thunder bolts or flashes. Mars can not only provoke wars but can also be a strong protector.
5. Apollo, the brilliant sun youth, rides is in the clouds on his Sun Chariot driven by Venus.
6. Saturn, lord of the Underworld and of agriculture, carries a long scythe with which, like the Grim Reaper, he mows down mortals. The scythe is also found in the *Book of Ballymote* as an astrological symbol for the planet Saturn.
7. The Moon is not mentioned in this passage. In general, however, it is linked to the psyche and the mind.

“But we now once again turn our discourse to Fate, as it is an energy. For concerning this it is that there are so many natural, moral, and logical questions. Having therefore already in some sort sufficiently defined what it is, we are now in the next place to say something of its quality, although it may seem absurd to many. I say then that Fate, though comprehending as it were in a circle the infinity of all those things which are and have been from infinite times and shall be to infinite ages, is not in itself infinite, but determinate and finite; for neither law, reason, nor any other divine thins: can be infinite. And this you will the better understand, if you consider the total revolution and the A whole time in which the revolutions of the eight circles (that is. of the eight spheres of the fixed stars, sun, moon, and five planets), having (as Timaeus says) finished their course, return to one and the same point, being measured by the circle of the same, which goes always after one manner. For in this

order, which is finite and determinate, shall all things (which, as well in heaven as in earth, consist by necessity from above) be reduced to the same situation, and restored again to their first beginning. Wherefore the habitude of heaven alone, being thus ordained in all things, as well in regard of itself as of the earth and all terrestrial matters, shall again (after long revolutions) one day return; and those things that in order follow after, and being linked together in a continuity are maintained in their course, shall be present, every one of them by necessity bringing what is its own.” (*Plutarch's Morals, Of Fate, 3, p. 294-295*)

Calculating the strengths of the planetary conjunctions

The yokes take grip at the conjunction of planets entering a house. The strength of the yoke's grip results in the combined planetary forces acting on the house ruler. Since these house-rulers are hosts to the celestial gods seen as planetary rulers, these forces have an effect on the activities of the gods as well as on the fate of men. The numerical values given to the planets and the strengths of their yokes do not necessarily translate into a scale of increasing values. Given that force one is given to the moon, this does not mean that this planet is weak or at the bottom of the scale in importance, but rather that it takes precedence and is first in line. As we have seen, queen Medb takes advantage over her king, Ailill, and his warriors. The term briga, “force,” indicates that the yoke is strong and powerful. Briga can also be of good or bad influence. In general, it is considered more or less neutral or beneficial that is, auspicious. The term mata defines a yoke having a non-overpowering good influence. It is therefore beneficial or auspicious. The term anmata indicates an inauspicious yoke or simply indicating that it is not beneficial. The higher the power of the yoke, the more it is harmful, and then it is considered vile, baleful, that is to say *lagus* in ancient Celtic.

BRIGA (strong), more or less beneficial or slightly beneficial:

1. Moon; 2. Mars; 3. Sun.

MATA (good), beneficial:

1. Jupiter; 2. Mercury; 3. Venus.

ANMATA or Lagus (bad) non beneficial, vile, and baleful:

1. Saturn.

Table of planetary conjunctions and signifiers

Planet	MATA (auspicious) or beneficial	BRIGA (strong, powerful) less or slightly beneficial	ANMATA (bad or non-auspicious) or LAGUS (vile, malefic or baleful)
Moon	Venus and Mars	Jupiter, Sun and Mercury	Saturn

Mars	Jupiter, Mercury and Venus	Moon and Sun	Saturn
Sun	Jupiter, Mercury, Venus	Moon, Mars	Saturn
Jupiter	Mercury and Venus	Moon, Mars and Sun	Saturn
Mercury	Jupiter and Venus	Moon, Mars and Sun	Saturn
Venus	Jupiter and Mercury	Moon, Mars and Sun	Saturn
Saturn			Moon, Mars, Sun, Jupiter, Venus and Mercury

List of planetary forces (*Book of Ballymote, Ireland*)

Moon: 1 + 8 = 9;

Mars: 2;

Sun: 3;

Jupiter: 4;

Mercury: 5;

Venus: 6;

Saturn: 7.

Numerical value of the yokes:

One: Initial, the unit, the monad, the sovereign entity.

Two: duality, opposition, the conflict, opposing ends.

Three: top, middle and bottom, completion, reciprocity, increased.

Four: space, the 4 directions, closing, protection.

Five: man, measurement, movement, change.

Six: duplication of three (3 to the superlative or tripling).

Seven: wisdom, the stars (planets and stars of the Pleiades and of the North), the seven fairies, the seven sages, the seven rulers.

Eight: the duplication of four (number 4 on the increase, to the superlative, to the power of 4).

Nine: the tripling of three (number 3 on the increase, to the superlative, to the power of three).

Ten: the sacred (the duplication of five), and according to Pythagoras, decad ten represents the entire universe since the first four numbers are contained in the decan: 1 (the centre point), 2 (the straight line), 3 (the triangular plan, triangulation), and 4 (space, square); thus, ten is the guiding principle of life, both earthly and divine.

Eleven: infinity, the mirror of number 1. While number one represents the point or the essential unity, number 11 represents infinity without ever being complete: 11-22 -44-88, etc...

Twelve: this number is the product of three (divine spirit), 4 (earthly body), and 5 (man). The sum of 3, 4, and 5, which, like 7 gives symbolical consistency to a series of odd numbers.

Thirteen represents closure, completion of a cycle, buckling of a twelve period cycle, that is, the 13th

embolismic moon.

According to the Pythagorean Greek philosopher Philolaus (circa 430 BCE), number 1, the monad, symbolizes the point, dash or dot; 2, the duad, two lines; 3, the triad, three lines, a triangle; 4, the tetrad, four lines, a box, a rectangle, a volume; 5, the pentad, grades and colours; 6, hexad, the soul; 7, the heptad, the mind, health and light; 8, the ogdoad, love, friendship, cunning and intellectualisation; 9, the ennead, failure, shortcoming, man; and 10, the decad, perfection.

Table for the signifiers and strengths

Zodiacal sign, houses and Planet	Signifier and strength
Cancer, House X, Moon:	briga 1+ Mars, briga 2 = force 3, slightly beneficial; briga 1+ Sun, briga 3 = force 4, slightly beneficial; briga 1 + Jupiter, briga 4 = force 5 beneficial; briga 1+ Mercury, mata 5 = force 6, beneficial; briga 1+ Venus, mata 6 = force 7, beneficial; briga 1+ Saturn, anmata 7 = force 8, baleful;
Scorpio, House II; Taurus, House VIII; Mars:	briga 2 + Moon, briga 1 = force 3, slightly beneficial; briga 2 + Sun, briga 3 = force 5, slightly beneficial; briga 2 + Jupiter, mata 4 = force 6, beneficial; briga 2 + Mercury, mata 5 = force 7, beneficial; briga 2 + Venus, mata 6 = force 8, beneficial; briga 2 + Saturn, anmata 7 = force 9, baleful;
Leo, House XI, Sun:	briga 3 + Moon, briga 1 = force 4, slightly beneficial; briga 3 + Mars, briga 2 = 5, slightly beneficial; briga 3 + Jupiter, mata 4 = 7, beneficial; briga 3 + Mercury mata 5 = force 8, beneficial; briga 3 + Venus, mata 6 = force 9, beneficial; briga 3 + Saturn, anmata 7 = force 10, baleful;
Sagittarius, House III; Pisces, House VI; Jupiter:	mata 4 + Moon, briga 1 = force 5, slightly beneficial; mata 4 + Mars briga 2 = force 6, slightly beneficial; mata 4 + Sun, briga 3 = force 7, slightly beneficial; mata 4 + Mercury, mata 5 = force 9, beneficial; mata 4 + Venus, mata 6 = force 10, beneficial; mata 4 + Saturn, anmata 7 = force 11, baleful;
Gemini, House IX; Virgo, House XII; Mercury:	mata 5 + Moon, briga 1 = force 6, slightly beneficial; mata 5 + Mars briga 2 = force 7, slightly beneficial; mata 5 + Sun, briga 3 = force 8, slightly beneficial; mata 5 + Jupiter mata 4 = force 9, beneficial; mata 5 + Venus, mata 6 = force 11, beneficial; mata 5 + Saturn, anmata 7 = force 12, baleful;
Libra, House I; Taurus, House VIII;	mata 6 + Moon, briga 1 = force 7, slightly beneficial;

Venus:	mata 6 + Mars, briga 2= force 8, slightly beneficial; mata 6 + Sun, briga 3= force 9, slightly beneficial; mata 6 + Jupiter, mata 4= force 10, beneficial; mata 6 + Mercury, mata 5= force 11, beneficial; mata 6 + Saturn, anamata 7= force 13, baleful;
Capricorn, House IV; Aquarius, House V; Saturn:	anmata 7 + Moon, briga 1= force 8, baleful; anmata 7 + Mars, briga 2= force 9, baleful; anmata 7 + Sun, briga 3= force 10, baleful; anmata 7 + Jupiter, mata 4= force 11, baleful; anmata 7 + Mercury, mata 5= force 12, baleful; anmata 7 + Venus mata 6= force 13, baleful.

The astral theme

In order to make a prognostic or interpretation, it is important to consider several aspects before developing a theme (or natal chart).

The astral theme for a specific event or for the birth of a person is not only given through the meaning from the astrological sign itself, but also from the cusps of entry and exit of the sun in a given house. We must also consider the symbolic meanings given to the houses and the planets present in the subject's natal chart. Further themes or aspects can also come from other sources such as the lunar mansions and their zodiacal symbols. This being said, a zodiacal sign and its house can yield much information through their cusps and their tree, animal and bird signs. Messenger birds are found in the trees (= constellation cusps) and zodiacal animals are found at their foot roaming in the astral domain. Zodiacal signs and houses can also be aspected by the passing of a comet or a meteor, which also negatively colour the interpretation.

The chart is graphically drawn from four parallel lines intersecting four other lines in order to form a grid. The arrows indicate the four directions marked by the two equinoxes and the two solstices. According to this graph, House I starts in Libra because the old Celts did not consider the vernal point of Aries as the initial zodiacal marker. The autumnal point was therefore the starting point. This was also the case for the older Zodiacs such as the early Greek and Vedic models. This archaic trait, however, does not contradict the other elements of the Celtic astrological system which differed little from the other classical Greek, Roman or Vedic Zodiacs.

Footnotes:

1. Divitiac <Diviciacus < Diuiciacos, "the theologian," a Gallic druid met by Caesar, he bore the title of Vergobret for the capital city of the Aedui. He was a moderator of the Roman party against the Swabian Germans of Ariovistus, and he travelled to Rome in 60 BCE to gain the support of the Senate

after the defeat of the Aeduan battle of Magetobriga.

2. Cicero, *De Divinatione*, "On Divination," Book I. v. 41, p. 323.

3. Plutarch, *Moralia*, from the face that appears on the Moon, Ogygia is an island far out at sea, p. 991.

4. Geoffrey of Monmouth, *History of the Kings of Britain*, p. 173.

Chapter XIII

Medical Astrology

"I am steel; I am a druid.

I am an artificer; I am a scientific one.

I am a serpent; I am love; I will
indulge in feasting."

(*Book of Taliesin III, Buarch Beird*,

"The Fold of the Bards")



A Druid mistletoe picker with bow and sickle. Small horns at the top of the head indicate the sacredness of this character. Gallic statue from Mont-Saint-Jean, Sarthe, France. Author's drawing after a photograph from the *Musée d'archéologie nationale*, St-Germain-en-Laye, France.

Druidical medicine

As boasted the Welsh poet, Taliesin, the Druid-physician is the steel of his scalpel, a snake of medicine, a scientist and a physician. More compelling still, are the incredible feats described in the various myths.

Astounding acts of medicine are recorded in the stories surrounding the Irish god of medicine where Dian Cécht is evoked in the famed Battle of Mag Tuired. The medical achievements described in these myths are worthy of Space-Age science.

“Núadu's hand was cut off in that battle—Sreng mac Sengainn struck it from him. So with Crédne the brazier helping him, Dian Cécht the physician put on him a silver hand that moved as well as any other hand. Now Núadu was being treated, and Dían Cécht put a silver hand on him which had the movement of any other hand. But his son Míach did not like that. He went to the hand and said ‘joint to joint of it, and sinew to sinew’; and he healed it in nine days and nights. The first three days he carried it against his side, and it became covered with skin. The second three days he carried it against his chest. The third three days he would cast white wisps of black bulrushes after they had been blackened in a fire.”¹

From Antiquity to the Renaissance period, the practice of medicine necessarily included concepts of astrology. Since the task was to restore health through the balance of vital functions, medicine resorted to the elements of nature.

Were not the Druids the sovereign masters of the elements? The main elements available to the Druid physician were the basic five: water, earth, air and fire.

Insofar as medical practice required a body of knowledge that was not within the reach of anybody, medicine was jealously guarded by the elite members of the Druidical class. The ancient Greek physicians turned to the gods Apollo and Asclepius for guidance and the ill and wounded were treated in healing centres called asclepia. Medical treatment was then under the patronage of the goddesses

Panacea and Hygea. In India, Ayurvedic medicine was also guarded by a priestly caste called the Brahmin. The etymologies of the Old Celtic name Dru Uidiia is an exact match to the Sanskrit Dhru Vidya, both for, "firm knowledge." In a world where there was no separation between the sacred and the profane, gods would communicate with mortals in their sleep and in meditation. Man, the mortal creature, was not only made in the image of the gods, but was also a macrocosm and a microcosm of the world.

And, medicine was the art and the science aimed at attaining the balance between the great and the small. In Welsh bardic thought, the Manred (< mino-redo "small course") was in reference to the activities of the microcosm. This quest for balance was attained through the exercise of mind, body and soul. Wisdom and technical know-how went hand in hand. In this order of things, the medical act was also structured according to a tripartite ranking: 1, psychological and mental healing; 2, physical healing and surgery; 3, herbal and natural healing.

The Indo-European tri-functional medical doctrine
--

Priestly level: incantatory medicine, spells and formulas;	Warriors' Level: surgery and physical medicine;	Craftsmen's level: herbal and natural medicine.
--	---	---

In short, medical doctrine was the intellectual matter of high-level Druids. As the name recalls, were not Druids "very knowledgeable" in all domains? Another related term was Suuides, which meant, "well knowledgeable," and both names, were used to qualify astute scholars. And as pointed out by the French Celtic scholars Guyonvarc'h and Le Roux², medicine was practised solely by the members of the Druid class. Therefore, doctors of medicine had to be educated as Druids provided they followed the right curriculum. Thus, medical education was given to future physicians by the Druids. Also note that in Antiquity, medicine was mostly empirical. Logically, the Druid-physician was an empirical healer. The practices of midwifery and herbal medicine were also important elements of popular medicine for everyday life. Celtic medical practice, as a legal doctrine, was most evidently under the patronage of the gods.

Iolo Morgawg and the *Book of the Fferyllt* (Vergil)

During the Middle Ages, magical powers were attributed to Vergil who was seen as one of the great thaumaturges of Antiquity. In one of the old Welsh manuscripts, as Morgannwg claimed, a medical book used by the witch Cerridwen was mentioned.

"Now Caridwen his mother thought that he was not likely to be admitted among men of noble birth, by reason of his ugliness, unless he had some exalted merits or knowledge. For it was in the beginning of Arthur's time and of the Round Table. So she resolved according to the arts of the books of the Fferyllt, to boil a cauldron of Inspiration and Science for her son, that his reception might be honourable because of his knowledge of the mysteries of the future state of the world. Then she began

to boil the cauldron, which from the beginning of its boiling might not cease to boil for a year and a day, until three blessed drops were obtained of the grace of Inspiration.” (Hanes Taliesin, The History of Taliesin, (Iolo Morganwg version, late 18th/early 19th C.)

Although it is doubtful that such a book by Virgil ever existed, manuscript copies handed down through oral lore did surely exist.

Levels within the Druidic Order

A specialization of the Druidic order was that of the *Veledes* (< ueledos, f. ueleda); ueles / uilis, the file or the filid). Doctors were called *leagioi* (or sing. *Leagios* / *lepagios*) in ancient Celtic. In Antiquity, occupations and professional work was shared by the household couple. Therefore, the *Leagia*, the doctor's wife, was far from being just a passive observer and was often responsible for the maintenance and order of the family clinic. The term *Leagiaxto*, which means, “one who prescribes or prescriber,” covers everything that surrounded medical practice of the ancient Celts. The name *lepagios* designated the formulator, that is, the diagnostician, the prescriber and caster of spells and formulas.

At this level, they were not only general practitioners but also petty surgeons and practitioners of diverse professions such as those of ophthalmology, trepanation, emergency treatment, toxicology and herbalism.

For the clerics' specialization, that of the *vates* (Old Irish fáid > fáith < uatis, f. uatissa), the medical practitioner was the *uatis-leagios*, the physician's clerk. Better regarded than today's nurses, he was the doctor's assistant and prescriber. Another actor of the field was the *dedgobaro*, *dedgobara*, the cup-bearer, the specialist and carrier of liquids. Because of his degree of expertise in toxic products and antidotes, he was an associate of doctors and physicians at the level of clerks (*uatis* or *ueletos*).

Since the druidical philosophy focused on two distinct doctrines of faith, that of monism and that dualism, it was just a matter of time before a conflict should arise between the two doctrinal positions. Nevertheless, it was generally agreed upon that there was interdependency between the physical and the psychic realms. Therefore, any diagnosis could be supported using physical auscultation and psychological observation. Treatment could also be performed using psychological reinforcement and mystic chanting.

- Or in the words of the Breton neo-Druid Alain Le Goff⁵:

“In the druidical tradition, healing is especially psychosomatic in that, it is more often:

- 1 – a reconciliation with the patient himself (removal of blockages and inhibitions or body ailments);
- 2 – the patient’s reconciliation with others: (restoration of disrupted human and environmental relationships);
- 3 – and finally, restoration of the patient’s relationship with the mystical and the divine and removal of hidden pathologies (making peace with oneself in balance with the physical).”

Hence, the adjuvant or activating principle of will, thus the axiom of Sophocles: “Heaven ne'er helps the men who will not act.”

Aspects of Druidical Medicine

I- Medical discipline:	II- Techniques and approaches:
Parapsychology and disorders of the soul	Mantic spells and incantations, meditation and self-control
Psychology, character, types, moods and temperaments	Adjuvant will and sleep restoration
Diseases	Diagnostics and appropriate treatment
Medical Astrology	Cosmic energy, solar rays and moon beams, both restorative and debilitating
Herbalism and apothecary	Potions, ointments, poultices and balms
Hygienism	Prevention and Hygiene ; healing by the elements (water, earth, fire and air), and spa treatments, the vital importance of water
Anatomy	Surgery

The Ancient physicians of Ireland

“Dían Cécht did not like that cure. He hurled a sword at the crown of his son's head and cut his skin to the flesh. The young man healed it by means of his skill. He struck him again and cut his flesh until he reached the bone. The young man healed it by the same means. He struck the third blow and reached the membrane of his brain. The young man healed this too by the same means. Then he struck the fourth blow and cut out the brain, so that Míach died; and Dían Cécht said that no physician could heal him of that blow⁴.”

The Irish Apollo was undoubtedly Oengus / Aongus, if not Bile. As god and patron of medicine, he also bore the nickname Diancecht⁵. This Druid-physician god had two sons, Míach⁶ and Oirmiach⁷ and

a daughter called Airmed⁸. According to the Indo-European triple order of social functions:

Oengus is patron of incantatory and priestly medicine;

Diancecht is patron of bloody medicine or surgery;

Miach, Oirmiach and Airmed are the patrons of minor surgery, natural medicine and herbalism.

In short, medicine in general is under the medicine-god Belenos, the Celtic Apollo of Caesar's list. The Gaelic Aoghus or the Gallic Belenos had two aspects:

1 – Aoghus (< Oinogustios, “the first choice”) or Belenos, “the brilliant;” brightness, everything that is heavenly, beautiful, young and healthy;

2 – Diancecht (< Diuanno Cextis, “the brutal grasp;” or Grannos, “beaming;” medical procedure, everything that is physiological, bodily and intervening.

In short, it always follows this logic:

a) Aoghus or Belenos represents the principles of sacred or incantatory medicine;

b) Diancecht or Grannos, represents the principles of bloody surgical medicine.

In addition, the herbalist Druids were masters in the botanical science of herbs and in the art of preparing medicinal concoctions. Since they had quite a sense of humour, they also played metaphorical jokes and crafty puns. An episode from *The Dialogue of two Sages* easily comes to mind. Here, four young apprentices, puzzled at the meaning of plant names, began to question themselves accordingly:

“Nede then left, and his three brothers were with him, namely Lugaid, Cairpre, and Cruttine. On the path, they stumbled on a rod of digitalis. One of them said: Why is this called digitalis? As they did not know, they returned home and were a month with Eochaid. Then, they were set to resume their journey. On the way, they found reed. One of them said: Why is this called reed? As they did not know, they returned again to their tutor. There, they spent another month. Afterwards, they journeyed on and on the way, they found a sanicle plant. As they did not know why it was called sanicle, they returned home and were with Eochaid another month.”⁷

As the story goes, answer to the mystery is actually found in the names of the plants themselves. To truly understand the hidden implications, one must turn to the original Gaelic names. Digitalis, or digitalis purpurea, was called lus-nam-ban-sith, “the fairy grass,” when not, lus-a'-bhalgair, “fox grass.” The sith element in the name is a variant of sidh, or sid in Old Irish, which is derived from the Old Celtic sidos, which means, “peace, abode,” and which was one of the names for the Other World seen as the earthly residences of the gods or fairies. Another one of these Irish names is bolgan beic (< bolganon beccan) for, “small belly.” In Scotland, it is called an-lus-mos, the “great plant.” The Welsh call it nienyg ellyllon, the “fairy glove.” But again, in Old Celtic, digitalis was called spiona and purple foxglove was called baccharis.

The Gaelic name for reed is cuilc. Another name for reed was n'getal (< ena- caitalis), “swamp gras, reed.” The Old Celtic words for reed, depending on the variety, were colcis, corisos, and lisca or caitalis sesca.

The name cuilc (< colcis), lends itself to interesting word plays such as: golg, cuilg, “of masculine aspect, virile, manly” (Old Celtic, golga, “straw beard”). Straw beard was traditionally used by used by young aspiring bards as a disguise during examinations or again to mock their old masters.

The Irish and Scottish Gaelic name for sanicle is coille bodan (Old Celtic, boddos caldi) which literally meant “wood penis.” Along with its well-recognized haemostatic qualities, this plant was also known to have the same property as the bois bande or Dominican Mama Juana (mamajuana) plant, the viagra of the Caribbean. No one could have missed the implied cynicism of the pun surrounding fiodh < fidh (< uidus), “wood,” fios < fis (< uesos < ueidtos) “knowledge, science, understanding,” and dru, “firm, hard.”

Confusion remains surrounding the Old Celtic name samolos. It is unclear whether it is the same as the Latin samolus for brook-weed and water pimpernel if not, shamrock, samole, pasque flower or maybe Dane's blood, and chickweed?

Galic empirical medicine

Medicine played an important part in the Celtic world. In Gaul and Britain there were renowned healing centres such as Vichy and Bath. Archaeological digs have also unearthed artifacts such as medical kits, surgical instruments and remedy vials.

As we have seen, for all other matters of science and healing, it went without saying that incantatory magic and psychic medicine came under the supervision of the Druids. The last known of the Gaelic empirical physicians was Marcellus of Bordeaux. His Gallo-Roman name was Marcellus Empiricus and he was born the 4th century CE in the vicinity of Bordeaux. In his treatise entitled *De Medicamentis*¹⁰, he gives a short list of all sorts of remedies and healing spells. This type of medicine, closer to that of the Druids than to that of Hippocrates, largely relies on the power of speech for the process of healing. It was therefore a psychological technique of appeasing comparable to the mantras of Indian Ayur Vedic medicine. And as rightfully noted by Clement of Alexandria (Stobe, Stromata I, XV):

“Pythagoras was an auditor with the Galatians and the Brahmins.” To quote Pythagoras: “the world is born of thought, not of time.”

Healing Spells from Marcellus of Bordeaux	Spells to:
exsicom acrisos	To counter cold congestion <i>“Cold congestion, go away!”</i>
tetunc resonco bregan gresso	The evacuation of dust in the eye <i>“I swear away this lowly particle of suffering!”</i>
in mon dercomarcos axatison	To treat swelling or irritation of the eye <i>“This conjunctivitis in me, remove it!”</i>
rica rica soro	To treat a sty

		<i>"Cut, cut out (this liquid)!"</i>
Curia curia cassaria surôbri		To treat a sty <i>"Cure, cure this sty of severe pain!"</i>
vigaria gassaria		To treat a sty <i>"Force this sty out (from my eye)"</i>
argidam margidam sturgidam	To counter	tooth sores <i>"Kill this nagging neuralgia"</i>
crisi crasi cancrasi		To soothe throat aches <i>"Surround and shrivel it with drying!"</i>
heilen prosaggeri vome si polla nabuliet onodieni iden eliton		To clear the throat <i>"In hope that this ointment will reach and evacuate all the liquid at this moment!"</i>
Xsi exsu cricon exsu criglion Aisus scrismio velor exsu cricon exsu crilau.		To clear the throat <i>"So Flee, mucus! Aisus, I want to spit! Flee, flee, (and so flee) throat ache!"</i>

The Microcosm and the Macrocosm in Man

As masters of the elements, the Druids had mastery over all ancient natural sciences. In some of his poems, the bard Taliesin evokes the realms of the macrocosm and the microcosm along with the notion of the fundamental elements and sub-elements. In order to have a better general understanding of this cosmological order, the following is the traditional Irish classification:

The macrocosm:		The microcosm:	
1. Talam < talamu), the earth;	8. Colâind < colanis), the body;	9. Fuil < uolisa), blood;	10. Cnaim < cnama, bones;
2. Muir < mori), the sea;	11. Imradud < ambiradeto, the brain or cerebellum,	12. Anal < anatla, breath, respiration;	13. Dréch < dricsma, the face;
3. Cloch < clocca), stone;	thought, reflection;	14. Anam < anatmon, the soul, vital breath.	
4. Nel < neblioi, clouds;			
5. Gaeth < goita (also auentos), Wind;			
6. Grian < greina, beaming (also sauelios, sonnos), the sun;			
7. Dee < dé (< deuoi), the gods;			

The Zodiacal Signs Which Govern the Body Parts in Graeco-Roman Classical Astrology

Aries: the head and the organs, etc.

Taurus: the neck and throat, etc.

Gemini: the shoulders, arms and lungs, etc.

Cancer: the digestive system and chest, etc.

Lion: the heart and the spine, etc.

Virgin: the stomach, intestines, etc.

Libra: the lower back, kidneys and bladder, etc.

Scorpio: the genitals and the rectum, etc.

Sagittarius: hips and thighs, etc.
 Capricorn: knees and legs, etc.
 Aquarius: ankles, etc.
 Pisces: feet, etc.

The Elements and Body Parts in the Irish Tradition

Cneas (Old Celtic, Cicon), the flesh; talamh < talamu, the earth;
 Fuil < ulasnos / uolisa, blood; uisce < udescio / udesca; aqa (Gaulish, aba / aua), water: mori, the sea;
 Cnámh < cnama / astcornon; cloch < cloca, stone, phonolith; caletia, hardness, stone, bone;
 Inchinn < eniqennos, the brain; aer < auer, air, nebeloi, the clouds;
 Aghaidh < eneqos / eneco / aneco (Gaulish, anipos, dricsma), face; Aedh < Aedis fire, sun.

Irish and Indian Cosmologies Compared

Earth: Talamh < talamu; deity, Tailtiu < Talantio, “the deified earth;” (Prthivi-pati, master of the Earth in India);

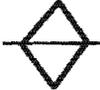
Fire: Tine < tepneton, also ur, aedis; toirmeach < tanaros, lightning; deity, Aedh < Aedus the morning sun (the fire god Agni in India);

Water: uisce < udescio, also aqa / aba / aua; mori, the sea; deity, Lir < Lero, the lord of the waves and the sea (AP-pati, Ap, “water,” the lord of water in India);

Air: Aer < auer, wind, or auentos, auella; deity, Aoife < Esuia, “the (divine) breath,” or Esuuia, “the terrible;” (Vayu the god of wind in India);

Ether: Nemh < namos, nemos, sky; geal < gleua, bright (leuxsita, light); (Akasha in India)
 Lugh < Lugos (brightness, splendor) or Loucetios (bright) or Diuanno (the light that illuminates), the god of light, the universal essence, a source containing all the qualities of the elements above.

<p>Northwest (Air) MELDONO (lymph)</p>  <p>Master: Findias < Uindia, “of the white;”</p>	<p>Northeast (Earth) MALACNON (fluid/bile)</p>  <p>Master: Gorias < Goría, “of the warm, the hot;”</p>
--	--

<p>Uscias / Uiscias < Udescios, “the watery;” or Arias < Arios / Ariats, “the free man, the land owner, the land lord;”</p> <p>Uindiassos, “the splendid one, white one.”</p>	<p>Esrus, Esras < Esdrios / Esdratis, “he who has means, who has the way;” Urus < Uros, the pure, “original, fresh;” or Urias < Urios, “the pure;”</p> <p>Goriassos, “the hot one.”</p>
<p>Southwest (Water) UOLIA (blood)</p>  <p>Master: Murias < Moria, “of the sea;” Semias > Semios / Semiatis, “the flitty, fluttering, vivacious, dashing;” Moriassos, “of the sea.”</p>	<p>Sud-Est (Fire) BULACA (swelling/phlegm)</p>  <p>Master: Falias < Ualia, “of the strong, the mighty;” Marouesos, “of great knowledge;” or Morias < Morios / Moriatos, “of the sea;” also Fios / Fessus < Uesos, “knowing, knowledgeable;” Ualiassos, “the strong, the worthy.”</p>

Galiones – the Humours

Since there are four basic elements, it was speculated that in druidical medicine, there were four basic humours (Old Celtic, galiones). The humours were seen as organic liquids that maintain bodily functions. When one of these fluids is disturbed, discomfort or illness occurs. Humours, as body fluids, can be affected by the other elements. For example, Earth has the qualities of hardness as with bones, rocks and stones and causes coagulation and clot. Bile is a yellowish and greenish liquid and is associated with the earth. Fire causes fever and other burning and boiling sensations. The word phlegm comes from Medieval Latin phlegma which was borrowed from the Greek phlegma meaning, “inflammation,” (phlegein, “to burn”). Phlegm is associated with fire. The air element causes gas, bloating and rashes. Lymph is a whitish, yellowish liquid that is traditionally associated with water in Greece. In Irish cosmology, it is blood that was associated with water and sea.

Humours and Elements:

(Main qualities: moisture, heat, cold, drying)

Fire: Phlegm (hot and dry)

Earth: Bile (hot and dry – cold and wet)

Water: Blood (cold or hot and humid)
Air: Lymph (dry and hot – cold and wet)

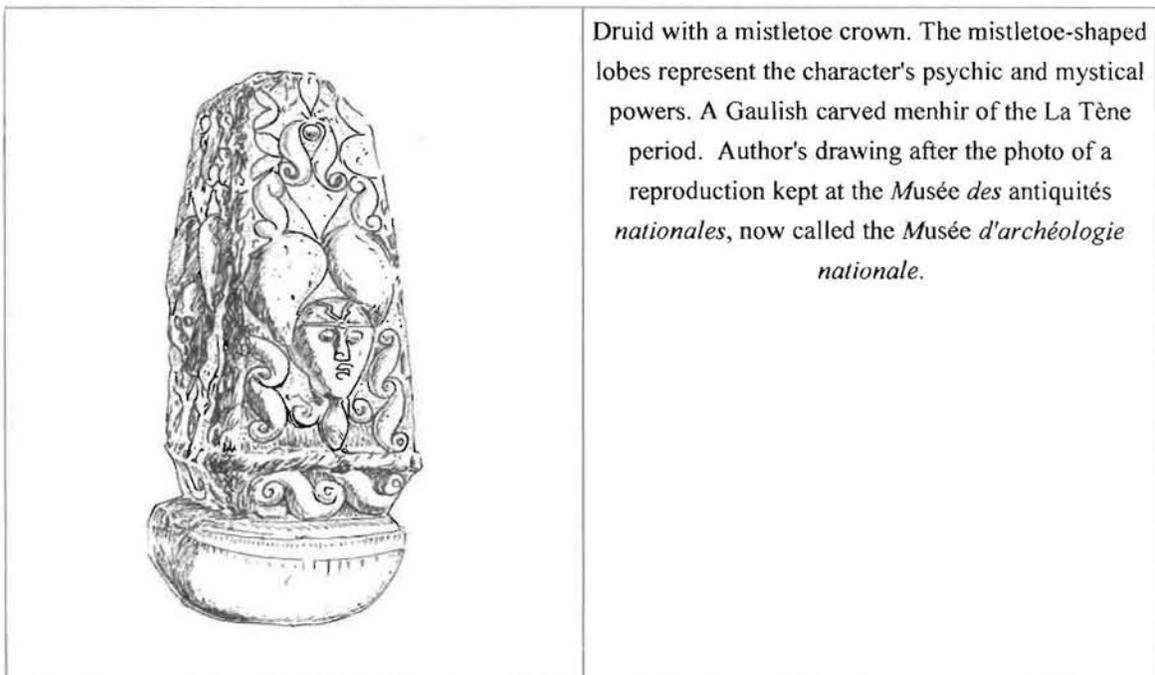
Tempers and Emotions

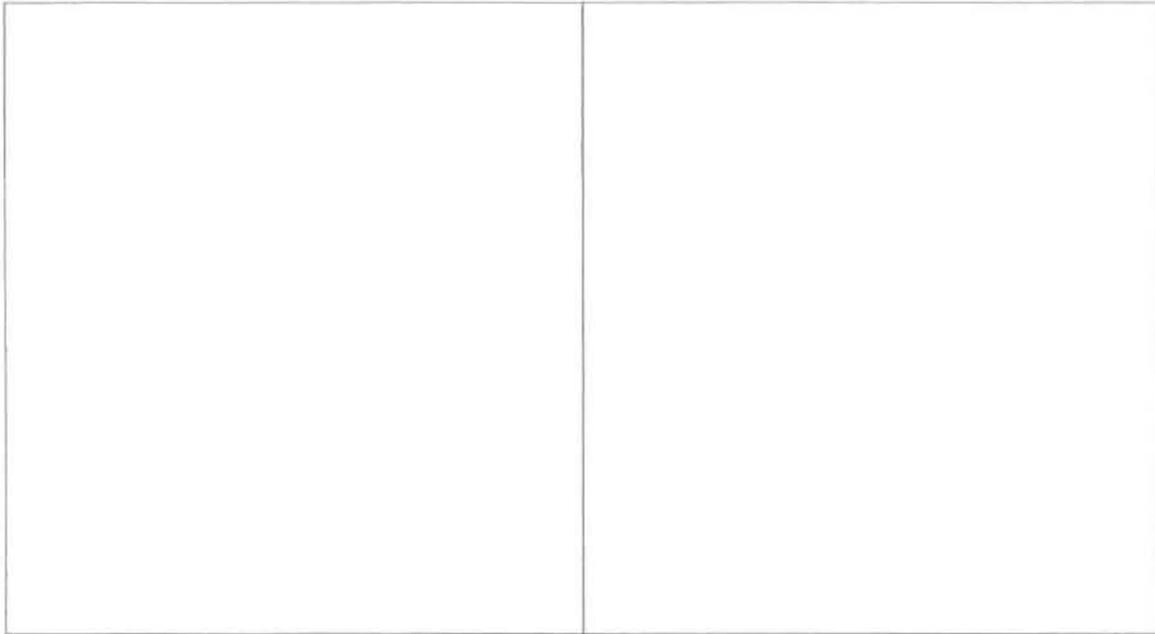
Tempers, or Temperaments (Dantoues), are related to moods, elements and parts of the body associated with the zodiacal signs. Temperaments are inborn and are influenced by emotions and moods. Temperaments are personality types. Emotions or sadness or joy, arise from energy centres in the body content. Other emotions, such as emulation and human and divine love, are also considered. Love, carantia or coima Celtic (Kama in Sanskrit), is a quality of the soul arising from the principle of desire, auilla. The gods also have personalities. As conceptualised, there were two types of love: divine and human.

Tempers may be formulated in Celtic as follows:

- *Uoliacos, “sanguine,” characterized by robustness, high resolution and cheerfulness;
- *Meldonacos, “lymphatic,” lack of physical or mental energy, weakness;
- *Malacnicos, “bilious,” the spleen is prone to irritability and melancholy, inclination to anger;
- *Bulacos, “phlegmatic,” showing a slow, phlegmatic temperament and impassive.

Emotions are of two types: *brugno*, “sadness,” or *amaro*, “sorrow,” and *lauenia*, or *ualetia*, “joy.” In Old Celtic, divine joy was referred to as **deualis lauenia* and human joy was called **dunia lauenia*. The word for longing or mental aspiration was *aucidos* (> *auedos*, also spelled *eueidos*).





Oghamic herbal medicine

“After that, Míach was buried by Dían Cécht, and three hundred and sixty-five herbs grew through the grave, corresponding to the number of his joints and sinews. Then Airmed spread her cloak and uprooted those herbs according to their properties. Dían Cécht came to her and mixed the herbs, so that no one knows their proper healing qualities unless the Holy Spirit taught them afterwards. And Dían Cécht said, ‘Though Míach no longer lives, Airmed shall remain!’.”

In the *Book of Ballymote*, there is this line which describes an Ogham series inserted into a snake-shaped waving line reading:

Natar fa fercecni, “the snake in man of power,” which is usually translated as: nathair Fraoch, the “snake in the heath.”

The Celtic etymology for this Old Irish line goes as follows:

Natar, Old Irish for nathir, modern Irish, nathair, from the Old Celtic root *natrix > Natris / naðris / natro, “snake,” (cf. Welsh, neidr; Breton naer);

Fa < uare < uo -are, “on;” Fa < fo < uo, “under;”

Fercecni, compound noun, fer / fír < uiros, “man,” and cect-ni (elision of 't'), Irish ceacht “power, cycle of science, instruction, lesson,” from the Old Celtic, cacto “power;” Fercec(t) < Uirocacetinos, “man of power.” It is most likely a variant of the name Fercerdne / Fercertne, “master of art,” if not, the Gaelic name for the mythic serpent.

Please note that creeping ivy is also called athair lus in Gaelic, which literally stands for, “snake grass,” since it creeps and undulates on the ground.

The Ader Ogham "under the power of Man"	Translation of the symbols
	<p>Ida /Idho /Iodha /Ioho /Iubhar: icuris, "liver;" ilion, "intestine;" imbilon/embilon, "navel;"</p> <p>Eadha /Edadh: eniqendos/enipennos, "brain, grey matter;"</p> <p>Ur: ulnia/olnia, "elbow;"</p> <p>On/Ohn: odbos/oðbos, "thigh;" omaca, "neck;" ordlaca, "thumb;" ordiga > ordiclos > orticlos, "big toe;"</p> <p>Ailm: ades, "foot;" aredurnon, "wrist;" astis/ostis, "bone;" ausia, "ear;"</p> <p>Ruis: roscon, "eye;" rousmen > rumen, "teat;" raton, "phallus, penis;"</p> <p>Straif/Draighean: stilnon, "eye;"</p> <p>Ngetal/Gilcach: enguina > engina, "finger nail;"</p> <p>Gort: garra < sgarra, "leg;" garris, "calf;" glunos, "knee;"</p> <p>Mediu/Min /Muin: monio, "neck;" moina, "hand;" mâtos, "thumb;"</p> <p>Quert: qendos/pennos, "head;" qacria / pacria, "chakra;"</p> <p>Sail/Saile: sulis, "eye;" selga < spelga, "spleen;"</p> <p>Coll: calona, "heart;" callia, "testicle;" cûlos, "rear end, bottom;"</p> <p>Fearn: uerailia, "eye brow;" uerba, "pimple;"</p> <p>Tin/Tine /Tinne /Teine: tuta, "vulva, vagina;" toibos, "side;" taros, "belly;"</p> <p>Nin/Nion/Nuin: neibo > nebo, "vital energy;" negsa > nexsa/nessa, "injury;"</p> <p>Dur /Duir: drica, "physiognomy;" driccos, "face;" drigo, "hair;" drumbos/drommen, "back;" dossos, "arm;"</p>

	<p>Luis: lama, “hand;” luston/loston, “extremity, end;” letsto > letos, “thigh;” louno, “kidney;”</p> <p>Huath: uaitis/uétis, “vein;” uaddos/uaitos < ueisdos, “blood;” uéda/uída, “face;” scamantos, “lung;” scéda/sceidos, “shoulder;”</p> <p>Beth: bistis < bidis/bistion, “finger;” buta, “penis;” buððu > bussu, “mouth;” bragans, “throat;” brusnia > brunnia, “chest.”</p>
--	---

Gallic medicinal plants

Gallo-Roman culture retained a rich repertoire of Celtic names for medicinal plants which passed into the modern French language. It is a miracle that, despite the slow assimilation of the Gallic-speaking elite and erasure of the pre-Christian religion and traditions, so much of the culture survived in the provincial dialects. In order to show this, we have collected a thorough list of the Gallic names for the medicinal herbs.

Gallic Herbal Pharmacopia

Abolos / abulos / opulos, “rowan,” used as an astringent, diuretic, emmenagogue (also spelled emmenagog), anti-haemorrhagic, laxative and anti-scorbutic. Used to stimulate blood flow in the pelvic and uterus area in order to stimulate menstruation and treat diarrhoea.

Alos / alus, “comfrey, donkey ear;” It was, according to Pedanios Dioscorides (1st century, b. ca. 40 CE, d. 90 CE), prescribed against the spitting of blood and piles or hemorrhoids. A medicinal plant used to treat diseases of the chest, hemoptysis and consumption.

Baditis, “(white) lily;” Marcellus of Bordeaux recommended to crush the root. In Antiquity, a concoction was made from the root to turn children into eunuchs. Antispasmodic and sedative plant. Used to treat leucorrhoea, nervousness, rosacea, and cough and sleep problems.

Banatlos / genista, ginesta, “broom, English broom,” cardiotoxic, diuretic, depurative, vasoconstrictor. Slow heart rate good for abscesses, liver, edema, albuminuria, rheumatism, and gout.

Belenountia, “hen-bane;” vaticinatory plant that causes hallucinations in high doses and having para-sympatholytic effects. Indicated for digestive problems.

Beliocandos or beliucandos, “yarrow;” a plant antiseptic, vulnerary, tonic, diuretic, emmenagogue, haemostatic, astringent, carminative, healing, antispasmodic, digestive, anti-inflammatory, appetizer, sedative. Used in the treatment of menopause, rheumatism, varicose veins, cellulite, acne, cracking, scabies, sores, digestive disorders, liver and biliary disorders, premenstrual breast pain, haemorrhoids

and circulatory disorders.

Betilolen or betidolen, “great burdock;” used as a depurative, diaphoretic, anti-rheumatic, its root contains an active ingredient with effects are identical to those of penicillin. It is a natural antibiotic, an astringent, antiseptic, and a diuretic antiseborrheic. It was also used to deal with abscesses, carbuncles, gout, rheumatism, boils, sores, acne, eczema, hair loss and haemorrhoids.

Blutthagion or bluthagia, “marigold;” an anti-rheumatic, repellent and detoxifying antidote. It was mainly used to treat rheumatism.

Bricumos, “mugwort;” used to cure epilepsy, nervous problems (St. Vitus' Dance or Sydenham's chorea) and hysteria or problems of the female reproductive organs.

Bugio, “sage;” antibacterial, antioxidant, antiseptic, antispasmodic, antiperspirant, antiviral, astringent, cholagogue (agent that stimulates the gallbladder promoting bile flow), digestive, emmenagogue, febrifuge, estrogenic, stimulant, stomachic and is used as a general tonic for the treatment of amenorrhea, angina, ulcers, arthritis, catarrh (inflammation of mucous with emission of mucus), menstrual pain, muscle pain, gingivitis, gout, influenza, herpes, impetigo, indigestion, gastrointestinal infection, respiratory infections, laryngitis, sore throat, loss of appetite, bad breath, problems related to menopause, osteoporosis, pharyngitis, wounds and colds.

Calliomarcos, “colts-foot;” as its name indicates, colts-foot has expectorant, anti-inflammatory and antispasmodic properties. It was used as a cure for colds, bronchitis, coughs and asthma. Its leaves were used a poultice on wounds.

Calocatanos, “poppy;” as a cough remedy, a soothing, emollient, astringent, antitussive, vulnerary, anti-diarrhoeal, anti-haemorrhagic and anti-inflammatory agent. Heals burns, skin problems, stomach ailments, sore throat, sprains, and ulcers, inflammation of the mouth, bruises, sprains and wounds.

Corna, “agrimony, poppy agrimony;” anti-inflammatory, vulnerary, diuretic, astringent, resolvent. Used to treat wounds, obesity, migraine, fractures, sprains, diarrhoea, diabetes, bruises, the sore throat, hoarseness.

Deximon < texsimon, “clematis Aristolochia;” Aristolochia has been used for centuries in Europe to provoke birth; consumed on a regular basis, its aristolochic acid (carboxylic acid) has toxic effects that can cause major kidney failure and cancer of the kidneys.

Douco or duco, “danewort;” as a purgative, resolvent and sudorific; to treat constipation, sprains, bruises, swelling and cough.

Ercinon, “gerrymander;” recommended for digestive disorders, speeds recovery and eliminates

fatigue, has vulnerary properties. It was used to treat wounds and stomach ulcers. Its flowers have a bitter stimulating effect that were used as an antiseptic, diuretic and for the treatment of liver diseases, anaemia and painful menstruation.

Exacon, “centaury;” not to be confused with the great knapweed. It heals intestinal atony along with constipation or diarrhoea, lack of appetite, stomach cramps, hyper-acidity, bloating through anxiety and stress as well as urticaria skin irritations and dyspepsia. It is also a good stimulant for liver function and a general tonic prescribed for recovery. It was generally used to treat discomfort of the abdominal glands, anaemia and overwork.

Gelasonen, “milkweed, Asclepias, cotton, cotton grass;” used as an expectorant, depurative, with emetic and laxative properties; prescribed to treat bronchitis, flu and fever.

Gigaros, “arum, draconcule, serpentaria;” it is thought to be a good alexiteric, as a preservative against contagious and infectious diseases, the effects of poison in general and as an antidote in treating snake bites and dogs rabies.

Gilaros, “thyme;” used as a tonic, anthelmintic, diuretic, antispasmodic, stomachic, stimulant for breathing, a vasodilator and an expectorant. Treats influenza, whooping cough, dry cough, bronchitis, dyspepsia, flatulence, asthenia, asthma, emphysema, anxiety. A physical asthenia treatment for respiratory asphyxia, nosebleeds, upset stomach and enteritis.

Glaston / glastron, “woad;” a dye and medicinal plant used against infections and fast healing action.

Iubaron / iubaros, “black hellebore, Lenten rose (helleborus orientalis), melampode (helleborus niger, also called black hellebore christe herbe, and Christmas rose);” poisonous plant that should be used with great caution. Rhizome powder has sternutatory properties (causing sneezing). Helleborine acts as a drastic narcotic, emetic and emmenagogue.

Laguna / lagina, “white hellebore, false hellebore, white veratrum;” its root contains violent antispasmodic, emetic and cathartic substances.

Lagonon, “false hellebore, Indian poke, Indian hellebore, green false hellebore, veratrum viride;” it acts on the cardiovascular and respiratory system, renal system, the skeletal muscles and smooth muscles, the nervous system and thermal control, the skin and mucus, it behaves as a repellent, anaesthetic and sternutatory.

Merioitoimorion < meriseimorion, “melissa;” antispasmodic qualities, carminative, choleric and stomachic, also taken as a tonic, appetizer, digestive and sedative, bactericidal, and is also used to treat tinnitus, insect bites, insomnia, loss of appetite, asthma, indigestion, dizziness, anaemia, respiratory infections, lack of appetite, migraine.

Mulicandos / beliocandos, “yarrow;” (see Beliocandos).

Ninatis < nenadis, “nettle;” used as an haematinic, antidiabetic, astringent, depurative, diuretic, galactogogues, haemostatic, repulsive, dietary, hepatoprotective and is used to treat anemia, ulcer, diabetes, diarrhoea, enuresis, bleeding nose, swelling, skin problems, rheumatism, sciatica, leucorrhoea, menopause, insect bites, bleeding, psoriasis and hives.

Oualoida < oualidia < oualoiða < obalða, “chamomile;” was used as an antispasmodic, tonic, sedative, vermifuge, emmenagogue, stomachic, febrifuge, healing analgesic, cholagogue, antiseptic, treats rheumatism, gout, lung disease, stomach spasms, flatulence, neuralgia, ulcers, intestinal parasites, sluggish digestive, inflammation of the skin, painful menstruation, acne, headaches, arthritis and allergies.

Ousoubem < usubes / usubis / eugubis, “laurel chamaedaphne, periwinkle, oleander, broom;” according to Pliny (Natural History, Book XXI), “a dose of periwinkle or chamaedaphneis is given on a spoon crushed dry mixed in water for treating dropsy and it very quickly discharges the liquid. Cooked in ashes and sprinkled with wine, it dissolves tumours. Its juice is a cure for ear infection. As a suppository, this plant is believed to be very good against diarrhoea (little periwinkle plant).”

Pempedula or pimpedula, “cinquefoil;” it was used to treat haemorrhoids and diarrhoea.

Pones, “mugwort;” was used as an antispasmodic and once was given to treat the beginnings of epileptic disorders and chorea.

Ratis, “fern;” the male plant is excellent against parasites and as a detergent. It is also effective in the treatment of internal parasites, gout, rheumatism and wounds.

Rhoda < rodora, from Latin rodarum, Gallo-Roman, rodaron, “meadowsweet, mead wort, filipendula ulmaria;” plant used as a diuretic, anti-rheumatic and sudorific. In folk remedy, it was used against colds, flu symptoms and general pains. A good source of salicylic acid, the active agent aspirin. For these properties, it was recently found as a good treatment against obesity and cellulite.

Salicos / salix, “willow;” salicylic acid is extracted from it. It is used as an anti-neuralgic, antispasmodic, sedative of the genitals, nervous sedative, antipyretic and digestive tonic. It can also relieve rheumatic neuralgia, headaches, menstrual pain, feverish conditions, anxiety, insomnia and psychological disorders such as neurasthenia.

Soprano, “chickweed;” a plant with vulnerary, diuretic and tonic effects. It was used to treat haemorrhoids, bruises and anaemia.

Sappos / sappoudus, “balsam;” pine gum was used as antiscorbutic, as an antiseptic in wounds and poultices for burns.

Sistameor < sestamora, “wild fennel;” plant used as an appetizer. It is a galactagogue, sedative, vermifuge, stomachic, diuretic, tonic digestive, laxative, and expectorant. It was used for gum treatment and for its antitoxic, emmenagogue and antispasmodic qualities. It therefore treated lack of appetite, bloating, intestinal parasites, urinary calculi, flatulence, dyspepsia, and sluggishness of the digestive tract, milk insufficiency in young mothers, lung diseases, gums, fatigue, cough and hoarseness, among other ailments.

Scobies, “elder;” used as a diuretic, antirheumatic, against sweating. It is also an anti-inflammatory, astringent, anti-haemorrhagic, anti-neuralgic, and laxative and is used to treat rheumatism, skin diseases, conjunctivitis, colds, flu, urinary tract infection, haemorrhoids, arteriosclerosis, constipation, neuralgia and nosebleeds.

Scubulon / scobilo, “black nightshade;” a toxic plant formerly used internally as a sedative or for calming nervous pain. It is nowadays rarely used, and only externally, against skin problems such as acne, seborrhea, bruises and abscesses.

Suibitis, “ivy;” a medicinal plant used to calm cough and soothe bronchitis.

Tarbelodathion < taruotabation / taruotebation, “broad-leaf plantain;” herb that cures many ailments. Contains aucubine which accelerates elimination in the kidneys and has antimicrobial properties and apigenin which is an anti-inflammatory. A leaf poultice is effective against boils and its mucilages inhibit appetite and activate the intestinal transit.

Taurucs / taruxs, “gladiolus;” a dye and medicinal plant. Gladiolus is used to purify the body. Slightly laxative and diuretic, it stimulates the production of urine and bile, and its purifying properties also treat chronic skin conditions such as acne and eczema. It is also used to relieve constipation, gastric, biliary and liver disorders.

Thona / tona, “greater celandine;” celandine is a poisonous plant that can cause hepatitis. Its latex was traditionally used as an ointment applied on warts since its latex is caustic and is potentially antiviral. This is the reason why it was also called wart grass or wart spurge.

Titumen, “wormwood to a rod;” (see Pones).

Uela, “mustard wormseed, erysimum cheirantoides, false flax;” its seeds act in the bile ducts as an antispasmodic and its leaves have expectorant properties that can soothe coughs and infections of the larynx.

Uelaron, "hedge mustard;" an herb that contains sulphur compounds that are beneficial for asthmatics and for people with sore throats. It also has diuretic and stomachic effects.

Uettonica > bettonica > betonica, "betony;" when used internally in large doses, it acts as a purgative and emetic. In external application as a vinous decoction, it gives good results on infected wounds and varicose ulcers.

Uisumaros, "clover;" used to prevent endometrial cancer in women and limit prostate cancer in men. It can prevent heart disease and is used to alleviate hot flushes. Its procured heat stimulates blood circulation, lowers cholesterol and improves breast health. It is also used to help prevent osteoporosis and reduce the development of benign prostatic hyperplasia.

Uitu, "willow scrub;" (see Salicos).

Correspondence address:

Michel-Gerald Boutet
boutios@cgocable.ca