

Lesson 11: Druidic Magick

First things first, Druidism is a way of life, not a magickal practice, nor a religion. I know that almost every religion out there claims this, but Druidism is this. You cannot separate the philosophy from the spirituality from the magick without invalidating the way of the Druids.

(One aside that is a personal gripe of mine, the pronunciation is Keltic, with a hard C sound, not Seltic with a soft C. It's Celtic like Chaos.)

This lesson will show you the tools the Druid uses, it will bust myths, and it will give you the truth about the Druids (or as much of the truth as we know and can figure out). We are daily discovering more things about the Druids, and we are constantly looking for more and more information on what the rites and practices of the Druids were.

One thing I must stress in this lesson is **THIS IS NOT AN ECLECTIC PATH**. This is the spirituality and the way of worship of the Celts. You can call upon Juno if you want, invoke the Archangels, call upon Arthur and Merlin if desired, but DO NOT call that "Druidism". Call it an eclectic path that is influenced by Druidism. This is the problem with a lot of the Druidic paths out there these days, they made up their own junk and decided it was "real" Druidism and they started writing books and teaching their path as the real thing.

We will start this lesson with a short (for me that is) history lesson.

No, the Druids did not build Stonehenge. It was there when the Druids first showed up on the scene. Most of the information we have about the Druids is from the enemies of the Druids, namely the Romans and the Roman Catholic Church. We have Caesar's account of the Druids in "The Gallic Wars" and his correspondence to the Senate while he was attempting to conquer the Celts.

*[Mary's aside: The Catholic missionaries took what they found, learned as much as possible, converted it from the stories of the pagans to stories of Catholic Saints (Brighed comes to mind immediately.) and pronounced everyone Catholic. By winning over the rulers of a place ("more power in * your * hands my lord, * we* would never seek such a thing.") They claimed that all the "subjects" of said rulers were converted. I realized this is turning into a rant so I'll be quiet now. Back to your regularly scheduled program.]*

But let's start correctly. Back in the pre-history, there came peoples from the Steppes of what is now called Russia. These peoples migrated all over Europe and Asia. In some cases, they were called the Goths (including the Visigoths, Ostrogoths and so on), the Belgae, the Germans, the Jutes, the proto-Danes, the Magyar and many other ethnic peoples. The group that would be called Celts appeared on the scene sometime in about 700 BCE and started migrating to the West, settling in Gaul (France and Spain), Germany, and going over the sea to England. The Spanish Gauls invaded

Ireland many times and took over from the natives there, called the Tuatha de Dannan and the Firbolg (whom the Tuatha de' conquered). (The Russian Steppes seemed to be a genetic hotbed, and quite a few ethnic peoples got their start in this area. The Norse and Classical Greek, Afghans and Indians as well as what is listed above.)

More can be found at <http://ragz-international.com/celts.htm>.

This time period seems to be the time that the Red Book of War, the Táin Bó Cúalnge, the Mabinogion and other Irish/Welsh mythic cycles are set in, the very beginning of this integration. I'm not going to go into every nuance and aspect of those stories, although a major portion of Druidism is the stories and myths along with the History.

(These cultural comments are important to understand what Druidism was, since you literally cannot separate the spirituality of the Druids out from the culture of the Celts. The culture is infused with the spirituality completely, as in Native American beliefs and life, and the spirituality has many aspects of the culture reflected in it's structure. It would be like trying to separate the Kaballah completely from Judaism.)

The most current archeological thought has the Celts appearing in England and Ireland sometime around 400 BCE. Their civilization was based on the tribe and village. There was a clan Chief and under him was the warrior class. Under that were the artisans and crafters, the support structure of the tribe, in addition a powerful chief would encourage other chieftains to become his "clients", thus increasing his status in the region. Standing outside all this was the Druid. Things persisted this way for quite some time, although Ireland's social structure and political structure changed over time and became quite monarchical and rigid. There were 5 kingdoms of Ireland, each "owned" and ruled by a Righ or King. Under each Righ, there were the Chieftains, heads of the different families who would make alliances with the Righ in exchange for help and protection from enemies.

Now, nothing was free. For this, the Chief was expected to supply their own troops, food for the warriors, space for them to live and so on. It was also the custom for the Chief to buy the loyalty of his followers and the people he protected. The political structure was in a sense electoral, for if the Chief lost the favor of the people through old age or poor judgment, he could be replaced, often without a war. The rulers held power by the tolerance of the people.

Where did the Druids fit in this structure? They were outside it completely. The Druids were untouchables in many ways. They were not loyal to a specific clan, chief or person, they were loyal to the land and each other. They were advisors and helpers. They taught and educated people in many things like herbs and astronomy. Because their life was dedicated to the service of others, they were granted multiple powers that (we hope) they took care not to abuse. They were the lawmakers and sat in judgment of many.

Each of the Righs also owed their loyalty to the Ard Righ or the High King, who united all of Ireland under them. Druids were there to advise him as well, and they were also

developing a structure of their own order. There was the Arch Druid, the head of the entire Irish order of Druids. He was (apparently) elected to the position by the body of Druids and was supposed to be THE expert in every aspect of druidism, although, I suspect, most often he was just the best politically.

Generally the Arch Druid advised the Ard Righ, along with a council of Druids to do things like interpret the laws and keep the history. There were colleges established for the education of new Druids, and much of what we know about the political structure of Ireland and the Druids is because this was written down centuries after the fact. There are clues in the mythology and the stories told, such as the stories of CuChulainn and the Welsh Mabinogion. There are clues in the laws from that time, as written by the Brehons (the Druidic group who made the laws and passed judgment on people, like the modern American Judicial system).

There are, however, very few documents that detail the Druidic organization from the Druids themselves. A great deal of what we know comes from documents sent to Rome by Caesar and written down by Pliny in their compilations and reports. A lot of them, therefore, are slanted to show the Druids as evil amoral creatures who willingly go out and capture hundreds of their own people and bloodily sacrifice them on altars to strange and evil gods who demand blood.

However, by crosschecking these documents with accounts written from centuries later by Christian Monks and the legends we have, we discover a LOT of good facts. In this lesson we will look at some of the facts discovered by the modern Druids, Celtic Reconstructionists and historians.

1) The Druids practiced blood sacrifice. Yeah, this is the big one. However, it is not nearly as prevalent nor bad as was told to Rome. The style of blood sacrifice that was practiced was like the sacrifice of the Shamans and the witches. It was used for magickal purposes (remember the previous comments on the amount of energy released in a death?) but more often it was used to prove to the Gods that there was a desperate situation going on and gain their attention.

Here's an example of a possible type of Druidic blood sacrifice: There is a drought going on in the land of a specific tribe and everything that can be done to alleviate this has been done, to no avail. Prisoners captured in the most recent skirmish with another tribe or tribes might be offered a chance to redeem themselves from the perceived cowardice of allowing themselves to be captured by pleading the case of their captors to the Gods. The severity of the situation would dictate how many people would be sacrificed. A very severe situation would demand several people be sacrificed.

More than likely, the captive would be taken by the victorious warriors and used as a slave, abused and so on, until death ensued. According to what we know of the "honor" structure of the Celts, this was a disgrace to the captured warrior. Their participation in sacrifice would allow them to die an honorable death and go to the Gods, instead of dying a death in slavery which was considered dishonorable. Since

most Celtic spirituality was focused on living an honorable lifetime, this was of prime importance.

This would also allow a death of dignity and honor, rather than one of humiliation. Don't think that simply because the prisoners were being sacrificed that they were tortured, they were not. The general attitude of the sacrifices was "what good would it do to make the sacrifice suffer? It means their soul would be confused and be unable to take the message to the Gods." So the Sacrificers were very skilled in death, both dealing it and their understanding of it. They also had an understanding of the death process from the perspective of the Shaman, and the journey the soul took once released from the body.

In some cases, the sacrificers could have seen themselves as doing a favor to those who were trapped in a body and unable to die. It could be seen as common (I have no evidence of this, so it's supposition) that a sacrificer could be called upon to release a dying person.

Don't think that tribe members were not used as a sacrifice, because they were. In fact, sometimes the Druids themselves were sacrificed to the Gods. There could be no greater magick than this. There is one body that was uncovered in the bogs of England and it shows all the marks of having undergone the "triple death" of blunt force to the back of the skull, garroting, and being stabbed in the jugular. [This](http://www.humnet.ucla.edu/humnet/celtic/22papers/jones.pdf) article may shed some more light. Or you can also search the net using the listing the "Lindow Man".

Nor were people the only things sacrificed. One ritual for the diviner (Druid tasked with oracular vision and scrying and prophesy gifts) was to lie on a white bull's hide for a period of time, and enter a trance. It was believed that the spirit of the Bull would bring the diviner a vision of the future and it was given a special weight. This was ALWAYS done on the New Year, and at other times during the year as needed. This was the most powerful means of prophecy available to the Druid. Now, the hide had to come from someplace, and usually a white bull would be raised specifically for this purpose, the bull would be sacrificed, the meat eaten and the bloody hide would be slept on.

It's logical to assume at this point that if a bull can be sacrificed and humans can be sacrificed, then other animals can be sacrificed as well, but the archeological evidence is not very clear about this subject.

One interesting ritual sacrifice is the harvesting of the mistletoe on the night of the Sixth Moon. In this rite, according to Pliny the Elder, the Druid climbs the tree that the Mistletoe grows in and cuts it with a golden sickle. Then two white bulls are sacrificed to the gods. I would assume that the Druids also thanked the Gods for the Mistletoe and thanked the tree for its gift. These links will give MUCH more information on this.

[Romancing the Mistletoe](#) Natural History Excerpt
[Classical Authors about the Druids](#) About half way down the page under "Pliny, Natural History

[The Druid's Mistletoe Rite](#)

2) There were multiple classes of Druids. Sometimes for those reading about the Druids, it can get confusing to those to hear that a Bard was treated as a Druid, a Brehon was a Druid, and a Cainte or Fildh were Druids. But once you know the structure, it's obvious.

A Druid was trained for at least 20 years before attaining the title of Druid. During that time, if you had accomplished 12 years of study, you were a Bard, because that was what had been studied up to that point, the history, stories and songs of the Celts. Yep, you were spending the first 55% of the study time you had to go in this course in JUST absorbing the lore and history.

This sounds excessive, but the children of the Celts had similar structures of study for ANY life path one chose. Additionally, think about your own life for a while. How many years did you take to learn what our Western Culture told you were critical for your existence? (Here's a hint, you were in school when you did this) Twelve years you said? Hmmm sounds right to me.

After that, the Druid went on to learn other skills; the Brehons (law givers) would spend the next three years learning the legal code of the Celts. Believe me, they needed this time. Their legal code was about as complex as the legal code of America. It was based around a couple principals: every person had worth inherent to their being, and that any crime could be forgiven if that worth could be paid. This was the concept of "honor price". Simply put, the greater your standing in the overall "tribe", the more personal value you had.

Most of the value came from your contributions. Let's say for a moment, that a farmer had been killed by a warrior of the tribe in retaliation for some slight. The Brehons would hear the case. They would determine that the farmer had a value of 2 cattle and the warrior would have to pay 2 cattle to the family of the farmer. This is an example, the actual Brehons has a very complex method of determining a person's worth and once determined it was not open for debate. So long as the warrior could pay the honor price of the farmer he has slain, he would not be punished further.

This code also assumed that those outside the tribe they were in were non-people. If, for example, I were a member of the Iceni, all other Iceni were people to me and the laws. A Cumhaill who was captured in a raiding party was not only a non-person, but also a slave. If he was beaten to death, the person doing it would owe nothing to his family members of the Cumhaill. After all, he's "one of them", not "one of us" and thus he has no worth. I may have to pay the OWNER of this slave for the work he will not do now, but the Cumhaill and his family can't bring a protest about ill treatment, someone in the Iceni clan must do so. This is one reason why banishment from the clan was such a HUGE penalty, because it severed all ties to a group and made the person so sentenced into nothing, with no family and made sure that he (or she) was outside all the protection of the laws. It also explains why a slight against a member of the Cumhaill by a member of the Iceni usually led to an armed conflict, this was the only way to gain satisfaction.

It goes on. [Celtic Law - A Short Summary](#) is one resource, [Brehon Law Project](#) is another, along with [Brehon Law](#), and there are many more. One site I found is a continuation of a site I first became a druid on [Ancient Worlds](#) which has a whole section devoted to the historic study of the Druids and the Celts, along with a section where Brehon scholars of today talk about the Brehonic laws in the context of the Celts. It's a serious site, even though there is a LOT of role-play, I learned most of what I know from this site and sites like it.

The final is the Druid. After passing through the preliminary stages of Bard and Brehon, the rank of Druid was achieved. Generally, this level of Druidry was concerned with understanding the magick and spirituality of the Celts. They could still specialize in certain aspects of Druidism, much like a college professor of History could specialize in a time period, culture or even a certain aspect of history. And once again, there were different jobs a Druid could do. A Druid who felt a call to politics could advise the Righ or Clan Chief, or they could decide if they didn't like politics to "minister" to the needs of the people in a village or area.

There were different titles for the specialties, one of which was the Cainte, or Magickians and Ritual Experts. I learned that those who were masters of an aspect of Druidic practice were called Ollamhs in some recreation groups, which is where I earned my title of Ollamh Cainte, or professor or master of magick and ritual. I have a good friend who earned the of Ollamh Fili, Master of Song and History, what a Bard eventually grew into, another who was an Ollamh Sencha, or Master (in her case mistress) of the Healing Arts and so on. (This was what we used on AncientSites, not what actually was used in the past. I must make that clear.)

3) There were three groups of Celts; the Gauls, the Irish and the Britons. Each had different cultures, customs and ways of doing things. However, the Druids were able (for the most part) to move from one group to another. It was uncommon, but it was possible. Most often, the Druids of the Gauls (France, Spain, Portugal, some of Italy, some of Germany) did not associate with the druids of Briton (England and part of Scotland, the Islands of Anglesey and Mann, and Wales) and Ireland (where they eventually migrated to Scotland). The time period of the Druids was approx 450 BCE to approx 100 CE at which point, the influence from Rome became too great. While Ireland was never conquered by Rome, and [Hadrian's Wall](#) cut England off from Scotland, the cultural and religious conquering was very thorough. Patrick didn't drive all the snakes out of Ireland, he drove all the Druids out, or so it's said. Some legends equate the Druid of the Celts with the Snake of the Old Testament (since they are both evil...) and THAT is what Patrick drove out. (references: [The Truth Behind St. Patrick's Day](#) and [The Catholic Encyclopedia](#)) However it is a known fact that Patrick was captured in a raid and made a slave to a Druid, and learned the ways of Druidism and used that knowledge to undermine and disintegrate the religion of the Druids MUCH later in his life.

I should probably add a note here: The Celts covered an area that was HUGE. Think the entire continent of Europe and parts of Asia at the height of their culture. Even given that, it was a bloodline and a genetic group, not only a culture. And each region,

the Gauls, the Irish and the Brittons, were different with different customs and language and religious/spiritual practices. While there was some transfer between the regions through the Druids, that was pretty much it. There was even a difference between the Northern Gauls (made up of the French/Germanics) and the Southern Gauls (Spain/Portugal/Italy). There was combat between the clans and the tribes, but they pretty much stayed in their region. There is only one story I can think of where there was cross-regional activity, and that is ONLY because Britain and Ireland are so close to each other and it resulted in ALL of the human life on Ireland being wiped out (at least, that's how the myth goes). Being Celtic is not a matter of having red hair, and in fact, Hitler's vision of the Arian race is pretty close to what the typical Celt was back in the time we are talking about. Read "The Gallic Wars" by Caesar sometime and pay attention to his description of the main people.

4) Modern Druidism is NOT the same thing the Druids of old times practiced.

Because of the lack of writings from the Druids themselves, and the fact that MOST of what was written down was preserved centuries after the last free Druids disappeared (in this case meaning Druids who were not being hounded by Rome or Catholicism), we have no clue what the spirituality of the Ancient Druids actually was. There are hints and clues in the documents of the times, hints in the writings of their enemies, hints in their mythology and so on, but it leaves holes in our knowledge. So, for the most part, Druidism of today takes what we DO know, uses what is hinted at, fills in with logic and archeology and research and creates the parts that are still missing from whole cloth. But just because this is what we have to do, even though we don't know exactly what was believed, that does not mean that we are not close in what has been practiced in the past.

We have some information preserved in mythologies and one document called "[THE COLLOQUY OF THE TWO SAGES](#)" in which one Druid talks to another (possibly an apprentice) and they discuss what a Druid needs to know to be considered a Druid. Many scholarly papers have been written on this subject, and a look at this is beyond the scope of this lesson. Suffice to say it's occult (hidden) enough that unless you are already familiar with many of the principals in this document it's easy to miss the key points.

Basically what you have is three main branches of modern day Druidism. You have the [OBOD \(Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids\)](#), which was created in the mid 1800's as a gentleman's society. It was known at the time as the "Ancient Druidic Order" at the time, and the OBOD eventually broke off from them to become what we know now as the OBOD. [druid_history.htm](#)

You also have the most well known Druidic organization in America, the ADF, or Ar nDraiocht Fein (translated to "Our Own Druidism") which was started by Isaac Bonewits. You can find their site at <http://www.adf.org/core/> and Isaac Bonewits' site at <http://www.neopagan.net>. There was a problem with some political aspects of the ADF and Isaac retired from the ADF with the "Arch Druid emeritus" in honor of all his work in creating and running the ADF for so many years. I will let you follow the links and read the stories of both these organizations right from them. [Here](#) are a few relevant articles you may also be interested in by Bonewits himself. (By the way, you may be

most familiar with Mr. Bonewits' work in the "[Advanced Bonewits Cult Danger Evaluation Frame](#)" that has been republished all over the net and in many books. It's pretty much the standard for evaluating whether or not an organization is a cult or not these days. I recommend to you that if you do not know this document.)

Then we come to those groups/people who have studied Druidism independently and have come to some conclusions that don't necessarily agree with the groups listed above (like yours truly) or who have had some dogmatic differences with the parent groups and left to start their own group reflecting that which they believe (like the [Henge of Keltria](#)) or who have done some independent study, come to some conclusions, shared those conclusions with others and created their own tradition like [The Summerlands](#)

There are other organizations in the UK and Europe currently, and unfortunately I don't know enough about them to tell you what they are like. My best suggestion is to ask around online if you are in that geographic area. However, this was shared with me by a reader: "arguably LAW (Loyal Arthurian Warband) has the highest political recognition, possibly the BDO - British Druid Order is more recognizably active and of course the Welsh/Cornish culture Eisteddfod are also well recognized even though not what neo-pagans would call Druids." Eisteddfod is an annual poetry/singing competition held in the UK in the Druidic style, but other than that, I can't tell you much.

(I should mention here that in each of the sites I recommend above, I know the founder/administrator/Arch Druid personally and have had many discussions with them, or someone I know knows them personally. For instance, I have had a few discussions with Isaac in the past, I have had quite a number of discussions with Dark Owl and Searles O'Dubhain and I know TopazOwl (second in command of the Henge of Keltria) pretty well. I have not had the honor of speaking on an intimate basis with Mr. Phillip Carr-Gomm (of the OBOD), although DarkOwl knows him on an intimate level and advised me that he is a nice man to speak with. Please understand I'm NOT name-dropping, but in some cases it's very much a matter of "who you know" and this is one of those cases. Each of these people and organizations have been around for a long time, and these organizations influenced much of modern Druidism. The organizations themselves reflect the personality of their founder/leader and I'm telling you that all these can be trusted to give you the best information they have, unlike SOME people like Douglas Monroe. But that's a whole separate issue.) (Added later: The ODU is a defunct organization now. It folded sometime in mid 2005, much to a lot of people's shame.)

In each of these cases, these groups and people are not fooling themselves into thinking that they are practicing as the Druids of the Celts practiced, but that they are trying to recreate the spirituality of the Druids as best as they can in modern times. That's an important factor to look at as some groups and organizations will try to have you think that they are the direct descendants of Merlin or the High Grand Order of Druids from 100 CE or that they have found a book written by the Druids in Latin which describes their belief system....

All I can say to those claims is "Caveat Emptor" (let the buyer beware). I am not going to say that they are lying, but there have been several cases of books that were claimed to be written by the Druids and were later proven as forgeries. Do some research and ask questions of those groups and people you trust to know who's who in the druidic communities. The Druids and such groups are small enough as a community right now that almost everyone is known to someone else or information on that person is easy to come by. But don't ask me, I'm just a Witch who knows a lot about Druidism. ;-)

5) Women were Druids.

I know that in most people's minds they see the Druids as men who wore long white robes and who had long white beards, but that's not the only Druids that were. Women were druids as well, fully capable of doing all the rites of Druidism and fully trained. They underwent the 20 years of training and used the magick just like their male counterparts. One of the most famous accounts of females in Druidism is the attack on Anglesey by the Romans. In one section, the [chronicler was writing](#) about "wild women running back and forth in front of the army, enraging it and casting their fell spells" which proves that there were women welcome in the ranks of Druidism.

This would also make sense when you look at the Gods. Dianecht was the physician of the Tuatha de Danann, and he was a skilled healer. He killed his son (Minach) for being a better healer than he was, and his daughter found growing on her brother's grave 365 herbs that would make man immortal, showing that the [goddesses were healers](#) too. That the contribution of the female was not overlooked nor was it disparaged like would happen in later years and the coming of Christianity.

Before we move on to Magick, I want to recommend two fictional books to you that illustrate a lot of what I'm talking about. The first is "Red Branch" illustrating the Irish Warrior culture as seen in the myth of CuChulainn. The other is called "Druids" which looks at the Druid order and spirituality from the perspective of the High Druid of Gaul during the Gallic Wars. Both of these books are by [Morgan Llewellyn](#) and can be found on Amazon.com.

Okay, enough clearing up of Misconceptions of Druidism, on to the part you have patiently been waiting for, the Magick of the Druids.

I am going to have to warn you here, be careful. There are aspects of this practice that will look familiar, but other aspects are VASTLY different. For instance, there are sections of Druidism that are VERY shamanistic in nature, but as I showed you before the Dhuite is so different from any elemental system that modern NeoPagans know that it's easy to get lost. So, let's take this one element at a time.

[Awen/IMBAS](#)

These are the same thing, just in Welsh it's Awen and in Irish it is IMBAS. This is literally knowledge from Illumination or channeling. When the Druid is in a meditative state, they can receive visions and information from the Gods, directly instructing them

in what they need to know. It can be about anything from the properties of an herb, to the song a plant will grow to, to what weather the Clan will have tomorrow to anything else that is necessary. To receive this was considered a great gift, a special attachment to the ALL, and was seen as a mark of high favor. In fact, one of the most flattering compliments I have EVER received was when DarkOwl read my poem on the [Dhuile](#) and him calling it pure IMBAS.

However, this was NOT just "open the head up and pour the knowledge in" as some seem to think, there was a lot of work to be done beforehand to encourage this state.

For instance, in that poem, it was not just *BOOM* and it was there, completely written and proof read, or not the Gods taking control of my body and writing it themselves. I did have to know what I wanted to do, how I wanted to say what needed to be said, the basic overall structure and the rules for poetry.

In the case of that poem, I knew I wanted a poem to instruct in the Dhuile. I wanted one that would capture what the Dhuile sets were in the stanzas and I wanted it to be a pneumonic device for students to have to learn the dhuile. I wanted it to have the sets of dhuile in the first line, and have the rest describe what they were. And I had to have them arranged so that in the first line they were Internal, External and Directional in that order, so the "columns" of Dhuile were consistent.

After that, I wrote the first line, and relaxed the control I had on my mind and let the words flow. I did some tweaking to them afterwards, and I simply let them flow out of me, as though I was the vessel they were contained in or like I was a funnel.

It is a trance of sorts, in which your mind is still present, but it gets out of the way enough to allow whatever is needed to speak through you to do so. It's like interpreting tarot card spreads after you have been doing it a while. You may pull out the Two of Pentacles (juggling too much) and put it in the "past" in a Celtic Cross spread, then pull out the Eight of Swords (trapped in the situation and helpless) and put it in the present position and finally put the Two of Wands (choice between the spirit and the material) in the "final outcome" space. While each of these cards mean something specific and the position they are in means something specific, seeing them in this order may prompt a reader to say "In the near past you felt that you had too much to do and that you were getting overstressed, while now you feel that you are trapped. Don't worry, the end says that the choice is yours to make between your mental and spiritual being and your physical one." An experienced reader in the throes of Awen may say "I see that you got into a situation recently where you felt you were doing too much with too little. You now feel trapped by this situation and that any choice you make is a bad one. But let me ask you this, is it better to be worried about what others will think, or what you need to survive? Your ship is coming in, and I would advise you get out of this relationship you are in that has you trapped an unable to do anything. You are helpless now, but you have the ultimate power to make the choice between what you actually DO need and what you THINK you need."

The first reading anyone can read out of the pamphlet that comes with the deck. The second is true IMBAS, in which seemingly unrelated information simply springs into

your mind, and you find yourself speaking it without knowing quite why, and subsequently freaking out the person you are reading for. But you still had to know what each of the cards meant, you had to know what they meant in the context of the reading and in their positions, and how they related to each other. But that extra little something kicked in and started you mentioning information that is relevant to the situation, but which is not found in the books of tarot cards.

That is IMBAS and Awen at its finest.

How do you know that you had that kind of experience? The same way you know that energy is moving around you. For me, my hair on the nape of my neck stands up and I get goose bumps all over my body when Awen comes on me. And it doesn't matter whether or not I have written something and am re-reading it or if someone else has written it, it's all the same feeling. It's the way I use to find the truth in what I have read or heard.

Anyhow, the next means of magick of the Druids was the [Dhuile](#).

In this tool, it is very much "as above, so below". The cosmos is mirrored in us, and in the Sea. The three primary elements of the Druids were the Sky, the Land, and the Sea. Those three realms are where everything is at, from the Stone to the Face to the Clouds. The full list is here:

Internal	External	Directional
Face	Sun	South
Mind	Moon	Inwards
Blood	Sea	West
Breath	Wind	East
Head	Sky	Above
Hair	Green World	Outwards
Flesh	Land	Below
Bones	Stone	North
Spirit	Clouds	Through

This is probably one of the most confusing sets of elemental associations that there is, and I don't understand it yet. But this is also one of the most mystical when used properly. I'll be honest, because I know of and can use it, does not mean that I understand it. I have not used this system completely enough to fully be comfortable with the Dhuile. When I use it, most often I use it like a codebook, with long laborious translation. But there are aspects to it that relate around and to other parts of Druidic spirituality, as we will see in a few moments.

["The Three Cauldrons"](#)



















This tool of Druidism is one of those things that you go "huh?" about, but once you understand what the Three Cauldrons represent, the beauty of it is obvious.

The best way I can explain the Cauldrons is by saying that each Cauldron represents a "body" in Buddhism. Zen Buddhists believe in three bodies, the physical body, the mental body (intellect) and the soul or spiritual body. Freudian Psychology also recognized these bodies with the Id, Ego and Superego. This explains the Cauldrons also. I have also heard the Cauldrons described as being the Celtic system of chakras. I have also related these to the path of Self-Actualization.










In brief, there are three cauldrons in each of us, The Cauldron of Warming (physical), the Cauldron of Vocation (mental and intellectual) and the Cauldron of Knowledge (spiritual). The Cauldrons turn at different times in our life. All the Cauldrons go from inverted, mouth down, to on it's side to mouth up. The Cauldron of Warming is the only one that is upright from birth, which is obvious since the physical is working from the first moment of life.

It's important to note that the Cauldron of Knowledge CANNOT be turned upright until the Cauldron of Vocation is turned and filled. It's not enough to turn the cauldron; it must be filled as well. For instance, I cannot logically turn the Cauldron of Knowledge (spirituality) until I have knowledge to put that spirituality to work. I cannot logically gain knowledge unless my body is at its peak performance.

If I were to put this visually I could use this:

Warming	Vocation	Knowledge	Description
			Time before birth
			Just after birth and for the first few months of life
			When learning starts (as you can see, the Vocation cauldron is on it's side, in preparation to be turned upright)
			Time in School, studying some part of life skills
			In the middle of a religious epiphany (baptism, Seminary, holy ecstasy)
			What most humans would be striving for during their lifetime.

However, it is also possible for these cauldrons to spontaneously rotate around and empty by life experiences, such as death or sadness, or other events.

Warming	Vocation	Knowledge	Description
			<p>Physical illness, such as disease or so on. The knowledge is still there in the Vocation Cauldron, but the Cauldron of Knowledge has rotated because while the body is sick, you can't give your full attention to the spiritual. If the Cauldron of Warming were completely inverted, the patient would be dead.</p>
			<p>This could be an example of a catastrophic event, like loosing your home, winning the lottery, or something that makes you stupid for a while.</p>
			<p>Death of a loved one, in which it makes you forget your training and grieve for the unknown. The knowledge you gained is still there, waiting for you to remember it, but you can't use it because the Cauldron of Knowledge is overwhelming the Vocational Cauldron as well as the Warming Cauldron with the grief.</p>

In each of the above events, you can re-focus on the areas of your life that the cauldrons relate to and turn the cauldrons again.

This is an email discussion I had with DarkOwl about the Cauldrons. He told me that each of the Cauldrons related directly to one of the Dhuille, and this is what I found out. Mind you, this is what I felt, and he told me that this is pretty close to what he uses in his training classes and it was pretty good for coming off gut impulse. He said that the major difference is that the directional associations were different in his tradition (which he teaches for free, as opposed to those traditions that ask for outrageous fees).



Okay, working on impulse here. Don't know how close it will be. Basically I "asked my Center" what the answer to these were, and got responses. Here is what I got.

Internal Vocational	External Knowledge	Directional Warming
Face (V)	Sun (K)	South (W)
Mind (V)	Moon (K)	Inwards (W)
Blood (K)	Sea (W)	West (V)
Breath (W)	Wind (K)	East (V)
Head (K)	Sky (V)	Above (W)

Hair (W)	Green World (K)	Outwards (V)
Flesh (W)	Land (V)	Below (K)
Bones (W)	Stone (K)	North (V)
Spirit (K)	Clouds (W)	Through (V)

Some of these I have reasons for, here are those:

- Internal = Vocational These internal qualities relate to the Mind and the Intelligence.
- External = Knowledge Taking note of these usually doesn't happen until one is very advanced and realizes that they all have a spirit
- Directional = Warming These are some of the first things that are noted by us, that here is different from THERE and up and down are different.
- Face: One's personality is on the Face. If one can control the face, one is an actor. Of the Mind, discipline and will.
- Sun: The Sun is a God, understanding and LIGHT of the sun have been likened to IMBAS and Awen all the time, the light bulb moments.
- South: As a direction, we general want to go toward where it is warmer, which is a bodily need.
- Mind: DUH, of the mind.
- Moon: Mother and nighttime, holding secrets, knowing when to hold secrets and when to be gentle.
- Inwards: Some of the first things we learn is to listen to our body, pain, gurgles in the stomach, our mother's heartbeat.
- Blood: Our blood is the essence of ourselves, the distilled essence of us. That is why it is a spell component. All that is us, reduced to a physical form.
- Sea: IT was our birthplace.
- West: It is the land of danger in some myths, but because it can be guarded against, that is something a thinking person can do.
- Breath: You need breath for life
- Wind: Wind carries all that is spoken on it to us, as Math was able to know, a very Awen trait
- East: Beginning place, sunrise and the start. There is you, and there is the start.
- Head: The location of the brain, and thus the seat of our consciousness.
- Sky: The patterns of life can be seen in the patterns of the sky, the birds, clouds and so on. Contemplating it can lead to wisdom
- Above: As above, so below, first principal of magick and life in general
- Hair: The seat of our strength, as in Sampson and some other
- Green world: The Green world is us made large. All that is in the Green world is reflected in ourselves.
- Outwards: Noticing that there is another place other than in your mind, is the start of learning
- Flesh: Um, Warming? Am I close.???
- Land : The land supports us and nourishes us. It has it's own life and life cycle. We can take advantage of that.
- Below: The underworld, the place where we can be and learn from those who have passed through before.

- Bones: The framework, the scaffolding which keeps us erect.
- Stone: There are times when being stone is not a fantasy. It is a state that Buddhists strive to be at times. Solid and grounded, empty, immortal. Spirit
- North In the North, good things dwell. Spiral Castle, Arianhrod, Santa Claus. One can gain knowledge by going there and coming back.
- Spirit: This one should be obvious.
- Clouds: Clouds are made of water and dust. They are not of the air, they dwell in the air. They are made by the Earth and us.
- Through: We seek to pass through, that is when enlightenment happens, when knowledge is gained. NOT wisdom, but simple knowing.



The next major tool in Druidic magick is the [Ogham](#). Don't make the mistake and think that the Ogham is like the FUTHARK runes, which has a method of divination built around it, it's not.

The Ogham was used originally as a writing script. They used it to mark boundaries and to advertise things like "Cathbad makes good combs" and "This sword belongs to Keith". At some point, the Druids took this script and associated each letter with a specific tree, who's qualities they admired. With this association, the basis for a set of divination runes was laid. Note this is different from the FUTHARK runes in which the writing was all that existed and modern scholars tried to make a divinatory system out of it.

I can't say that I use the Ogham to divine with, I generally use omens and IMBAS to forecast the future, however, Searles at The Summerlands gives a [course in Ogham Divination](#) twice a year. The fee is nominal, and basically covers the cost of the book used in the course. While I have not taken it yet, I hope to one day.

Next are the Gods and Goddesses of Druidism

Please understand something, the deities of the Druids are critical. You cannot call yourself a druid if you remove the Celtic Gods from the picture. It would be like trying to describe color to someone who had no sight from birth, who had absolutely nothing to hang your description of "red" on. The flavor of Druidism changes vastly if you try to substitute other deities for the Celtic Gods.

The Gods were pretty much unique to the different clans. They had their own patron deities, and they had their own names for the different deities, which is why you find that Brigid is spelled four different ways in Celtic Mythology. The goddess of Fire was important to the region, but they had their own name for Her. It was not until the Catholic Monks started compiling the deities into a mythological concordance and collecting the stories together that they started reconciling the deities' names.

The two links following are compilations of those appearing in mythology, which is assembled by Mike Nichols. One is the list of deities and people for the Irish, and the next is for the Welsh. Unfortunately, Caesar did a good job in Gaul and we have lost

the mythology of those people, except what Caesar and Pliny assembled which is slanted terribly.

[Irish Myth Concordance](#)
[Welsh Myth Concordance](#)

Verbal magick

One last component of Druidic magick is the spoken and written word. Consider this for a moment, the Bards are a grade of Druid, and their magick is through the songs of the tribe. The Bards know the histories and so on of the group and they share those with those that they meet. Because of this, the people talked about in stories never die.

Also consider the power the word had now. If I said to my boss, "Stick it up your ass", I would probably be fired pretty fast. However, if a doctor said the same thing about a suppository, it would probably be considered crude, but accepted as instructions on how to use the medicine. Think of how many flame wars have been started online by one person taking what another said amiss and deciding to be offended. Think about how often plainly spoken words are misconstrued to be an insult, and conversely how often insults are missed by some who don't quite understand the context it's said in.

Words can be powerful magick. I'm speaking about the same things that make a strong woman into a dependant hurting person without leaving any visible scars and the same thing that can build confidence up to a point where the world can be conquered. Think about how in a diplomatic situation that a war can be started by a single misunderstood statement.

These are all well-known effects of words and writings, so is it any surprise that the Druids use it all the time? Consider this satiration:



> I was just wondering has anyone gone to their local churches or
> communities and educated people about the Wiccan religion and the danger
> of doing spells with no knowledge of how and why to do it? Like a goddess
> or god invocation, and what it means to do an invocation. Or the
> unforeseen consensequences that doing spells can cause? The law of
> returns, ending a spell and closing a circle correctly. There are alot of
> young people drawn to doing witchcraft that don't properly research or
> have the knowledge of what they are setting into motion. I am thinking
> about doing it because there are people who are interested, but want
> privacy, and not getting proper guidance from the massive contradictory
> internet about where they should start. So they jump right in and end up
> doing something unknowingly, like inviting then trapping a spirit in the
> house, without proper knowledge of what they did and how to fix it. And
> how to keep it from happening again.

<FULL RANT MODE>

What makes you think that we have not been doing this all this time? Many of us have been trying to educate the public about the dangers/rewards of magick, it's just that you fluffy canars don't seem to get the point. Let me illustrate for a minute...

I'm teaching a class online in magick and part of the course requires the student to be familiar with different schools and philosophies of magick. So far, I have been teaching this class for about 9 months and I'm only half way through it. This is an enormously complex subject and you can't learn it by sitting in the Circle with your HPS and chanting for a bit. You cannot call yourself a witch because you make one potion of relaxation bath salts successfully ONCE. You don't know everything when you walk into someone's home and ask a benevolent ghost to leave. When you have walked into a house and forcibly ejected a malevolent spirit bent on destroying the occupants of the house and you have kept it from coming back, when you have successfully conjured the elemental ruler of Air, made him obey you and had him assign one of his dukes to be your personal servant, when you have cast enough spells to bring money to you that you realize that the Threefold return and the Rede are simply known as "cause and effect" THEN I will let you call yourself a mage and a witch. Until then you are a fluffy canar, and depending on the severity of the affliction you may even be a fluffernutter.

Has it occurred to you that 90% of humanity doesn't WANT us sticking our nose into their business on a regular basis? Has it occurred to you that a Christian being told that by praying to God that he's casting a spell doesn't WANT to know that, even if it is true? Has it occurred to you that you would be so totally insulted and you would go immediately into "persecuted witch" mode if a Jew came in and corrected your pronunciation of the chants Gardner added from the Key of Solomon, and that you would be ready to hit something if a Catholic Priest decided to teach you how to conduct a ritual correctly? Has any of this crossed your puny pea brain? No? Why not?

Could it be that according to you, it's good and correct for you to stick your nose into everything in the universe, but no one better stick their nose into yours? Guess what... THAT'S CALLED KETTLEITIS IN MOST PLACES.

Oh, and by the way, can I watch as the Goddess slaps the crap out of you for breaking the Rede? How you may ask? Causing harm to these people by going in and condescendingly telling these people what they are doing wrong with spells and such you are causing so much mental trauma to them that you deserve to be bitch-slapped by Kali or the Morrigan. I want to watch it. After all, this could be their way of learning, through trial and error.

And what makes you think you are qualified to tell them that their spells are wrong in the first place? Don't you fluffy canar realize that most of the spells you are going to be "correcting" came from the RCC in the first place, or at least from those who were members of the RCC? In fact, there are several Popes and Cardinals who were rumored to be magickians that could blow away those like Crowley. Did you know that Elphias Levi, one of the huge magickal minds of the 19th Century was a Catholic Monk

for most of his life? Ever heard of the Grimoire of Pope Honourous III? Do you even know who Elphias Levi was?

In short, fluffy canar, you are doing to them what you have accused them of doing to us for centuries. Besides, if the infestation of the ghost is too severe, they can always call in an exorcist to drive it out. Yep, there is a whole section of the RCC that deals with JUST driving out malignant spirits that infest people and places, the difference is that they actually STUDY the problem before leaping in and deciding that THIS is the problem. Ya know, like they do some experimentation and actually use Occam's razor to see if there is another explanation before chiding the occupants of the house for summoning a spirit they can't control.

Ever walked into a chapel? Ever felt their Wards? What?!?!? You don't even know what a ward is? Then how does that qualify you to chide these people for miscasting spells they don't know how to control? They seem to be better magickians than you.

In short, silly fluffy canar, back the hell off and cast the beam from YOUR eye before touching the mote in theirs.

</FULL RANT MODE>



I wrote that rant in response to the post quoted above. It was on a private list I'm a member of specifically for ranting about fluffy members of the Pagan community (also called the canar community to differentiate it from those pagans who are Hindu, Buddhist and so on. For a full definition please see [Canar Definition](#)) the quoted section was posted for ridicule, and I decided to do the rant. It's very satirical and made to be scathing and quite flaming in nature. But it was also a private satire for those who agreed with the general content of the rant. (Basically I was preaching to the choir on this one, everyone on the list agreed with the general content of the rant.)

And this is only one example of satire, now imagine this same thing set to music and spoken in the public square by every bard that was in existence. This was a magick that literally ruined reputations and caused some to commit suicide to get it to stop. At a time when a person's reputation was everything, it was a deadly power to be able to publicly ridicule them.

Lastly, please read this [review of the 21 Lessons of Merlin](#) if you have not already. It just goes to show you that even if you call yourself a Druid, it does not mean that you actually are a Druid.

These are some of the better references I have in my "Favorites" folder on Druidism. Each of these work when I copied them here, so if something is not working, wait a while and it may be working later.

- [Táin Bó Cuailnge - The Cattle Raid of Cooley](#)

- [The Druid Archive](#)
- [EARTH MYSTERIES Introduction](#)
- [Clófhoirne Oghaim Ogham Fonts](#)
- [Complete Cattle Raid of Cooley, Irish and English](#)
- [Celtic Folklore - original Celtic Folklore, Legends and Lore](#)
- [Ár nDraíocht Féin - A Druid Fellowship](#)
- [Who Were the Druids](#)
- [DarkOwl's Druid Grove](#)
- [Isaac Bonewits' Homepage](#)
- [Merlin's Voice](#)
- [The Mabinogion](#)
- [The Encyclopedia Mythica](#)
- [The Summerlands](#)
- [Celtic Myth - Irish and Welsh](#)
- [The Lebor Gabala Erren](#)
- [List of Published Texts at CELT](#)



Assignment

Well, I'm going to give you some theory on another source of energy for spells, one that I'm loathe to tap into very often for reasons that should become plain as I write.

This is the emotion as a source of fuel.

Okay, get Yoda's voice out of your head. His advice only applies to those who believe it applies. (Those of you not in the know, his advice to Luke and others consists of "Anger, fear and hate are of the Darkside, it causes suffering and forever will it dominate your days once you start down that path.") I have never agreed with this stance of always being contaminated by the darker emotions of anger and hate.

First off, if I was not angry at the injustice in the world, would I do anything about it? If I did not hate what those in public office were doing, would I get out an vote? If I did not fear what could happen to me, would I have the impulse to learn to protect myself? All these situations are times when these "negative" emotions are useful and good to have. Without them there would be no impulse to change or grow.

So too can these same emotions be used to fuel spells. Let's take some examples:

Hate: In this I'm talking about the emotion that we have that causes us to hate situations, and also that same emotion that causes us to hate people. I hate my boss, so I use that hate to fuel a spell that I have targeting him. Now, in some cases, I can be using it to cause a specific thing to happen to him, or I can simply use that hate to cause him to get what he deserves.

Anger: I'm angry at what a soon to be ex-husband has been doing to a friend of mine, and I can use that anger to fuel a spell to hurt him, or to simply keep him so busy dealing with the consequences of his actions that he's too busy to do much of anything else.

Fear: I'm afraid of being hurt while I'm on the Astral Plane, so I use that fear as the impetus to set up a ward to keep me safe.

Now in each of these cases, the "flavor" of the emotion will linger. The fear in the ward will attract those things that feed off that fear, and the anger of my spell will cause the victim to become angry about the effects of my spell, rather than accepting it. In other words, it could feed into a negative cycle of action/response.

But for all that, it can be a powerful fuel and energy source.

I want you to take notice next time you are under extreme emotion. Check your physiological reactions, your pulse, your breathing, your mental processes. Write these impressions down in your notebook for later comparison. Do this every time you are under extreme emotion, be it fear, hate, anger, ecstasy, joy, love or what have you. Write these down. You don't have to write down the time and date but the entries should look something like this:

*"FUCK HIM! Theat GOD*AMN BASTID of a SON OF A B*TCH F*CKER has done this to me for the last time! I WILL NOT TAKE THIS! Shit.... heart's pounding, my hair is standing on end, Shit it's hard to see.... Head's swimming. Damn, every time I think of htis I get mada ll over again.... Crap.... I can't believe that this happeneded AGAIN! I'm so pissed I can't see straight. I want to go out and kick him in the nuts to make him hurt and hurt and hurt...."*

I think you get the idea. Part of this is to purge this emotion also from you, to give you a constructive way of dissipating this energy so you don't get in trouble.

Now, a week later or so, take out all those entries, and I want you to meditate. I want you to look for a few things:

1. How much energy is in the entries in your journal? I'm betting that it will be a significant amount of metaphysical energy that in in the words and letters and paper of the rant. Compare it to other entries where you were calm and/or grounded
2. What does that energy feel like? In this one I want impressions of how the energy feels, not what source it came from (ie, "I was mad", "I was scared..." but more "It feels like a sea urchin, all poking/stabbing points, spiky.")
3. Next time what would you do with that energy? Are there situations where you could use it to fuel a spell? Would you use that if you could?
4. Would grounding it out help? If you could not ground it for one reason or another, what would you do with that energy?

The next time this happens, situations like above, especially with sorrow and so on, I want you to channel it all into your battery or at least *A* battery. It does not have to be your primary battery because this energy may need to be cleansed and cleared up, but I want you to treat this emotion as though it were just another energy and then get what happened and those impressions down on paper.

There are a lot of other things that you could look for, see what you come up with. Any impressions or thoughts will be valuable to you.

And please note, this is not only the "darker" emotions of hate and fear and anger, but also extreme joy, happiness, the sappy crying one does when seeing a coffee commercial on TV with the older brother coming home for the holidays.... (Perfect timing, as the advertisers will be pulling heartstrings at this time of the year.) These extreme emotions are just as valuable as the darker emotions, the effects of the darker emotions is just more noticeable is all.

Why are we looking at these emotional swings? Because it occurs to me that we have not discussed "Death Curses" like I thought we had, so we will cover it now.

As you have been finding out in your experiments and throughout this course, everything has energy to it. Plants grow, have energy to them, we cut them and take that energy into ourselves. The elements have energy to them, our children have energy to them, the pets, the wind, the sun and on and on. One of the greatest sources of energy is ourselves. We can use our personal energy to fuel spells and spell-like effects that, if we did not tap into our personal stores of energy, would take a lot of time and effort to do. This is why in many cases when we get to the end of a spell-casting session that we are exhausted, because we have poured our own personal energies into the spell without realizing it.

So, this being true, can we harness the release of energy of ourselves when we die? Obviously I'm going to say "yes" simply because I mentioned it above.

Yes, we can harness the energy given off at the time of death and use it for our purposes, just as we can harness the energy of life creation as in Sex Magick. It seems to me that when a body is alive, there is an energetic structure holding the soul in place, preventing it from escaping into other areas of reality. We can learn to see and manipulate this structure for our own purposes, and thus we are able to Astrally Project, remember past lives and so on. Well, upon death, the soul escapes that energy structure, and it can take that energy with it, let that energy dissipate along with the body, or use it to fuel a curse or blessing.

How many legends do we as a culture have that depends on the hate and anger of a poor old woman being channeled into a curse on a family? How many of those come from the death of the old lady? I'll point you to Macha Fleet-Foot as one example... [this page](#) . She harnessed a couple energy sources, the source of pain from birth, the source of death and the source of her anger, and threw this curse on ALL men, not just those present, but all of them in that country, and that curse persisted for 10

generations. Talk about a powerful spell. Even if one stipulates that magick was more common then, that's still one powerful spell.

The point of this section is that this kind of power does exist and can be used by us. Granted it is hard to touch, but that does not mean that we cannot use it at all. Here's another example of the power behind emotions; the parental blessing.

How many people do you know who have gone against the parental wishes in something, and had their world fall down around them while those who have gotten permission from a parent for some activity they were contemplating had everything go right? How many times did a parent look at them and say "I told you so...." in that tone of voice that makes the child feel like they are 5 again? An example of this is Jacob and Esau from the Bible.

It's an incredible power, but when you look at it objectively I can see these steps to the parental blessing:

1. Nervousness on the part of the child or person seeing the blessing
2. Heightened awareness and an altered state of mind in the person seeking the blessing
3. Curiosity on the part of the parent
4. Surprise and shock on the part of the parent
5. Joy and release on the part of the person asking the blessing

...all of which are emotions that when channeled into something, like the ritual words of a parental blessing (such as seeking the hand of a person in marriage or leaving on a journey such as college) can become a powerful thing which can carry over for quite some time. The more energy and power, or the more excitement and surprise, the more energy is going into the spell.

So, work with those emotions, and try to channel the energy from an extreme emotion into a spell once or twice. There will be times when you need that extra boost in power.