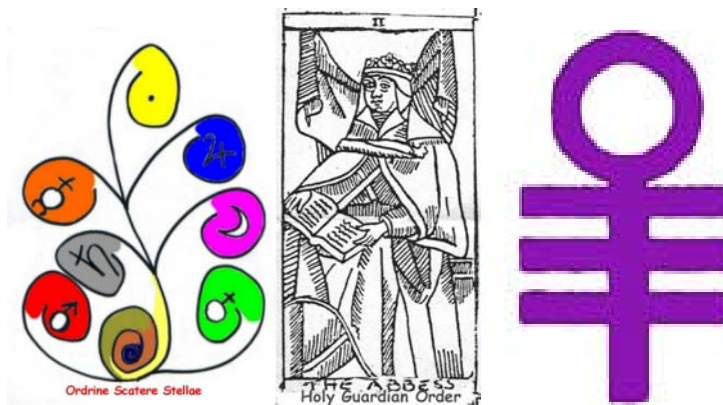




Jean de Cabalis - a various Orders paper

For Members of the Following Orders



Herbs and Spices and their Correspondences

By Michael Freedman

Essaier XXIII

Herbs and Spices and their correspondences

Herbs and spices are a very effective means to tap into the planetary and elemental forces which magicians use to power their spells and rites. There are many ways to use herbs and spices in ritual magic. The first that usually comes to mind is as incense, that is, leaves, petals, powder or essence, burned on charcoal to give off a fragrant smoke. Sometimes, several spices or herbs are ground up and mixed with other substances to make powder,

cones or sticks to be set alight to smoulder.

Not all herbs and spices are meant to be used in this way. It is better to hang bunches of some fragrant herbs in the temple to perfume it. It is usually a good idea to bruise or lightly crush the leaves to increase their aroma.

It is not recommended to put herbs or flowers in vases of water in a temple. The smell of old-flower-vase water has no constructive magical correspondences that I know of. It is better to keep flowers or herbs dry and allow them give off their fragrance as they dry out and die. That is, if you propose to retain them in your temple at all after your rituals are over.

Some herbs and most spices, if they are not toxic, can be used as flavourings for magical breads. However, I know of no magical tradition, apart from the *Guardian Order* I belong to, in which the eating of small, spicy cakes or biscuits, usually accompanied by wine or other liquid refreshment, is used as a magical technique.

Finding the right herbs

Most herbs and spices have acquired their correspondences with the cosmic energies through long use by schools of magicians; and thus there are inevitably differences from school to school. Because many books now draw on a variety of sources for their information, this can mean that the same herb can be referred to several different energies, even in the one book.

When the same herbs or spices are referred to more than one planetary energy in the following list, you should decide which correspondences suit you best personally, on the basis of your own careful experiments. Then, use each herb or spice for only one correspondence.

Camphor, for example, can correspond to the Moon for its whiteness and to Mars/Pluto for its pungency. In my temple, I use it as Mars-Pluto incense and never use it at Moon festivals. **Juniper** is referred to both Jupiter and the Moon; but I use it only for Moon festivals.

It is best to decide on no more than two or three readily available herbs or spices for each planetary energy and stick with those. You will focus your powers much more effectively that way.

Some incense, such as the **frankincense** blends used in Christian churches or the white sandalwood sticks used in Hindu temples ["specially made for puja"], are virtually universal incenses and can be used under any circumstances or to focus any of the planetary energies.

A very useful rule:

When in doubt, burn sandalwood

When magicians consult books on herbs and spices, they usually find that either they are concerned only with their culinary and medicinal uses; or, if it they do deal with the magical uses of herbs and spices, the author is oriented strictly to the Northern Hemisphere and lists dozens of plants they have never heard or which cannot be obtained in Australia-NZ.

All the herbs and spices listed in this article are available in Australia-NZ. Some of them will not be available from your local supermarket, but there are many herb now in this country which should be farms able to help you. There is not room in an article to do more than list the names of herbs and spices corresponding to the planetary energies. Not all of them yield their perfumes best when burned, and some should not be used in cooking. I have omitted, as far as I know, any herb or spice that is dangerous to human life or sanity when inhaled or eaten.

Useful books on Herbs

Those who wish to investigate the individual properties of herbs and spices further will find the following books useful. All of them are new enough not to be out of print yet. All of them, as well as many other excellent texts on herbs and incense.

Herbs in Magic and Alchemy:

- "Techniques from ancient herbal lore." by C.L. Zalewski. Prism/Unity, 1990
This book preserves the standard Golden Dawn techniques and correspondences.
- "Wylund's Book of Incense:
- "A Magical Primer." by Steven R. Smith. Weiser, 1989.

Outstandingly clear, instructive book, which includes detailed instructions for making incense; and for using herbs for magic.

- The Master Book of Herbalism
by Paul Beyers. Phoenix, 1984. Encyclopaedic and comprehensive. Best modern book on herbs currently available.

CAUTION

Be careful when handling any essences, as they can often damage the skin. None of the herbs or spices in the following lists are dangerously toxic to handle. However, many of them should not be taken internally. Do not use any of the herbs or spices listed for cooking without first checking in a herbal, such as Wylund's or Beyers, whether they are toxic or how toxic they are.

SUN - LEO - FIRE

Aloe Vera; Angelica; Bay-, Bergamot; Calendula; Camomile; Dandelion; Eyebright; Fenugreek; Frankincense; Lemon; Lemon-grass; Lovage; Marigold; Orange; Orris-root; Rosemary; Safflower; St John's Wort; Sunflower

MOON - CANCER - WATER

Camphor; Coconut; Chickweed; Cleavers; Cucumber seeds; Evening Primrose; Hibiscus; Hyssop; Jasmine; Juniper; Job's Tears; Poppy.

MERCURY - GEMINI - AIR

Caraway; Cassia; Cinnamon; Jacob's Ladder; Lavender; Mace; Marjoram; Meadowsweet; Parsley; Sandalwood; Savory;

MERCURY - VIRGO - EARTH

Chaste tree; Dill; Elecampagne; Fennel; Fenugreek; Sage; Wintergreen

VENUS - LIBRA - AIR

Alecost; Alkanet; Cardamon; Catnip; Goldenrod; Golden Seal; Lady's Mantle; Lemon Verbena; Marjoram; Oregano; Pennyroyal; Peppermint; Plantain; Primrose; Rosehips; Savory; Sorrel; Spearmint; Tansy; Thyme; Verbena; Violet.

VENUS - TAURUS - EARTH

Allspice; Angelica; Blackberry; Blueberry; Burdock; Coltsfoot; Lovage; Nasturtium; Patchouli; Pomegranate peel; Red Clover; Red Sandalwood;

MARS - ARIES - FIRE

Aloe Vera; Aloes, Bitter; Basil; Broom; Camphor; Catnip; Cayenne; Coriander; Curry plant; Dock; flax; Garlic; Geranium; Ginger; Honesty; Honeysuckle; Hops; Hyssop; Horseradish; Menthol; Myrtle; Mustard; Nettle; Onion; Oregano; Plantain; Salt; Tarragon; Turmeric; Valerian; Wormwood; Witch-hazel.

JUPITER - SAGITTARIUS - FIRE

Agrimony; Alfalfa; Balm of Gilead; Borage; Cedar; Chicory; Cornflower; Dandelion; Juniper; Lemon Balm; Lemon; Verbena; Lilac; Lungwort; Meadowsweet; Nutmeg; Oak; Plantain; Peppermint; Raspberry; Red Clover; Sweet Cicely; Tansy.

SATURN - CAPRICORN - EARTH

Aconite; Cascara Sagrada; Celery; Comfrey; Eucalyptus; Ginseng; Horehound; Horsetail; Hearts Ease; Parsley; Pine; Poppy; Rue; Shepherd's Purse; Skullcap; Verbena; Woad; Yarrow

URANUS - AQUARIUS - AIR

Allspice; Chicory; Cinnamon; Clover; Cloves; Coffee; Elecampagne; Ginseng; Linseed Oil; Nutmeg; Oxalis; Pomegranate

NEPTUNE - PISCES - WATER

Alcohol; Ether; Lemon; Methylated Spirits; Narcissus; Orange; Passion flower; Poppy; Rock or Sea Salt; Willow; Wisteria

PLUTO - SCORPIO - WATER

Acorns; Bitter aloes; Bitumen; Camphor; Cypress; Eucalyptus; Hops; Oats; Patchouli; Rye; Sulphur; Wheat; Wormwood