
Astrology of the Ancient Druids

Part 2

The Hittite Zodiac

1. Aries	The Ram
2. Taurus	The Bull
3. Gemini	The Rushes
4. Cancer	The Eagle
5. Leo	The Proud Lion
6. Virgo	The Deer
The Vernal Point	“Leashed was the Great River and its current”
7. Libra	The Leopard
8. Scorpio	The Wolf
9. Sagittarius	The Graceful Antelope
10. Capricorn	The Messenger of the Gods Riding a Sea Monster
11. Aquarius	The Throne of the Sky God
12. Pisces	The Bearded Serpents

The Hittite tablets were written in cuneiform and date from between the 16th and 13th centuries BCE.

“We know that the Vedic literature is considerably older than the historical Hittites. The Hittites, Mittani and Kassites consisted mainly of non- Aryans of Asia Minor supervised by the aristocratic elite of Aryan Kshatriyas. Even the Assyrians had such rulers as evidenced by their purely Sanskrit names: Asurbanirpal (Asura Vanir Pal 'Whoever protects the Word of the Asuras'; Asurnarsipal, Asura Nari Pal 'Whoever protects the people of the Asuras').”

(David Frawley, letter dated 25 April 2000).

Frawley's reading of the Assyrian king's names as being Sanskrit or Old Aryan is in itself very interesting. As we have seen, Babylon had long been dominated by Persian warrior kings. And the Avesta, despite the Zoroastrian reform (ca. 600 BCE), does not at all contradict the cosmological scheme described in the Hittite tablets (Chapter 19, verse 42, translated into English by James Darmesteter, from *The Avesta*, 1898.):

“I invoke the Kara fish, who lives beneath waters in the bottom of the deep lakes. I invoke the ancient and sovereign Merezu, the most warlike of the creatures of the two Spirits. I invoke the seven bright Sru...”

The Chaldeans had a very different sky chart prior to the Indo-European conquests. So, for the sake of sceptics who believe that the Chaldean scheme was tropic, therefore solar, here is the full Chaldean lunar astrological model of 18 divisions (also, please note that an annual lunar calendar is much shorter than that of a solar year, and even less so than a full course of the moon around the Zodiac which takes one month comprising of 27 or 28 days):

1. MUL.MUL, “the hairbrush or comb,” passing through the Hyades and Pleiades moon in Taurus.
2. MUL.GUD.AN.NA, “the bull of Anu,” the moon passes through Taurus.
3. MUL.SIPA.ZI.AN.NA, “the cattle herder of Anu,” the moon passes through Orion.
4. MUL.SHU.GI, “the old man,” the moon passes through Perseus.
5. MUL.GAM.ZUBI, “the wand,” the moon through Auriga.
6. MUL.MASH.TAB.BA.GAL.GAL "The Great Twins," the moon through Gemini.
7. MUL.AL.LUL, “Procyon,” the moon crosses the Little Dog (Canis Minor).
8. MUL.UR.GU.LA “The lioness,” the moon through Lion (Leo Major).
9. MUL.AB.SIN, “the furrow,” the moon crosses Spica in the constellation Virgo.
10. MUL.ZI.BA.NI.TUM, "the scales of Heaven," the moon passes through Libra.
11. MUL.GIR.TAB, “Scorpio,” the moon crosses Scorpio.
12. MUL.PA.BIL.SAG, "the grandfather," the moon passes through Sagittarius.
13. MUL.SUHUR.MAS, “the goat-fish,” the moon goes through Capricorn.
14. MUL.GU.LA, "the tall one (giant)," The moon passes through Aquarius.
15. MUL.ZIBBATI.MESH MUL.KUN.MESH, “the tails,” the moon goes through Pisces.
16. MUL.SIM.MAH, “the great swallow,” the moon through Pegasus (Pisces and Epsilon Pegasus).
17. MUL.A.NU.TI.TUM, “Anunitum,” (a goddess compared to Andromeda), the moon passes

through its centre.

18. MUL.LU.HUN.GA, “the hireling,” the moon passes through Aries.³

According to an old Sumerian account entitled *Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta* (ca. 21st century BCE), the king of Uruk, Enmerkar, wanting to submit his rival the lord of the prosperous city of Aratta in Iran, had his emissary send him a quoted message. Following the advice of his sister Inanna, he also sent the messenger with a tribute of gold and silver. Unfortunately, after this long and perilous journey through the high mountains and deserts, the messenger forgot several parts from his long missive. After a series of trips to and fro and great misunderstandings between the two city courts, Enmerkar decided to inscribe the message on a clay tablet in cuneiform code so that it could always be faithfully repeated.

This story deserves attention for several reasons: first, because it informs us on the relationship between the proto-Sumerians and the Indo-European peoples and the necessary spread of writing, and secondly, for cosmological reasons which we will further explain.

According to the archaeologist Colin Renfrew, Indo-European was spoken in Asia Minor as back as 7000 BCE. Thus, placing it in the proximity of the Elamite and Dravidian peoples of Sumer and the Indus Valley.

David Frawley has pointed out to me (in a letter dated 29 August 1998) that Aratta (Ara-tta) was, according to the Mahabharata and other Vedic texts, the Sanskrit name of the ancestor of the Arattas, an Aryan people of the region of Panchnada or Punjab. The Arattas were a tribe from Central Asia called the Druhyus and whose ancestor was Yayati. Ara in Sanskrit, means “speed, the radius of a wheel,” also taken for the radius of the Wheel of Time when not “metal, copper, brass or iron,” when not one the names for the planets Mars or Saturn.

Furthermore, This name is etymologically linked to that of the Greek poet and astrologer Aratus, living in the third century BCE and who was in the service of King Antigonos II Gonatas of Macedonia and to Antiochus I of Syria. Let’s not forget that it was he who drew a map of the stars of the northern skies thus giving them some of their mythological names. Author of the *Phonomena*, Aratus of Soli (who flourished from about 315 to 245 BCE) was the reputed author of the *Phaenomena*. Although the event related in the story of Enmerkar is at a much earlier date, there seems to be an underlying mythic pattern with the Iranian city of Aratta and the Greek Aratos. The name Ἀρατος, often defined as meaning the “Ploughman” (from ἀροτριάω, αροτριαό: “to plough”), is most likely from ἀρᾶσθαι “to pray.” Aratos was also the name of a settlement (now in the Rhodope Prefecture) in the East Macedonia and Thrace region of Greece.

On Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta, vs. 499 to 576:

“His speaking (...) Recite his omen to him. At that time, the lord (...), on the throne daises and on the chairs, the noble seed, (...) His speech was substantial, and its contents extensive. The messenger, whose mouth was heavy, was not able to repeat it. Because the messenger, whose mouth was tired, was not able to repeat it, the lord of Kulaba patted some clay and wrote the message as if on a tablet. Formerly, the writing of messages on clay was not established. Now, under that sun and on that day, it

was indeed so. The lord of Kulaba inscribed the message like a tablet. It was just like that. The messenger was like a bird, flapping its wings; he raged forth like a wolf following a kid. He traversed five mountains, six mountains, seven mountains. He lifted his eyes as he approached Aratta. He stepped joyfully into the courtyard of Aratta, he made known the authority of his king. Openly he spoke out the words in his heart. The messenger transmitted the message to the lord of Aratta:

“Your father, my master, has sent me to you; the lord of Unug, the lord of Kulaba, has sent me to you.”

“What is it to me what your master has spoken? What is it to me what he has said?”

“This is what my master has spoken, this is what he has said. My king is like a huge mes tree, (...) son of Enlil; this tree has grown high, uniting heaven and earth; its crown reaches heaven, its trunk is set upon the earth. He who is made to shine forth in lordship and kingship, Enmerkar, the son of Utu, has given me a clay tablet. O lord of Aratta, after you have examined the clay tablet, after you have learned the content of the message, say whatever you will say to me, and I shall announce that message in the shrine E-ana as glad tidings to the scion of him with the glistening beard, whom his stalwart cow gave birth to in the mountains of the shining me, who was reared on the soil of Aratta, who was given suck at the udder of the good cow, who is suited for office in Kulaba, the mountain of great me, to Enmerkar, the son of Utu; I shall repeat it in his jipar (temple), fruitful as a flourishing mes tree (tree of life), to my king, the lord of Kulaba.”

After he had spoken thus to him, the lord of Aratta received his kiln-fired tablet from the messenger. The lord of Aratta looked at the tablet. The transmitted message was just nails, and his brow expressed anger. The lord of Aratta looked at his kiln-fired tablet. At that moment, the lord worthy of the crown of lordship, the son of Enlil, the god Ickur, thundering in heaven and earth, caused a raging storm, a great lion, in (...) He was making the mountains quake (...), he was convulsing the mountain range (...); the awesome radiance (...) of his breast; he caused the mountain range to raise its voice in joy. On Aratta's parched flanks, in the midst of the mountains, wheat grew of its own accord, and chickpeas also grew of their own accord; they brought the wheat which grew of its own accord into the granary of (...) for the lord of Aratta, and heaped it up before him in the courtyard of Aratta. The lord of Aratta looked at the wheat. The messenger's eyes looked askance (...) The lord of Aratta called to the messenger: "Inana, the lady of all the lands, has not run away from the primacy of her city, Aratta, nor has she stolen it for Unug; she has not run away from her E-zagina, nor has she stolen it for the shrine E-ana; she has not run away from the mountain of the shining me, nor has she stolen it for brick-built Kulaba; she has not run away from the adorned bed, nor has she stolen it for the shining bed; she has not run away from the purification for the lord, nor has she stolen it for the lord of Unug, the lord of Kulaba. Inana, the lady of all the lands, has surrounded Aratta, on its right and left, for her like a rising flood.”

The Sumerian language, decoded in mid-19th century by Henry Rawlinson and Edward Hincks, is classified by linguists as an isolate belonging to no linguistic family, although some tie it to Caucasian and perhaps Dravidian. Sumerian was spoken from after the 4th millennium to after the 2nd millennium

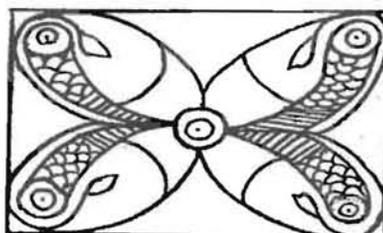
BCE when it was replaced by Akkadian, a Semitic language. At some time in the proto-Sumerian past, the culture was in proximity of Indo-European speakers as is shown in its vocabulary. Also, all indicates that the Sumerians probably borrowed the cuneiform script from the Aratta Aryans of Iran. The Sumerian Zodiac also shows 18 constellations visited by the moon, and is thought by many experts to be the prototype for the Chaldean and Greek Zodiacs. It is estimated to date from around 2000 BCE. The Sumerian and Chaldean charts were in fact designed for moon divining and were quite different from the Indo-European 12 sign models that charted the sun's course around the ecliptic. As mentioned above, since a lunar month is of 29.53 days, then after 12 lunar months, the lunar year, of 354 days, is in average 10 to 11 days short of the solar year. The 18 part moon chart of the Chaldeans and Sumerians worked on the moon's movement on a span of 360 solar days (18 constellation visits x 20 days). The moon does not orbit the sun the same way the earth does since it is tilted to about 5° on the ecliptic. Therefore, the moon spends half of the time slightly north and the other half slightly south of the ecliptic. It crosses the ecliptic twice a month. This downward and upward movement from the ecliptic gave slightly different apparent astral conjunctions from those of the sun. So for these cultures, Sumerian and Semitic (Assyrian, Ugaritic, Phoenician, Canaan and Hebrew), time keeping was basically lunar (Paul Couderc, 1945).

The Sumerian Zodiac

1- The Hair-Brush (Pleiades); 2- The Bull of Anu (Taurus); 3- Anu's True Shepherd (Orion); 4- The Old Man (Perseus); 5- Gamlu, The Sickle Sword or Harpé (Auriga); 6- The Great Twins (Gemini); 7- Al.Lil (Procyon or Cancer/Crab); 8- The Lion or Lioness (Leo); 9- Furrow (Spica); 10- The Scale (Libra/Scales); 11- The Scorpion (Scorpio); 12- The Archer (Sagittarius); 13- The Goat-fish (Capricorn); 14- The Great Star or Giant (Aquarius); 15- The Tails (Pisces/Fishes); 16- The Great Swallow (Piscis SW with Epsilon Pegasi); 17- The Goddess Anunitum (in Piscis to the North East and in the middle part of Andromeda); 18- The Hireling (Aries/Ram).

Footnotes

1. Kugler (I) Erg. 2, 207; Gossmann, quoted from Jack Lindsey in *Origins of Astrology*, p. 54.
2. Quoted from *Le Combat pour l'immortalité. Héritage indo-européen dans la mythologie anatolienne*, "The struggle for immortality in Anatolian mythology" by Emilia Masson, chap. 2, *Les trois mondes des Hittites* "The Three Worlds of the Hittites," p. 187-223, author's translation from French.
3. Reference for this Chaldean chart is given by Jack Lindsey in *Origins of Astrology*.

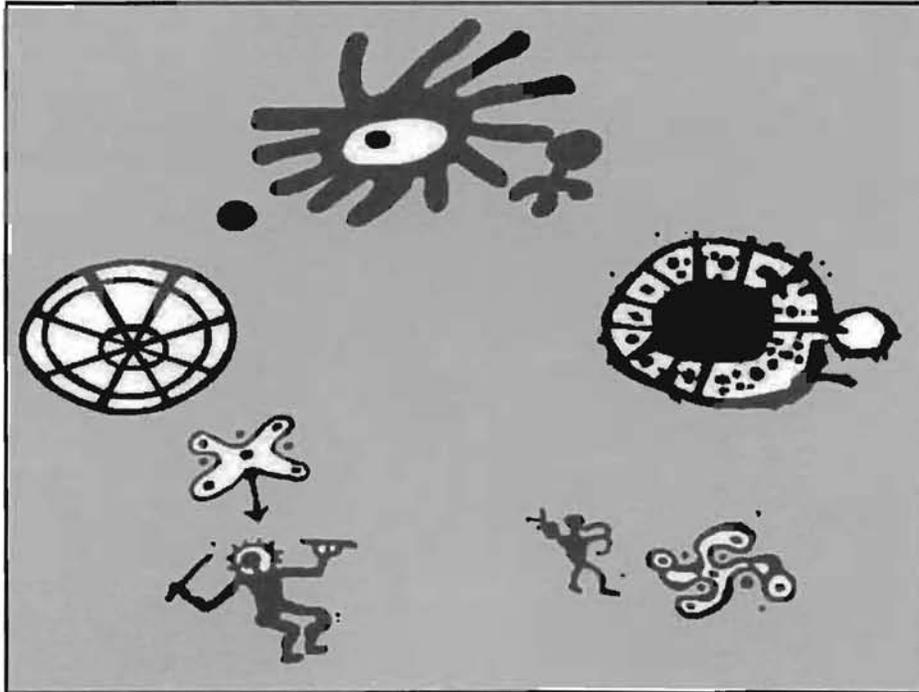


Chapter II

THE INDO-EUROPEAN BASES OF ASTROLOGY

“In the beginning the Golden Embryo arose. Once he was born, he was the one lord of creation. He held in place the earth and the sky.”

(Rig Veda, 10.121 vs. 1)



Val Camonica Rock Art, Italian Alps, digitally drawn after a photo from UNESCO.

INDO-EUROPEAN RELIGION – A COSMIC IDEOLOGY

It was in a very early Age, possibly at the start of 8000 BCE, that the Indo-European culture was diffused over much of Southern central Eurasia. Even then, it had the solidity and unity that nowadays is still not suspected from outside of a small intellectual circle. When one considers the pre-Vedic phase of Indo-Aryan religion, admittedly, one turns to the Steppe culture, but it turns out a pre-Vedic culture was already found in the Indus Valley with the Harappa civilization which dates from as early as 4000 to 1700 BCE. It should also be noted that artifacts from Sumer do not yield dates prior to 4000 BCE. And as we have seen, if the Sumerian cuneiform writing is very close to that of Aryan Aratta, the Iranian pre-Avestic texts are sensibly older, but not as old as the Harappa hieroglyphs which are now regarded as pre-Sanskrit. The kingdom of Aratta on the Iranian Plateau was right between Sumer and Harappa (now in Pakistan) that is, to the south of the Black Sea where also flourished the Danubian civilisation which begins at around 6250 BCE.

The dates for these dispersed Indo-European cultural areas are as follows: Vinça Lepenski Vir (Danube) culture, after 6500 BCE, Yamna Eastern European culture (Hungary) 4500 to 2500 BCE; Sredny Stog, Dnieper-Donets and Sarama cultures, domestication of the horse, from 4500 to 4000 BCE; the Yamna Kurgan builders culture, steppes expansion, and the Maykop culture in northern Caucasus 4000 to 3500 BCE; Harappa (Indus) culture, dating from circa 4000 BCE; Yamnaya culture expansion from 3600 to 2200 BCE; Anatolian and Jiroft-Aratta (Iranian Plateau) cultures, from before 3000 BCE; the Yamnaya Pontic steppe Kurgan Culture (South Caucasus), circa 3000 to 2500 BCE; and the Ikshvaku culture (Caspian Sea), circa 2300 BCE.

At some time around 3000 BCE, the Central European ancestors of the Hittites and Luwians cross the Bosphorus into Anatolia where they become acquainted with cuneiform writing.

With the Hittite tablets one discovers a highly coherent system of beliefs still present in the later forms of the Brahmanic Ṛta Dharma, Avestic Asha or Classical Greco-Roman devotion. This being that the Proto-Anatolian and Indo-Aryan branches were linguistically close when they separated from the main trunk.

Contrary to popular belief, the early Indo-Europeans had developed a priestly caste that was no longer at the pre-Indo-European level of shamanism and witchcraft. In fact, these priests were neither magicians nor shamans, but chaplains to a warlord and his people. Therefore, it is an error to speak of “Vedic, Celtic or even Germanic Shamans.” We are not speaking here of an animistic world of anarchy and chaos where the individual human soul must negotiate with a greater animal spirit, but that of a world order in which humans and gods coexist, compete and cooperate, in accordance with a universal cosmic “World Order.” Henceforth, we are truly in the presence of a world ruled by ritual law and social order, of harmony and structure, of mind and fate, a world timed as a clock and essentially cyclical in nature. Any breach in this ethic order spells moral depravity, chaos and degeneration.

Wisdom had it that man, the Just,¹ understood the laws of ritual order and that he acted in honour of the gods. This law of rite was called *ṛta* or *rita* in Sanskrit or *ritus* in Latin, *asha* in Avestic Persian and *litus*

in Celtic. Keeping to ones dharma² was more than an oath; it is what distinguished the nobly-born³ from the uncouth. And this is what bonded him to the higher realm of the immortals. In commemoration of this, the young nobleman (*ario- “host, lord, master”) at his coming of age, was given a white linen tunic and a threaded woollen strap or cordon to tie it.

Priestly order	white	flax
Warriors’ order	red	hemp
Producers’ order	Black, dun, blue-green	wool

One of the duties of the *arios faithful was to tie and untie this cordon at least thrice daily that is, morning, noon and evening. In his service to the gods as a householder, the married man had many sacrificial duties to perform. These included keeping the sacred fire and preparing the *soma* or *amrita*.⁴ For the Teutonic tribes it was “the heavenly beer of the gods” brewed with heavenly care. Soma is a plant which grows in former Sogdian in what is now known as Turkestan but was once the homeland of the Uttarakuru to which the early Cimmerians belonged. It also grows further north and is found on the mountain slopes of Kerman. Its botanical name is *Sarcostema Viminalis*. Shoots and stalks of Soma are mixed with curled milk, barley meal, or in India, mixed with nirvana or trinadhanya thought to be wild rice which fermented, produced a strong intoxicant considered nourishing and healthy. As a divine fortifier, it was seen as prolonging life (J. A de Gobineau). One favourite saying of the Brahmans which just about sums the spirit of Indo-European religion was, “Who wishes to gain heaven must sacrifice.” And even the concept of the Other-world, Heaven or Paradise, is linked to the notion of fate, seen mainly as the netherworld, the Fairyland of the European folktales. Does not the term “fairy” derive from Fata, the goddess of fate?

Gradually, around the third or second millennium in the northern steppes, shamanistic types of practice were almost abandoned for a highly regimented priesthood structured around an elite called *Blagmena.⁵ This second phase was highly codified and ritualistic with the focus on ceremonial and scriptural injunctions ordering sacrificial rites.

After 1000 BCE, the steppe migrations of the Aryan Scythians and Proto-Thracic or Proto-Celtic Cimmerians and Tocharians⁶ of Central Asia came into contact with the Turkish and Mongolian shamans, thus bringing Indo-European ritualism to the area.

How was it that these people could influence such diverse, different and culturally marked societies? This was possible only because the early Indo-European cultures were still related and that these people formed a highly mobile culture. Let us not forget that it was the elite, the travelling poet-seers and their aristocrats who were the main proponents for the spread of aryanic culture as a spiritual force (David Frawley/25-04-2000). The doctrines and concepts of Yoga, along with the Ātman (the spiritual self) and Dharma, Karma and reincarnation, were probably already articulated at the common level of Indo-European thought. At about this time examples of seated gods in lotus position were found in many areas, from the Indus valley on the Mohenjo-Daro tablets and on to Bulgaria on the Gundestrup Cauldron. As was the case for the Gaulish mummies of the Remoi found in d’Acy-Romance near Rethel in the Ardennes, all were found seated in the lotus position. These bodies were not incinerated and therefore could have either been aristocratic warriors or either noble holy men. In short, yogic practices were

widespread and did not simply originate within some Dravidian ascetic practice as it was originally proposed by modern western scholars.

Therefore, because of this fundamental mindset and common Indo-European cosmological and mythological world view, the state of affairs in the world of the gods necessarily affected those in the world of the mortals. Hence the hermetic maxim: "As above, so below!" This notion that the macrocosm is reflected in the microcosm was not only professed by the Greek philosophers but was also present as an underlying concept in the other Indo-European wisdom traditions.

French linguist, Jean Haudry (born in 1934), has very well demonstrated that Indo-European thought was essentially cosmological. His observations are well summarized in a short article which he wrote for the *New Antaios Journal*.⁷

The following excerpt sums it all in the chapter entitled *General characteristics of Indo-European Religion, The Heavens and the Earth*:

"The Indo-European gods are called *deywòs "those of the day-sky" (Haudry 1987 b: 28 f.), a term whose origins go back to a period in which the Day-sky, *dyéw-pHtér-, was the first among the gods. Hittite Sius "Sun god" is his most archaic reflex, which retains his temporal character, the limitation of the day. He lost this primacy in those cases where he remained the sky (so the Vedic Dyaùh), whereas his name passed to the sovereign god in the case of the Greeks (Zeùs) and the Romans (Jupiter). To the *deywos of day who inhabit the heavens are opposed the demons whose habitat is the Night-sky or Hell. This theology, initially linked with the revolving-sky-cosmology, is perpetrated in the various dualism which place gods and demons in opposition to one another, such as the Mazdaism of the Iranians. The earth-mother is, in the last state of this theology, the consort of the 'sky', but in more ancient times she was the consort of a black Night-sky who was succeeded by the white Day-sky after the brief reign of a red Dawn- or Dusk-sky."⁸



Prajapati, Lord of Beasts, Harappa Mohenjo-Daro, Indus Civilization.

This seated figure coiffed with bull's horns is probably the oldest representation of the Ophiuchus constellation which anciently marked the starting point of the sun's course through the Zodiac following the Fall equinox.

Although, we can suspect that there could have existed a common Indo-European Zodiac, for the time being, no artifact has yet been uncovered in the archaeology digs.

It is nevertheless possible to reconstruct a prototype by comparing the oldest Indo-European models of the Zodiac. The earliest Zodiac is thought to have comprised of eight non equal constellations with two other stellar signs added on in the final model. This assumption is corroborated by many examples found in Rock Art depicting four-spoked, six-spoked and eight-spoked wheels, but rarely twelve. It is also assumed that the early charts started at the fall equinox and not at the vernal equinox as was the practice later on. The oldest graphic example on an eightfold zodiacal chart was to be found in 1903 by a mine technician with no archaeological expertise, a certain D.G. Shultz, at the Kelermesskaya Stanitsa site in Russia. There, he hastily excavated four burial mounds where he found the mirror. This artifact is not only of great artistic merit, but also provides much detail on the cosmological considerations of the ancient late Kurgan culture.



Hellenic-style Thracian-Cimmerian or Scythian Mirror (650-620 BCE) with cosmic and astrological symbols, from Kuban Valley at Kelermes in Russia bordering Ukraine and kept at the Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, Russia. Author's drawing from a photograph published in *Les dossiers de l'archéologie*.

The Kurgan Zodiac

Classical constellations	Zodiacal symbol or theme

Pisces and Aries	A giant snow leopard, the World Tree in bloom over a ram with bonded legs
Vernal Equinox	Two winged sphinxes (North and South winds) holding the World Axis lying on the back of a slain wolf (end of winter)
Taurus	A lion (Hyades) devouring a bull (of days) over a wild boar (Ursa Minor)
Twins and Cancer	The Sky Goddess holding two panthers (spring and summer)
Leo and Virgo	Two opposing lions (Leo) over a goat and a ram's head
Libra and Scorpio	Opposing sphinxes (South and North winds) over a griffon
Sagittarius	An eagle (Aquila) flying over a bear (Ursa Major)
Capricorn	Two giants or heroes, young and old (days of the year), combating a griffon (winter solstice)

Greek, Celtic and Vedic Astrologies compared

The Archaic Greek Order

Comment on the presumed ancient Greek order:

This sequel starts at the fall equinox and not at the usual the spring vernal point as it is for Vedic, Classical, and contemporary western charts. Not that there is error here, as Frawley noted, simply that the older cosmological order of cyclical time started with the annual dark period. The Celts seem to have maintained this old practice much longer than the Greeks or Indians. Therefore, this Hellenic prototype also started in fall. Most of the Greeks calendars started in autumn and winter except for the Attic calendar which started in summer.

Dzôdiakos kyklos, “circle of little animals,” the zodiacal cycle;

I-Ophiucos, Ophiuchus, that is, Asclepius and his snake begin the cycle of the twelve zodiacal constellations; symbol for the dark and cold areas.

1 Krysopheros, “the golden antler,” or Chelae, “claws (of the scorpion),” or Zugos, “the Yoke,” for Libra; Libra, “the Scale,” is the later Latin name for this constellation which was formerly seen as the Scales of Astraia, the Greek goddess of Justice.

2 Elaphos Kyroskerôs, “the deer with golden antlers,” or Skorprios, “the scorpion,” for Scorpio; also Elaphos Kerynitis, “the deer of Ceryneia,” or Elaphoi Krysokeroi, “the deer with golden antlers,” who were sacrificed to Artemis, Apollo's sister.

3 Toxotes, “the archer,” for Sagittarius);

Kentauros, “the centaur,” followed by Lukábas, the twelve day period after the winter solstice; also called Lúkeios, “the master of wolves.”

4 Khimaira, “cold air,” the Chimera of Capricorn; or Tragos, “the goat,” for Capricornus; the Chimera was a half-lion, half-goat, half-serpent, monster.

5 Hydrochooös, “the water pourer,” or water pot, for Aquarius;
For the nymph Ganymede, Zeus’s water carrier.

6 Ikhthyes, “the fishes,” for Pisces;

In mythology, there were large river fish attending the birth of Aphrodite. The Ikthyokentauroi, were “sea centaurs,” the poetic name for the stars of that constellation.

II-Kórunthos, “the cock-rooster;”

Eoos, “the one of Dawn;” symbol for the clear and warm period.

7 Krios, “the ram,” for Aries;

Aries, “Mars;” Ares, the god of Mars. His chariot was driven by the goddess Aphrodite.

8 Tauros, “The bull” (Taurus);

Tauros, also Khalkeos, “the brazen bull,” a fire-breathing bull forged by Hephaestus.

9 Dioskouroi, “the twins;” for Gemini;

Castor and Polydeukes (Castor and Pollux).

10 Karkinos, “The Crab” (Cancer);

11 Léôn, “the lion,” for Leo;

Léôn Nemeios, “the lion of Nemea,” the mountain valley of Nemea in Argolis where the Nemean games were celebrated. Heracles killed the lion there which desolated the country. He made a cloak of his skin.

12 Astraia or Astraea, “the stellar one,” for Virgo;

The virgin goddess of justice; the name also connotes Astrape, “lightning.”

The Vedic Order of Jyotisha

1 Mesa, “ram” (Aries);

2 Vrsabha, “bull” (Taurus);

3 Mithuna, “the pair” (Gemini);

- 4 Karkataka**, Kartaka, Karka, “crab” (Cancer);
5 Simha, “lion” (Leo);
6 Kanya, “girl” (Virgin);
7 Tula, “scale” (Libra);
8 Vrushchik, “Scorpion” (Scorpio);
9 Kamuka, “flower”, Dhanus, “bow;” as Dhanvin, “the archer” (Sagittarius);
10 Ena or Mrga, “the antelope;” as Makara, a mythical sea monster, or a dolphin, or a crocodile (Capricorn);
11 Kumbha, “the pot” (Aquarius);
12 Matsya, “the fish”, also Jhasa, Timi, Mina (Pisces).

Puns on the names (Clesha in Sanskrit):

Dhanus/Dyanus, “archer;” connoting “mainland or island, dry land;” and “good;”
Vrsika/Vrsiha, “scorpion;” connoting “scissors;”
Makara, “sea monster, crocodile;” connoting “crier;”
Mithuna, “pair, couple;” that is, a “couple as an interchangeable pair.”

The Gundestrup Cauldron and the Celtic astral tradition

I - Libra and Scorpio: Caruos/Sidos, “deer;” opposite to Taurus on the zodiacal circle. Representation of a god grabbing two deer by the hind legs; that is, Cernunnos, the horned god or Natronouiros for Ophiuchus, “the serpent bearer.”

1 Libra: Cantalon, “the (memorial) pillar.”

2 Scorpio: Samonios/Semonios, “the sower.”

3 Sagittarius: a wolf (uolcos in OClT); Duniomannos, the centaur.

4 Capricorn: Moritasgos, the child riding a sea monster (a sturgeon or dolphin) opposing a Lion; Riuones, “the rays.”

5 Aquarius: Medua, “intoxication,” the goddess of ritual drunkenness surrounded by her two male companions, one bearded and one beardless while holding her left breast or nipple; Anaxs, “the pot, the tumbler.”

6 Fish: Snake on the head of a ram; a god grabbing two dragons as two monstrous wolves devour two men; Ogronios, a cold-blooded animal, or a reptile.

7 Aries: A young warrior with his sword jabs at a wolf; the chariot-driver goddess is flanked by two elephants (seen as giant boars), two griffins (winds) and a wolf; Cutios, Aries.

8 Taurus: Taruos a bull lying on a bobcat or a lynx; three bulls attacked by men armed with swords; Taruos Trigarannianom, “the bull with three cranes;” Gammos, “ox.”

Gemini 9: A god grabbing two youths holding small boar piglets with a dog to his right shoulder and a winged horse by his left shoulder; Semiuesses, “the small sprinty pigs.”

Cancer 10: A winged horse; Equoredioi, four riders on the run; each wearing a helmet with the effigies of: a feathered crest, bull horns, a wild boar and a bird (crow, hawk or eagle?); Equos, “the horse.”

11 Lion: A god waving his arms flanked by two boxers and a rider on the run; an opposing lion with a child straddling a sea monster; two leaping lions; Elembos, “the fawn.”

12 Virgo: Dexsiutera, “the righteousness;” the goddess holding a wren in her right hand and a young man lying in her left arm; a dog or wolf lies further; the hair of the goddess is combed by a lady; another maiden is sitting next to her right with a wolf leaping over it; two eagles fly over on both sides.

I- Comparative Table of the Indo-European Zodiacs

Classical Greco-Roman	Hittite	Vedic	Gaulish
Aries: Mars, Ram	Ram	Mesa, Ram	Cuti Prinnios, Ram
Taurus: Bull	Bull	Vrsabha, Bull	Giamoni Prinn., Sprouts
Gemini: Twins	Rushes, Reed	Mithuna, The Pair, Couple	Semiuisoni Prinn., Spirited
Cancer: Crab	Eagle	Kartata, Crab	Equi Prinn., Equalised, Horse
Leo: Lion	Lion	Simha, Lion	Elembiui Prinn., of Fawns
Virgo: Maiden	Deer by the tree of the maiden Eya	Kanya, Virgin, Maiden	Edrini Prinn., The Hot Flux
Libra : Scales	Leopard	Tula, Scales	Cantli Prinn., The Ring, Buckle
Scorpio: Scorpion	Wolf	Vrsika, Scorpion	Samoni Prinn., Of the Sower
Sagittarius: Archer	Antelope	Dhanus, Archer	Dumanni Prinn., Of darkness
Capricornius: Goat Fish, Goat	The Messenger	Ena, Mrga, Antelope/Makara, Sea Monster, Dolphin,	Riuri Prinn., Of Frost, of Rays

		Crocodile	
Aquarius: Water Carrier	Throne of the Sky God	Kumbha, Water Pot or Jar	Anaganti Prinn., Of Inaction, Calamitous
Pisces: Fishes	Serpents/Fish	Mina, Fish	Ogroni Prinn., Cold blooded, Fish, Snakes

List of Compared Common Zodiacal Designations

Many of the astral designations (astronyms) were gleaned from the different early zodiacal charts. There is a certain consensus surrounding the majority of the names for the majority of signs. The following table shows the great unity and subtle originality of the different astral charts:

Classical Zodiacal List Twelve Signs:

Aries; Taurus; Gemini; Cancer; Lion; Virgin; Scales; Scorpio; Sagittarius (the Centaur Archer); Capricorn; Aquarius; Pisces.

List the Vedic Zodiacal Signs:

Ram; Bull; Pair/Twins; Crab; Lion; Maiden; Scales; Scorpion; Archer; Antelope/Sea Monster; Water Pot; Fish.

List of the Luwian-Hittite Signs:

Ram; Bull; Pair/Twins; Lion; Fish/Snakes.

Gallic List (Coligny Calendar) of Astral the Signs:

Ram; Bull; Fish.

For the sake of comparing, having the shortest list of classical zodiacal symbols, the Gallic list from the Coligny calendar seems to be the most archaic since it has, along with the Hittite Zodiac, maintained the stag or deer constellation of the Indo-Europeans. The Sumerian or Chaldean star charts seems to have contributed the astronyms which appear in the Classical and Vedic lists.

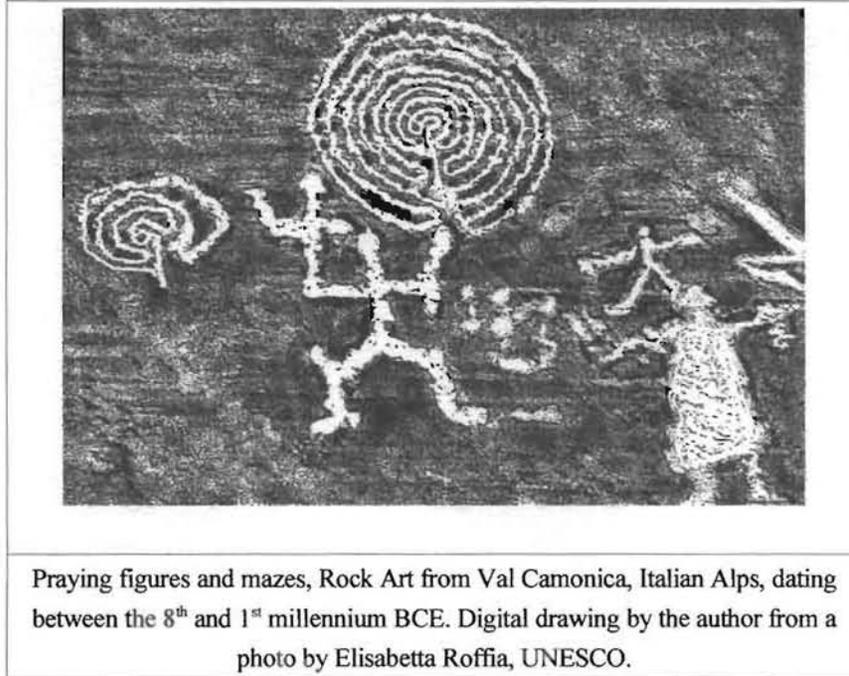
To wit, the list of Sumerian-Chaldean lunar signs shared with the other Zodiacs:

Bull; Gemini, Leo, Libra, Scorpio, Capricorn.

Therefore, as can be observed, at least half of the Classical and Vedic names are present in this list.

Although Ophiuchus, with its two sub-constellations, Caput Serpentis and Cauda Serpentis (Head and Tail of the Snake), is one of the major constellations through which the sun passes on the ecliptic plane, it is not included as a zodiacal constellation. And this despite of the fact that the sun stays in this constellation four times longer than in Scorpio. Let's remember that in the remote past, Ophiuchus was considered as the first constellation of the Zodiac. In Scandinavian cosmology, Ophiuchus was called the "door of Valhalla," and Níðhöggr, the Snake found at the base of Yggdrasil, the World Tree (or Milky

Way) was identifiable to Scorpio. Eikþyrnir, The Deer (along with 4 others), browses at the foot of the Yggdrasil tree. The ancient Greeks also shared the same cosmological theme. Elaphos Kyroskerôs, the “Deer with the Golden Horns,” the Deer constellation, was the name for the stars grouping Libra and Scorpio. The archer’s bow points to it. The brightest stars of this region of the sky form the deer’s antlers.



Praying figures and mazes, Rock Art from Val Camonica, Italian Alps, dating between the 8th and 1st millennium BCE. Digital drawing by the author from a photo by Elisabetta Roffia, UNESCO.

In the Hittite Zodiac, Scorpio was represented by a wolf. For the Scandinavians, it were the stars of Sagittarius that were referred to as Fenrir the Wolf. This being that the constellation of the Wolf (Lupus) is now in Libra and Scorpio just west and east of the Centauri cluster. In Greek myths, this animal was pierced by the spear of the centaur archer. In these cosmologies, the Wolf symbolically marks the revival period of the winter sun springing up in March. For the Greeks, the calendar month of Lukios, covered the period from February to March when not, from April to May.

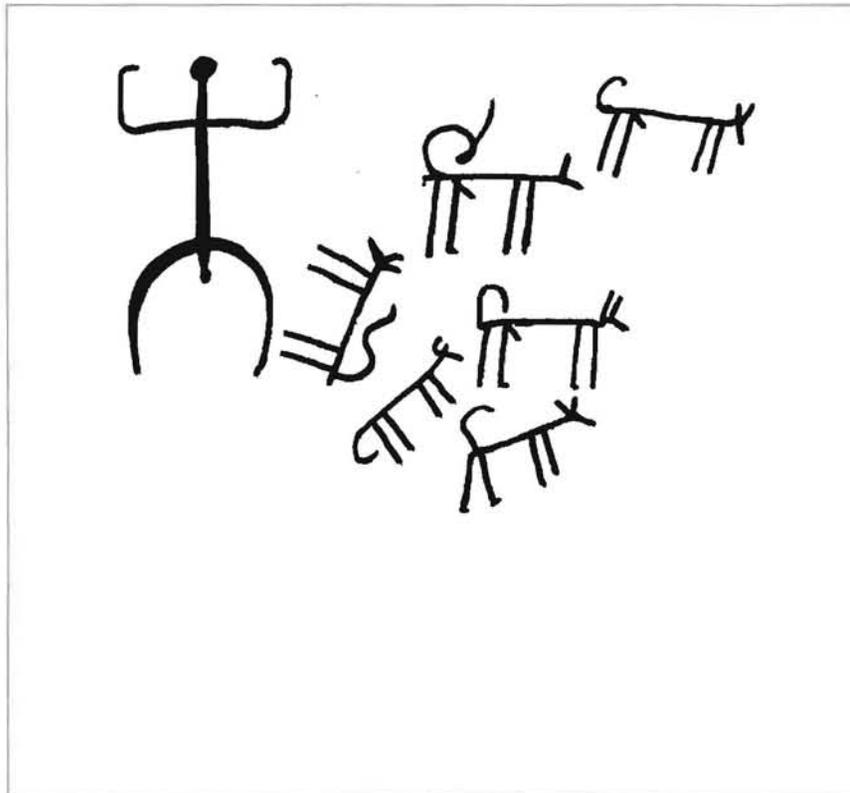
To quote Aristotle, *The History of Animals*, Book VI, and Chapter 35 (translated by D'Arcy Wentworth Thompson), and here is the mythological plot:

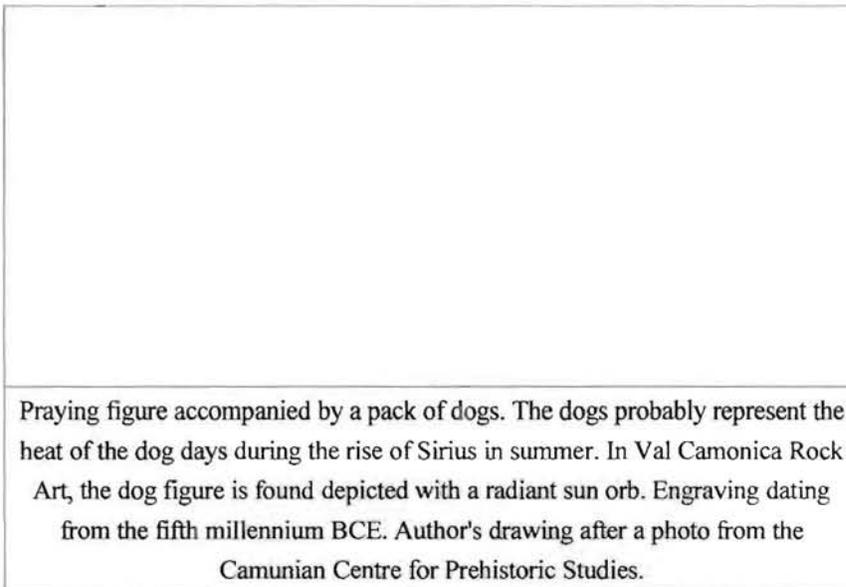
“The wolf resembles the dog in regard to the time of conception and parturition, the number of the litter, and the blindness of the newborn young. The genders couple at one special period, and the female brings forth at the beginning of the summer. There is an account given of the parturition of the she-wolf that borders on the fabulous, to the effect that she confines her lying-in to within twelve particular days of the year. And they give the reason for this in the form of a myth, viz. that when they transported Leto in so many days from the land of the Hyperboreans to the island of Delos, she assumed the form of a she-wolf to escape the anger of Here. Whether the account be correct or not has not yet been verified; I give it merely as it is currently told. There is no more of truth in the current statement that the she-wolf bears once and only once in her lifetime.”

In Rome, these twelve days were under the auspices of the twelve Luperci “those of the Wolf.” Their institution was created before the time of Romulus and they are recruited from the great patrician families of the Quinctilli and the Fabii. Every year in February, they performed magic rituals for the protection of sheep against the wolves. The Lupercalia (Lupercalia) were fertility festivals in honour of the god Lupercus, an equivalent of the Greek god Apollo Lúkeios represented by a lynx. In Rome, Lupercus was also called Faunus. This is because Faunus was later likened to the Greek Pan. On the Celtic side, January had the Gaelic name *Faolteach* for the time “of wolves,” and the Gaelic name for the February feasts of Lupercalia was *Imbolc*. If *Imbolc* is thought to come from *im'bolg*, literally “in the bag,” or “in the belly,” referring to the pregnancy of ewes, this because of a late medieval word play replacing the old pagan meaning by a Christianized one. That is, *Imbolc* is rather from the Old Celtic root **ambi-uolca-ia* for “lustrations,” and connoting “from around the wolf bitch.”

The wolf-bitch was, in Antiquity, synonymous with dog days, increase of heat and sexual activity. On the Gundestrup Cauldron, wolves and dogs are inseparable. Did not the Celts tend to confuse wild dogs from domesticated ones?

At the feast of Robigalia in April, the Romans sacrificed dogs to Robigus, the god of wheat rust. It was held just after the rising of the star Sirius, *Canis Major* and *Canis Minor*, which they called *Canicula*, “the little dog.” Dogs were also killed during the dog days of September in honour of the youth fraternities. The Scandinavians also associated dog days with sexual heat; hence the names: *Lokabrenna* and *Hudastjarna*, the “Dog Star,” for Sirius.





Capricorn was formerly represented by a sea monster, probably a sturgeon and then later replaced by a dolphin, or a goat-fish, when not simply by a goat. According to the *Vedanta*, the seven Rishis or sages of the North ascended to the stars of Makara (Capricorn) while the Devas, the highest celestial deities (Rudras Kumaras Adithyas, Gandharvas or Asuras), made their descent from there to Earth in order to teach humanity wisdom and to establish right and order. And, from the North skies came the seven cosmic rays affecting the seven planets or the seven worlds. The Gallic Riuros⁹ months, for “freezing,” is also marked by these beams. The Romans called this winter constellation Capra, “goat,” same as with the Scandinavians who called it Heidrun, also for “goat.” Each evening, the udder of the goat Heidrun filled with mead a huge basin. By its horns, the goat is also the symbol for the heavenly waters of the moon, hence the pouring of Soma (Haoma the Indo-Iranian). The Hittite designation for Sagittarius was the “graceful Antelope,” and “messenger,” for Capricorn. On the Gundestrup Cauldron is featured a boy riding a sturgeon or dolphin. In Greek myths, Taras, was rescued from a shipwreck by a dolphin sent by his father the sea god Poseidon. The dolphin boy somewhat brings us closer to the god sent messenger of Hittite myth.

For Aquarius, the Hittite had Halmasuit, the “Holder of the god throne” for “Sovereignty.” The idea of a pouring pot featured in the Vedic Zodiac is also present in other charts such as those of the Greeks and Romans. The Gallic (*Coligny calendar*) designation of Anacanti, for “calamitous,” is also found on the Gaelic side with Fii from the book of Ballymote, meaning “disastrous.”

There is a general consensus for most of the charts to have the fish symbol for the Piscean constellation. However, it seems that snakes first represented Pisces as it was for the Hittite and Gallic Zodiacs. In the Hittite Zodiac, Pisces was called “Bearded Serpents,” and in the Gallic (*Coligny calendar*), Ogronios stood for “of cold-blooded animals, snakes or fishes.” Here, Gallic terminology hesitates between snakes and fishes.

In Vedic literature, Taurus is described as a being of fire, of heat, and referred to as “the Bull of days.” As Lord of Heaven, the Maruts, his martial companions, are surrounded with fire and rain. In ancient art, the

Bull of May was represented as a great white ox attacked and devoured by an oversized feline, most often a lion.

For the Greeks, it were the nymphs of Hyades who brought rain. In the *Avesta* of Zoroaster, the heavenly showers depended on the twin stars Sata-vaêsa (Aldebaran, alpha Tauri), and Tištriya (Sirius or Canis Major). The asterisms of Taurus, the Pleiades and the Hyades, were already figured on the Nebra disc (ca. 1600 BCE). The Pleiades, called “the Seven Sisters,” embodied the Fate Fairy consorts of the “Seven Seers,” of the Septentrion. The Scandinavians simply called them the Sjaustiarnar, “the seven stars.” In their midst, is the boar Sæhrímnir who is devoured every day in order to be reborn again every night. The Boar Star then passes by the cauldron of Andrimnir. They appear in May, peaking until the harvest season only to appear again at sunset at the approach of winter in November. Hesiod believed that their influence was like that of the moon on agriculture. The Celts called the Pleiades Trigaranai, the “Three Cranes,” thereby identifying these three bright stars to the old lady, the crane or the witch. The Scandinavians called them the “hens of Freya.” Freya, who was the goddess of love and death, drove a chariot pulled by two cats. These cats were identifiable to the two bright stars of Hyades, also called the Cat Stars¹⁰ by the Celts and other peoples of Antiquity. The Greeks maintained that the Hyades, the Pleiades, were the daughters of Atlas and the sisters of Hya, who cried rain storms. The pouring water god of Aquarius, was not only symbolically linked to the pitcher pot but also to pigs or boars.¹¹ Henceforth, the Hyades mourn the death of Hya who was gutted by a boar, and in other versions of the myth, he was attacked by a lion or a snake. This asterism or cluster of Taurus therefore marks the rainy season in November. The Romans called the V-shaped cluster of Hyades, Sacula, “the pig,” while the Welsh called it Cath Palwg¹² “the mouse-catcher cat,” and the Teutons, called it Litilæa Vulfaes Hrakón for “the mouth of the little wolf.” The Gemini, Castor and Pollux of the Greeks were called Mithuna, “the pair,” by the Indians. The notion of pairs is also shared by the Scandinavians with Þiazis Augar “the eyes of Thiazi.” That is, according to natural law, everything comes in pairs. The solar symbolism of the eye is here self-evident.

“The father of the eye (the Sun), who is wise in his heart like butter (of offering) created these two worlds folded down. As soon as their extremities left in the east, at that time heaven and earth moved apart.” (RV Visvakarma, 10.82, 1)

And in Purusha again (RV Purusha, 10, 13): “The Moon was gendered from his mind, and from his eye the Sun had birth; Indra and Agni from his mouth were born, and Vāyu from his breath.”

The “rushes,” or “reeds,” of the Hittites most certainly connote water, a concept that goes back to the idea of the Greek rainy Hyades. The grass rods are indeed safe from water fires; here symbolically connoting the “heat of inner being.” Indra, who takes refuge in a reed or lotus stem, is eventually found by Agni during for his quest for the many names of the god. Agni, the fire god, enters the stem and sets fire to the reed. And, according to Zoroastrian literature, it was also with the use of magic that Nôtarga created a cow that feeds for a year on harvested reed to give milk to nourish her three sons.

Avesta, Greater Bundahishn, Chapter XXXV, As regards the race and genealogy of the Kayanians (translated by Behramgore Tehmuras Anklesaria), lines 38 – 40:

“This too one says, “The glory of Faridoon had settled on the root of a reed, in the ocean Frakhvkart. Notarga having with sorcery transformed a cow into a goat, led her there. Having reaped the reeds

there for a year, he gave them to the cow till the glory went over to the Cow. Having brought back the cow, he milked her milk and gave it to the three sons, such as Vamun, Shun, and Changranha, which he had. The glory went not to the sons but to Frana. Notarga wished to kill Frana; Frana went from under the father's sway by means of the glory, and made a vow, saying: "I will give my first child to Ushbam." Then Ushbam saved her from her father, and the first child she bore was Kay Apiveh whom she gave to Ushbam, and she went in a mingled state again with Ushbam, as Ushbam's companion."

But for the Celts, this asterism was represented by pigs or piglets. In the book of Ballymote the sign for Gemini is marked by the word: Ruidzûig (ruidh sûig < roudos succoi, "the red pigs"). The Old Irish word for "pig," sug, also can be taken for "joy, laughter or happiness." On the Gundestrup cauldron is shown a figure of a god clutching two young boars or holding small piglets. And on the Coligny calendar, is engraved the Gallic name Simiuisionios meaning "capricious breezes," or connoting Simiuesses / Semiuesses, "little flighty pigs, or frisky, piglets."

The Eagle or the "Wings of the Eagle" of Hittite cosmology differs much from the Crab found on other charts. Cancer, "the crab," was not the original Indo-European name for it and was probably borrowed from the Sumerians. Winged creatures more often appear in relation to sky deities, but not aquatic animals. On the Kelermes mirror, the Sky Goddess is represented with wings and a winged horse is found on the Gundestrup cauldron. In Celtic cosmology, the horse symbolizes the adjustment of the duelling time cycles and equos, the name for horse, also marks the month of July on the Coligny calendar.

Although the lion was probably not the ancient name for Leo, it rapidly became widespread as the main astronym by the time of the Hittites and Cimmerians who placed it in this constellation. On the Gundestrup cauldron, as on the Kelermes mirror, two opposing lions are figured while on the Coligny calendar Elembos, the "fawn," is marked in place of Leo.

Besides Edrinos, "arbitrator," for the Celtic Gauls, the Virgin appears to be the unanimous symbolic figure for that zodiacal constellation. Interestingly, the Hittite names for this sign were Ea, the "fairy," and Aliya-, "deer."

Footnotes

1. Just < Iustus in Latin, from PIE root *yewes-, "law," with cognates, the Avestic yaozda, "to make ritually pure," and the Celtic auentos, "right, just."
2. Nobly born, that was called Arya in Sanskrit for "land-owner," Altus in Latin and Celts in Old Celtic, both meaning "lofty."
3. Dharma, from PIE root *dhe-, *dh-mā, "status testimony;" by its dialectal variant Pali dhamma (cf. old Indian dhaman-, "law, housing, troop, multitude, crowd, etc.," Avestan Persian daman, "site, creature;" Old Celtic dedma, Gaulish, dema "statute"); dharma (dharmán- "holder," or dhárman-, "supports"). It is of the same root by the mutation of the initial consonant of d shifting to f (d > f-) as the Latin firmus, "firm, solid, resistant."

4. The ritual nectar, Soma in Sanskrit, Haoma in Avestic, Ambrosia in Greek and Medus in Celtic. Varenne, Jean, *Zarathustra et la tradition mazdéenne*, p. 23-35.
5. Flamens and Brahmins, priestly oblation carriers; flamines in Latin, brahmana in Sanskrit, both from I.E. roots *blagmena or *beromena for the Proto-Celts.
6. Tocharian, from Greek Tokharoi (< Tacaros, “chiefly”), were most likely Proto-Celts of mixed Illyrian Cimmerian stock as shown by the Old Chinese name Xiemmer. The Iranian speaking Scythians called themselves Skolots, and were referred to as the Sakas in the Vedas.
7. A cultural and historical society review which continues the *Antaios Journal* founded in 1959 by Mircea Eliade & Ernst Jünger. Quoted from: Centro Studi La Runa, Archivio di storia, letteratura, tradizione, filosofia; URL: <http://www.centrostudilaruna.it/haudryreligion.html>.
8. Dawn or dusk, the Dawn goddess seen as Venus, the Morning and Evening star.
9. Riuros, literally “cold feeling, intense frost;” riuo, “frost,” riuo, “ray, stylized ray;” implying riu-ros, “great ray.”
10. Cat Stars, an old name of the Pleiades which should not be confused with a small constellation between Hydra (the water snake) and Antlia (the pump) created by the French astronomer Lalande in 1799.
11. The Greeks saw the Small Bear as a Boar. In Greek myths, Hercules slew the Erymanthian Boar. The boar or pig, since both animals were often confused by the ancient Celts.
12. Cath Pagug, literally “the cat in absentia,” is mentioned in the Welsh *Trioedd Ynys Prydein*, *Triad 26*, in the *Paniarth 16 MS* and in the *Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch*.



Gallic coinage depicting a knight brandishing a spear. Author's drawing.

CHAPTER III

ASTROLOGY OF THE DRUIDS

“Next morning, at the dawn of day, they arose. And they took way along the sea coast, up towards Bryn Aryen. And at the top of Cevn Clydno they equipped themselves with horses, and went towards the Castle of Arianrod. And they changed their form, and pricked towards the gate in the semblance of two youths, but the aspect of Gwydion was more staid than that of the other. "Porter," said he, "go thou in and say that there are here bards from Glamorgan." And the porter went in. "The welcome of Heaven be unto them, let them in," said Arianrod.”

(LADY CHARLOTTE GUEST, THE MABINOGION, MATH THE SON OF MATHONWY, 1877)



Assembly of the Druids, old book engraving by Charles Knight, England (public domain).

Druidical Astrology

Roman scholars have often reported that the Gauls, of all the empire's people, were the most receptive to astrology¹. This pedagogical art and Druid-science was always on top of the agenda as an important subject matter in the curriculum of all the pagan schools of southern Gaul.

And as Peter Berresford Ellis remarked, it is very surprising considering the classical sources that there is so little mention of it in the Celtic texts. Pomponius Mela² (ca. A. D. 43) noticed the high regard given to the Druids who were held for their “speculations” on the stars.”

Then there is this passage by Flavius Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus³ (ca. A. D. 490-583) concerning the Getae or Gets, an eastern Celticised Thraco-Dacian tribe, where he mentions them as being learned in moral and natural philosophy and well informed on the “course of the twelve signs of the Zodiac and the planets passing through them, including the whole science of astronomy.

The Danube valley land of Dacia was also peopled by powerful Celtic tribes such as the Scordici and the Britolagai (Latin, Britogalli). The Celtic influence was the underlying civilizing factor in the transformation of the Dacian Getic culture. The Greeks knew them as the Γέται or Gètai.

In some Roman documents, the name for the Daci is spelled Dage and that of the Getae is spelled Gaete. The etymology of Getae is most likely from the Indo-European stem *guet- “to utter, to talk” (cf. Gaulish, gutu, Old Irish, guth « voice », Old Norse goði “priest” < *g^hutjon- “calls, invokes, summons”). The Celts would certainly not have missed the pun of Getoi with Gettoi “big butted.”

In his translation of Cassiodorus’s text, Jornandes writes Gauthigoth in place of Getae. Many have confused the name with the northern Germanic Goths, but these are two distinct peoples.

A king of the Gets, Dromichætes⁴, who defeats the

Macedonian king Demetrius I in 294 BCE, was most likely Celtic (Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, Book I, Attica, chapter I). The name of Diceneus⁵, the philosopher teacher of the Gets, also looks Celtic. In no other classical text, do we get such a vivid picture of the teachings of astronomy and natural science in the ancient Celtic realm:

“What made their salvation, their happiness, the fulfilment of their wishes, was that they understood the use of the rules given by their counsellor Diceneus, and that they sought by every means to apply these and put them to practice. Diceneus, seeing that the spirits obeyed him in all things and that this people was gifted of natural wit, taught them almost all of philosophy; since he was a master of this science.

He introduced them to morals hoping to keep them away from barbaric mores; in revealing to them the laws of physics, he taught them to live according to those of nature under the regulation of their own laws handed down to this day by the writings of the Belgians⁶; through the lessons of logic, he trained them to reason better than the other nations: in showing the practice, he persuaded them to perform good deeds; in demonstrating the theory, he showed them the twelve signs of the Zodiac, the passing of the planets through these signs; and all of astronomy; he instructed them on how the lunar disc waxes and wanes; he showed them how the flaming orb of the sun surpasses in greatness the circumference of the earth; he exposed under which names and signs the three-hundred and forty-four stars pressing at the pole of the sky or distancing from it descend while moving from the orient to the occident.

What was it not, may I ask, his will to bring essentially bellicose men to put down arms at times for four days in order to penetrate the teachings of philosophy!

There, we could see one studying the positions of the sky, another the properties of the herbs and fruits of the earth; another follow the waxing and waning of the moon; and the other observe the work of the sun and seek how, caught in the rotation of the sky, this heavenly body hastily attempts to reach the eastern shore is brought back towards the western shore.

Then after having been made aware of all of these phenomena, they took rest. Diceneus, thanks to his knowledge, having taught the Goths all these things and many others still, inspired them such great admiration to the point that he not only commanded men of modest rank, but also to the kings themselves". (Author's translation from French)

The Sicilian Greek, Strabo (64 BCE – 24 CE), spoke of a Celtic Druid named Abaris⁷ invited to Athens to discuss such matters with the Greek philosophers. At a time when astronomy and astrology were the same science, the Celts were, according to Cicero, Caesar, Pliny, Tacitus, and other classical writers, masters of astronomy⁸. "The apparent silence of Druid astronomers after the days of Taliesin can only be explained by the success of Christian censorship on pagan science. Peter Berresford Ellis also had noticed, thanks to his vast understanding of the various insular texts, that parallels were found in both Celtic and Vedic cosmologies. He noticed that the ancient Celtic astrologers used similar systems as those of the Vedic astrologers. This system was based on the twenty-seven lunar mansions called *nakshatras* in Sanskrit. His main argument was found in the motif of the circular palace of King Aillil which comprised of twenty-seven windows and through which he could observe his twenty-seven "Star Maidens." Berresford Ellis also noticed that Aillil had traits similar to those of the Hindu Soma god. More startling were the names of the mead goddesses⁹, the Old Irish Medba and the Sanskrit Madhavi.

As for Taliesin, "brilliant forehead," the name seems to be a Celticized early Welsh rendering of the Greek name Ptolemaios "war-like," from Πτολεμαῖος (*Ptolemaios*), from πόλεμος (*pólemos*), "war". Therefore, Taliesin was to the Welsh what Claudius Ptolemaeus (circa 100 to 170 CE) was to the Alexandrian Greeks:

"I am learned in the principal sciences, and the reasoning of astrologers concerning veins and solvents, and the general nature of man" (The Hostile Confederacy)... "I am a wise man of the primal knowledge, I

am an experienced astrologer, pronounce solutions, I speak to habitual sycophants, I continue to behold God" (in *The Hostile Conspiracy*).

From Geoffrey of Monmouth, more fragments of ancient Welsh astrology attributed to Merlin are to be found in the *Historia Regum Britanniae* (ca. 1134 CE).

A 10th century text, the *Saltair na Rann* (Psalter of Quatrains), states that every educated Irishman knew the names of the signs of the zodiac in order, and the correct day and month when the sun entered the signs. And according to Cormac Mac Cuileannain (836-908 CE) in *Sanas Chormaic* (or Cormac Glossary), any well informed person could throughout the year estimate the hour of the night by the positions of the moon and stars.

In Greek Anatolia, Strabo¹⁰ speaks of Abaris, a Druid ambassador who discussed astronomy with the Greeks of Athens. At that time, astronomy and astrology were one and the same, that is, a divining art as well as a science. So, according to the classical authors, Cicero, Caesar, Pliny, Tacitus, Cassiodorus, Plutarch, and so on, the Druids were the undisputed masters of the natural arts and sciences of the sky. Plutarch, in *Moralia* (p. 191), concerning the inhabitants of the island of Ogygia (Ireland), wrote:

“Here then the stranger was conveyed, as he said, and while he served the god became at his leisure acquainted with astronomy, in which he made as much progress as one can by practising geometry, and with the rest of philosophy by dealing with so much of it as is possible for the natural philosopher.”

Unfortunately, the comments gleaned here and there from the Greek and Roman writers is all too vague and sketchy to grasp what the astrology of the Druids really was like. However, one interesting detail in Plutarch's *Moralia* (vol. XII Concerning the Face Which Appears in the Orb of the Moon, section 26), is the mention concerning the wise of Ogygia who knew of the thirty years cycle of Saturn.

“Now when at intervals of thirty years the star of Cronus, which we call *Phenon* 'Splendid' but they, our author said, call *Nycturus* 'Night-watchman', enters the sign of the Bull, they, having spent a long time in preparation for the sacrifice and the expedition, choose by lot and send forth a sufficient number of envoys in a correspondingly sufficient number of ships, putting aboard a large retinue and the provisions necessary for men who are going to cross so much sea by oar and live such a long time in a foreign land.”

If we are to understand druidic astrology, this passage of Plutarch is all the more interesting. Firstly, he explains the manner by which these “holy men” grouped years into thirty year cycles and not centuries as did the Romans and secondly, he gives the Gaulish name for planet Saturn rendered in Greco-Latin as *Nycturus* (< *Nucturos* “Nightly”).

To better grasp this astute computation, a revolution of Saturn around the sun is of 29 years, 165 days and 11.68 hours. This explains why the Druids counted their ages in 30 year cycles. The number thirty (or occasionally twenty-nine or twenty-eight days) is also the duration of a month. Plutarch (in *Moralia*, p. 191) says that when abroad in the land of Ogygia, he gained much in astronomy as much knowledge as can be acquired after a consuming investigation.

“Here then the stranger was conveyed, as he said, and while he served the god became at his leisure acquainted with astronomy, in which he made as much progress as one can by practising geometry, and with the rest of philosophy by dealing with so much of it as is possible for the natural philosopher.”

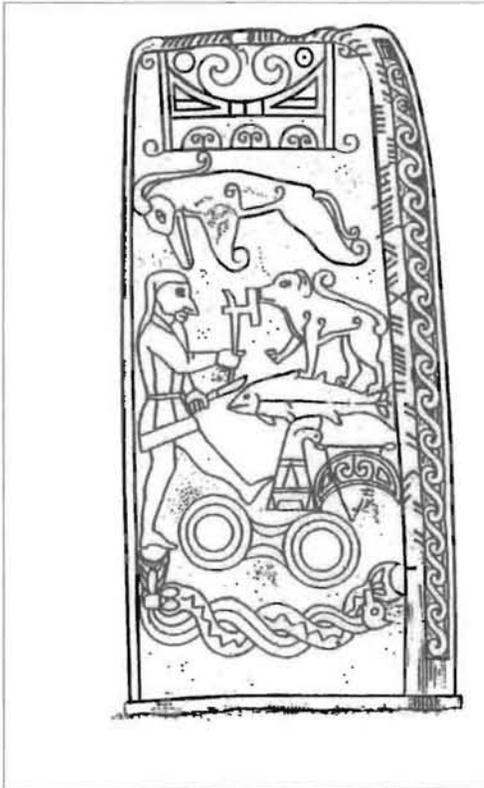
This says much about the astronomical knowledge gained at the contact of the Hibernian astronomers. And contrary to what the experts say for a Chaldean origin. As found in the early sky charts of Greece, the 12 sign astrological model was created well above the 36th parallel. This contradicts the theory of a single Egyptian or Sumerian Chaldean origin. At these latitudes, well above the Aegean Sea at the 40th parallel, we find the Balkans and Black Sea. Also, there is a date for its invention: 2500 BCE, right at the time of the Bronze Age during the spread of the Danubian and Pontic peoples! This Indo-European origin best explains the parallels between the Greek and Vedic astrologies, which at the time were the two main civilizational poles of the ancient world. In fact, the Greek and Indian systems are so much alike that we are forced to conclude that both derive from a single prototype. Most evidently, this early 12 sign model evolved and was eventually refined in the local cultures through the speculations of the Greco-Latin mathematici, the Persian magi, the Vedic Rishis, or even Celtic Druids, among others.

And as previously mentioned, Peter Berresford Ellis was the first to notice that the Irish texts described the 27 lunar mansions along the same mythological lines as those of the Vedic scriptures where they are called Nakshatras.

According to the Irish myths, king Ailill¹¹ had a circular palace in the shape of a wheel in which there was a large room with 12 windows and a small one with 27 windows, where he could admire its 27 “daughters of the stars.”

And in other Irish mythological tales, the god Lugh, King of the Tuatha Dé Danann, boasted to master all the sciences and arts of the Druids¹²:

“Prompt and bold is Lugh with his long hand that beat warriors. He, the son of Eithe Imdhearg, daughter of Balor Bhailchbheimnech, granddaughter of Nuachrothach Neid, set mind to consider and look at length at the sea to observe the appearance and course of the stars, examine the sky, study the sun, in order to remember the planets, making sure that they should not set and remain in their twilight so that they remained longer, more lasting, prolonging the warriors' combat, so that the shape-shifting poly-technician distinguished the break of day or if his army was with him (...)? Or again, if it turned to his advantage. Hence he found that he had actual knowledge of the signal of daybreak or night's end (...)? (...) That day.”



Pictish stone probably depicting an astronomer or geographer holding a navigational instrument and knife. Drawing from the work of Richard R. Brash, *Inscribed Monuments of the Gaedhil of the British Isles*, George Bell and Sons, London, 1879.

In addition, we know from archaeology that the Gallo-Roman astrologers were interested in prediction techniques from the Egyptianized Ptolemaic Greeks. In an archaeological dig of 1967 at the site of a Gallo-Roman sanctuary at Grand, France, was found a diptych engraved with a detailed astrological chart (made around the second century CE). The signs of the Zodiac, along with the names of the decans in old Coptic, were engraved in Greek characters on it. One of the panels is kept in the town of Épinal, France, at the Departmental Museum of Vosges, while the other is kept at the Museum of Antiquities in Saint-Germain-en-Laye.

And more recently at Chevroches, Nièvre, France, during excavations by the archaeological team lead by F. Devevey in 2001 to 2002, an astrological disc (dating from the fourth century CE) was discovered. It is inscribed with three lines bearing the Egyptian, Greek and Roman months along with the twelve signs of the Zodiac. The disk is now kept at the Chevroches Archaeological Museum of Dijon, France.

Although these artifacts do not inform us on Celtic astrology, these archaeological finds nevertheless prove the importance astrology had in ancient Gaul. Unfortunately this information gap leaves us with the need to fine comb the voluminous corpus of Irish and Welsh texts.

Starting with Welsh literature, we have the legendary Taliesin, the Claudius Ptolemaeus of the Old Britons, we presume.

In one of the poems attributed to Taliesin (*The hostile Conspiracy*, W. F. Skene, 1858), it is declared:

“From me no one shall know. The wise man of the primary science, the astrologer reasoned, about wrath, about the resolvent, about the man describing windings.”

And in *Historia Regum Britanniae* (ca. 1134 CE) by Godfrey of Monmouth, there are other elements on Celtic cosmology, attributed to Merlin, not the least, found in old British literature.

Then, concerning Irish literature, Berresford Ellis found in an introductory comment to a manuscript of the tenth century, the *Saltair na Rann*, or “Psalter of Quatrains,” a passage insisting that any educated Irishman knew in order the twelve zodiacal signs and the correct day and month in which the sun entered each sign along with the seven planets (quoted from the Introduction, viii):

“The conception of the universe in the first poem, with its ideas of the seven heavens, the coloured and fettered winds, and the sun passing through the opening windows of the twelve divisions of the heavens, is curious; the earth, enclosed in the surrounding firmament, 'like a shell around an egg,' being regarded as the centre of the universe.”

This quote probably explains another obscure passage found in the *Saltair na Rann* in one of poems on the twelve winds of heaven, *The Creation of the Universe* (translated by Eleanor Hull, 1912)¹³:

“The twelve winds, Easterly and Westerly, Northerly and Southerly, the King who adjusted them, He holds them back, he fettered them with seven curbs.

King who bestowed them according to their posts, around the world with many adjustments, each two winds of them about a separate curb, and one curb for the whole of them.

King who arranged them in habitual harmony, according to their ways, without over-passing their limits: at one time, peaceful was the space, at another time, tempestuous.

Measurements of the Universe. King who didst make clear the measure of the slope from the earth to the firmament, estimating it, clear the amount, along with the thickness of the earth-mass.

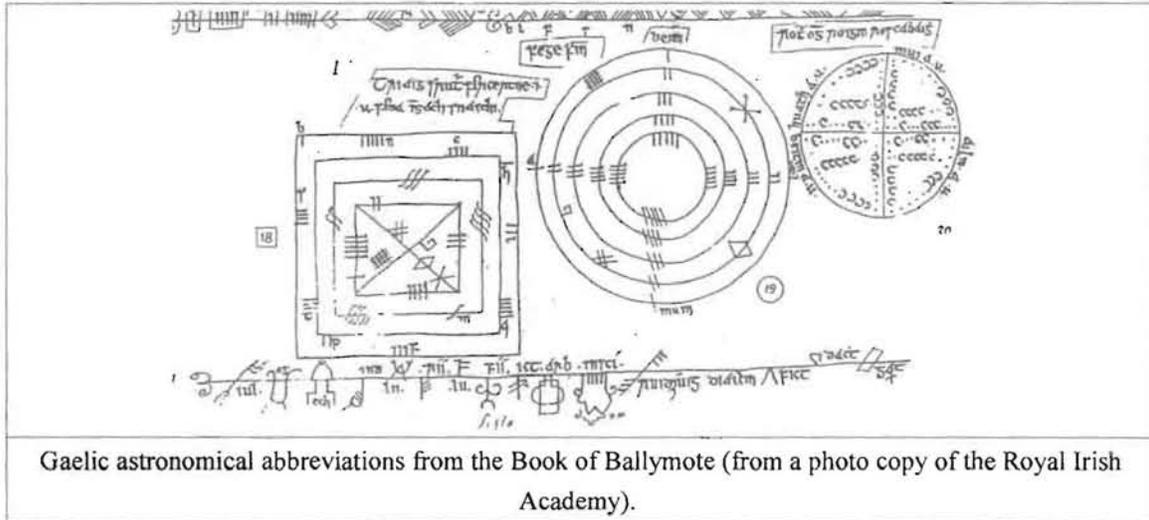
He set the course of the seven Stars from the firmament to the earth, Saturn, Jupiter, Mercury, Mars, Sol, Venus, the very great Moon.”

Berresford Ellis also found in a work attributed to Cormac MacCuileannain (836-908 CE), the *Sanas Chormaic* or “the Glossary of Cormac,” a line mentioning that a “well-educated person should be able to estimate the time of the night from the moon and the position of the stars.”

In *Cormac's Glossary* are also found old Gaelic names for many of the heavenly bodies, moon, sun, stars etc.:

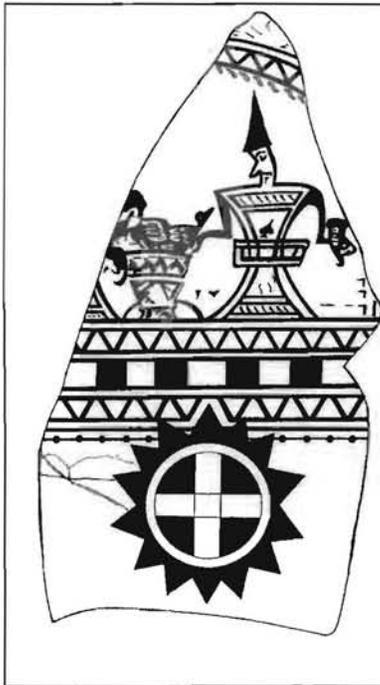
“Retglu, f a 'star'; Esca, f 'moon'; Grian, f 'sun'; Fiie, i.e. the rising of the sun in (the) morning; Máirt i.e. Marte, from the god of battle of among the gentiles. Mars, was his name.”

However, if some of the astronyms found in *Cormac's Glossary* are truly Gaelic, many of these names are Latin borrowings. To discover the original astronyms, we must turn to the *Book of Ballymote*, abbreviations 21 (*Lebhor Bhaile Mhota*: LBM, manuscript copy dating from 1390-1391 CE), wherein the Celtic symbols of constellations and zodiacal signs are found.



Finally, according to Joseph Monard, the names of the Gallic zodiacal constellations inscribed on the Coligny calendar, went as follows:

- Cantli Prinnios, “cycle-settling,” cantos ring (Libra/Scales);
- Samoni Prinnios, “of the meeting, of the sower,” (Scorpio/Scorpion);
- Dumanni Prinnios, “darkening,” (Sagittarius/Archer);
- Riuri Prinnios, “of frost,” (Capricorn/Goat Fish);
- Anaganti Prinnios, “inactive,” (Aquarius/Water-Bearer);
- Ogroni Prinnios, “of cold, of snakes,” (Pisces/Fish);
- Cuti Prinnios, “fiery, ram,” (Aries/Ram);
- Giamoni Prinnios, “of shoots, of sprouts,” (Taurus/Bull);
- Simiuissonni Prinnios, “capriciously-breezed, vivacious, dashing,” (Gemini/Twins);
- Equi Prinnios, “balanced,” (Cancer/ Crab);
- Elembiuii Prinnios, “of arbitration,” and connotes, “hot flux,” (Leo/Lion);
- Edrini Prinnios, “of the arbitrator judge,” (Virgo/Maiden).



A Celtiberian druid astrologer?

Detail of a painted pottery shard depicting a priest offering a libation during a religious sacrifice. The conical cap and the large white apron recall other examples found in Celtic art. In his left hand, he holds a drinking horn while in his right hand he caresses a gallinaceous bird perched on a cauldron. In ancient imagery, zigzag patterns most often represent water and sometimes peaks (hills and mountains). For the Celts, the constellation of Crater was represented by a cauldron. So, the rooster announcing daybreak can be one of the bird-messengers of the Sky-god. The Raven (Corvus) and the Horn (Triangle) are found over Hydra. It is therefore an allusion to the cycle of cosmic waters described in the various Indo-European cosmologies.

Author's drawing from a copy taken from Celtiberian Ideologies and Religion by Gabriel Sopeña, E- Keltoi Museo Numantino, Soria (Sopeña 1995).

The Druid Astrologer

<p>Talhayarn yssyd Mwyhaf there sywedyd. Pwy amgyfrawd gwyd O aches amot dyd.</p>	<p>“Talhayarn is The greatest astrologer. Which is the meditation of the woods. Eloquence according to day.”</p>
<p>(Book of Taliesin VII – Kyfyndawt Angar , The hostile conspiracy)</p>	

There is a quote on Claudius Ptolemaeus by Jim Tester that very well describes the competence of a good astrologer: “The astrologer, said Ptolemy, should so understand the movements of the heavenly bodies that he can know 'the place of any configuration'...”¹⁴

As we know, men of science, throughout the period of Antiquity, made no distinction between astrology and astronomy, either art or science, and used the general term *astrologia* to designate the two disciplines. It was in fact the Visigoth bishop Isidorus of Seville (560-636 CE) who, in the seventh century (*The Etymologies or Origins*), was the first to make the distinction between both terms. And indeed, in those times we were still far from the technological means of modern science.

Therefore, the druid-astrologers of the ancient Celts went over the same ground as the Latin *mathematici* (philosophical Pythagorean astronomers), Avestan magi or Vedic Rishis did.

Also, as stated by Julius Caesar in *Gallic Wars* on Gallic astronomy and geography, the Druids, much like the Greeks, had calculated the distances between the Earth and the luminaries and understood Earth's rotundity.

“They likewise discuss and impart to the youth many things respecting the stars and their motion, respecting the extent of the world and of our earth, respecting the nature of things, respecting the power and the majesty of the immortal gods.”

(*De Bello Gallico, Campaign against the Suevi*, Book VI, chap. 14)

Unfortunately, Caesar, who was drawing information directly from the Gallic Druid Diviciacus, does not give more detail on what were the names of the stars, the planets, let alone the nature of this science.

The science of astronomy¹¹ has many names in various modern Celtic languages and at least seven Gaelic names for the astrologer can be noted: rollagedagh, “one who studies the stars,” fisatóir, “one who studies the heavens,” eastrolac, “one who studies the moon,” fathach, “soothsayer (by the heavenly bodies),” n'éladoir, “soothsayer (by the sky),” reall-eolach, “knower of the stars,” and réaltóir, “astrologer.”

Recently, astrologers have speculated much on the cosmological and astrological properties of the Germanic Runes and have proposed a similar underlying concept for the Irish Ogham. It is a proven historical fact that in the past the art of writing was linked to magic and cosmology. The scribe was not just a writer, an annalist, but also the “scribe of the gods”... And these gods resided in the stars.

Therefore, the astrologer was also a rune-master, that is, one who kept up the secret annals. Thus, the Gaelic scribe, the Ogham expert (Ogmodanos in Old Celtic), looked over the Ogham letters or fews (feda), that were represented by the trees of the heavenly forest, seen as constellations marked by zodiacal cusps.

Also bear in mind that the astronomical observation of the ancients was essentially geocentric. The same conclusion can be made for the Celtic and Teutonic star-gazers.

The Sidereal Worlds

The ancient Indo-European seers saw the cosmos as a vast ocean surrounded by a ring of fire. These specific realms in the cosmos were strictly imaginary, mythical or mystical in nature. Imagined as invisible worlds, we should not confuse them with the *Sidhs* (> *Sidos* “residence, tranquillity”), which were seen as planetary godly places or residences similar to the Vedic Lokas.¹⁵

In Vedic astrology, a Loka generally refers more specifically to a region of the sky, or the cosmos, world, earth, sky, atmosphere or any of the lower regions. These sites were classed as follows: the earth, the sky or firmament, the middle region, or place of rebirth, or place of truth, where reside the blessed mortals.

The Lokas include seven worlds: *Bhu-loka*, the earth; *Bhuvan-loka*, the atmospheric space between the earth and the sun, where reside the Siddhas (enlightened ones) and their companions; *Svar-loka*, the heaven of Indra above or between the sun or the space between the sun and the North Star; *Mahar-loka*, the region above the North Star inhabited by Bhrgo and other wise men who survived the destruction of the last three lower worlds; *Janar-loka*, a place inhabited by the four Kumaras, the sons of Brahma, including Sanat Kumara and company; *Tapar-loka*, inhabited by the deified Vairagins; and finally, *Satya-*

loka, or Brahma-loka, the abode of Brahma.

The Greeks and Romans also entertained similar notions concerning the “Soul of the World,” and of the movement of the stars.

Plutarch, quoting the Lampridius's catalogue, speaks of a loss of influence through the course (or curse) of comets. It would be nice to know more, but unfortunately, we can now only deplore the loss of Lampridius's work. Although these hypothetical or fabled domains were much debated by the ancient astrologers, stranger even, were their discussions on the music of the spheres.¹⁶

Macrobius, who was inspired by Porphyry, speaks at length of the Platonic idea of the cosmic concert emitted by the movements of the heavenly bodies.

What follows is Macrobius's comment found in *Saturnalia* on Cicero who wrote about this “Heavenly symphony”:

“The older orbs turn with an even greater impetuosity the wider they are and at the same time, they travel much heavier by the blast which is still at its starting point, as Cicero said, they move by making a chirping sound precisely because of their faster rotation. To the contrary, the lunar globe, being smaller, makes a deeper sound because of the wind that has turned, has reached the end of its course and is already weakened. It also rotates slower because of the impetuosity its narrow sphere in which is enclosed the penultimate orb.”

This is but an example on how the astrologers of Antiquity debated on such esoteric notions as the music of the heavenly bodies. That heavenly bodies do emit audible vibrations, which we now know thanks to the means of our modern technological wizardry, but how on Earth did the ancients know about this? Needless to add that we are left to accept the ancients' belief in ethereal sounds manifested in mystical places. This passage from Macrobius better explains the same notion found in other related cultures such as those of the Celts; as described in Irish literature where emission and the audition of ethereal music from the faerie Sidhs resound. Therefore, it is conceivable that the Druids had maintained the same conceptions on the heavenly symphony of the higher spheres.

Correspondence address:

Michel-Gerald Boutet
boutios@cgocable.ca