

Astrology of the Ancient Druids

Part 3

The astrological ogham

In 1937, R.A. Stewart Macalister wrote in *The Secret Languages of Ireland* (p 40) that the so-called Ogham (abbreviations 18 to 21) were not actually Ogham, but magical or semantic representations for the divinising arts. One list labelled sigla 21 in Latin do hint at astronomical terms such as *am* for “totalized time” and *iul* for “July.”

Sigla 21:

1) IUL. 2) og 3) ech 4) ind 5) ln. / lii? 6) rii. and 7) lu., 8) fii. , 9) ict., 10) arb. ; 11) insci., 12) ruidzûig
diailm; fict; dact; gaxt / gact or gart? (At the bottom of the list, a hook, stairs and the letters 'am').

The following is a thorough linguistic analysis of the series with their corresponding etymologies and their symbols resembling conventional astrological signs.

Abbreviations of the words with their Gaelic meanings

Acronym and Ogham	Dictionary Definition
IUL	Iul < Julii, “(month of) July;” for direction/orientation, course, track, guide, landmark, buoy (sea), namely, knowledge, learning, art, judgement, leader, commander, service, attention, etc.”
Og	Og < og/óc (abbreviation ogham), “young boy, young man;” Ogh, a Gaelic name of the letter 'O'; Ogh, “virgin, pure, whole, honest.”
Ech	Ech > each, “horse;” echu > aecuos, “equalized, balanced,” that is, ech for “horse” and “equalized;” compare with personal name Eochaidh > iuocatus, “the clear/yew and combat.”
Ind	Ind < ind- prefix, ind-os/-a/-on, adj. “end, penultimate,” cf. English, “end.”
In. / Lii. / Li. Len	Len, “canvas (sail or curtain);” linn, “age, century, race, family, descendants;” lii, or given as: 'le < i-le, the “marker, the number;” li < liv/lif, “colour, tint, paint.”
Rii.	Rii > ri, “king, regent.”
Lu.	Lu, “small,” the first element is found in luachaman “leprechaun;” lû, “gain.”
Fii.	Fii < fia / fea < feannag, “carrion-crow, raven, rook, cock-raven.”
Ict.	Ict > icht, “offspring, children, protection;” ict for Greek chthys or Latin ichthus, ictus, “fish.”
Arb.	Arb > arba, “cart, chariot.”
Insci.	Insci/inscii > innsgin, “spirit, courage, vigor;” insgne, “speech, language.”
Ruidzûig	Ruidzûig > ruidh/ruith, “red/wheel;” sûig > succos, “pig;” sug, “joy, laughter, happiness,” or maybe ruid ruig, “red queen?”
Diailm	Di-ailm < di-, “negation,” prefixed to ailm, the letter 'A', implying an exit from the letter 'A'. Arb is the only notation starting with the A initial.
Fict	Fict > fecht, “time, turn, occasion, feat.”
Dact	dact / dect > decht, “right.”
Gaxt or gact	Gaxt > gact > cachd, “captive, young slave or servant;” cacht, “the world;” cacht, “exalted cry, shout,” or a spelling mistake: gart/gort, “garden, enclosed yard, vineyard.”
Hook and stairs	
Am	Am < ama < amannan, “time period,” that is, time in general, past or present.

The notation *am*, to wit, “totalized annual time” corresponding to the sun's course through the 12 zodiacal constellations whose names are conveniently noted as acronyms starting with: Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius, Pisces Aries Taurus Gemini. The *am* notation,

abbreviated from amannan, and given in final note (along with the hook and staircase symbols), indicates that what preceded pertained to a total time period. It should be noted that this list begins and ends at the summer solstice in Gemini and Cancer. This was probably because of the heliacal rising of the constellation at the time of the summer solstice where the sun is at its peak. As recorded in the *Coligny calendar*, this period was also an adjustment period for the annual and monthly cycles. Some of the early Greek calendars also started at the summer solstice.

These abbreviations from the Book of Ballymote, recognized as acronyms by most Ogham scholars, seem at first incomprehensible... But nevertheless, for those who have the patience to see beyond these truncated consonants, one can distinguish the tree from the forest. Similar abbreviations are also found on the *Coligny calendar*, therefore, helping us better understand what these obscure charades hint at. What follows are some of my etymological proposals for the LBM sigla starting with the *iul* siglum:

1) Iul, “July,” the list starts in July. The Gaelic name *Iul* for this month was from the Latin patrician name Iulius and could have been confused with the Gaelic *iul*, from the Celtic root Iuliuos meaning, “jubilant” or *iulucos*, “jubilatory cry of victory,” if not *iulon*, “sung prayer, yodel.” This shift in word meaning could be the work of a Christian copyist. Then also, it could be an inversion from *iul* to *uil* < *uillo*, “horse.” This month was also under the patronage of the horse in the Gallic calends: *Ecuos* / *Equos*, “horse.” *Uil*- also connotes *uilia* < **euilia* for “willingness, honesty”. But then again, this month also had a Gaelic name: *Iuchar* > *iecuorios*, “(time) spawning.” The other astronyms were: *equos*, “horse,” *Partanos*, “the reddish, the crab,” or *Legustros*, “the crustacean.”

2) Og : Og-, is the usual abbreviation in LBM Ogham for *óg* < *ogos*, “intact,” which implies, “egg;” *ogia*, “virginity, purity, young;” *ogiomu*, “purity, freshness;” *ogios*, “young, youth;” *aghuist mins* from the Latin *mens Augusti*, “month of August;” *aga/agica*, “doe;” *agliu*, “deer;” *aglo*, “big game;” *ago/agu*, “fight” and “commitment;” *agomarus/agontios*, “driver, leader;” *agos*, “horned beast, steer;” *agtos/asctos*, “act, fact, action;” *agtu*, “manner, condition, condition;” *Ogma*, “champion;” *ogmio*, “magic link;” *ogmo*, “sudden decision, inhibition;” *ognos*, “lamb.” Other astronyms: *Elnbos/Elembo*, “fawn;” *Leuo*, “lion.”

3) Ech < ecu, “cattle;” *eqos*, “horse;” *ecco*, “country priest;” *ecuodecs*, “perfectly fair;” *ex*: *exo*, “start count,” abbreviation for “starting a computation.” *Esoxs*, “pike, salmon;” Gaelic name for the month of September: *Sultuine* > *sultennos*, the “lavish.” Other astronyms: *edrin*os, “judge;” *carca*, “hen.”

4) Ind < indon, “end, extremity, ultimate;” *indonesodion*, “pending issue;” *indouelicon*, “ultimate ring or circle;” *Indamia*, “servant, follower.” Month names: *Deireadh Fómhair/anDàmhair* < *Damodàris*, “rutting deer.” Other astronyms: *Cantlos*, “loop;” *Sidos*, “deer” (*Libra* and *Scorpio*).

5) Lii

-**Ln.** < **(A)ln-** < **alnos**, “from beyond, noble;” **(e)ln-** < **elnos**, “roeibuck;” **elna**, “prodigy, herd, flock;” **elnô**, verb “to go, to come;” **olnos**, “elm, ash;” **ulnos**, “fleece;” **ln:** < **lengmen**, **lingmen**, “on scene, on

arrival;" lon, "momentum;" lon, "blackbird;" lona, "female sheep;" slogmen, "gathering;" lii. < Lingonis, "jumper, dancer, go-getter;" lingmen, "jump, jump;" lenuos, "child;" (s)li- < sioladair < siltarios, "sower." Name of month: Samhain < Samonios, "of the meeting, of the sower." Other astronyms: Samonion, "the gathering."

6) Rii. < (A)rii < arios, "free man, landowner;" ariomos, "farmer;" bogdarios, "archer;" rii- < rios, "free;" ridir, "rider, cavalier, knight;" rixio, "appearance, form (representation)." Name of month: an Dúbhlaich < Dubilectos, "dark, covered." Other astronyms: Uarcustos, "archer."

7) Lu. Lu- < lupos, "bar, wolffish;" (i)lu/(e)lu/(a)lu- < eluo, "gain, profit;" eluos, "herd;" eluen/oluen, "shower of sparks;" eluios, "whistling swan;" eluioi, "many" (this is the time of the swan song because at this time this constellation slips below the northwest horizon); eluinos, "owner;" lu- < lucius/lugius, "pike;" luuios, "guide, chief;" lucio, "personality, remarkable person;" ad/at-lu < attiluis, "sturgeon (that is to say a horned fish)." Name of month: an Faoilteach < Uailuticos, "of wolves." Please compare with the Gallic name Riuros for, "cold, frost." Other astronyms: Gabra, "goat;" Boccas, "goat;" Riuri Prinnios, "the constellation of frost."

8) Fii. < - Uii < uiis < uisucios, "respectable;" uisucios/ueseceos, "male raven, chough;" uisucia, "female raven;" uecuos/uesacos, "crow;" uiscioch > udesciocos, "aqueous, watery;" Month name: an t-Uisceadoir > udesciodouor, "the pouring water;" uetsis > uisis, "young pig, piglet." Other astronyms: Anaganti Prinnios, "the constellation of inaction."

9) Ict. < Ict- < ictus, a Latin borrowing from the Greek ikhtus, "fish" in wordplay with, ictis, "down at the bottom, bottom," and can be understood by the Latin term ictus for, "part, stroke, blow, shock, impairment;" (p)ict-/a/on, "careful;" iction, "strait, channel;" -ect < ectamos, "extreme;" ext-, "outside;" extincón, "abundance brilliance;" eictami, "utterance, scream;" iactis/iectis, "language;" iegtos, "frozen, frozen;" iacceto, "health;" iaccetos/iaccitaros, "healer." Month name: an Giblean < Gegdoblonacos, "time of goose fat." Other astronyms: Escoi "fish;" Ogroni Prinnios, the "constellation of cold-blooded animals, fish and reptiles."

10) Arb. < Arb-/aru- < aruos, "plough;" aruon, "furrow, ploughed field;" aruos/aruos, "attacking;" arubianos, "blushing;" aruerniatis, "provider, supplier;" (c)arb > caruos/caruosidos, "deer;" caruts, "hero;" cairaxs, "ram;" tsiburnos, "ram;" Aedu, Aidu, "young Aries," called Aros in Old Celtic, the equivalent of Ares or Mars. Month name: an Márt, from Latin mens Martis, "month of Mars." Other astronyms: Cuti Prinnios the "constellation of Aries;" Putios/Qutios > Cutios, "Aries, Fiery, Ram."

11) Insci, insci < insqia / eniscuia, "discourse, speech;" in-sciatacos, "in-winged, winged;" tarbh-insci < insciatos taruos, "the winged bull," is also spelled indsci for an(d)- scia(tach) > sciatacos ander, "the winged cattle;" sciathon "shield (highly probable in this astrological context);" connoting inícia/inisia, "island." Other astronyms: Taruos, "bull;" Taruos Trigarannianom, "bull with three cranes;" Month name: an Ceitean < Cetonos, "the prime time." Giamoni Prinnios, "the constellation of

germination.”

12) Ruidzûig > roudiosuccones, “the red pigs;” roudiosuccoi, “the red piglets,” if not, ruidriug > roudia-rigu, “the red queen.” Roudios has at least three meanings: “red, rough or loud,” and “ruin, fall.” Similarly, *suc-* can also connote: *suca* > *suga* / *suba*, “girl,” and/or *sucô/slucô*, the verb “to knock, to strike.” Month name: *an t-Òg-mhios* < *mins Ogii*, “month of the youth.” Other astronynes: *Cancstica*, “mare;” *Simiuisoni Prinnios*, “the constellation of capricious breezes.”

13) Diailm < di-Ailm, “out from” the letter “A,” for *alamios*, “pine;” *alamos*, “cattle, livestock, a head of cattle, wealth.”

14) Fict > uict-/uect- < uecta, uegta, “time, occasion, tour;” *uecta*, “feat, exploit.”

15) Dact < dect < decht < dexsiua, “right;” *diexstagô*, verb “to release (a halter), to unclip;” or punning with *decton*, “fire;” *ditaca*, “smoke;” *digatma*, “seamless area;” *doagt*, verb, “to go;” *doaget*, verb, “it is going.”

16) Gaxt-/gact- < cact - < cacteto, “taking, seizure;” *cacto*, “power;” *cectos* < *cencos* < *canctos*, “applied strength, power;” adj. *cantec-/os/a/on* and *cantic-os/-a/-on* “girth;” also given as, *gart-/gort- < gorta*, “enclosure;” *gorton*, “closed garden.”

17) Am. > ama > amannan > Ammania, “duration, period, totalized time.”

Table of Compared Zodiacal Charts

Classic	Vedic	Gallic	Gaelic
Aries, Mars, Ram	Mesha, Ram	Cuti Prinnios, “constellation of the Ram, Aries;”	Arb < Aru- < Aruos, “forward,” punning with Aros (the equivalent of Ares or Mars) and/or Tsiburnos, “Aries;” month: An Giblean < Gegdoblonacos, “time of goose fat.”
Taurus, Bull	Vrishabha, Bull	Giamoni Prinnios, “constellation of Germination;”	Insci < in-sci- insqia, “discourse;” in (d)sci < Sciatacos Ander, “winged cattle,” or Insciatos Taruos, “winged bull;” Bealtaine < Belotennia, “bright lights.”
Gemini,	Mithuna,	Simiuisoni Prinnios,	Ruidzûig/ruidsûig

Twins	Pair	"constellation of brisk breezes;"	< rudio-succoi, "red pigs;" rudia riga, "red queen;" month: Meitheamh < mediosamosenos, "mid-summer weather."
Cancer, Crab	Kataka, Crab	Equi Prinnios Equos, "balanced constellation, the horse;"	Iul < iuliuos, "jubilant;" uil-uillos, "horse;" Iuchar < Iecuorios, "spawn time."
Leo, Lion	Simha, Lion	Elembiui Prinnios, "constellation of the fawn;" Elembos, "fawn;"	Og < og-/ag- < ago/agu, "fight," aga, "doe;" Lunasa < Lugi Naissatis, "commemoration of Lugh."
Virgo, Maiden	Kanya, Maiden	Edrini Prinnios, "constellation of the arbitrator;" Edrinos, "judge, arbitrator;"	Ech < ec-/eq- < ecuodecs, "perfectly fair;" ecco, "country priest;" ecu, "livestock;" ecuos / eqos "horse;" month: An t-Suiltine < sultennos, "lavish"
Libra, Scales	Thula, Scales	Cantli Prinnios, "constellation of the loop, ring, buckle"	Ind < ind-/end- < indon, "end;" Indouelicon, "ring or ultimate circle;" Indamia "servant", An Dàmhair < Damodàris, "person in rut, deer rut"
Scorpius, Scorpion	Vrishchika, Scorpion	Samoni Prinnios, "constellation of the sower, reunion, gathering;"	Lii < -lii-, liio, "outpourings, effusion;" lucios, "pike;" or Ln. < ln- > lingmen, "starting stage, on the scene;" .ln. < alnos, "the hereafter;" lingonis, "jumper, getter, dancer;" siltarios, "the sower;" Slogmen, "gathering;" Samhain < Samonios, "the sower of seeds, meeting."
Sagittarius, Archer	Dhanus, Archer	Dumanni Prinnios, "constellation of darkening," connoting: "of fumigation;"	Rii < -rii - ariios, "free man, noble;" riios, "free;" ariomos, "ploughman;" Bogdariios, "Archer;" Dubilectos < Dubhlachd, "dark, damp."
Capricornius,	Makara,	Riuri Prinnios,	Lu < -lu- < lupos, "bar, wolffish,"

Goat-fish	"Sea Monster," dolphin or crocodile	"constellation of the Frost;"	and/or lucius, lugius, "pike;" Attiluis, "Sturgeon, (goat-fish?);" Faoilteach < Uailuticos, "of wolves."
Aquarius, Water-Bearer	Kumbha, Pot	Anaganti Prinnios, "constellation of inaction;"	Fii < ui- < uiscias < udesciocos, "the Aqueous," and / or uisucios, "raven;" Na Féile Brighde < Ueilias Brigindonos, "Day of Brigitt."
Pisces, Fish	Mina, Fish	Ogroni Prinnios, "constellation of cooling, cold-blooded animals, fish and snakes;"	Ict- < ictis, "down;" escoi, "fish;" month: An Gearran Gerro, "time of castration."

The Vedic "Seed" Syllables Compared to the Celtic "Key" Sounds

One of the particular aspects of common Indo-European cosmology is the notion of the primordial sacred utterance or vibration which ordered the Cosmos and set the world into place. In a Welsh manuscript is found the mention of a central character to this theme called Menw ap Teirgwaedd. We find him in the *Llyfr Coch Hergest* or "Red Book of Hergest," a collection of Welsh mythic tales, compiled in 1382 CE and which are now kept at the library of the Oxford University. In 1877, Lady Charlotte Guest (1812-1895), collected and translated the tales in a book she retitled *The Mabinogion* or "tales of youth." Menw ap Teirgwaedd is figured in one of the tales entitled *Kilhwch and Olwen or the Twrch Trwyth*. The following was quoted from her book on p. 252:

"And after Yskithyrwyn Penbaedd was killed, Arthur and his host departed to Gelli Wic in Cornwall. And thence he sent Menw the son of Teirgwaedd to see if the precious things were between the two ears of Twrch Trwyth, since it were useless to encounter him if they were not there. Albeit it was certain where he was, for he had laid waste the third part of Ireland. And Menw went to seek for him, and he met with him in Ireland, in Esgeir Oervel. And Menw took the form of a bird; and he descended upon the top of his lair, and strove to snatch away one of the precious things from him, but he carried away nothing but one of his bristles. And the boar rose up angrily and shook himself so that some of his venom fell upon Menw, and he was never well from that day forward."

The underlying cosmological motif is here quite apparent. Here, Arthur is the Welsh version of the Old Gallic Artaios, "the bear-like," Twrch Trwyth (Twrch < Turcos, "boar," Trwyth < Tretios "boar") and Menw ap Teigwaedd (< Meneuos Trigutouatios, "the minded of the three utterances") the tree cosmic rays from the Septentrion. This same motif is found in Greek myths with Arcturus "the bear watcher" watching over the path of bear cubs, the stars of Ursa Minor (Eburos, "the Boar" in Gaul). The Welsh held the notion that their writing, the Coelbrenn was first created from three sun rays uttered by the primordial world giant called Einigan or Einiget (in J. William's *Barddas, on Symbols*, p. 33):

“Who was the first that made letters”?

“Einigan the Giant, or, as he is also called, Einiget the Giant; that is, he took the three rays of light, which were used as a symbol by Menw, son of the Three Shouts, and employed them as the agents and instruments of speech, namely the three instruments B. G. D. and what are embosomed in them, the three being respectively invested with three agencies. Of the divisions and subdivisions he made four signs of place and voice, that the instruments might have room to utter their powers. and to exhibit their agencies. Hence were obtained thirteen letters, which were cut in form on wood and stone. After that, Einigan the Giant saw reason for other and different organs of voice and speech, and subjected the rays to other combinations, from which were made the signs L. and R. and S., whence there were sixteen signs.”

The name Einigan or Einiget derives from the Old Celtic Anacantios for “calamitous,” which punned with Anagantios, “inactive,” or with Incaitalis, “reed,” and which was the Celtic name for the month of February. Hence, morphologically connecting the name with 'Ncu, the 'Ng' letter of the Ogham which stood for, “finality,” and “fatality.” The 'Ng' symbol was also present in the Coelbrenn and Teutonic runes. In the runes, Ing or Ingwaz was also in relation to the theme of Life and Death. This shows that the cosmological three rays of light symbol was common to both the Celtic and Germanic peoples. It can also be found in the list of Vedic mantra seed sounds as: Nga for naga for, “snake,” or for “not moving, inactive.” Upon reflection, all of this seems much older than at first suspected, thus bringing us way back to the common Indo-European level. The Celts maintained that from the World Tree, the nuts of knowledge fell into the water of a pool where the Salmon of Wisdom resided. Hence, from this sacred hazel tree fall the seeds or nuts of innate knowledge expressed as “prime utterances.” Mantras or seed sounds are grouped in a pedagogical compendium called *bija mantra* in Sanskrit. The *bija*, “seeds,” or “seed syllables,” are the basis for qualified chant called *mantra* or *saman* in Sanskrit. The word *saman* has various meanings in Sanskrit, it can be taken to mean, “a breath, to live,” or at second degree, “the terms of acquisition, possession, property, wealth and abundance.” Or again, implying the sense of “peace, tranquillity,” and connoting the expression of kind words in order to gain an opponent through conciliation and negotiation. In this case, *saman* is the calming principle against opposition and is therefore the allegorical bearer of peace.

For the Celts, *samon*, meant “the meeting, the gathering,” or “assembly,” and puns with *semon*, “seed,” and *semon*, “reverend.” The Vedic term, *saman*, in the religious sense, came to designate a hymn, a sacred song or a praise. Some sacred verses are also called *saman*. In the Rig Veda (RV. x 90, 9), *saman* refers to the ability to produce sound, if not a tune, a song (either sacred or profane), and otherwise the buzzing of bees. It goes without saying that the “seed sounds” are also related to a yogic practice called Dvadazapattraka. This yogic practice uses twelve syllables harmonizing with the signs of the Zodiac and annual months. It seems that the syllables from the Irish Ogham charts contained in the *Book of Ballymote* are the harmonic equivalents of these twelve-tone “seed vibrations” found in Vedic astrology. It should therefore not be an exaggeration to interpret these as elements of a druidical practice comparable to Yoga.

To wit, *iul*, from *iulon*, the “sacred song;” *og*, from *ogos*, “egg,” the Ogham letter 'O'; *insci*, from *insqiia/eniscuia* “speech, address;” *uii-*, for *uidues*, “woods,” the astral “cusps,” that is to say, *uidia/uidiia*, *uidtu*, “science, knowledge, awareness and understanding (of the seers).”

Also along these lines, is the parallel idea found with the Celtic *indon* and Vedic *antya* terms. The *ind-* acronym is from the Celtic root word *indon* meaning, “the end, the outcome,” that is to say finality, the last cosmic sound and astral sign. And this concept is again found in Vedic astrology. The Sanskrit term *Antya* has the same meaning: “in last place, right at the end,” or “final order.” It is also for the stars of Pisces and last sign of the Vedic Zodiac called *Antyabha* used to qualify *Revati*, the last of the *Nakshtra* lunar mansions.

And, to quote from the *Vedas*, here is the basic reasoning:

“When the four-headed *Brahmâ* projected the universe from his mind, the seed ingredient was *Shabda*, sound. The prime sound was the original *Om* or *Aum* and from that *Om*, the mantras are born. In this sound, the fourteen planetary worlds spew forth as expressions of pure sound. Therefore, the constellations and planets are also expressions of sound, each an utterance of the *Brahmâ*.”

And then, according to the traditions of the *Lebor Gabala Erren* (Book of the Taking of Ireland) and the *Auraicept na N-Éces* (The Scholars’ Primer), the ancestors of the Irish were said to come from *Scythia* and were the descendants of a King *Feinius Farsaid*, a King of *Scythia*. This *Feinius Farsaid* and his son, *Nel*, went into Asia to work on the fabled Tower of *Nimrod* (Tower of *Babel* in biblical texts) and were thus present at the subsequent dispersal of the races after the destruction of the said tower. *Feinius* and his son, both learned in the new languages which resulted from this dispersal, eventually returned to *Scythia* where *Feinius* founded a great school of languages on the *Scythian* plain.

And to quote the *Scholars’ Primer*:

“Query, well, then, whence are the *Ogham* vowels and consonants named? Not hard, *Secundum alios quidem*, it is from the school of *Fenius Farsaidh*, to wit, the school of poetry which *Fenius* sent throughout the world to learn the languages. There were five and twenty that were the noblest of them so that it is their names that were put for the *Bethe Luis Nin* of the *Ogham*, both vowels and consonants; and there were four who were the noblest of these again, so that it is their names that were given to the seven principal vowels: 15.

It is *Gaedel Glas* who fashioned the Gaelic language out of the seventy-two languages: there are their names, *Bithynian*, *Scythian*, etc. Under – *poeta cecinit*- who of the school went to it thither? Not hard. *Gaedel*, son of *Ether*, son of *Toe*, son of *Baracham*, a *Scythian* Greek.

To what is this beginning? Not hard. To the selection that was selected in Gaelic since this is the beginning which was invented by *Fenius* after the coming of the school with the languages from abroad, every obscure sound that existed in every speech and in every language was put into Gaelic so that for this reason it is more comprehensive than any language. “*Er*” then is every beginning, for this was the beginning with the poets, which every obscure sound should come in the beginning, to wit, the *Beithe Luis* of the *Ogham* on account of obscurity.

Query, what is the reason why select language should be said of Gaelic?

Not hard. Because it was selected from any language; and for every obscure sound of every language a place was found in Gaelic owing to its comprehensiveness beyond every speech.

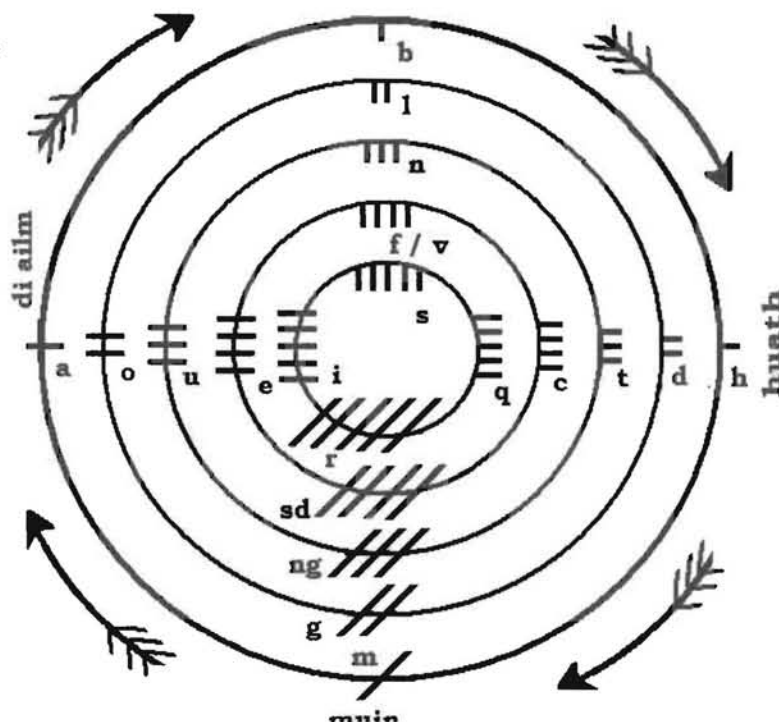
Query, how much did he bring of it? Not hard. The whole of it except what the poets added by way of obscuration after it had reached Fenius.

Query, what language of the seventy-two was published by Fenius first?

Not hard. The Irish language... For it is he whom he preferred of his school, and whom he had reared from his youth, and it is he that was the youngest of the school, and on account of its comprehensiveness beyond every speech, and it was the first language that was brought from the Tower. Fenius had Hebrew, Greek, and Latin before he came from Scythia, and he had no need to establish them at the Tower, wherefore on that account it was published first."

The *Auraicept* maintains that Soim was the first thing to be written in Ogham and that "R" is for Graif. What is the meaning of this? First, Soim from Soimos < Soibos means "magic," "illusion," and Graif < Graun, "writing." It couldn't be clearer, Ogham is magic writing! Og-uaim < Actusama "perfect alliteration", the Ogham, in accord with sound, comes from Ogma / Fenius, its prime inventor. And the learned are the prime agents who apply it to poetry. In the order of intellectual values, thought is superior to the spoken word, most often its imperfect expression. The spoken word is superior to writing, which kills it by fixing it forever. This fixing of word nevertheless binds it through magic. Graif (Graun), writing, is superior to Delb (Delua), image, in that writing is the property of the learned, those initiated to the mysteries, while imagery is understood also by the ignorant and unlearned, therefore the initiated. As Eochra ecsi (< Axario Axscas, "Key to writing (grooves)," writing forces reflection. Only meditation generates intelligence. Therefore, voice and sign, through mantric binding, are forever fixed in eternity. This is why the Ogham belongs to the god Ogma, Lord of Iugon (Yoke), magic, thought sounds, and martial arts.

Therefore, the creator of the Ogham is Ogma (< Ogmios "Champion, Notcher") and Fenius (< Uenios "Host, Clan man"), is one of his aliases.



The Circle of Finn, Book of Ballymote.

The Circle of Finn

Finn was the god qualified as the “possessor wheels,” and as you will see, this is not a euphemism! In the Book of Ballymote, there is this annotation over a bull's-eye labelled:

“Fege Fin,”¹⁷ or “Feige Fion,” and it is usually translated as “Finn's Window,” or “Fionn's Track.” He appears in the *Cycle of Finn mac Cumail* which narrates the battle of *Cath Fionntragha*, or “Battle of Ventry,” in which he and his Fianna oppose Dáire Donn, the world-king. Fionntragha was the battlefield overtaken by Dáire Donn¹⁸ and the name meant “the fair track or range.” Using his father's spear given to him by Fiacra, he saves the palace of the High King of Ireland at Tara threatened by the onslaught of a powerful demon. He is then reunited with Gráine, the sun goddess.

The sun shield and spear are the usual arms of the solar hero. In Greek myth, a golden shield falls from Helios's chariot, the sun god, onto the battlefield where it is picked up by an Apollonian hero. In Irish myth, the theme of the wheel brings us back to Mog Ruith's wheel called *roth rámach*, the “oared wheel” (from Ramaca Reta, literally, “the rowing wheel”), and which has two meanings or interpretations:

1. As a cosmological symbol representing the contour of the ecliptic, a schematic model of the organization of the cosmos maintained by the Druids.
2. As a divining instrument representing the macrocosm, a wheel, also called Tasgopeilas Reta, Tarabarra or Taratron in old Celtic and from which probably came the name Tarot for the French card game. The wheel of Fortune was called Kalachakra in Sanskrit. The medieval Wheel of Fortune was most likely a reminder of the zodiacal Circle. As for Taratron < Tarot, “auger,” the name hints at late Antiquity drilled or inscribed divining lead plates called *tabulae defixionis* in Latin and talouaro or talouero in Old Celtic which means “threaded.”

The Tasgopeilas Reta, “the powerful thinking wheel,” or “wheel of divination,” and “prayer wheel,” by extension, referred to the zodiacal belt.

- The Ogham abbreviations in the *Book of Ballymote* are given as follows:

“di- fict Ailm dact gaxt (or gart) from 'A' a right turn in circumference (in fenced plot or garden).”

A Ailm , B, Beth, H, Huath , Uath , M , Muin, Min, Th/Oi (r), Quinlan/Oir, Feorusoir, P/Ui, Peith, Pethbol/Uilleann, O, I, Ohn; Ph/Ia, Phogos/Iphin, L, Luis D, Daur, Ch/Ea, Choad/Eashadh; G, Gort, Gart, U, Ur, N, Nuin, Nion, T, Tinne, Ng, Ngetal, E, Eadha, Eodha, F (V), Fearn C, Coll, St (Sd), Straif, I Ioho, Idho, Iubhar, S, Saille, Q, Quert, R, Ruis.

“Per alio” Ae/xi, Amancholl, that is to say, sentence or Mor-Xi.

“Ae , Amancholl, abalone mountain pine ogham, that is to say, the divine pine wood, which are derived the four Ifins or vineyards, #, per alios, the name of the branch” (*Book of Ballymote*).

Ifin > Spiðna, “gooseberry.”

Per alio “otherwise;” alio adv. “Elsewhere (with movement), to another place.” So send the letter Ae elsewhere... That is to say that sentence, Head, alias Amanchol (Ae/Xi = mor – the solar grid sign) is sent instead of Peith, pethbol / uilleann (w/ui = #, the lunar square) between Ohn and Iphin.

Ferchertne's Strand

The Ogham transcribers generally read this as meaning:

“Triaig Srut fircertne. Iu fida ingach snaithi (snaschi?).”

That is, “Traig Sruth Ferc(h)ertne iu (U preceded by c: cu-, Coig.?) Feda in gach snaithi.”

Meaning, “The range or course of Ferchertne, to wit, five letters in each thread.”

The Etymological study for the Old Irish terms

Triaig < triagi, genitive of triagos/treagos, “fork, three-pronged,” if not tricarios, “triple power, triple strength;” corrected as traig by translators, that is, traig < tractos, “beach, strand, seafront, shore;”

Strut < Srutu, “fast course, torrent;”

Fircertne > Cerdonuiros, “skilled worker, technician;”

.i. < in, “in,” or eri for, “cause;” ei - < epi-, prefix with an idea of intention.

.u. < iuo, “order;” eu > aue, “too much, too little;” eu > neue, “or;” compare with Gaelic ua, preposition, “from, out of.”

fida, feda < uida/uido < uidta, “knowledge, wisdom,” in wordplay with uidu, “wood, tree,” or “peg/cusp (in the astrological sense).”

Ingach < in-gach, in as with English, “in,” and **gach** < gac < agac-, “every, all, everyone;” or, in < eni, “in, inside;” ina, “here, so;” cacto, “power;” cactio, “possess, enter;” cacteto, “taken, seized.”

Snaith, “pull, pull hook,” from the verb snatô, “to spin, to weave;” snatio, “swimming;” snatos, “cord;” or maybe snaschi < snasaich, “buff, made sleek, polishing, decorate, cutting, analyze,

criticizing,” in wordplay with senicatis (gen. -eios), “ancient tradition,” or “ancient monument.”

Thus reading:

“... Triaig srut fircertne i... u fida ingach snaithi.”

“At triple power (...) because of Fircertne, directs knowledge (connoting wood) by the entry (or power), of the cord.”

The Ogham wheel of Roigne Roscadach

Rot og (m) roigni roscadaig, “Ogham wheel of Roigne Roscadach;”

Beith a.u. - Huath a.u. - Muin a.u. - Ailm a.u.;

With C, Coll. ... C... cc ccc cccc..... cccccc in each quarter of the sun disc.

Astrology and Ogham

“As a mighty tree in the forest, so in truth is man, his hairs are the leaves, his outer skin is the bark. From his skin flows forth blood, sap from the skin (of the tree); and thus from the wounded man comes forth blood, as from a tree that is struck.”

(*Brihad-Aranyaka Upanishads, Third Adhyaya, verse 28*)

So this is how the Upanishads inform us on how Manu is to be likened to a tree for it is said that the self, the Atman is ruled by the mechanisms of the Atmakaraka (principle main Lord) as found in the Ashtakavarga system of prediction. The Ashtakavarga (eight sources of energy or acmes) set the lots of fortune for Man's growth and development. All this modelled on the Bharata (Tree) or Maha Bharata (Great tree) which is to be likened to the Scandinavian Ask Yggdrasils. In Celtic society the terms *coilu* for “prediction,” and *prennios*, “wood,” set the divinatory mood to the mode of predicting with augural sticks. This very ancient system is described by many authors of Antiquity. “These sticks were tossed into the air by the vate, in order to make a reading following the order of their fall, and interpret the omens through answers. This technique was known to the Bretons as the Prenn-denn, the Crannachar to the Gaelic tribes, and the Talamatia to the Cisalpine Gauls.”¹⁹

Again, the *Upanishads* (Third Adhyaya, verse 26) give us further details on the cosmographical aspects of this system:

“These are the eight abodes (the earth, etc.), the eight worlds (fire, etc.), the eight gods (the immortal food, etc.), the eight persons (corporeal, etc.). He who after dividing and uniting these persons, went beyond (the *Samana*), that person, taught in the Upanishads, I now ask thee (to teach me). If thou shalt not explain him to me, thy head will fall. Sakalya did not know him, and his head fell, nay, thieves took away his bones, mistaking them for something else.”

This something else might very well be the omen sticks. “The lumps of his flesh are (in the tree) the layers of wood, the fibre is strong like the tendons. The bones are the (hard) wood within, the marrow is made like

the marrow of the tree. But while the tree, when felled, grows up again more young from the root, from that root, tell me, does a mortal grow up, after he has been felled by death? Do not say 'from seed', for seed is produced from the living; but a tree, springing from a grain, clearly rises again after death. If a tree is pulled up with the root, it will not grow again; from that root then, tell me, does a mortal grow up, after he has been felled by death? Once born, he is not reborn; for who should create him again?" The explanation is quite clear; like the tree, unless man does not bear seeds, he cannot be reborn in the world of the living.

In de la Villemarqué's *Barzaz Breiz*, we read that there are three parts to the world: three beginnings and three ends, for man as well as the oak.

In Vedic literature, the primordial man is dismembered and his body-parts spread across the cosmos. At the centre, his genitals which seed the future world seen as a vast plain.

The ancestor of the Gaels, Partholon, clears four plains, along with Magh Elta¹⁶ each marking the four corners. Since the microcosm reflects the macrocosm, Ireland's four provinces are the allegories of the seasons and solar stations. Then comes Nemed and his people, the Nemedians, who clear twelve plains for each of the zodiacal constellations. Finally, Medb comes to clear the land turning it into a vast desolate field (27 lunar houses) with at its centre, Medb's Tree.

And, it is in her enclosed garden around her tree that evolve the zodiacal beasts.

"The zodiacal constellations were imagined as "trees," called prinnioi, akin to prenes (tree) and it is probably for that reason that tree names were given to the constellations (J. Monard, 2005)."

The sun, the moon, and other heavenly bodies entering a constellation or star cluster, are therefore seen as light shafts entering the clearing of a forest. In other words, fedha < fida < uidu/uidus for, "wood," or "tree," in Gaelic expresses the same notion as that of the Old Brythonic, prenos, also for "wood," or "tree." This being that the Druids referred to astral cusps or "horns," as trees. From Irish and Welsh poetry, it appears that these star seers saw two cusps, in and out, where the Classical astrologers saw one per astral house. That is, for the Celtic astrologer, each constellation had a front door and a back door. In Classical astrology, a cusp is a mathematical point marking the entry of the sun in a house. However, for the Oghamic scheme not all fedhas represent zodiacal cusps. These are the forfedhas or over-fews which represent the five elements, space and other abstract ideas.

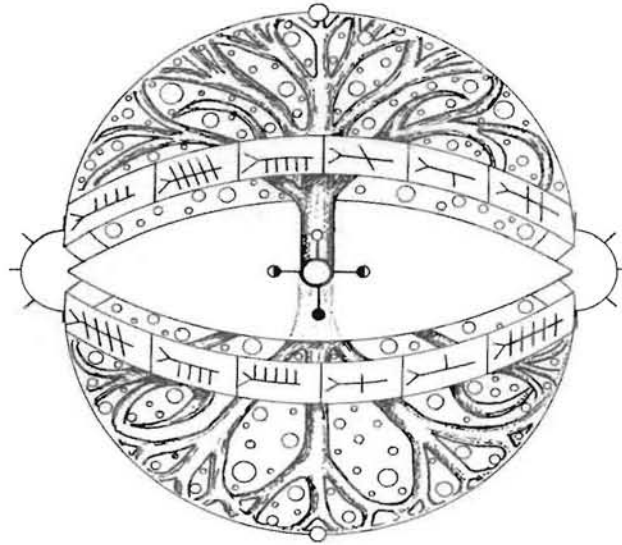
The four directions: -x-/±; the confines of space seen as circle or square: -o- /-◇-; the grid (dragon's head Ω): -#-; the spiral or hook (dragon's tail): -∂-; the double hashed grid for the sun's light: -##-.

Therefore, forfedha have nothing artificial or improvised.

The forfedha as symbols of the five elements:

Ch/Ea, xdonion, "chthonic, earth;" Th/Oi, tepnia > tennia, "fire;" P/Ui (p)idsca/udesca, "water;" Ph/Ia, auela, "air, blast;" aultos > uentos, "wind;" auentia, "inspiration breath;" Xs/Ae, uxdulon, "high element, ether."

The forfedha (< uorbentioi, “completing, additional”), are in reference to ueruidoues, “the over-woods,” implying a higher notion than the Zodiac. In addition to representing the five elements, the also represent greater cosmic considerations such as the movements of the sun, the moon and the nodes.



The world tree with symbols of Ogham. Author's drawing.

Etymological run up of the fedha “letters” in the Oghamic directional sun wheel (along with their esoteric meanings)²⁰:

A, Ailm < alamos, “pine;” alamos, “cattle herd, wealth, possessions;”

B, Beth < betua, “birch;” betis, “road;” bitu, “(live) world;” bitus, “life.”

H < Sq/Sp < Sc, Huath, uath < squiats, “hawthorn;” squertos, “thicket;” squetlon, “narrative, narrative history;”

M, Muin, min < muinia, “bramble or vine;” muinos/moinos, “treasure;” muinon, “benefit.”

P/Ui, Peith, pethbol < petios/quetios, “opulus;” Uilleann < uillo, “honeysuckle;” uillos, “horse;” uilia, “willingness, honesty;”

Ph < B/Sp/la < Fea < Phogos < bagos, “beech;” bagios, “boar;” bagacos, “fighter, warlike;” Iphin < spiðna, “gooseberry (mackerel);” spina/sparna, “thorn.”

O, I, Ohn < ocstino/acstino, “gorse;” acunos, “spice;”

L, Luis < luis, “rowan;” lugos, “brightness, splendor;” louxsnos, “light.”

C > K < X > Ch/Ea, Choad < coiton/caiton, “thicket;” caitos, “woody bush;” coitos, “common;”

Eashadh < esados/elto, eltos, “poplar (white);” esa, “cascade;”

D, Daur < daruos/deruos, “oak;” deruos/derbos, “safe, certain, proven.”

T > Th/ Oi(r), Tharan < taranos, "green oak;" tarannos, "thunder;" tarandos, "reindeer;" thesmerion, "hibiscus;" Oir, Feorusoir < uorosorios, "charcoal;" uorrice, "goat willow;" uoros, "wise;" uornoctos, "bare, naked;"

G, Gort, Gart < gortia, "ivy, thorny shrub;" gorton, "garden;" gorta, "famine."

U, Ur < uroica/broica, "heather;" ur/uron, "fire;"

F < V < U, Fearn < uernos, "alder;" uernos, "good;" uiriona, "sincerity;" iarú, "truth."

T, Tinne < tennos, "holly;" tepnia > tennia, "fire (wood);"

Ng < Nc, Ngetal < ingaitalis < caitalis, "reed;" ancouo > ancu, "death (personified);" anacantios, "disastrous."

E, Eadha, Eodha < idato, "aspen;" edemnos, "need;" iduna, "wisdom;"

S, Saille < salicos/salixs, "willow;" suligu, "harmony;" sauelios, "sun;" sulisma, "look."

C, Coll < coslos, "hazel;" cailos, "pomp, favorable, auspicious;"

St (Sd), Straif < sdragenos < dragenos, "barberry;" draco, "head, chief, war lord;" drangos, "ghost."

I, Ioho, Idho < iuos; Iubhar < iburos/eburos, "yew;" iuos, "good, suitable, safe, sound;" eburos, "(old) boar, lone boar;"

N, Nuin, Nion < onna, "ash;" ninatis, ninnatis > nenadis, "nettle;" nentios < nantios, "injury (war)."

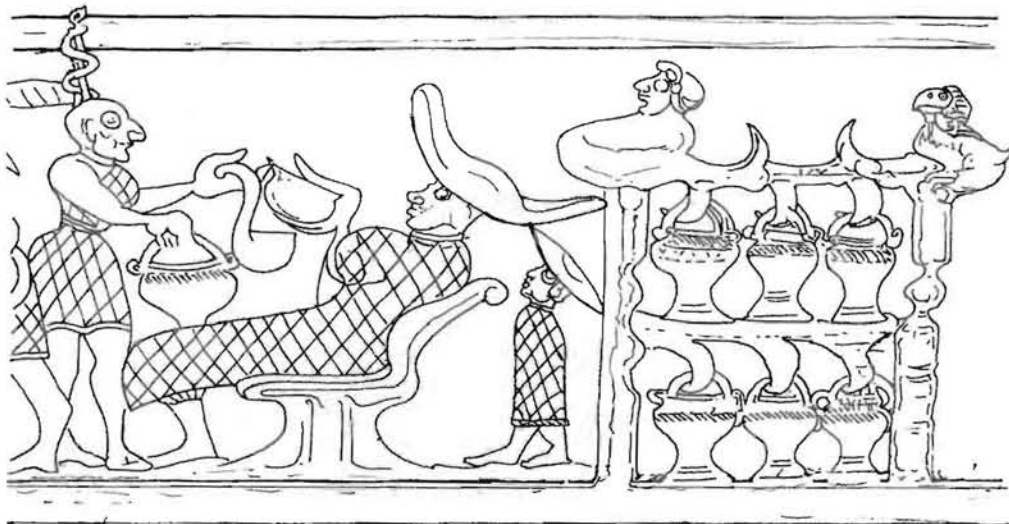
Q, Quert < qerta, "apple;" qarios, "cauldron;" qartis, "party;"

R, Ruis < ruscia, "elder;" roudios, "red, ruin."

Finally, there are many indications from Taliesin in the *Cad Godeu*, "the Battle of Trees", and in Taliesin's *First Address* that letters and cosmology were all part of same language:

"And before I desire the end of existence,
and before the broken foam shall come upon my lips,
and before I become connected with wooden boards,
May there be festivals to my soul!
Book-learning scarcely tells me
of severe afflictions after death-bed;
and such as have heard my bardic books
they shall obtain the region of heaven, the best of all abodes."

(The Book of Taliesin I, Priv Cyfarch, The First Address of Taliesin, translation by Skene)



A Noble character with a large crescent-shaped felt hat receiving a libation from a bald maid with a staff and snake coming out from the crest of her head. Detail of a bronze plaque from Kuffarn Situla, Lower Austria. Author's drawing from a photo of Naturhistorisches Museum, Vienna, Austria.

Footnotes:

1. In *Revue d'études anciennes*, 1902 p. 115, quote from Hutin, Serge. *Histoire de l'astrologie*. p. 105.
2. Pomponius Mela, a Roman geographer born in Tingentera small town in Baetica, and active to 43 CE.
3. Flavius Magnus Aurelius Cassiodorus born about 490 in Squillace, Calabria, and died in 583 AD. BCE.

4. Dromichætes < Dromicatus « fighter of the ridge, of the back ».
5. Diceneus / Dicineus, the Latin spelling of the Greek version Dikaineos which was most likely borrowed from the Celtic name *Dicanios « recitor »; verb dicanō « to recite ».
6. According to Jomandes, the Belagines were natural law texts given to the Gets by the philosopher Diceneus. Again, the name is best explained through a Celtic etymon: Belagines < Belogenio, “of luminous origins”; belo- clear, luminous + suffix –genos/-a/-on, for an “idea of origin, coming from something”, + appendix –io “idea of abstraction”.
7. Abaris < Abaris “the water”, or Abare-os/-a/-on, Abaros/-a, adj. “quibbling”, Abaron, “matter.”
8. Berresford Ellis, P., Dictionary of Celtic Mythology, (Astrology) p. 35.
9. Berresford Ellis, Peter. Our Druid Cousins, Meet the Brahmins of ancient Europe, the high caste of Celtic society. Published in Hinduism Today, February 2000.
10. Strabo, the Greek geographer born in Amasea in Pontus in 64 BC. AD and died in 24 AD. AD
11. Ailill < Alpillis, “the elf, elfin, dwarf, (nature) spirit.”
12. *The second battle of Mag Tured*, v. 76, p 66, author's translation from Christian J. Guyonvarc'h's French translation.
13. *Creation of the Universe*, a 10th century manuscript from Saltair na Rann transcribed by the Culdee Oengus and translated into English by Eleanor Hull, 1912.
14. Jim Tester in *History of Western Astrology*, p. 10.
15. That was mainly the Sidh of Aillil and Medb < Sidos Alpilleios Ac Meduas in Old Celtic.
16. The science of the stars in ancient Celtic, according to modern etymologists, was: *ðireula > *sireula (P-Celtic) or *retlaeulaxta > reuleolacht, “science of the stars”), adj. *retlaeulac-os/-a/-on (> reuleolach, “astrology or astronomy”). The etymologies for “astrologer” could have been: *sireulacoi (P-Celtic) and *retlodruuides for the Irish Gaelic real-druidh. Another class of sky diviners was the néladoir < *nabeltarios, the “cloud-diviner” or “augur.”
17. Fege Find > feige Fion, from uecos, “(religious) obligation, moral debt;” uecos/ begos, “bent, curved;” ueicos, “community house;” uega, “fabric, linnen, canvas.” Fege Find is usually translated as, “circle of Finn,” but in the astrological context, I would opt for, “common house,” or “hotel.” Fionn < Finn < Find < Uindos, “White, splendid;” in the *Battle of Cath Fionntragh*, for “strand or track of Fionn.”
18. Daire Donn < Darius, “the tumultuous;” Donn, from Donnos, “lord, chief, brown, tan.”
19. Magh Elta < Magos Eltonon, “the poplar grove field;” from elto, “poplar,” in wordplay with elata, “ability,” if not, eltina, “hatchet.”
20. Monard, J., Notice sur les Coelbrenni, unpublished material.

Chapter IV

The Luminaries

Pleasant, the moon, a luminary in the heavens;
Also pleasant where there is a good rememberer.
Pleasant, summer, and slow long day;

(Taliesin, *Aduvynneu Taliesin, The Pleasant Things of Taliesin,*
Book of Taliesin IV)



Gallic currency of the Triviri with three beams of light and the ecliptic. Drawing by the author.

Solar and lunar deities

The oldest Indo-European deities are directly related to light. As we have seen, the term *deiws, for god (literally, “One of light”) designates these light beings that populate the sky. At the oldest level of Indo-European cosmology, the luminaries were at the base of the structuring foundation myths.

This cosmological order was structured accordingly:

1. Sun for day light, day sky and the colours white, blue and gold;
2. Moon for night, night sky and darkness, the colour black;
3. Venus, the morning and evening star for dawn, dusk and the colours salmon pink, orange and red.

As evidenced by the earlier Latin tradition, the cult of Sol, the sun deified, is as old as the cult of Luna, the moon. For the Latin people, the goddess Luna was of less importance than the god Sol, while for the Celts, it was the opposite. Medb, the Queen of Heaven, completely overshadows Aillil, lesser in royal stature, but nevertheless, is very bright, diligent and rich in possession. The Greeks imagined Selene, daughter and sister of Helios Hyperion and Theia, as a most beautiful lady who appeared in the night sky riding in a silver chariot. Meanwhile, at night, Helios, the Sun, was carried away in his sleep in a moon crescent boat on the waves of the dark Ocean. And Venus, the goddess of dawn and dusk, was imagined in a silky white dress running on the celestial solar path before the bronze chariot of the sun prince Apollo, there scattering flowers along the way.

In Vedic literature, deities are classified according to their astral lineage into distinct competing houses:

The Adityas are deities belonging to the solar dynasty, and

Somavamza, under the auspices of King Soma or Chandra, belongs to the lunar dynasty.

It seems that from the Celtic myths and from the interpretation of the many plural god names found in archaeological excavations in Gaul and in Britain of the Roman period that a similar classification was used. For example, the Suleviae, a group of sun goddesses, which may very well be latinised manifestations or avatars of Suliua. Or the many avatars of the Gallic Apollo known under the names of: Atepomarus, Belenus, Cunomaglus, Grannus, Maponus, Moritasgus, Vindonnus and Virototis.

Names and Genealogy of the Celtic Gods of the Solar and Lunar Dynasties

Ireland

Apollonian Dynasty (solar)	Selene Dynasty (lunar)
1. Bilé + Danu: 2. Dagda, Elcmar, Nechtar, Midir; 2. Dagda + Boand: 3. Brigitt, Aongus, the Mac Og, Dearg Bodb and Cermat.	Lir's lineage: 1. Lir: 2. Mannannàn Mac Lir; 1. Lir + Aobh: Fionnuala, Aedh, Fiacra, Conn; 2. Mannannàn + Fand: 3. Gaiar, Niamh, Cliodna. Queen Medb's lineage: 1. Queen Medb and King Aillil: 2. their 3 daughters: Aobh, Aoife, Arbha; 2. their 7 sons: Maine Mathramail, Maine Athramail, Maine Mogor, Maine Mingor, Maine Mo Epir (also called Maine Milsothach), Maine Diligent and Maine Gaib uile. 2. Aoife + Cùchulainn: 3. Conlai.

Wales

Apollonian Dynasty (solar)	Selene Dynasty (lunar)
1. Manogan, father of Beli Mawr; 2. Mathonwy, father of Don and Math. Lineage of the goddess Don 1. Beli + Don: 2. Gwydion, Arianrod, Gilvaethwy,	1. Gods: Gwyn ap Nudd, Arawn pen Annwn, Llyr, Iweriadd, Penardun, Euroswydd. Lineage of Llyr 1. Llyr + Iwerdiadd: 2. Bran and Branwen; 1. Llyr + Penardun:

Amaethon, Nudd, Penardun, Nynniaw; 2. Gwydion + Arianrod: 3. Nwyvre, Llew, Dylan.	2. Manawydan. 2. Manawydan + Rhiannon: 3. Pryderi, son of Pwyll pen Annwn and Rhiannon, foster son of Manawydan. 1. Euroswydd + Penardun: 2. Nissyen, Evnissien.
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The Moon



Gallic coinage depicting Epona, the mare-goddess topped with the lunar crescent and solar disc or full moon.

Author's drawing.

In Lunar Time

In their progression around the ecliptic and its zodiacal constellations, the two luminaries, sun and moon, do not take the same time since their cycles are not of equal duration. The almanac or monthly calendar is the lunar record of annual events, while for the sun it is the Zodiac.

Indexing the events of the lunar annual cycle and reconciling it with the longer solar cycle around the ecliptic was the difficult task of calendar makers. The term almanac comes from *almanachus*, a Latin term most likely borrowed from the Old Germanic **allmonaxta*, for "all moons," or "all of the moon's acts," in English. It is therefore not from the Spanish-Arabic *al-manakh* as it is often claimed in the etymological dictionaries. The Old Celtic name for it was *Amserolenmen* which literally meant, "Sequential time."

As previously mentioned, the many constellations of the Zodiac were compared to a forest of trees called Prinnioi. The lunar year was called Blidnis in Old Celtic and comprised of a 12 moons registry called Reuia. Again, poets were quick to make the usual puns with the words Reuia and Reuesia. In that, Reuia was for "lapse, time space" and Reuesia for "clearing or cleared space", here again the

forest theme! Given that the Old Celtic vocabulary related to the moon was very rich and diverse, many other related “bardic” puns could be made. Since the moon had many alternative names, the list went as follows:

Diun, the moon as a heavenly body and diun “light source” (adj. diun-/os/a/on, “light emitting”) and Deuon “God”, this being that Deuonna or Diuonna was the name of the Moon Goddess.

In addition to other designations for the moon there was Luxna, a word attested by the Coligny calendar and Irish Luan. Luxsna, also has a similar etymology as that of the Latin Luna. Another synonym was Leucara (which evolved into Luga, then Loer and Lloer in Breton and Welsh) and the name refers to its bright appearance. And on the Gaelic side, we have Éasca < Eidsiia meaning “in phases (pl. neutral),” and Gealach < Gelaca “clear” (J. Monard, 1994).

Associated colour:
Black for night

Indexing cycles

The difficulty in keeping annual synchronized time arises when one tries to combine the lunar cycles with the solar year. In fact, the average lunar year of twelve months is of 354.3669 days compared to the average of 365 days, or more precisely 365.2422 days for the complete solar year. For the first calendar makers, the task was to combine these two years into a synchronous year, while still keeping track of the advent of seasonal changes. The solution was found which the introduction of an intercalary month inserted every three years as a full thirteenth month called **Santaranos mins*, or **Santaros mens*, for “special, embolismic month or month set apart”. This special technique of inserting an extra embolismic (“clotting”) month has the advantage of maintaining the two cycles synchronous. In addition to the use of an additional intercalary month, there was the insertion of an extra day in July which further complicated things. In this first cycle, an added mid-month lustre reappeared every five years and was appropriately called *Ciallosbuis Sonnocingos* for “indexing of the sun path”. It occurred during the spring equinox right between the months of March and April. The second embolismic month was called **Mens in dueixtionu* and was inserted at the beginning of the October and November lunation. It was set every five years. The term **mens* or **mins in dueixtionu* stood for “month in duplication” and was found inscribed on the Coligny calendar in abbreviated form as: MIDX.

The Coligny Calendar		
Month names	Number of days for month halves	Codes for month length
SAMONIOS	15 + 15 = 30	Mat. < mata even, for 30 days
DUMANNIOS	15 + 14 = 29	Anm. < anmata uneven for 14 + 15 days

RIUROS	15 + 15 = 30	mata
ANAGANTIOS	15 + 14 = 29	anmata
OGRONIOS	15 + 15 = 30	mata
CUTIOS	15 + 15 = 30	mata
GIAMONIOS	15 + 14 = 29	anmata
SIMIUISONIOS	15 + 15 = 30	mata
EQUOS	15 + 14 = 29 or 15 + 15 = 30	anmata or mata
ELEMBIUOS	15 + 14 = 29	anmata
EDRINIOS	15 + 15 = 30	mata
CANTLOS	15 + 14 = 29	anmata

One of the names found in the above list, Samonios, is related to the Gaelic month name Samhain. However, it is not known whether these Gallic names were primarily used by the other Celtic cultures. It is also likely that some of these terms were commonly known in Druidic times, but that Christian clerics censored them in favour of more neutral or popular agricultural designations. Eventually, under the Church's influence, Latin terms replaced the old Celtic ones. Another interesting Gaelic month name is *Mí Deireadh Fomhair* which refers to a class of mythological beings called the Fomoiri (< Uomoroi "submarine"). The Fomoiri, also spelled Fomhair, Fomore and Fomhoire, were akin to the Greek Telkhines, a class of primordial spirits. Their king was Balor (< Baloros / Belaros, "luminescent"), "of the evil eye."

Names of the Month in the Surviving Celtic Languages		
Month	Gaelic and Brythonic names	Old Celtic etymology and definition
November	Irish: Mí na Samhna Erse: an t-Samhuinn	Month of Samhain < Samonios, "of the gathering, of the sower"
December	Irish: Mí na Nollag Erse: Dubhlachd Welsh: Mys Du Breton: Miz Du	From Latin natalis, natalicia, "nativity, birthing, Noel" *Dubilectos, "dark, damp" *Mins dubis, "dark month"
January	Irish: Mí Eanair Erse: Faoilteach Cornish: Kervardhu	From Latin januarius, "of Janus," a Roman god *Ualuticos, "of wolves" *Couiros dubis, "frankly dark"

	Breton: Kerzu	*Certos dubis, “all as dark”
February	Irish: Mí Feabhra Irish: Mí na Féile Brighde	du latin februarius, “of purification” *Mins uelias Brigindonos, “month of the feast of Brigitt,” or “of Brigindo”
March	Irish: Mí Márta Erse: am Màrt Erse: an Gearran	From Latin martiae, “of Mars” *Mins Gerronos, “shortened month, of castration”
April	Irish: Mí Aibreán Erse: an Giblean	From Latin aprilis, “bloom» of buds” *Mins Gegdoblonacos, “month of goose fat”
May	Irish: Mí na Bealtaine Manx: Boaldyn Erse: an Cèitean	*Mins Belotennias, “month of bonfires (de Beltaine)” *Belotennia, “of bonfires” *Mins Centonos, “month of prime time”
June	Irish: Mí Meitheamh Manx: Mean souree Welsh: Mehefin Cornic: Metheven Breton: Mezheven Erse: an t-Òg-mhios	*Mediosamosenos or *Mediosamos, “mid-time festival” *Mins Ogii, “month of youths”
July	Irish: Mí Iúil Erse: Iuchar / an t-Iuchar Welsh: Gorffenhaf Cornish: Gortheren Breton: Gourzheren	from Latin Julius, “Jules” *Iecuurios, “fresh time” *Gortus-somareti, “heat of summertime”

August	Irish: Mí Lúnasa Erse: Lúnasdal Manx: Luanistyn	*Lugi Naissatios Samosenos, “(month) of Lug's commemoration”
September	Irish: <i>Mí Meán Fomhair</i> Welsh: Medi Erse: an t-Sultine Cornish: Gwyngala Breton: Gwengolo	*Mens minos Uomorii, “month of the little monstre” *Meðon, “to reap” *Sultennos, “plantly” *Uindos Golouos, “splendid, white light”
October	Irish: Mí Deireadh Fomhair Erse: an Dàmhair Welsh: Hydref Cornish: Hedra Breton: Here	*Mins deruedon Uomorii, “month of the (giant) monster's end” Mins Damodāris, “month of deer rut, of deer belling” *Sutrebos, “autumnal”

The Lunar Nodes

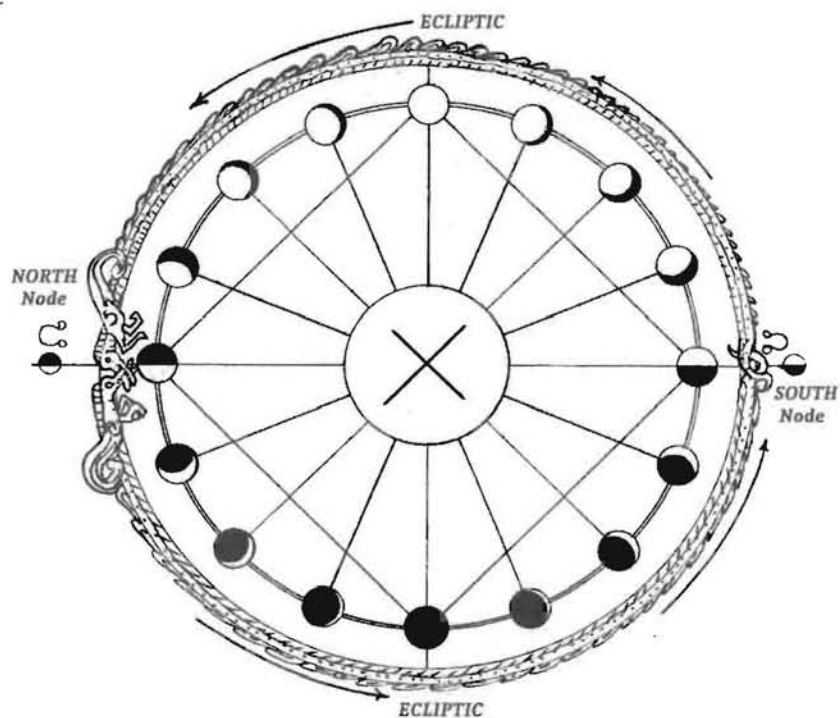


Ancient Boiiian Celtic coin from Bohemia, dating to circa 2nd and 1st centuries BCE, and showing the horned-serpent or dragon. Old Book engraving.

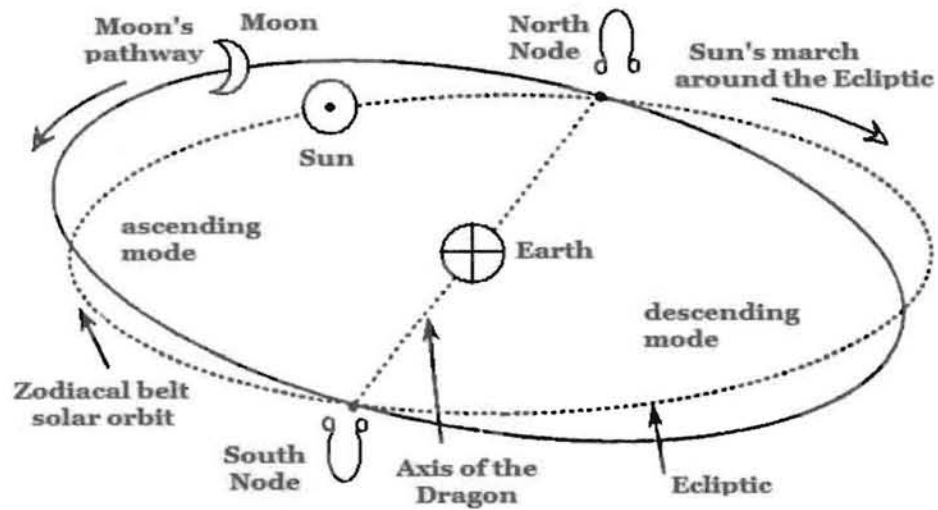
The lunar nodes are the intersection points on the ecliptic which are crossed by the orbits of the sun and the moon. These two points of intersection are strictly conceptual and do not correspond to any tangible physical reality such as that observed with the visible stars, both fixed and moving such as, the planets, comets and asteroids. A complete nodal cycle is completed every 18 years and 5 months.

The expression *North Node* means that the moon is on its upward path coming from the south and moving on to the north at the ecliptic intersection. Likewise, when the moon reaches its peak, it then dips downward and crosses the *South Node*. Each of these mathematical points is found exactly to the opposite of the other on the ecliptic. In order to better predict eclipses, the ancient astrologers were quick to notice the moon's movements passing over and under the sun's orbital path. The line connecting the two nodes is called "axis of the dragon."

In former ages, those able to correctly predict eclipses were highly regarded, not only by the superstitious, but by the court rulers who saw in these ominous events signs of times to come. The presence of a wandering star in this part of the sky was not only regarded as an occult phenomena, but as an omen. In light of this, the lunar nodes were seen as the seat of eclipses and indicators of future events. In Vedic astrology, the nodes were even counted as planets. This was not the case for classical Greco-Roman astrology.



The Celts however, unlike their southern neighbours, were in agreement with the Indian Jyotisha (astrologers). Celtic mythology also speaks of cosmic and astral phenomena in relation to dragons. The best example that comes to mind is the episode found in the Arthurian cycles where King Uther Pendragon has Merlin explain to him the causes of his difficulties. Merlin there explains that the British monarch is confronted with duelling dragons, one white (Saxons) and one red (Welsh). The white dragon, for the Saxon invaders, represents the ascending North Node, while the red dragon, for the Welsh, represents the descending South Node.



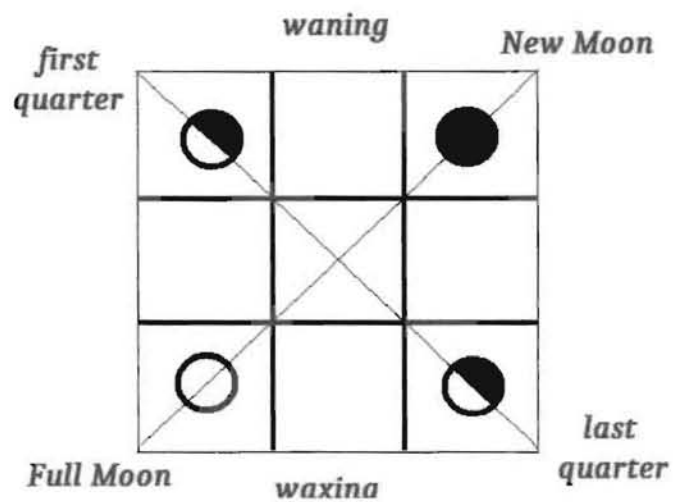
Caput Draconis:

*Pennos Ambeios / *Qendos Ambeios, the North Node (ascending); colour white;

Cauda Draconis:

*Lostos Ambeios, the South Node (descending); colour red.

The Moon Grid



The moon has often been seen as a large mirror or a large bowl. In antiquity, the moon shaped mirror was long used as a divining instrument for communicating with the Other World. Mirrors reflect indirect light and are therefore thought to be instruments of mind projection. The moon was once seen as the place from which emanated the mind of the Cosmos. Conversely, the radiant and bright sun represented the spirit of the cosmos.

In astrological graphic art, the moon grid is found at the centre of the solar grid. The lunar grid consists of two hashed vertical and horizontal lines. This four stroke grid forms a magic square of nine spaces. This square is placed to the north / south position where the two lunar nodes are found. Number nine is for the nine holy days of the novena, the nine tables of fate and destiny, while eight represents the phases of the moon.

Thus, the moon grid has four main squares for each of the major phases being: the full moon, the two crescents and the new moon.

This idea of four part place or mansion was called Bri Leith or Liath Bri¹ in Irish myth. The area in which was found the Liath Bri was referred to as *mide mag* < *medio magos*, "middle plain," (Old Celtic: *Leita Briga Mediomagos*, the "grey fortress of the central plain)." This lunar palace was governed by Medb (< Medua), the queen of the night sky, the moon goddess. Medb refers to the sweet intoxication of fermented beverages, especially mead. It is a known fact that the fermented beverages affect thinking and excite to tongue. Celestial waters, as it was believed, flowed from the moon, thus affecting thought. Did not its rays strike the minds of mortals? Therefore, Medb, from her lunar domain, had mastership over the watery element. The three sovereign fairies who assisted with Medb were her daughters: Aobh², Aoife and Arbha. They are also called the three Étain (< Etana "poetry"). They each embody one of the aspects of the Triple Goddess and mind the activities of the arts and healing. In short, each fairy is the allegory of the three stages of womanhood and the three phases of the Moon.

The Sun



Gallic coin depicting the sun with its eight acmes represented by circles and oak leaves. Drawing by the author.

“Magnificent astronomy, when communicated, sees all that is high.
When the mind is active, when the sea is pleasant, when the race is valiant,
when the high one is supplicated, or the sun when it is given,
when it covers the land.

Covering land of what extent?”

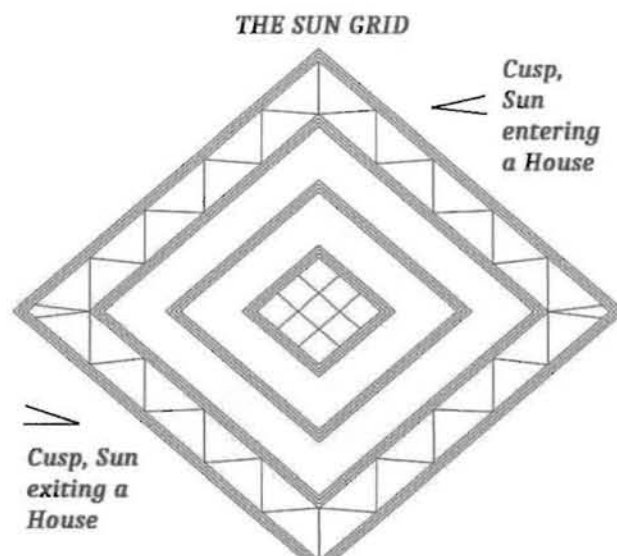
(Taliesin, *Book of Taliesin VII, Angar Kyfyndawt, The hostile Confederacy*)

As with all other questions concerning the cosmic mythological order, the conceptual scheme surrounding the heavenly bodies entertained by the Celts was essentially Indo-European. Thus, a basis conceptual model for the settings of the macrocosm was inherited by most of these cultures. First, the Cosmos was represented as a large covered dome prosaically called “the vault of heaven”. Aether or Ether, the firmament, was called *nem* in Old Irish, *nef* in Welsh and Cornish and *neñv* in Breton, all from the Old Celtic root *nemos*. The whole universe, from top to bottom, was imagined as consisting of two large hollow spheres specked with holes from which shone the primordial light as stars. And at its centre was a gigantic central sun around which other worlds and suns such as our own revolved. The world was made up of several domains or places that the Celts referred to as *Magoi* “plains” and that the Vedic seers called *Lokas*. These worlds, in constant motion around the axis of the centre of the universe, were represented as a pole, a shaft or a tree.

Associated colour:

White for daylight

The Sun Grid



The Sun grid consists of four horizontal lines and four vertical lines thus forming a magic square of twelve spaces, with at its centre in the two tier, the moon square. It illustrates the four-part plan that the sun covers at each season. And for each of the seasons, correspond three zodiacal months of thirty days. At the summer solstice, the sun is at its paroxysm or peak, while at the winter solstice, the sun is at its lowest. The sun at the vernal equinox is peaking, or in exaltation, whereas at the autumnal equinox, it is at its downfall or in debilitation.

Much more than just a magic square, or sacred grid, the solar clock not only helps define the time and position of the sun in the annual sky, but also establish the powers, yokes and prognostics for astral themes. In Antiquity, and on to the Medieval Ages following Ptolemy's fashion, the grid, and not the circle, was the usual plan for setting up a zodiacal chart.

It is in fact this same squared layout that appears in the forfedha (additional signs) of the Ogham under the designation of Aemhancoll.

These eight strokes must be understood as power lines or energy sources similar to the concept of the *Ashtakavarga* (Ashta + kavarga "eight paroxysms or acmes;" or *oxtuacmoi, if we were to coin a Celtic parallel) in the Jyotish Vedic Astrological system. According to the Vedic astrologers, each of these lines represents a cosmic force emitted by the all-pervading sun lighting up ground space and there influencing the (known) seven planetary planes of the solar system. The astrologer's purpose is to determine whether these forces (positively or negatively charged) influence current or future events. Their influence is manifested when these cosmic rays penetrate given stars, celestial bodies and other objects.

Here, the eight rays act as transit lines channelling energy on to the seven main planetary courses.

Graphic symbols found in Gallic coinage show that the Druids also entertained this notion of the eight acmes of the sun symbolized by orbs and oak leaves. The oak, traditionally linked to solar symbolism, was symbolic of the sun's ascent after the spring vernal equinox.

More than just a grid measuring the passages of the sun on its annual course, it was mainly used to chart planetary transits and positions in the various astral houses.

We also must remember that the sun, as well as the other luminaries, was considered a planet by

astrologers and was never treated independently from the other planets. Each planet had its allotted force or cosmic power along with its own course and hierophany (sacred manifestation or appearance). Or again, these epiphanies serve to predict its eclipses, returns and cyclical appearances. In turn, each of the planets enters an astral house kept by a given house master or lord. In Gaelic, the house master was called *tech-duin* < **tegodonnos*. And in Irish mythology, Tech Duin, “House of Donn”, was a mystical island situated on the Ocean to the southwest. The Old Celtic name **atregoranda*, for “domain with land and mansion,” or “lot with buildings,” also neatly renders the notion.

Because of cosmic events described in mythology, it is possible to access the underlying astrological themes and motifs. For example, consider the story surrounding the bard-poet Fer Cherdne³ who had eloped with Blathnáth⁴ after Cuchulainn had killed his master, King Cú Roi⁵. In some versions, Cú Roi, seeing his fortress blazing, rushes into the sea and there drowns. And according to other versions, he was killed in his sleep.

Henceforth, Cú Roi, King of Munster and Lord of the Other World, kept Blathnáth, the beautiful fairy maiden, prisoner in his fortress. After Cú Roi's death, Cuchulainn took Blathnáth and carried her to the cliff-side coast of Beara peninsula. Seizing the opportunity, Fer Cherdne seizes her by the waist and jumps with her over the cliff.

In prosaic terms, this theme illustrates the moon and sun dipping under the horizon into the sea.

Blathnáth represents the moon while Cuchulainn symbolises the sun's path.

The attributes of Cú Roi are described as dark and mysterious and his coat is described as grey and mottled.

He has the ability to shape-shift taking on the appearance of a hero giant.

Like Ogma, he has the power to bind others with magic. This characteristic likens him to Herakles who, in one of his twelve labours, must capture Kerberos, the hound keeper of the gates of Hades.

Likewise, Cú does stand for “dog” in Gaelic. The name Cú Roi (also Cú Ruí, Cú Raoi) is probably from *Cu-Redios means “dog of the plain”. The Dog Star was of course Sirius. Sirius rises at the start of summer and declines in autumn.

Furthermore, the province of Munster was traditionally linked to death and the moon was once held to be the residence of the souls of drowned mariners. The opposition between the two Cú “dogs”, most likely represents the passing of the sun and moon over the ecliptic. Cúchulainn's true name was Setanta⁶ which means “one who takes the path or the path,” the path being of course the ecliptic or the zodiacal band.

Thus, each of the spaces on the sun grid represents a plain in which the sun, much like Herakles, accomplishes twelve celestial labours.

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