
Astrology of the Ancient Druids

Part 7

3. Compare the Sanskrit Madhavi and the old Celtic Medđua both meaning “drunkenness, intoxication through mead.”

4. Dumézil, *Myth and Epic II*. p. 341.

5. Saptârishayah or Saptarsayah, that is, the “seven wise men,” of the north or the seven stars of the Little Dipper which were described in Vedic literature as the incarnation of sacred science. In the older mythology, they constitute a group apart from the other spiritual entities along with the Devas and Asuras, gods and demons, Devayoni, demigods, Atipurusa, while the heroes and Martas, mere mortals. Therefore, they all had the empowerment of religious authority. In the Vedic tradition, when it is written, “Rishi said,” then it implies that it is sacred and that “it has the force of law.” The seven Rishis or sages were seen as the early deified saints of Vedic religion. They were named as follows: Gotama, Bharadvaja, Vishva - Mitra, Jamadagni Vasishtha, Kasyapa and Atri. And, according to other sources, they were called: Marici Atri, Angiras, Pulaha, Kratu, Pulastya and Vasishtha. These were the primordial sages of the first Manvantara. The names Manvantaras (the secondary or avatars of Manu) subsequently were: Pracetas or Daksha, Bhrigu and Narada. They were created by Manu Svayambhuva in order to generate the souls of the gods and humans.

Each of the seven sages had an abode placed in the stars of the Little Dipper and represented one of the Chakras of the spiritual body. The Chakras, as glands, had a physical reality and thus secreted the seven vital essences of the human body. The name Rishi is from the Proto-Indo-Aryan root *dRsh which meant “see, under, perceive (psychologically),” for “seer,” or “soothsayer.” This term is similar to the Old Persian erešiš “mystical” and perhaps the old Irish Arsan, for “wise.” The Vedic tradition has three categories, often four and seven: the Devarshis the Brahmarshis and Rajarshis. These four categories were: the Maharshis the Paramarshis, and the Sutarshis Kandarshis. And this included the seven previously listed.

The Rishis were also associated with the moon, the cosmic zodiacal circle and the seven rays of light beaming from the seven northern stars of Ursa Minor.

6. Mynogeni > Manogenoi, “breed of man,” the descendants of the ancestor Belomaros, Manos for the old Celts.

7. Mantera < Mandera, “household, the family, dwellers under one roof;” The household, or manutera, traditionally included the wife, family, foster children and domestics.

8. Moronoe, Gliten, Glitona, Gliton, Tyronoe, Thiton and Thiten.

9. Seven Cailleach: Cailleach (< Cailiaca, “prophetess”), Cailleach Bolus (< Bolussas, “of apples”), Cailleach Corca Duibhne (< Crocnos Dubnis, “red abyss”) Caileach Bui (< Bodia, “walleye”), Cailleach Beara (> Beriia, “flat plateau”) and Cailleach Beinne Bhric (< Bennia Brica, “mountain top”).

10. Tea (< Tega, “support, coverage”), Fás (< Uassa, “servant”), Fíal (< Uilia “willingness, honesty”), Líben (< Libana “mountain stone”) Odba (< Odbia “hip” / Odbatia, “fascination”), and Scotta (< Scotta, “flower”).

11. In reference to the secrets of the stone door, that is, the eastern gate through which the sun passes the horizon. The stone door is actually the sun's gate. Which was probably called Duron saulii or Saelii duoron Greinas in Old Celtic. Or in poetic phrasing: Duron Salicos, “the willow door.” Much more than a silly pun, the willow, alder and elm, were at the top of the list of trees in Taliesin's *Cad*

Godeu, the "Battle of trees." Therefore, *Duoron Greinas* was another subtle wordplay with Grannos, "the sun god" (whose name literally means, "shining and bearded") and Greinos, "sunny and bright." Greina was also the name of the Goidelic sun, seen as the sun goddess. Quartz was seen as the solar stone and was called Greinoclocca. The prophet was called Doarelabaros (doare-, "start" + labaros, "talking"). Thus the pun: duoron, "door," and duorolabaron, "door sign." The Labaron, the sun symbol, was also called Subuton, the Old Celtic name for the Sanskrit Swastika. As in India, this symbol was incorporated on objects, masonry and doors in order to attract good luck.

12. Tethra < Tetras, "sea," in wordplay with teptarios, "fugitive deserter," tetorios, the male crow. The crow found on battlefields was the allegory of war. Tethra Formori was a king killed during the First Battle of Mag Tured and whose sword was reused by Ogma. He was regarded as a god of the sea and his wife, much like the Morrigan, was a "spirit of death."

13. Retrograde motion is the apparent backward movement of a planet as observed from Earth. Our Earth seems to pass forward because of its faster orbit when it is in opposition with certain stars. The sun and moon are never in retrograde motion. The word "rapid," refers to these heavenly bodies: Moon, Sun, Mercury, Mars and Venus.

14. Aedh > Aedus, "morning sun."

15. Ruad Rofessa > Roudios Rouesos, "the red of great knowledge."

16. Bodb Dearg > Dergos Boduos, "red crow," if not Dercos, "eye."

17. Rodrubán > Ro-dru-bona, "very strong foundation."

18. Nuada > Nodons, "the angler, fisherman."

19. Dechtire > Dexitera, "right-wing," the right hand of the gods.

20. Cuchulainn < Cuculantios, a hero and demi-god son of Lugh whose name means, "dog of Culann (< Coslanos)."

21. The porters of Tara: Camal < Camulos, "dynamic," and twin Gamal < Gemelos, "the good, straightness, iron (fetter), chain."

Chapter IX

The Lunar Mansions

“Nine little white hands on the table in the area near the tower of Lezarmeur with nine mothers who moan a lot. Nine Korrigans (goblins) dancing with flowers in their hair and in robes of white wool around the fountain in the full moon light. The sow and her nine piglets at the door of their lair, groaning and burrowing, burrowing and growling; little ones! Little ones! Little one! Hasten to the apple tree! The old boar will give you a lesson.”

(Barzaz Breiz, The Series or The Druid and the Child, author's translation)



The Belgian goddess Nehalennia from a Celtic sanctuary in Holland. Author's drawing after a photo from the Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Holland.

Description of the 27 Moon Mansions

The method of star divining using the zodiacal lunar mansions was by once far the most popular since it permitted accurate predictions for lesser time. Many seasoned astrologers preferred it before the other traditional methods using the astral houses system.

The Greeks divided the lunar mansions into 27 or 28 shares of the ecliptic covering roughly the period of one month. In India, the lunar mansions or Nakshatras¹ were divided into 27 shares.

Not unlike the Greeks, Druid-astronomers also counted 27 lunar houses and occasionally adding a twenty-eighth sign for adjustments.

Moreover, it is understood that these sidereal periods should not be confused with the days of calendar months which are synodic.

In the *Red Branch* of the *Ulster cycle*, is found the mention of a series of heroes called Lá. Here again is an occasion for traditional bardic wordplay using lá, “hero” and la “calendar day:” lá < lato, latios, “hero;” lata, latis, “heroic;” and la < latis, “calendar day,” or “nycthemeron.” Other puns included: latis, “liquor, beer,” and lettos, “castle.” It goes without saying that the moon and its houses were under the auspices of Queen Medb, the Soma queen of the Gaels.

In short, these *la* words represent the sidereal lunar mansions of the stellar month which is shorter than the synodic month. Therefore, there is a lag between the two months. This being that the synodic month is marked by an interval of two moons having a period of 29.53 days or 29 days and 12 hours. As for the sidereal month, its period is of 27.32 days, 27 days, 7 hours, 43 minutes and 11 seconds, to be exact. To compensate, Greek astrologers tended to add a 28th house every three years.



Detail from a panel from the Gundestrup Cauldron. Author's drawing from a photo by Werner Forman, National Museum of Denmark, and Copenhagen.

The Two Medbs

According to the *Dinnsenchas Achall*, there were two separate Medbs: Medb Leithderg and Medb Derg. If Medb is the Moon deified, each one corresponded to one of its major phases:

1. Medb Leithderg < Medua Letos Dercos, "Medb of the grey eye (derg, a pun on "eye and red");" for the waning moon, that is, the last quarter seen as an eye of Medb.
2. Medb Derg < Medua Derga, "Medb the red;" for the waxing moon that is, the first quarter seen as the other of Medb's eyes.

This double identity could also imply that Medb, "of the grey eyes," was the mother and that Medb, "the Red," was her daughter.

This lunar period was initiated at the end of the last quarter.

Taken as a representation of the lunar phases in line with the Moon Goddess, it roughly corresponds to what the other Indo-European traditions related on the subject.

"They (the Shaktis) indeed honoured the Goddess (Kali) on some moonless nights."²

Symbolically speaking, this new moon phase seems to mark certain intimate moments, a mysterious and disturbing event, here dedicated to the Goddess. The waning phase is associated to the novena since this period could not be initiated at the full moon, that is, the bright and clear period.

In one of the three Irish destiny tales, the name of the goddess Nemain, "the venomous," evokes the novena period of nine days. As the triune goddess, her other aliases were Fea (Hate), Badb (Fury), Masha (Battlefield) and Morrigan (the great Queen/born of the Sea). Morrigan was the main fate goddess as the allegory of death (mainly death suffered on the battlefield). This disturbing side of the Celtic triune goddess recalls the Indian Kali and her sisters.

In light of this, the eye symbolism cannot be applied here in that the new moon is in fact blind and occulted. The novena period had to precede this moonless moment. But there again, one can imagine the goddess winking an eye.

The two quarters or halves, were symbolized by the horn, mainly that of cattle. The sons of Ailill and Medb were all called Maine which meant "lad," or "boy." According to legend, they were all lawless and sent in exile to Britain to the court of Ingcel Càech, son (or grandson) of the blind king of Britons. From there, they led raids in Ireland on Da Derga's hostel. The High King of Ireland, Conaire Mór, was killed in these attacks. Afterwards, they all answered their mother Medb's war call in the war of the Tain Bo Cuailgne, the raid of the Ulster cows.

Medb's 27 Handmaids

The antiquity of the Nakshatras, or 27 lunar houses system, also found in other Indo-European myths, is reflected by the records of the 4000 years old Rig Veda. The Nakshatras moon signs all put together work in conjunction with each of the zodiacal signs, there sublimating in a monthly period of the solar cycle of 360 days. Their allegorical significations roughly reproduce the moon's movement through the constellations it visits during one month. This apparent movement inevitably comes in conjunction with certain stars and therefore does not actually match the displacement of the sun through the same stars, clusters and constellations, it crosses.

The constellations visited by the moon in these 27 days, and so, are measured for a full day, that is, a

period alternating day and night (marked by one night and one day). The Greeks called this 24 hour period a nycthemeron, the Indians called it a tithi³, while the Celts a latis (pl. lates). Unfortunately, the Irish texts do not give us a complete list for the names of the different lunar mansions identified as maidens. Nevertheless, it is possible to identify some of the maids surrounding Medb and Ailill and complete this list following the instructions found in the *Auraicept na Do Eces* or “Scholars' Primer:” “Tosach fregra, beginning of an answer, to wit, that is ailm, A; for the first expression of every human being after his birth is A.”⁴

The following is taken from the book in the ogham word list of Morann Mac Main:

“Word Ogham of Morann Mac Main here. Feocus foltchain, faded trunk and fair hair, that is for birch, B, in the Word Ogham, because names which Morann gave of himself to the Ogham letters, these are they which take the effect of letters in the Word Ogham. Feocus foltchain for B, for these are two aspects of the birch, and it was hence put for the Ogham letter which has taken a name from it.”⁵

In short, an Ogham ranking for women names, as Calder explains, follows the same method:

“Woman Ogham: heroines for group B after the same procedure (or method), to wit, one for B, two for L, thus all down.

Nuns for group H similiter.

Maidens for group M similiter.

Girls for group A similiter, to wit, one for a, two for u.”⁶

Please note that *similiter* is a Latin word meaning “in like manner.”

Summary List of the Possible Irish Star Maidens

“The driver turned the chariot and Medb came back. She saw something that she deemed wonderful, namely, a women coming towards her by the shaft of the chariot. The girl was weaving a fringe, holding a weaver's beam of white bronze in her right hand with seven strips of red gold on its points (?). She wore a spotted, green-speckled cloak, with a round, heavy-headed brooch in the cloak above her breast. She had a crimson, rich-blooded fair-faced, countenance, a bright, laughing eye, thin, red lips. She had shining pearly teeth; you would have thought they were showers of fair pearls which were displayed in her head. Like new pertaining were her lips. The sweet sound of her voice and speech was as melodious as the strings of harps plucked by the hands of masters. As white as snow falling in one night was the lustre of her skin and body *shining* through her garments. She had long and very white feet with pink, even, round and sharp nails. She had long, fair-yellow, golden hair; three tresses of her hair wound round her head, another tress falling behind which touched the calves of her legs.”

The mythological motif of the Druidess Feidelm holding a weaver's beam clearly identifies her as a fate fairy. Additional names can be gleaned, here and there, in other passages of the same tale surrounding Medb (*Book of Leinster - Táin Bó Cualnge*, “The raid of Cooley Cows,” p.175):

“Medb told a handmaid of her household to go to the river and fetch her water for drinking and washing. Loche was the maid's name. Then Loche came, wearing the golden diadem of the queen on her head and accompanied by fifty women.”

It is difficult to accurately guess the names of the 27 girls or 50 women who were in Medb's entourage, but nevertheless, the following list gives an overview of various possible mythonyms:

1. Áine < *Ainu, “ship,” or *Annia, “ring,” goddess of love and fertility, Eogabail's daughter, himself a foster son of Manannán; her mound: Cnoc Áine, Knockainy, County Kerry.
2. Almha < Alma, “farming,” a goddess of the Tuatha Dé Danann, and name of a mound of southern Ireland;
3. Aobh < *Aibo / *Aiba, “physiognomy, mien, air, demeanor, fair faced.”
4. Aoife < *Aisua > *Esuaia, “the (divine) breath,” Esuaia, “the terrible,” a sister of Scathach.
5. Arbha < Arbhar < *Arbara, “herb, grass, cereal,” or punning with Arua, “Furrow,” another of Aoife's sisters.
6. Badb < *Bodua, “crow,” one of the triple battle furies or Valkyries, wife and sister of Net Morigann and Macha.
7. Becuma / Becuna Cneisgel < *Bnacuma Gela Cnidta, “grief woman with light skin.”
8. Caer Iborneith < *Cadra Iburomatia, “beautiful yew lover,” Aonghus Mac Óg's lover, the swan-maiden. She stayed at Bruigh na Boinne to the north of Tara.
9. Collach < *Cailiaca / *Coiliaca, “prophetess, seer woman, vaticinator, augury, witch.”
10. Clothra < *Clotara, “fame,” a daughter of Eochaid Feidleach, sister of Medb, and another of Conchobar's wives, She was the mother of Cormac Conloinges, while others say that it was Ness, daughter of Eochaid, “of the yellow heels,” who was Cormac's mother.
11. Dechtire < *Dexsiutera, “the rightful.”
12. Eadon < *Aedonia, “fervent, fiery.”
13. Eibhir < *Ebara, “forgetful,” a foreign blonde star-maiden from the sunny countries courted by Oisín.
14. Eile < *Aella < *Aetla, “gale,” a daughter of Eochaid and another of Medb's sisters. She was Fergal mac Magach's wife. Her name was given to Bri Eili in Leinster. After being with Fergal, she became the wife of Sraibgend mac Niuil from the tribe of Erna, with him, she had a son called Mata, the father of

Sraibgend Aillil mac Mata.

15. Eithne / Ethne < *Etana, “poetry,” the daughter of Eochaidh Féidhleach and wife of Conchobar.
16. Fedelm / Feidelm / Fedelma < *Uídlma, “seer, witch.” One of the druid-fairies of Sidh Cruachan prophesying Medb's defeat. She is described as a blonde with long braids and wearing a green coat.
17. Fethan < *Uetona, “veil,” also called Fea < Uico, “fury.”
18. Findabair < *Uindasoibra, “the white ghost, or spectre,” the name matches that of the Welsh Gwenhyfar (Guinevere in French and Jennifer in English, wife of King Arthur) and later on, the White Lady of folk tales.
19. Fleidlimid Noichruthach < *Uoltiatama, “great fleece,” is a daughter of Conchobar, king of Ulster. She was also called Fedlem Noichruthach < *Uoltitamos Netscrutacos, “heroine of the abundant fleece.”
20. Garmuin or Carman / Carmun < *Carmantio, “the distaffer,” a seasonal goddess sponsoring the Assembly of Tara.
21. Inda < *Enda / *Inda, “the end, the ultimate,” a daughter of Eocho Salbuide and wife of Cethern.
22. Lebarcham < *Labarocama, “bed talking,” the daughter of Aue and Adarc. In the *Raid of the cows of Cualnge*, she is described as a beauty of noble face having large eyes and round cheeks.
23. Loche / Lochu < *Loca / *Locua, “pond, lake.”
24. Mugain Attenchaitrech or Mumain Etanchaitrech, also spelled as Mór Muman and Ethne Aitenchaitrech. She was one of Medb's sisters. When Cuchulainn returned to Emain Macha taken with battle frenzy, she and her damsels stripped naked in order to calm his rage. Mugain < Mogontia, “adolescence” and Mumain < Momonia, “of Mumha,” Munster. The name also puns with Mudsmia, “nurse,” and Mór Mumain < Mara Momonia, for “Great Munster.” Etanchaitrech is a compound of Etana “poetry,” caitra “round shield” and suffixed by the feminine qualifier –aca, for “the shield of poetry.” She was one of the representatives of the solar goddess and the shield was one of her attributes.
25. Nemain < *Nemetona, “sanctuary,” or Nimneto, “intoxication, poisoning,” one of the three Badbs (battle-furies), a sister of Badb and Morrigan.
26. Odras < *Adrastia, “invincibility,” the daughter of Odarnatan Udarnatanos, “of the river of otters.”
27. Oonagh < *Oinaca, “the meeting, the assembly,” a goddess of the Tuatha Dé Danann and wife of Fionnbharr. They resided at Sidhe Medb near Tuam. Site of the Giant's Causeway, a visible volcanic formation on the Ulster coast, 3 km north of the town of Bushmills in County Antrim. Her name was in reference to the magic of her coat.

28. Reid > *Redia, “plain or field passable by cart.”
29. Scandlach > *Scandlaca, “the tease, teaser,” the princess of ladies.
30. Scathach Buanand < *Scataca Bouenda, “the suspicious and ultimate cow.”
31. Sgeimh Solais, traditionally given to mean “beautiful light,” but most likely meaning “the great cutting light.” She was a daughter of King Cairbre. Her marriage with the son of Desi created a conflict with the Fianna. Sgeimh probably derives from scei-, sceiô v. “to cut, break, chisel” a feminine superlative suffix – ama, for “greatly cutting one;” and Solais, probably from suelnestio “luminosity, light.”
32. Slaine ní Seren < *Slania Sdironia, “health of stars;” from sdira > ðira / sira “star.” She was a Milesian goddess, daughter of Scethern, wife of Craiphtine and sister of Forgall Manach. She had an affair with Cormac Cond Lanyards. Furious, Craiphtine killed Cormac and turned his army of 150 youths into birds. In the *Leabhar Gabala Eireann* or “Book of the Takings of Ireland,” she is, along with Tea (Tea- Mhair), Fás (Feart Do / Do Gleand), Fial Liben, Odba and Scota, one of the seven Milesian fairies. A site is dedicated to her at Inber Slaine.
33. Sionnan < *Sianna, “binding;” she was the daughter of Mac Lir Lodan and her name is eponymous with the River Shannon which flows to south-west of Ireland.
34. Tea < *Tega, “support, cover,” a goddess of the Tuatha Dé Danann and wife of Eremon associated with Teamhair or Tara. Tea > Tee puns with the Middle Irish Tee, for “woman, girl, female.”
35. Tlachtga < *Tlagtetica, “woollen dressed,” a goddess associated with the Samhain ritual sacrifice performed on a hill of Meade.
36. Uathach Buanand or nUanaind < *Uataca Bouenda, “Boand, the sorceress, or witch.”

List of top six women of Ireland drawn from the *Dinnsenchas of Achall*: Medb, Sadb, Sarait (who embellishes verses), Er, Emer and Achall.

1.	Medb II, that is, Medb Derg as daughter of Medb.
2.	Sadb < Sadua / Sedia, “the doe.”
3.	Sarait < Sagreta, “the insistent.”
4.	Er < Eria, “the West.”
5.	Emer < Amaro, “sorrow, sadness.”
6.	Achall < Uxella, “the highest.”

The Bean Sidhe (anglicized as banshee), “the ladies of the mounds,” which numbered three to seven, were comparable to the Roman Parcae and Greek Moīrai or Moires. They were sinister figures who

presided over the destiny of mortal men and who decided on the span of life, work, marriage and time of death. According to Hesiodus, there were three Moires, Klôthô, "the spinner," who spins the thread of life, Lachesis, "the distaffer," who rolls the thread, and Atropos, "the inflexible," who cuts the thread. In Irish folklore, the banshees are said to be attached to some families as they are heard like sirens singing at the time of death or of birth. They are found in all of the Indo-European traditions and were named as follows: the Parcae, Fates, or Tri Fata, among the Romans, the Norns among the Germanic peoples, the Rozenicy among the Slavs, and the Niyati among the Indians.

The Sidh is a mound or hill whose underground entrance is a door to the Other World. The Irish countryside, as it is believed, is dotted with hundreds of Sidhs.

The Sidh of Cruachan was such a magical place that it had its parallel in both worlds, that is, in the world of the mortals and in the realm of the spirits.

The 27 Irish houses lunar compared to Indian Nakshatras

(Descriptive diagram according to the Gaelic astrological scheme along with the Vedic lunar mansions and constellations crossed by the moon.)

Names of the Gaelic constellations and Gallic (initial equinox in autumn) and their houses:	In-cusps and out-cusps with their constellations:	Medb's 27 handmaids and maidens (after the Irish tales):	Star chart (according to Vedic astrology) with astral houses, degrees and planets:	Vedic Lunar Mansions with the 27 daughters of Daksha and companions of Soma (the Moon God):
Scorpion: Siltarios Samonios, "The Sower" / Samoni Prinnios House I Lates I	.ln. / .lii. A, Ailm	01. Almha	From 20.00 Libra to 3.20 Scorpio, Jupiter	16. Vishakha, "The Forked"
Lates II Scorpio	.ln. / .lii. A	02. Achall	House VIII 3.20 to 16.40 / Scorpio Saturn	17. Anuradha, "Student of the divine spark"
Lates III Scorpio	B, Beth	03. Badb	16.40 to 30.00 Scorpio, Mercury	18. Jyeshtha, "The Oldest"
House II Sagittarius:	.rii.	04. Uathach Buanand,	House IX From	19. Mula, "The Root"

Bogdarios "the Archer" / Dumanni Prinnios House II Lates IV	H, Huath, Uath	and Scathach	0.0 / to 13.20 / Sagittarius, Southern lunar node	
Lates V Sagittarius	.rii. M, Muin, Min	05. Mugain Attenchaitrech or Mumain Etanchaitrech or Mór Muman or Ethne Aitenchaitrech	13.20 to 26.40 Sagittarius, Venus	20. Purva Ashadha, "The early victory or the undefeated"
Capricorn: Attiluis, "the Sturgeon" / Riuri Prinnios House III Lates VI	.lu. P/Ui, Peith, Pethbol / Uilléan	06. Fethan	27.40 Sagittaire to 10.00 Capricorn, Sun	21. Uttara Ashadha, "Late or not yet conquered victory"
Lates VII Capricorn	.lu. Th/Oi(r), Tharan / Oir, Feursoir	07. Odras	House X 10.00 to 23.20 / Capricorn, Moon	22. Shravana, "The Hearing"
Aquarius: Udesciocos / Anaganti Prinnios House IV Lates VIII	fii. O, On, Ohn	08. Oonagh	House XI 6.40 à 20.00 / Aquarius Northern lunar node, 23.20 Capricorn to 6.40 Aquarius, Mars	23. Dhanistha, "The Richest"
Lates IX Aquarius	fii. Ph/Ia, Phogos / Iphin	09. Eibhir	Aquarius 6.40 to 20.00	24. Shata-bhishak, "The Hundred healers"
Pisces: Escoi / Ogroni Prinnios House V	ict. L, Luis	10. Lochu	20.00 Arius to 3.20 Pisces, Jupiter	25. Shata-bhishak "The Hundred healers"

Lates X				
Lates XI Pisces	ict. L	11. Lebarcham, daughter of Aue	House XII 3.20 to 16.40 Pisces Saturn 16.40-30 Pisces, Mercury	26. Uttara Bhadrpada, "Happy feet of the Future"
Lates XII Pisces	ict. D, Daur	12. Daireann, Dairine	16.40 à 30.00 Pisces	27. Ravati ou Revati, "The Rich"
Aries: Aros, "the god Aries or Mars" / Cuti Prinnios House VI Lates XIII	arb. Ch/Ea, Choad / Eashadh	13. Eadon,	House I from 0.00 to 13.20 / Ram Southern lunar node	1. Ashvini, "The Horselike"
Lates XIV Ram	arb. G, Gort, Gart	14. Garmuin	13.20 to 26.40 / Ram, Venus	2. Bharani, "The Life-bearer"
Taurus: Sciatos Ander, "The Winged Bull" / Giamoni Prinnios House VII Lates XV	insci. U, Ur;	15. Fedelma	26.40 to 10.00 / Bull, Sun	3. Krittika "The Cutter"
Lates XVI Taurus	insci. N, Nuin, Nion	16. Nemain	10.00 à 23.20 / Taurus, Moon	4 .Rohini, "The Red"
Gemini: Roudiosuccoi, "The Red Pigs" / Simiuisoni Prinnios House VIII Lates	ruidzûig T, Tinne	17. Tea	House III 23.20 in Taurus to 6.40 in Gemini / Mars	5. Mrigashirsha, "The Deer head"

XVII				
Lates XVIII Gémeaux	ruidzûig Ng, Ngetal	18. Cneisgel	6.40 à 20.00 Gémeaux Northern lunar node	6. Ardra “The Fresh”
Cancer: Uillos, "Horse" / Equi Prinnios House IX Lates XIX	iùl. E, Eadha, Eodha	19. Eile	House IV 20.00 to 3.20 / Cancer, Jupiter	1. Punarvasu “The Bright Renewal”
Lates XX Cancer	iùl. E	20. Emer et Er,	3.20 à 16.40 Cancer, Saturn	8. Pushya “The Nurse”
Lates XXI Cancer	iùl. F (V), Fearn	21. Findabair	16.40 to 30 Cancer, Mercury	9. Ashlesha “The Embrasser”
Lion : Aga, "The Deer" / Elembiui Prinnios House X Lates XXII	og C, Coll	22. Collach	House V From 0-13 to 20.00 / Leo Southern lunar node	10. Magha “The Great”
Lates XXIII Leo	og St (Sd), Straif	23. Sláine ní Seren	13.20 à 26.40 Leq, l. Venus	Purva Phalguni “The First Red”
Virgo: Ecco Esoxs / Edrinni Prinnios House XI Lates XXIV	ech Ioho, Idho, Iubhar	24. Caer Iborneith	Maison VI From 26.40 in Leo to 12. 10.00 in Virgo / Sun	Uttara Phalguni “The Last Red”
Lates XXV	ech S, Saille	25. Sadb	10.00 à 23.20 Virgo, Moon	11. Hasta “The Hand”
Libra: Indouelicon / Cantli Prinnios House XII Lates	ind Q, Quert	26. Coinchend	Maison VII From 23.20 in Virgo to 6.40 in Scales / /	14. Chitra “The Bright”

XXVI			Mars	
Lates XXVII	ind R, Ruis	27. Réid	6.40 à 20.00 Scales, Northern lunar node	15. Swati “The Sword or Independence”

Astrology and the Lunar Mansions

“Nine small white hands... And nine mothers... Nine Korrigans dancing with flowers in her hair and in robes of white wool around the fountain in the light of the full moon.”

Why the number nine? Simply because this figure is three times three and is symbolic of Nemain⁷, the goddess of the novena period. Also, nine gives an even tripling breakdown of the mansions: $3 \times 9 = 27$. Therefore, there is a potential allocation of 9 signs for each of the lunar mansions of Emain Macha.

Let’s note that the royal palace of Emain Macha Macha⁸ had three large main halls. The first hall, Craobh Ruadh (< Roudia Crobas), “The Red Bough,” had nine rooms. This is where the king and his attendant hero slept and feasted. It is described as a circular structure made of yew (iogh < iucos, “goodly, auspicious, clearly, strongly”) and having plated bronze walls. The king’s bedroom was at the centre of it and had a silver ceiling supported by columns of gold-plated bronze. Around the fortress of Emain Macha, there was the battle field aptly called, “the Plain of Macha.” The severed heads of fallen warriors from after the battle were prosaically called “the hazelnuts of Macha.” The second largest hall, Craobh Derg⁹, was the royal treasure room in which were contained the war trophies and spoils of war.

In the third hall, Teite Brecc¹⁰, were kept the weapons and battle gear of the heroes, because it was agreed by all that no one came to the banquet armed. The name is reminiscent of Briccos, “the speckled, the trout” (and punning with Brictillos, “the mackerel,” Bricta or Bricstia, “magic”). Another famous building mentioned in the Irish cycles was the Hostel of Airtheach.¹¹ Brann regularly visits this hostel which was located on an island to the west of Ireland and which was surrounded by the plain of Magh Airthech. Also mentioned is Da Derga’s Hostel¹², which was a hospital for wounded warriors. And finally, the tales also relate of the destruction of the Hostel of Bron Mac Bruin. Bron, from the Old Celtic name Bronnos means, “lame.” Bron (< Bronna/Bronda) generally given as meaning “breasts or chest,” sounds similar to the Welsh name of the goddess Brannwen, “the white Raven-hen,” who was also called Bronnwen, “of the white breasts.”

Other legendary buildings

Buchat's Hostel

The Rennes Dindshenchas (section 113) mentions that Odras was a Hospitaller of Buasach (< bouosacos), the cow-chief of Cormac hua Cuind, and owner of the House of Care.

In Buchat's Hostel, or Bruidhean Buchat Buasaich, was found a cauldron that was always hot. Therefore, the men of Leinster referred to Buchat (< bucatos, "public crier") as "the cauldron of generosity." In the Irish tongue, a buasach, was a man who had many cows.

Tech Duinn

Tech Duinn, "the house of Donn, the dark," which was the inn of the dead, was located beyond the waves on an island in the ocean to the southwest of Ireland.

The Irish cycles attribute to each house a geographical orientation and a cosmological meaning that hint at their position in time and space.

Geography of the legendary mansions:

1. North East (Ulster):
2. East: Bruigh na Boinne (< Brugden Bouendas), "the Hostel of the Boyne," is located at the site of New Grange. Other designations: Tara, Rath Gráinne (< Rate Greinas), Tech Cormaic, or Teite Corbmac (< Tegos Corbomaqi). Cormac was father of Gráinne.
3. South East (Leinster): Bruidne Dá Derga (< Brugden Deuos Dergos), Da Derga's Hostel or Caer Feddwid (< Qataira Uedduidogli), "Fortress of Twilight-appearance."
4. South: Temair Luchra (Tumera Lucaras), "the Hill of Luchra," the Tara of the South at Luachra's South Rath; Other designation: Baile Lughaide (< Lugu Balion), "the domain of Lugh."
5. South West (Munster): Tech Duinn (< Tegos Donni), "the house of Donn."
6. West: Emain Ablach; other designation: Airtheach or Airgtech (< Aeritegia) "the house of Care."
7. Northwest (Connacht): Rath Cruachan (< Rate Crucon), "Rath of the Slope," the stronghold of Ailill and Medb. Other designation: Bruidhean Buchat Buasaich (<) or Buchat's Hostel.
8. North: Emain Macha (< Emniou Magosias), "Twin City of the Plain," with its three large halls.

The Sidh of Cruachan (< Sidos Crucon)

The Lunar Mansions in Sections of three Novenas:

Qatairai Emniou Magosias, the three halls of the Palace of the Twin City of the Plains

I – Qataira Roudas Crobas (Palace of the Red Branch, including its nine halls):

1. Almha (livestock)
2. Achall (elevation)
3. Badb (combat)
4. Uathach and Scathach (monstrous, the omen, the pretext)
5. Mugain or Mumain (concealed, graceful)
6. Fethan (denial, challenge)
7. Odras (invincibility)
8. Oonagh (reunion, strength, fatigue, thirst)
9. Eibhir (oblivion)

II – Qataira Dergas Crobas (Palace of the Red Branch, including its nine halls):

10. Lochu (fault, error, balanced)
11. Lebarcham (eloquent, resonant sound)
12. Daireann, Dairine (of young girls, rage, madness)
13. Eadon (fervor, ardor)
14. Garmuin (responsiveness to calls)
15. Fedelma (clairvoyance)
16. Nemain (hostile, enemy)
17. Tea (support cover)
18. Cneisgel (gasoline, quintessence)

III – Tegia Brecca Tectas (House of Motley Property) includes the following nine houses:

19. Eile (striping, breath)
20. Er or Emer (back, behind, sadness)
21. Findabair (ghostly)
22. Collach (auspicious omen)
23. Slaine ní Seren (health, star)
24. Caer Iborneith (beauty, goodness)
25. Sadb (peace, peace, peace)
26. Coinchend (intelligence, knowledge, wisdom)
27. Reid (travel, availability).

Let's note that the first of the three halls is noisy and rowdy, the second is dark and quiet while the third is bright and joyful.

The 27 Cusps According to Taliesin's Cad Goddeu

1. U. Uernos, "alder tree."
"The alder trees, the head of the line, formed the van."

2. S. Salix, "willow."
"The willows and quicken trees came late to the army."
3. B. Brinio, "plum tree."
"Plum-trees, that are scarce, unlonged for of men."
4. M. Mespilos > Nespila, "medlar."
"The elaborate meddler-trees, true objects of contention."
5. A. Acuilentos > Apilentos (cf. Latin aculentum "wild rose,") or Acuilenton > Apilenton, "wild rose;" Broica / Uroica, "heather, wild rose."
"The prickly rose-bushes against a host of giants."
6. S. Subitocrobios, "raspberry."
"The raspberry brake did what is better failed for the security of life."
7. G. Gabromelxos, "privet."
"Privet and woodbine and ivy at the front of the battle."
8. G. Gortia, "furze."
"Furze, like ivy went to the combat."
9. C. Carasos, "cherry tree."
"The cherry-tree was provoked."
10. B. Betus, "birch."
"The birch, notwithstanding his high mind, was late before he was arrayed."
11. C > Ch > X. Cista (Greek cf. Khistos), "laburnum."
"Not because of his cowardice, but on account of his greatness. The laburnum held in mind, that your wild nature was foreign."
12. P. Pados, "pine tree."
"Pine-trees at the doorstep of the chair of disputation were greatly exalted in the presence of kings. Morawg and Morydd were made prosperous in pines."
13. L. Lemos, "elm tree."
"The elm with his retinue did not go aside a foot less he would fight the centre, and the flanks, and the rear."
14. C. Coslos, cosla, cuslos, "hazel tree."
"Hazel-trees, it was judged, that ample was thy mental exertion."
15. G. Gabromelxos, "privet bush."
"The privet, happy his lot, the bull of battle, the lord of the world."
16. C. Colenos, "holly bush."
"Holly, it was tinted with green, he was the hero."
17. S. (sp / sq, 's' mutating into 'h') > H. Spetes, or Acinarios, "hawthorn."
"The hawthorn, surrounded by prickles, with pain at his hand."
18. C. Critacos, crennos, "aspen."
"The aspen-wood has been topped, it was topped in battle."
19. R. Ratis, "fern." V / F: (B / U) Roica: "heather."
"The fern that was plundered."
20. G. Genista, banatlos, "broom."

- “The broom, in the van of the army, in the trenches he was hurt.”
21. A. Actina, “gorse bush.”
“The gorse did not do well, notwithstanding let it overspread.”
22. B / U > V / F, Uroica, broica, heather.
“The heath was victorious, keeping off on all sides. The common people were charmed, during time proceeding of the men.”
23. D. Deruos, “oak.”
“The oak, quickly moving, before him, tremble heaven and earth. A valiant door-keeper against an enemy, his name is considered. The blue-bells combined, and caused a consternation. In rejecting, were rejected, others, that were perforated.”
24. P. Periaros, pesiaros, “pear tree.”
“Pear-trees, the best intruders in time conflict of the plain.”
25. A. Abassia, “chestnut tree.”
“A very wrathful wood, the chestnut is bashful, the opponent of happiness, the jet has become black, the mountain has become crooked, the woods have become a kiln, existing formerly in the great seas since was heard the shout.”
26. B. Betua, “birch tree.”
“The tops of the birch covered us with leaves, and transformed us, and changed our faded state.”
27. E. Ercus, “oak tree (in general).”
“The oak, quickly moving, before him, tremble heaven and earth. A valiant door-keeper against an enemy, his name is considered.”

Proposed model for the Gallic lunar mansions	
1. A. Argantoreta (the silver wheel)	15. O. Onniona (the ash)
2. Ā. Andarta (great she-bear)	16. Ō. Oadianai / Osdianai?
3. B. Belisama (most bright)	17. P. Pendusa (the final); Parga (the slope)
4. C. Catubodua (battle crow)	18. Q. Quadriai < Quetruaduai / Petruaduai (the four ways)
5. D. Diuona (lunar)	19. PH. Phernouinexai < Bernouinexai (naiads of the outflow)
6. Đ. Đirona (star-like)	20. R. Rosmerta (providence)
7. E. Elituiāi Matres (the visionaries)	21. S. Suliūia (well coloured)
8. Ê. Epona (the mare)	22. T. Tangonai Matres (patch-mender mothers)
9. G. Glanis (the pure)	23. TH. Tiana / Thiana (kind, trim)
10. I. Ialona (of the grove)	24. U. Uacalinexai / Baccalinexai (naiads of the vintagers)
11. Î. Icouellauna (excellent water)	25. Ū. Uroica (heather)
12. L. Loucena Uirodaxtis (lightning turning one)	26. X. Xandrumanexa (hundred oars naiads)
13. M. Mogontia (the powerful)	27. XS. Xsulsigiai (the hypnotic ones)
14. N. Nemetona (the sanctuary)	Indexing of mansions

Footnotes:

1. Nakshatras, this Sanskrit term generally refers to a bright heavenly body, sometimes the sun, a star, a star cluster or an asterism, a constellation through which the moon passes or when a planet is present in a lunar mansion. Lunar mansions, numbering 27 (or periodically 28), include: 1. Shnavishtha or Dhanishtha; 2. Shata – Bhishaj; 3. Purva-Bhadrapada; 4. Uttara-bhābhādrapada; 5. Revati; 6. Ashvini; 7. Bharani; 8. Krittika; 9. Rohini or Brahmi; 10. Mriga-shiras or Agrahayani; 11. Ardra; 12. Punarvasu or Yamakau; 13. Pushya or Sidhya; 14. Ashlesha; 15. Magha; 16. Purva-phaguni; 17. Uttara-phāphaguni; 18. Hasta; 19. Citra; 20. Svati; 21. Visakha or Radha; 22. Anuradha; 23. Jyeshtha; 24. Mulla; 25. Purvashadha; 26. Uttarashādhā; 27. Abhijit; 28. Shravana. In other versions, Revati, Uttara- Phalguni, Uttara-Bhadrapada and Uttara-Shadha dhruvani are seen as “fixed” and none movable. In the Vedas, the Nakshatras were considered to be the abodes of the gods and of the pious dead when not the companions of the daughters of Daksha.
2. Alexandra David- Neel. *L'Inde où j'ai vécu*, “The India where I lived,” page 200.
3. Tithi is a full moon day, that is, a day and a night and a 30th of a complete lunar cycle of twenty-seven and so solar days. A tithi is measured in two fortnights, each forming a light and a dark half. The beneficial tithis are: Nanda, Bhadra, Vijaya and Purna.
4. George Calder. *Auraicept na Do Eces*, p. 287.
5. George Calder. *Auraicept na Do Eces*, p. 277.
6. George Calder. *Auraicept na Do Eces*, p. 293.
7. That is, Nemain < Namantia, “the hostile,” which meant Noiolatis, “the ninth day” of the novena in the calendar. The name is from nametos, naumetos, noumetos, for “ninth,” and connoting nametos, nemetos, and “holy.”
8. Emain Macha < Emania Magosias, “the twin (city) of the plain.”
9. Craobh Derg < Derga Crobas, “the red leg,” dergos punning with dercos, “eye.”
10. Teite Brecc < Brecca Tectas, “the colourfully stained property,” or Brecta Tegia “the spotted house.”
11. Airtheach/Airgthech < Aericotegia, “house of care.”
12. Da Derga < Dergos Deuos, “the red god,” and Bron-Bherg < Brugno Bargii, “worry of the unable or disabled.”

Chapter X

Signs of the Zodiac

“‘What better plan could we carry out’ said he, ‘than to go and attack yonder man who is checking and holding back the four great provinces of Ireland and to bring back with us his head in triumph to Ailill and Medb. Though we have done many wrongs and injuries to Ailill and to Medb, we shall obtain peace thereby if that man fall by us’. That is the plan they decided on. And they came forward to the place where Cú Chulainn was, and when they came, they did not grant him fair play or single combat but all twelve of them attacked him straightaway. However Cú Chulainn fell upon them and forthwith struck off their twelve heads. And he planted twelve stones for them in the ground and put a head of each one of them on its stone and also put Ferchú Loingsech's head on it's stone. So that the spot where Ferchú Loingsech left his head is called Cinnit Ferchon that is, Cennáit Ferchon *the Headplace of Ferchú.*”

(*Book of Leinster - Táin Bó Cualnge*, translated by Cecile O'Rahilly, p. 209)



Gallic Drachma of the Tectosages (from 12 to 52 BC) depicting a sun wheel with moon crescents and cosmic symbols such as bean-shaped globes and axe. The axe as an astronomical symbol lends itself to a few crafty puns such as: seruo, “vagabond, planet,” serro, “axe,” and amsero, “time age.” After a photo from Laurent Fabre numismate.

The Head Place of Ferchú (Cennáit Ferchon < *Qendotia Uiroconos) – the Zodiacal Belt

As recalled by Diodorus of Siculus in the 1st century BCE, the Druids practised mysteries and created symbols that codified their knowledge into abstract images.

“The Gauls are terrifying in aspect and their voices are deep and altogether harsh; when they meet together they converse with few words and in riddles, hinting darkly at things for the most part and using one word when they mean another; and they like to talk in superlatives, to the end that they may extol themselves and depreciate all other men. They are also boasters and threateners and are fond of pompous language, and yet they have sharp wits and are not without cleverness at learning. Among them are also to be found lyric poets whom they call Bards. These men sing to the accompaniment of instruments which are like lyres, and their songs may be either of praise or of obloquy. Philosophers, as we may call them, and men learned in religious affairs are unusually honoured among them and are called by them Druids. The Gauls likewise make use of diviners, accounting them worthy of high approbation, and these men foretell the future by means of the flight or cries of birds and of the slaughter of sacred animals, and they have all the multitude subservient to them.”¹

Therefore, as Diodorus writes, the Druids said one thing while meaning another.

This is an important passage if we are to understand the mechanics of wordplay in the arts of divination. Further on in his *History*, Diodorus explains the importance of letters and writing used by the Gallic Druids.

“They (the Gauls) invite strangers to their feasts, and do not enquire until after the meal who they are and of what things they stand in need. And it is their custom, even during the course of the meal, to seize upon any trivial matter as an occasion for keen disputation and then to challenge one another to single combat, without any regard for their lives; for the belief of Pythagoras prevails among them, that the souls of men are immortal and that after a prescribed number of years they commence upon a new life, the soul entering into another body. Consequently, we are told, at the funerals of their dead some cast letters upon the pyre which they have written to their deceased kinsmen, as if the dead would be able to read these letters.”²

They were most certainly the undisputed masters of the graphic arts; and this expertise nowhere else shines more than in the numismatic arts. If we should want to know the precise nomenclature and terminology of Druidical astrology, we will have to look elsewhere.



Gallic gold stater depicting astronomical symbols. Author's drawing.

And if we are to rely on the data collected from the *Book of Ballymote*, up until the late medieval Irish times, Celtic names for the zodiacal signs were still maintained. But then again, these names are significantly different from those found on the Coligny plates dating from late Gallic Antiquity. Obviously, much of this difference is not only due to cultural differences but can also be explained by the way copyist monks tended to gloss over pagan content, there seeking to conform the material to their orientalisising Christian views. Needless to say that this revisionist approach will greatly obscure the older cosmological system. In time, the original Irish astrological scheme will be quickly abandoned and forgotten in favour of the current Greco-Roman models.

Luckily, thanks to the comparative linguistic and mythological approaches, it is now possible to uncover the real McCoy lying under centuries of overlays.

Here are the proposed names for the zodiacal constellations of the ancient Gaulish and late medieval Old Irish versions:

The Twelve Signs of the Gallic Zodiac



Gold Stater depicting a torque and a solar eye surrounded by a halo.

Author's drawing from a photo by D. Bertuzzi, in *Dossiers Archéologie et sciences des origines*, p. 58.

I – Libra: Cantli Prinnios, “Constellation of the loop of the ring.”

Cantlos, “looping,” connoting Cantalon, “memorial pillar.”

The Greeks called this constellation Zygus, for “yoked (zygon “yoke”),” that is, the claws of the scorpion.

The Romans saw it as a scale and named it Libra next to Virgo which marked the autumnal equinox. In

Vedic astrology, it was also called the scale as Tula. The Celts of Antiquity, who represented Libra as a

ring or a memorial pillar in former times, saw it as the antlers of a deer. But again, the word Cantlos

carried several meanings such as: “looping, buckling,” and/or “chant or setting of a ring.” Cantalon or

Cantlon means both, “ceremony with songs,” and “memorial pillar,” while Cantla means “lesson.”

Therefore, this Gallic zodiacal sign was imagined as a ring loop representing the annual cycle. As the sun reflected on water at sunset, a twinkling light shaft seemed to mirror a pillar on its surface. Here, the ring or wheel is mounted on a pillar; an image which served to mark the end of the sun's daily path. In short, the motif of the sun ring and the pillar allegorically served as markers for the cycle's end.



Cyclop character holding a mace and a torque all in representation of the constellation of Ophiuchus (Ophiuchus), which marked the beginning of the Celtic Zodiac. Coinage of the Catalauni kept at the *Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris*. Author's drawing after a photo by Blanchet.

II – Scorpio: Samoni Prinnios, “Constellation of the sower rally,” and

Samonios, “the Sower.”

According to a Greek mythological theme, the scorpion Skorpios (Scorpio) was instrumental in resolving the dispute between the goddess Artemis and the god Orion. This image was also shared by the Indians known as Vrsika, “the scorpion,” in Sanskrit.

The Celts, unlike their southern Mediterranean neighbours, did not imagine this sign as a scorpion. In

fact, they imagined it as a sower throwing the seeds for the oncoming year as it was called Samonos. The name for the sower hinted at Samoindon which literally meant “summer's end, that is,” late summer.” The Old Celtic name for summer was Samos. The term Samon hinted at many other meanings since it stood for “seed,” or “meeting, assembly, reunion.” This vocabulary illustrates just what the feasts of Samhain were, New Year celebrations. Also taken figuratively was the term Samo which expressed quietness, calm, balance, firmness and continuity. The Constellation of the Scorpion, along with that of the Serpent, served to indicate the beginning of the new zodiacal cycle.

III – Sagittarius: Dumanni Prinnios, “Constellation of darkening, nebulous,” and connoting *Dumannios, “of the dark horse, the dark man.”

The Greeks formerly associated this constellation with the satyr Krotos, inventor of the bow and son of the god Pan and of the Charite muse Eupheme. It was later associated with the centaur Chiron. The Indians called it Dhanus, “the bow.” The name Dumannios for the month of December and its corresponding constellation also connotes Dunomannos, meaning “the horse man,” that is, the centaur. This period was also called the time of fumigations and the name hints at dumacos which meant foggy, overcast and nebulous since it is the darkest time of the year. In the old Roman pre-Julian calendar (700 BCE), February (from februarius, februare, “to purify”) was the last month of the year. When Julius Caesar became pontifex maximus (high-priest), he fixed the calendar by taking out the intercalary months. Therefore, for the Gauls, December probably marked the beginning of purification through fire and smoke. Moreover, the prefix du-, meaning “dark, black, evil,” combined with the root word mann-os/mand-, for “small horse” is a direct pun with dumacos, “darkened, foggy.” Mannos also puns with mana, “thought, intelligence,” and manda, “residence,” and manos, man, human.” It was therefore a time of darkening, of retreat and reflection, symbolized as a black horse.



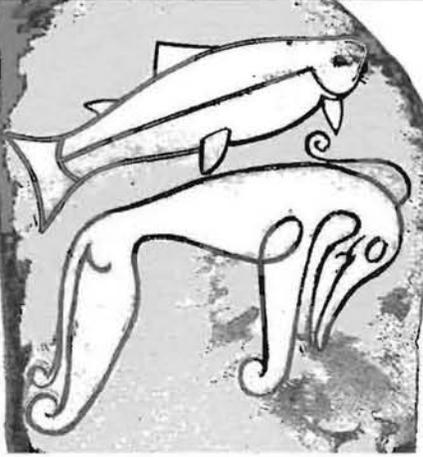
Gallic gold stater depicting two sun or moon beams along with two rays emanating from Venus. From the collection of the *Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris*. Author's drawing after a photo by Blanchet.

IV – Capricorn: Riuri Prinnios, “Constellation of freezing, of frost.”

Riuos, “frozen,” is in wordplay with *Riuoros, “radiant, beaming,” and connoting *Ariurocon, “before the water bucket,” that is, before the water pot, Aquarius.

The plural of *riuo, for “ray,” is *riuones. The riuones are therefore the seven cosmic rays.

Capricorn comes from the Latin Capricornus, a compound name coined from capra, “goat,” and cornus, “horn.” The Capricorn mythical beast was the equivalent of the Greek aegocerus. This fabulous half-goat, half-fish beast most likely refers to large scaled fish, probably a sturgeon. The Indian name Makara also designates a sea monster. In Vedic astrology, the makara, is either described as a Capricorn, half stag, half fish, a dolphin or a crocodile. This mythical beast is probably a garbled reminiscence of the original Black Sea Sturgeon. On one of the panels of the Gundestrup Cauldron is depicted a boy riding what seems to be a dolphin but looks rather like a large sturgeon. Likewise, the image of the down-pouring water pot could also be a mythologized reminder of the flooding of the Black Sea by the higher waters of the Mediterranean Sea (circa 5600 BCE).

	
<p>Pictish stele of Barflat, Scotland, depicting a salmon and a dolphin. Dating from the fourth or fifth century CE. From a pencil drawing by J. Stuart in <i>Symbol Stones of Scotland, Aberdeen</i>, 1856.</p>	<p>Currency of the Helvetii depicting an ibex, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. Author’s drawing after a photo by Blanchet.</p>



Celtic gold stater of the Belgians with graphic representations of a Triskelion, zigzag patterns in the form of waves, and the eight main stars of Aquarius. From the Rhine Valley, Germany, 1st century BCE. Author's drawing from a photo of the *Money Museum*, Hadlaubstrasse, Zürich, Switzerland, collection.

V – Aquarius: Anaganti Prinnios, “Constellation of inaction, or of the calamitous.”

*Anacantios, “calamitous,” hints at *Anaxs or *Anappon, a “goblet, cup or pot.”

This term also suggests the name of an official agent in the form of *anacontios, a “cup-bearer, pot bearer,” or again, a “water boy.” The representation of a cup-bearer, pouring his pot in a pool in which swam a large fish was common to both Classical and Vedic astrology. Here, the large fish is for the constellation of the southern fish (Piscis Austrinus) which the Celts saw as a salmon. The Vedic Indians also entertained the idea of a pot as Kumbha, the “pot.” The Greeks called this constellation Hydrochoos, which meant the “water-pourer,” and the Romans called it Aquarius, the “water carrier or cup-bearer.” Aquarius was identified to Ganymede, the cup-bearer of Zeus. And in Celtic bardic wordplay, this sign stands for *Ancena or *Ncena, “dire necessity, fatality or violent coercion.” And again, in standard poetic formulation, Ana gantas, stood for “pond of the geese.”



The Ophidian headed ram is the classical symbol for this sign. Gallic coin representing a head with a torque, lightning bolt and a coiled snake. From the collection of the *Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris*.

Author's drawing after a photo by Blanchet.

VI – Pisces: Ogroni Prinnios, “Constellation of coolness, the cold-blooded.”

*Ogronoi, “fishes, snakes, amphibians, cold-blooded animals.”

The constellation of the Fishes (Ichtyes in Greek and Pisces in Latin) commemorates the myth where Aphrodite and her child Ichthus were turned into fish and pursued by the malicious Typhon, the Titan

of smoke and winds, in the waters of the Euphrates. This theme of the fish was also present in Vedic astrology and known as Mīna, “the fish.” Along with ogronos, some of the Old Celtic names for snake or ophidian were: anguis and nadralis or natralis. The Celtic terms ogros and ogris both refer to cold.



Celtic Tetradrachm of the Danube Valley from the 2nd or 1st century BCE. Left: the head of Aries, right: a horse (Pegasus) topped by the Northern Crown and below it, the sun disk. The rake symbol represents the constellation of the Boar (Little Dipper). Drawn by the author.

VII – Aries: Cuti Prinnios, “Constellation of Aries.”

Cutios / Qutios / Putios, “the ram.”

The adjective cuti-os/-a/-on, means “fiery, fervent or ardent,” when not “sneaky, hypocritical.” The name cutios, for “ram,” puns with cutis, “skin, leather,” as for a pouch or a leather purse. The Greeks called the constellation of Aries, Krios. The Latin name Aries should not be confused with the Greek name for the god since it was Mars in Latin. The Vedic name for this constellation was Mesa, the “ram.”



Bull, detail from the Gundestrup Cauldron, 1st century BCE. Author's drawing from a photo by E. Lessing,



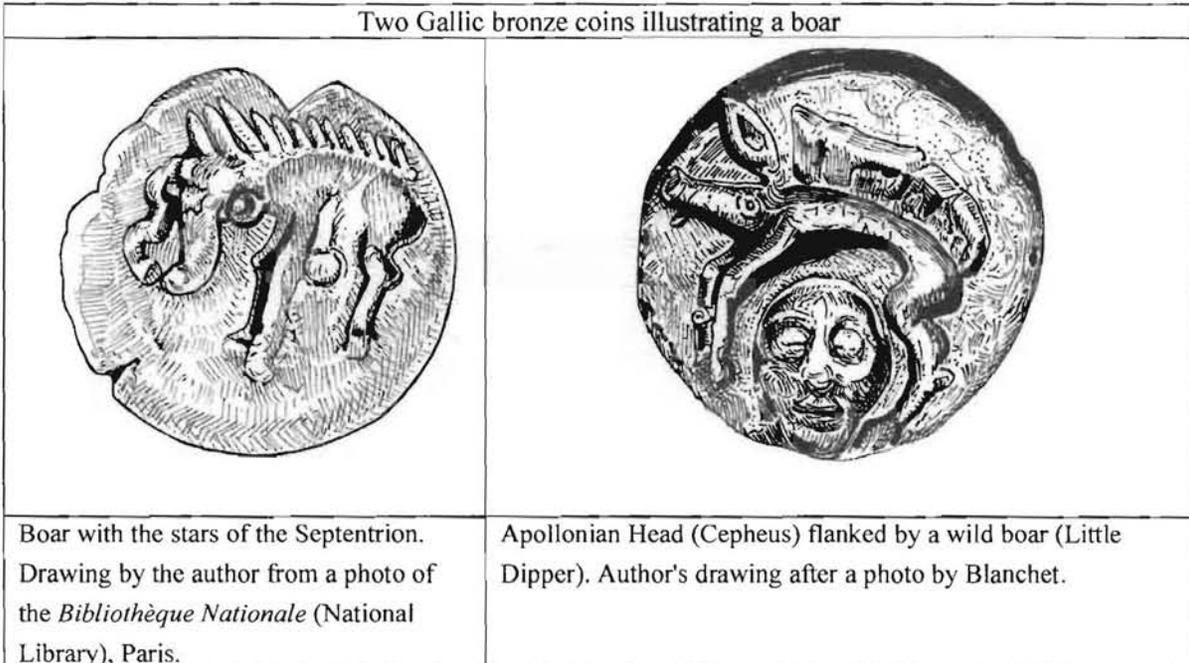
Coinage from southern Gaul. Representation of a bull with the inscription Massalihto (or perhaps Massalieton “Massalia”). *Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris*. Author's drawing after a

VIII – Taurus: Giamoni Prinnios, “Constellation of shoots, germinating.”

*Giamonos, “germinator;” connoting gammos, “cattle or deer buck,” and/or gamminos, “steer.”

The Greeks imagined this constellation as a white bull, an aspect of Zeus in association with the goddess Europa. Its Greek name was Tauros Kretaios, “the retan Bull.” The Indians called it *Vṛṣ abha*, also for “bull.” The Gallic phrasing was Taurus Giamos or Giemos, which should not be confused with the Gallic form gemos, which is from geimos or giamos, and which coalesces with giamos for “winter.” Thus, the true meaning of this month, and astrological sign, was giemo > giamo which meant “germination.”

Two Gallic bronze coins illustrating a boar



IX – Gemini: Simiuisonni Prinnios, “Constellation of the spirited breezes.”

*Simiuisunoi, “worthy and lighthearted,” connoting Semiuesses, small and lively, spirited, vivacious pigs.

The Latin term Gemini was borrowed from the Greek Didymoi, the “twins,” being the Dioscuri, Castor and Pollux. The Sanskrit term Mithuna was also for “twins.”

The first element of the term, *simis* or *semis* means “light, lighthearted or reckless.” The second element can also be taken for a pun on uisunos, meaning “worthy, excellent,” which is the name for the dawn goddess prosaically called Uisuna or Uesuna, “the Worthy.”



The eagle riding a horse supported by an acrobat warrior. Gold coin from the 3rd or 2nd centuries BCE of the Unelle tribe of Armorica bearing the label EXC. Author's drawing after a photo from the *Cabinet des Médailles de Paris* collection.

X – Cancer: Equi Prinnios, “balanced, adjusted constellation or Constellation of the horse.”

Ecuos/Epos < *Equos, “horse.”

Ecuos, from the Old Celtic root word aecuos, meant, “equalized and balanced.” Again, in poetic wordplay, this puns with equos / epos, for “horse.” Thus, for the Celts, the crab motif, called Karkinos in Greek, Cancer in Latin and Karkata in Sanskrit, was actually under the sign of the horse. This designation also shows up as Du-mannos, “the dark pony,” for the Gallic Sagittarius, as well as Ech, “horse” for Virgo, in the Old Irish Book of Ballymote. In Classical astrology, the crab was found in association with the goddess Hera. And, in other Greek fables, from an earlier period perhaps, this constellation was under the sign of the Asini, the asses of Dionysus.

Towards the end of the La Tène period (2nd and 1st centuries BCE), the Greco-Roman lion replaced the Celtic doe or fawn symbol for this constellation.



A lion pursued by a snake. Coin from the *Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris* (National Library of Paris).
Author's drawing after a photo by Blanchet.

XI – Leo: Elembiui Prinnios, “Constellation of the fawn.”

*Elembos, “fawn.”

According to legend, the constellation of Leo was so called by the Greeks in remembrance of the Nemean lion that Hercules had to overcome during one of his twelve labours. In Vedic astrology, this sign was also called the Lion as Simha. Therefore, the Celtic representation of the deer, doe or fawn, for this constellation seems to be very ancient. In former times, the deer motif was used in Indo-European cosmology to name the combined constellations of Libra and Scorpio. The lion symbol belonged to the Greek and Anatolian cultures and was not familiar to the continental Celts.

XII – Virgo: Edrini Prinnios, “Constellation of the judge,” (in wordplay with Aedrinios, “heat wave”).

Edrinos, “judge, arbitrator, referee,” connoting, Andera, “maiden, girl, young woman.”

The Maiden, or Virgo, was called Parthenos, Dike, Demeter, Tyche Thespia, Kore, or Persephone, in Greek, and Fortuna in Latin. These were just some of the many names of the Goddess under her youthful aspects. In the myths, she was depicted holding a sheaf of corn or a wheat stalk. The star Spica of Virgo is symbolized by a spike of wheat. In Sanskrit, the maid or virgin was called Kanya, literally meaning “daughter.” The Celts, called her Dera or Andera or Ogia Magula, “the young maiden.” In this situation, Gaulish astrology seems to have preferred the image of a wise man in place of a maiden for this sign.

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