
Astrology of the Ancient Druids

Part 8

The twelve signs of the Zodiac in the Irish Ogham

(Please note that the Old Irish names of the Oghams are rendered in Old Celtic in order to restore all of their original meanings, connotations, and cryptic meanings.)



I – Libra: Indouelicon, “the ring, or the ultimate circle,” and Indamia, “the maid.”

Cantos, “ring;” Gallic sign: Cantli Prinnios.

The sign of Libra is here replaced by the antler of a roe buck, or a deer buck. The antlers belonged to the horned god Cernunnos, lord of animals, and serpent bearer. Cernundos was the Old Celtic name for Ophiuchus which covered both constellations of Libra (Antlers) and Ophiuchus (overlapping Scorpio).

Cusp of entry: Qerta, “crab-apple,” qertocos, “crab-apple tree;”

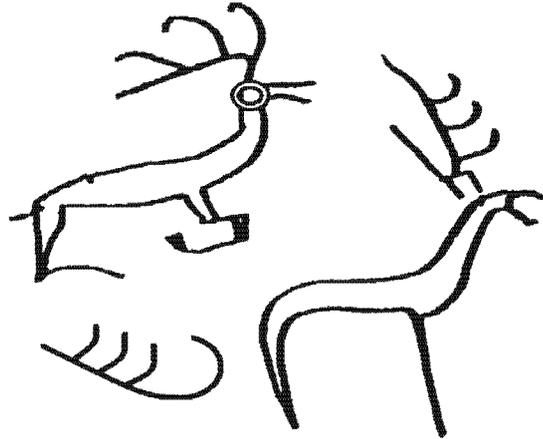
Bird sign: Qarca < carca, “hen;” animal sign: qrumis, “worm, maggot;”
Hidden meaning: qert-os/-a/-on, “turned, rolled, twisted;” qernio, “victory.”

Out-cusp: Rudioscaua / ruscia, “elder tree;”

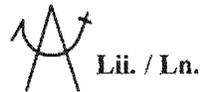
Bird sign: Rucinatis, “rook;” animal sign: ructu, “pig;”

Figuratively: Rusca, “hive bark;” ruscon, “basket, beehive;” rudi-os/-a/-on, “rough.”

House I: Indon, “end result;” {losses, costs, waste}; planets: Venus and the Southern lunar node as an aspect of Mars.



Deer and antlers in the Scythian art of the Steppes. Drawn by the author (after a drawing from the *Revue Les dossiers de l'archéologie*, journal of archaeology records, no. 194, June 1994).



II – Scorpio: Liathag < leitacos, “salmon-trout, young salmon,” if not Lingonis, “jumper, dashing dancer.”

Siltarios or Samonios, “the sower;” Gallic sign: Samoni Prinnios.

The theme of the sower for this sign was common to both the continental Gauls and the insular Gaels or Scots. In the Ogham, the Scorpio logo is drawn in the shape of a compass, an instrument of choice for graphic designers, cartographers and astrologers.

In-cusp: Alamios, “Scottish pine;”

Bird sign: Alauda, “lark;” animal sign: alcis, “red deer, elk;”

Hidden meaning: Alamos, “herd, livestock, cattle, capital, wealth;” alabis / alanis, “beautiful.”

Out-cusp: Betua, “birch;”

Bird sign: Boduos, “crow;” animal sign: baedos / bagios, “boar;”

Hidden meaning: Bitu / bitus, “world, the living world;” bit-os/-a/-on, “immortal, eternal.”

House II: Lingmen, “on scene, starting point;” {birth, origin, commencement, start}; Planets: Mars and the Northern lunar node as an aspect of Saturn.



R-Viros, a stater of the Nervis where the letters form a bird rebus. Author's drawing after a photo by Blanchet from the *Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris*.



Sagittarius: Bogdarios, “the archer;” Gallic sign: Dumanni Prinnios; Rii, that is, rii-os/-a/-on, “free;” rigi-os/-a/-on, “royal, pertaining to the king;” Ridir < redarios “rider, cavalier, knight.”

The logo for *rii* is drawn like a rake and sometimes as a wing or a fork. This symbols also appears on Celtic coinage and is at times drawn the shape of three lines which either represent a horse's mane, an eagle's wing or the crest of a boar.



Stater bearing a stylized boar and the North Star (Polaris) drawn as a cross-mark. Author's drawing after a photo by Blanchet from the *Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris*.

In-cusp: Squiats, "hawthorn;"

Bird sign: Sciatos, "duck," or scrauo, "black-headed gull," and screua / scriua, "skua gull;" animal sign: scobarnocos, "hare;"

Hidden meaning: Scetac-os/-a/-on, "inciting to offence, scheming;" sceito / sceta /scetis, "wing, fin;" scito/scitos, "fatigue;"

Out-cusp: mUinia, "bramble or vine;"

Bird sign: Mesalcos, "blackbird;" animal sign: mugnos, "salmon (mythical);" Morimoccos, "porpoise;"

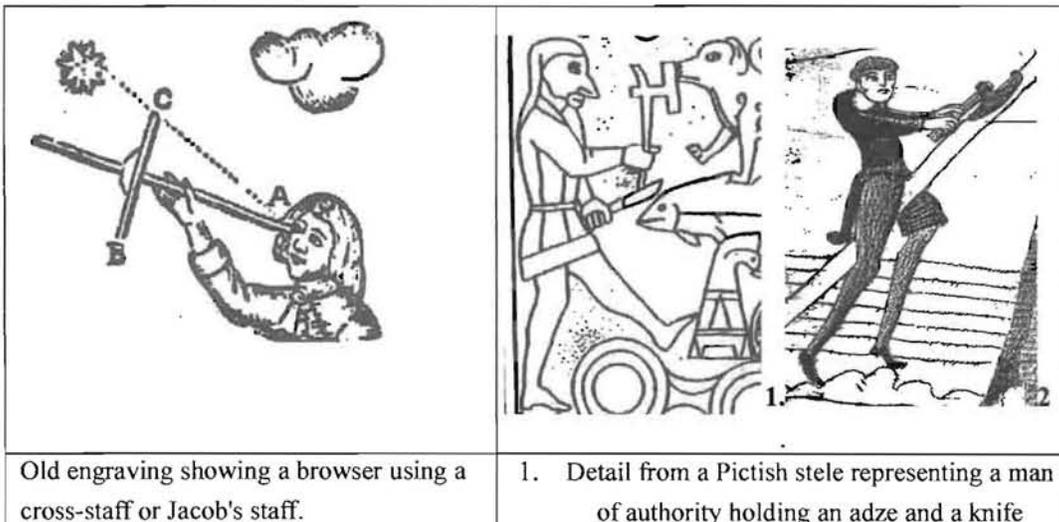
Hidden meaning: Muinos / moinos, "treasure;" muinon, "the blessing;" muncis, "cloud."

House III: Artigatiom, "ploughing;" {life, livelihood, work}; Planet: Jupiter.

⌒ Lu.

Capricorn: Lucius / lugius, "pike," formerly attiluis, "sturgeon," and connoting luamos, "pilot," or lugos, "crow;" Gallic sign: Riuri Prinnios;

The man holding an adze and a knife on the Pictish Stone seems to be a person of authority The 'F' shaped symbol could also be taken for a measuring tool, a cross-staff or Jacob's staff, that is, a surveyor's tool, a gnomon, when not an astrolabe



	along with astral symbols. 2. Detail from the Bayeux tapestry showing a shipcarpenter using an adze.
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In-cusp: Petios / qetios, “opulus;”

Bird sign: Pincio / pinciu, “finch;” animal sign: peigno <pencinio, “salmon;”

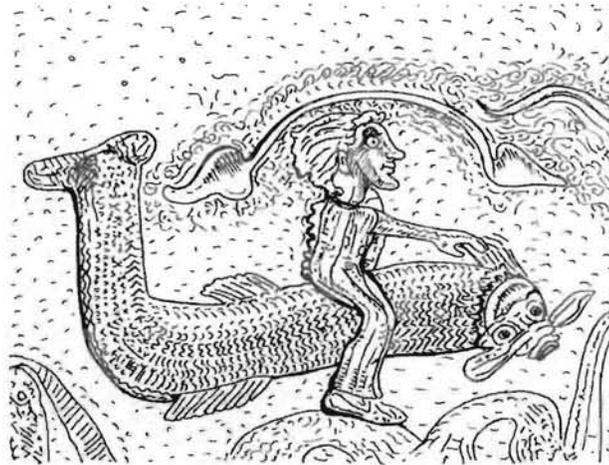
Hidden meaning: Petitt-os/-a/on, “small;” petia / pettia / pettia, “room;”

Out-cusp: Phagos > phogos/bagos, “beech,” or spidna, “mackerel currant;”

Bird sign: Sparuo, “sparrow;” animal sign: phrucnios <sprocnios, “horse;”

Hidden meaning: Phland-os/-a/-on < bland-os/-a/-on, “nice;” phindon, “end.”

House IV: Eluetia, “abundance (of goods);” {fraternal relations, friendly and social}; Planet: Saturn.



Boy riding a sea animal (porpoise or giant sturgeon). This may be an early representation of Moritasgos, the young Belenos, and Romanized as the “Apollo of the Sea.” Detail from the *Gundestrup Cauldron*, 1st century BCE. Author’s drawing after a photo by E. Lessing from the *National Museum of Copenhagen*.



Aquarius: Udesciocos, “watery, aqueous,” or Uisucios / Uiseceos, “the crow;” Gallic sign: Anaganti Prinnios.

On a quarter stater of the Gallic Leuques tribe is figured a warrior whose arms have turned into flapping wings. Could it be the god Lugus metamorphosed into a raven? Let’s not forget that the constellation of the Raven is not far from that of Aquarius. This anthropomorphic image very well

illustrates the idea of fluidity as that of a figure with winged arms moving like waves or gusts of wind. It parallels the Classical water-bearer motif pouring a large amphora at arm's length into the mouth of a large fish. This bird-man moves through air as the bird flies.



Coin depicting the metamorphosis of Lugus (or Lugos) into a bird along with the directional arrow of solar progression. Quarter stater of the Leuques from around the 3rd or 2nd century BCE.

Author's drawing after a photo by D. Hollard from the *Bibliothèque Nationale de France*, Paris.

In-cusp: Onna, "ash;" acstino / ocastino, "gorse;"

Bird sign: Olerca / olerica / alarca, "swan;" animal sign: ouios "sheep," ouica "sheep," ognos, "lamb;"

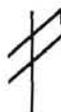
Hidden meaning: Onna > ona / ono, "river, stream," ona, "shame."

Out-cusp: Lulis, "rowan;"

Bird sign: Lugos / luogos, "crow;" animal sign: Lucius / lugius, "pike;"

Hidden meaning: Lussoios < luxsoios, "burning;" luuios, "guide, leader, chief;" Luutos, "dwarf."

House V: Uindobios, "happiness, bliss;" {maternal relationships, happiness}; Planet: Saturn.

 Ict.

Pisces: Escoi, “fishes;” Gallic sign: Ogroni Prinnios.

The Irish symbol for the constellation of Pisces is almost identical to that of classical astrology. The abbreviation ict. is probably an attempt to reconcile the Latin ictus, Greek ixthús, “fish (punning with ictus, “sudden shock, suffering, heartbeat and pulse measurement),” with the Celtic escos / iscos, for “fish,” or escate, “fish,” to the collective mode.

In-cusp: Xoiton, “thicket;”

Bird sign: Cauacos / cauocos, “jackdaw,” or couixs, “cuckoo;” animal sign: Cu, “dog,” cunthos, “hound dog;”

Hidden meaning: Xaimon, “homeland, ethnic home;” xodoni-os/-a/-on, “chthonic, earth;” xsulsigiactos, “hypnotism;”

Out cusp: Daruos, “oak;”

Bird sign: Druuos, driuolos, “wren;” animal sign: damatos, “sheep;”

Hidden meaning: Derb-os/-a/-on, derb-os/-a/-on, “sure and certain, proven;” deruiis, “being certain, truthful;” dirouedon > deruedon, “end;”

House VI: extincón, “abundance, waxing;” {offspring, brood, children}; Planet: Jupiter.



Aries: Aruos, Aruios, “attacking;” Aros, the god Ares, “Mars,” in Old Celtic; Gallic sign: Cutii Prinnios, cutios > qutios, “ram.”

The abbreviation arb, implies ploughing, rauo, “to plough;” aruon, eruon, “furrow, plowed field or land.” Arb also connotes arbos, orbos, “heir;” arbio, orbio, “heirloom;” arbion, orbion, “heritage.”

In-cusp: Taranos, “green oak;”

Bird sign: Tarascala, “thrush, song thrush;” animal sign: tarandos, “reindeer;”

Hidden meaning: Tarannos < tanaros, “thunder;” taranautos, “storm;” torindos, “spark anvil;” torina / torinna, “flour.”

Out-cusp: Gortia, “ivy;”

Bird sign: Gansa, “wild goose;” garannos, “crane;” animal sign: gabro, gabros, “goat;”

Hidden meaning: Gortos > gartos, “plot, fenced garden;” gorton / gortion, “croft, closed garden;” gortus > gurtus, “heat.”

House VII: Aruos, “striker;” {opposition, diseases, obstacles}; Planet: Mars.



Taurus: Insciatos, “winged,” or Sciatos Ander, “winged bovine;” Gallic sign: Giamoni Prinnios; Taruos, “bull.”

This strange graphic symbol also appears on a Gallic stater of the Remi along with a depiction of a deer or horse on the tail side of the coin. It is a stylized udder or heart in the shape of a head. In this case, the abbreviation insci < insqia / eniscuia, “speech, discourse,” seems to connote eneqos, eneco, “face (of a person).”

<p>Beef heart, udder or head? Quarter stater of the Remi, Seine-et-Marne. Author's drawing after a photo from the <i>New Atlas of Gallic coins</i>.</p>	<p>Gold stater with a stylized ox head. Author's drawing after a photo by D. Bertuzzi.</p>

In-cusp: Uroica, “heather, wild rose;”

Bird sign: Udarocrago, “corncrake;” animal sign: uros > urus, “bison, ure-ox, aurochs,” and / or urleo, “large wild cat, lynx, leopard;”

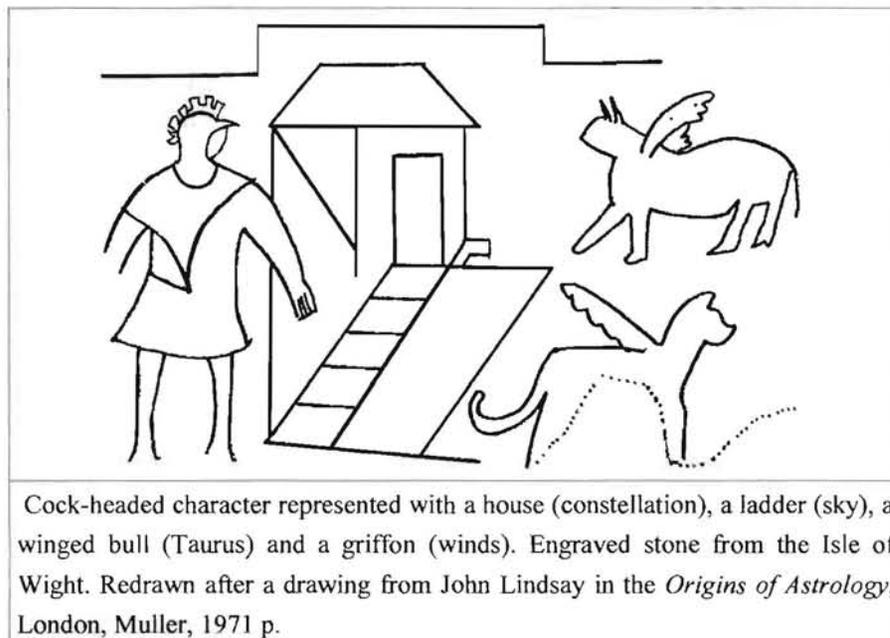
Hidden meaning: Ur / uron, "fire;" ura, "grave;" uracia, "unmarried woman, spinster;" uraccaia, "spark, flash;" ur-os/-a/-on, "pure."

Out-cusp: Uernos, "alder;"

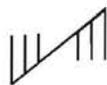
Bird sign: uailennos > uoilennos, "gull, seagull;" animal sign: uerbis < uerba / uerua, "cow;" uetsis > uisis, "(young) sow, sow," and/or ualos / uolcos, "wolf;"

Hidden meaning: Uernon / bERNON, "marsh, swamp;" uernon, "field, property, property value;" uern-os/-a/-on, "good;" uirona, "sincerity;" uroniia, "truth."

House VIII: Insqiate / eniscuiate, "speeches, discourses;" {Partnerships, marital relations}; Planet: Venus.



Ruidzuig / ruidsuig



Gemini: Roudiosuccoi, "red hogs;" Gallic sign: Simiuisoni Prinnios; Semiuesses, "lively pigs."

The symbol for Gemini is made up of a doubled rake such as the one for Sagittarius. It may be the stylization of a boar's mane or the crest. This being, that there were three rays on the sun god's crown. Also note that these two constellations are perfectly opposed.



Silver coin with opposing wolves. Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris.
Author's drawing after a photo by Blanchet.

In-cusp: Tennyos, "holly;"

Bird sign: Trodis > trodis, "starling;" animal sign: trucus/tretios, "boar;"

Hidden meaning: Tannis. "glowing, the hue of fire;" tepnia > tennia, "(wood) fire;" ten-os/-a/-on, "strict, severe."

Out-cusp: 'nGaitalis < in-caitalis, "water reed;"

Bird sign: Engnaca, "hooded crow;" animal sign: ancoracos > ancoragos, "old salmon;"

Hidden meaning: Anguinon, "serpent's egg, fossil sea urchin test, cosmic egg;" ancoc, "servant;" ncu < ancu < anco < ancouo, "inevitability;" encouo, "death (personified)."

House IX: Roudios, "ruin, fall (from prestige or eminence);" {death, destruction, annihilation};

Planet: Mercury and Counter-Earth.



Cancer: Uillos, "horse;" Gallic sign: Equi Prinnios; Equos, "horse."

This sign is designed as to suggest a prancing horse or a man raising his arms to heaven. Horse-shaped abstractions and stylizations are very often found in Gallic numismatic art.

In-cusp: Elto, eltos, "poplar;"

Bird sign: eruros / eror, "eagle;" animal sign: epos / eqos, "horse;"

Hidden meaning: aecu-os/-a/-on > equ-os/-a/-on, "equalized, compensated, adjusted, balanced;" aecos, "resident;" ecu, "cattle;"

Out-cusp: Salix, "willow;"

Bird sign: Sebacos, “hawk;” animal sign: sidos, “deer;”

Hidden meaning: Saulios / sauelios / saulos / saualis, “sun;” suligu, “harmony;” Sulis, “eye;” sulisma, “look, demeanour, good look,” name of the solar goddess;

House X: Uilia, “honesty, will;” {Dharma, the law of good order of the world and of his own nature};
Planet: Moon.



Macha of the red tresses, the Irish mare goddess and an equivalent to the Gallic Epona.



Leo: Aga “doe;” Elembos, “fawn;” Elembiui Prinnios;

The symbol for Leo, which is substantially the same as that of Greek astrology, accentuates the shape of the lyre. Vega, the alpha star of Lyra, is one of the brightest stars of the summer sky. It is at its peak between May and September. We also find the same symbol on Gallic coinage along with horse representations.



Silver Tetradrachm with horse and lyre representations. Author's drawing after a photo by D. Bertuzzi in *Dossiers Archéologie et sciences des origines*, p. 59).

In-cusp: Coslos, “hazel;”

Bird sign: Caliacos / calliacos, “cock;” animal sign: cattos, “cat;”

Hidden meaning: Cala, “stone;” cailos / coilos / coelios, “omen, auspicious, favorable;” coilu, “auspices;” cailiacos / coiliacos, “omen, soothsayer.”

Out-cusp: Sdragenos < dragenos, “barberry;”

Bird sign: Đragena > draena / drasina / drascina, “thrush;” animal sign: đragenocos, “hedgehog;”

Hidden meaning: dir < sdir < đira < sđira, “star;” đireula, “astronomy;” đunios/dunios < donios < xdonios, “human being, man.”

House XI: Agtate / actate, “acts, facts, actions, and decisions for action;” {actions, rewards, karma};

Planet: Sun.



Virgin: Ecco, the “country priest;” Gallic sign: Edrini Prinnios; Edrinos, “judge, arbitrator.”

It is ironic that the sign for Virgo is represented here by the symbol of a penis. Needless to mention that this surprising representation does lend itself to several interpretations, that are: a fish shaped symbol or a drawing of a woman wearing a hooded cloak, if not, the penis of a horse. Also, three sun strokes are depicted at the top of the symbol. In Celtic art, strokes are often drawn around orbs or over the heads of animals and characters.

In-cusp: Iuos / iburos, “yew;”

Bird sign: Iar > giar < iaro, "cock, gallinaceous, domestic fowl;" animal sign: iorcellos < iorcos, "deer;" and/or, isoxs / esoxs, "pike;"

Hidden meaning: iuos/-a/-on, "good, propitious, valid, stout, reddish;" iuer < iuuer, "spry, fresh, swift;" iueriu < iuueriu, "vitality, vigour, freshness, fertility;"

Out-cusp: Nertos, "myrtle;"

Bird sign: Naudauica / nauscuca, "snipe;" animal sign: natris / naðris, "snake;"

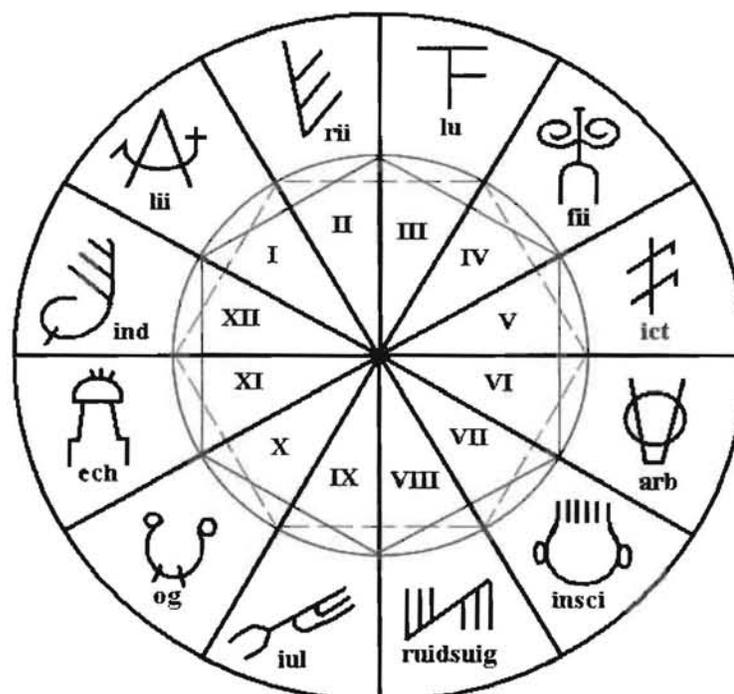
Hidden meaning: nertos, "strength;" nertacos, "vigourous;" nariaa, "discreet bountiness, bountiful discreetness;"

House XII: Ecuodecs, "perfectly fair;" {gains, profits, possessions}; Planet: Mercury.



Gallic stater depicting a horse-headed woman along with a representation of the annual cycle of the moon. Note the praying figure with the mare. Priests were often depicted with arms raised. Author's drawing after a photo from the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.

The Irish Gaelic Zodiacal Circle



Footnotes:

1. Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History, Book V, verse 28*, p.173.
2. Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History, verse 31*, p. 179.

Chapter XI

Planetary Yokes and Cosmic Forces

“Who will measure Uffern?
How thick its veil?
How wide its mouth?
What the size of its stones?
Or the tops of its whirling trees?
Who bends them so crooked?
Or what fumes may be about their stems?”
(The Red Book of Hergest XXIII, Taliesin's First Address)



The Tarascan severed heads. Author's drawing after a photograph from the *British Museum*, London.

“Who will measure Uffern?” This question can be asked otherwise: how do we measure the depths of sky? Here Uffern¹ refers to the Underworld, literally the Christian Inferno seen as an abysmal void. Ever since the earliest stages of astronomical science and astrological art, measuring distances between the constellations of the ecliptic was an impossible task. Thus, the question was reduced to its simplest solution: either the constellations formed equal houses or that they were at distance from each other. In order to visualize a working model, the Druid-astronomers imagined the astral houses in a

vast garden domain surrounded by the trees of the forest. As we have seen in the previous chapters, the empty spaces on the zodiacal belt between constellations were marked by trees seen as markers. The Greeks and Romans saw these markers as cusps or horns. And then, what were the distances between the planets, their sizes, their conjunctions (meetings), their astral features, aspects or their cosmic powers? Again, how did the ancient astrologers consider all of these questions?

As we have seen, the little we know concerning the mechanisms of the astrological system of the Druids was given by the Classical authors. This information is by far less than what can be gleaned from the Irish and Welsh texts. In addition, these cosmological fragments, gleaned here and there in the old Classical and Medieval texts, are not only difficult to access but the keys to unlock their meaning are not given by these authors. It is nevertheless possible, from the collected data, to restore the broken pot with its missing pieces.

Yokes and Forces in Astrology

According to the ancient astrological scheme, the yokes of the planetary or cosmic forces do not hold when under influence of the giant planets such as Jupiter and Saturn which exert beneficial or malevolent forces on the other planets. Mars and Mercury were considered active while Venus was considered passive. Nevertheless, a measure of deterrence was envisioned. When lightning is fired by Mars in the vicinity of Jupiter and Saturn, then the movements of other celestial bodies are set in motion. It was imagined that these flashes, seen as heavenly lights, were caused by comets in that they were believed to be the cause of lightning. Their frequency is unpredictable and can only be foreseen through meticulous observation maintained over long periods of time. Since it is difficult to distinguish a comet from a meteorite, their passages could only be predicted because of their constant elliptical orbits around the sun. And again, they vary in shape and appearance, so much so that the ancient astrologers simply classified them in the general category of wandering or erratic stars. It is from the outer zones of the solar system, after their passage into Jupiter's orbit, that they are disturbed in their revolutions, to the point as to deviate from their usual course. Another argument for the allocation of evil qualities given to erratic stars was because of their alleged destructive properties. That is, they ignite, become inflamed and lose some of their mass as they approach the sun. In light of this, comets differed from meteors in that they have elliptical or hyperbolic orbits. Only comets run on a periodic elliptical orbit. The average frequency of comets is of thirty-five to fifty years. For example, Haley's comet visits us every seventy-five years.

Concerning the influence of comets and planet Saturn exerted on the other stars, Seneca (in *The natural questions, Causes of Comets*, Book VII, 3 – 4, p. 274 – 276) wrote:

“So much is certain; two authors, Epigenes and Apollonius of Myndus, the latter highly skilled in casting horoscopes, who say that they studied among the Chaldeans, are at variance in their accounts. The latter asserts that comets are placed by the Chaldeans among the number of the wandering stars (i.e. planets), and that their orbits have been determined. Epigenes, on the contrary, asserts that the

Chaldeans have ascertained nothing regarding comets, which are thought by them to be fires produced by a kind of eddy of violently rotating air.

In the first place, if it like you, let us set down the views of the last-mentioned author and refute them. He supposes that the planet Saturn has, most influence in determining all motions of the heavenly bodies. When it presses upon the constellations next Mars, or crosses to the neighbourhood of the moon, or encounters the rays of the sun, being naturally cold and windy, it contracts and masses the atmosphere at more than one place. By and by, if Saturn absorb all the sun's rays, there is thunder and lightning. If he has Mars in agreement, the lightning is forked. Moreover, he continues, forked and sheet lightning contain different materials. Evaporation from water or other moisture produces only gleams that threaten but stop short of striking. The hotter and drier exhalation of the earth forges the bolts of forked lightning. Beam meteors and torches, which differ from one another only in size, are produced in this same way. When any ball of air what we call a whirlwind encloses moist earthy matter, wherever it rushes it presents the appearance of an extended line of fire, which lasts just so long as the mass of air remains, which carries within it the supply of moist earthy matter."²

The Welsh Bard Taliesin (in *The Spoils of Taliesin*) is in agreement with Seneca's views on comets:

Mal rot tanhwydin dros eluyd. Mal ton teithiawc llwyfenyd.³

"Like the wheeling of a fiery meteor over the earth. Like a wave that governs Llwyvenydd."
(Translated by W. F. Skene, 1858)

The following is the author's literal translation:

"As the wheel of the sun of fire over the country.
As the wave that governs Llwyvenydd."⁴

On the Cosmic Forces

In traditional astrology, the word "strength," stands for power, force, and energy, including all other aspects or qualities of a star or planet. In the enumeration of the heavenly bodies, the numeral quality of the strength of a planet falls in a given order. This order of the planets varies according to the different astrological traditions. In Classical and Vedic astrology, signs are credited as having good or evil qualities. The Old Celtic names for these allotments were the following: mata, "beneficial, good," and anmata, "non beneficial, not good." Some of the ancient schools of astrology favoured a rule based on the qualities of the sun, while others on the moon, and still others on Jupiter. These ranking orders were undoubtedly referred to as rectus in Old Celtic (rectuarius, "regulator"). Thus, according to the accepted order, a number is assigned to each planet. In some traditions, the moon was the first regulator. Accordingly, in Vedic astrology the lunar nodes were added to this scheme. This ranking significantly changes the allotted cosmic forces. From the list found in the Book of Ballymote, we

suspect that the Old Irish also considered the nodes as planets.

The ancient Greeks classified the planets in two categories: one assigned for the criteria of astronomy and the other for the considerations of astrology. Let's not forget that the point of view of ancient sky observation was strictly geocentric. However, this did not exclude later speculations on a possible heliocentric order.

Order of the planets given by the Greek astronomers

1. Moon; 2. Mercury; 3. Venus; 4. Sun; 5. Mars; 6. Jupiter; 7. Saturn.

Greek astrological order:

1. Sun; 2. Moon; 3. Saturn; 4. Jupiter; 5. Mars; 6. Venus; 7. Mercury.

Greek Ptolemaic order of late Alexandria:

1. Moon; 2. Sun; 3. Mercury; 4. Venus; 5. Mars; 6. Jupiter; 7. Saturn.

Roman Mithraic order:

1. Saturn; 2. Sun; 3. Moon; 4. Jupiter; 5. Mars; 6. Venus; 7. Mercury.

The Vedic astrological ranking along with cosmic strengths and aspects:

1. Surya, Sun: uniqueness, foundation, spirit generally evil;
2. Chandra, Moon: duality, balance, thinking, generally beneficial;
3. Kuja, Mars: energy, action will; slightest evil;
4. Budha, Mercury: order, balance, reason, generally beneficial;
5. Brihaspati or Guru, Jupiter: law, education, intellect greatly beneficial;
6. Shukra, Venus: harmony, beauty, intuition, slight benefit;
7. Shani, Saturn: control, purpose, wisdom, great evil;
8. Rahu, the North Node Moon: duality, great dispersion, return, greater evil;
9. Ketu South Node, Moon: tripling, trinity, creation, release, slighter evil.

Order of the planets according to the Irish list (*Book of Ballymote*) along with their inherent meaning:

1. Gealac, Moon: Gelaca, "clear, milky white;"
2. Goac, Mars: Coccus, "red;"
3. Grian, Sun: Greina, "light, radiant;"
4. Tuct, Jupiter Tectos, "sent, emissary;"
5. L(u)ct, Mercury: Luctos, "troop, party, light;"
6. Rii, Venus, Riia / Reia > Ria / Reia, "free;"
7. Milni, Saturn: Melnos, "slow, lazy, sluggish, indolent;"
8. Ear, Tail: South Lunar Node: Ersa Ambeios, "dragon's tail;"
9. (c)Ean, Head: North Node Moon: Qennos Ambeios, "dragon's head."

However, we should not conclude that this old medieval Irish order was subsequently the typical common Celtic ranking for the planets. Although we do not absolutely know for sure what the generally admitted order for the planets was at the time of the ancient Druids. It is nevertheless possible to propose a hypothetical sequel from the list of deities given by Julius Caesar in his *War Commentaries*.

Proposal for a Gallic ranking after Caesar's Roman interpretation:

1. Moon? 2. Mercury; 3. Sun; 4. Mars; 5. Jupiter; 6. Venus; 7. Saturn?

Please note that Caesar does not give the godly equivalents for the Moon and Saturn. In addition, when comparing this list with that of the medieval Welsh texts, we understand that there is no overall consensus for the previous lists.

List of planets according to the medieval bardic tradition of Taliesin:

1. Sun; 2. Moon; 3. Mars; 4. Mercury; 5. Venus; 6. Jupiter; 7. Saturn.

Nevertheless, some constants do emerge when comparing these lists:

- Sun and Moon are usually given in the first position;
- The two luminaries are usually followed by Mars, Mercury and Jupiter;
- Venus is constantly given in sixth position;
- Saturn generally ends the list;
- The lunar nodes are also listed at the end of the Indian and Irish lists.

Acuity of the Planets – Ogiomu Seruoretlanom

From the cosmic drama scripted in the myths, we know that many of the deities and heroes acted as heavenly bodies. And thanks to these myths, we can guess what role these actors played... That is, what were their relationships and interactions?

What follows is a rundown and working model for an astrological system of planetary yokes and strengths for Celtic astrological themes.

Since the Old Celtic lexicon is rich with astronomical vocabulary, finding the Classical and Vedic parallels is made easier. For example, the Sanskrit word *yoga*, for “yoke” (from Proto-Germanic *yukam), is found not only in Latin as *Iugum*, Greek, *zygon*, and Old Celtic, *iugon*. They all derive from the Proto-Indo-European root *yugóm. From this root also derived the terms for conjunction, from Latin *coniunctio*, which were also found in Sanskrit as *kuyoga*, and in Old Celtic as *cumiugon*, thus the Old Irish *cuing*. The conjunction of two luminaries or heavenly bodies was called *amba* in Sanskrit and *ambo* in Old Celtic. Other cognates are the Sanskrit *bala*, “force,” and Celtic *bala*, “charge, weight.” This Sanskrit word was used as follows to name many astronomical concepts: *Amsa Bala*, force due to the Earth's longitude; *Chara Bala*, force due to nature; *Sthira Bala*, force due to the presence of one or more planets in an astrological sign. And the name Sanskrit *bala*, for “strength,

power, power,” had many Celtic equivalents: briga, “power;” gala, “force, power, strength of mind;” nertos, “force, might;” sego, “prevalent force or might;” stertis, “strength and resilience,” and ualos, “harmful force, overpowering strength.”

Early Vedic astrologers believed that each of the forces emanated from a cosmic ray called Marici in Sanskrit. The Marici rays were sent by the Maruts as a light particles, a sun or moon ray, originally emanating from the stars of the Big Dipper. The Old Celtic name for these cosmic rays was most likely *riuones, the plural of riuo, “ray,” thus punning with reuos / riuos, “frost.” We have seen in a previous chapter that the Gallic constellation of Capricorn was called Riuros. The Old Gallic term for a cosmic ray was probably *riuo-albios, while the name for a light beam was most likely touindo or toundedo (feminine case). The Moon, as goddess of sovereignty, reflected light beams in a greater number than the other heavenly bodies. These were thought to affect the mind. Therefore, the expression moon-stricken or moonstruck, implying, “to be stricken by madness or dazed with romantic sentiment.” The Sanskrit term Rasi, which also means a sign (of the Zodiac) has no Celtic equivalent. The term Prinnios, for “tree, out-branching,” was the usual Gallic denomination for a “zodiacal constellation, zodiacal period, or sign.”

Sanskrit Terminology for the Yokes and strengths in Vedic astrology:

Rasi Bala, “strength of evidence;”

Rasi Dasa, “prevalence period of astral signs;”

Rasi Vriddhi, “gain or increase of a sign;”

Rasi Hrasa, “debilitation, reduction or collapse of a sign.”

When comparing these Sanskrit expressions with those of the Gaulish *Coligny Calendar* we get:

Ogiomu, “sharp constellation;”

Tratus, “time lapse of a zodiacal sign;”

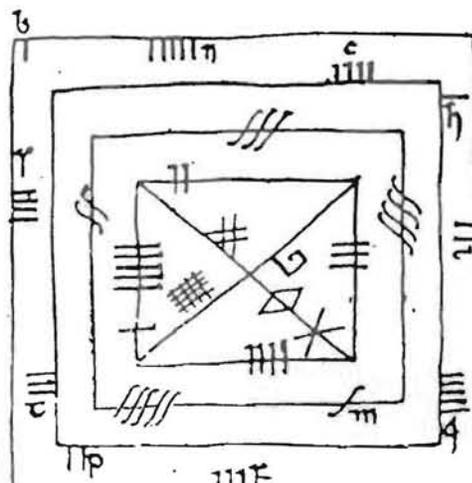
Loudextio / Loudixtio, “astronomical rising, ascent;” Prinnios Loudextio “ascending constellation;”

Lagiato, “fall, descent (of a constellation);” Prinnios Lagiato, “falling, descending constellation.”

Here are the following strengths of the various planets according to the Irish list:

Moon plus the lunar nodes: 1 + 8 = 9; Mars: 2; Sun: 3; Jupiter: 4; Mercury: 5; Venus and Saturn: 6 and 7.

(Please note that each score gives the power of a planetary yoke.)



Magical square or divining table with the positions of the Ogham cusps. The central section corresponds to the Moon Grid.

The Irish model

Moon

Yoke: Iugon Gelacai, "yoke of the Moon," gala, "(moral) might, bravery, storm;"

Strength: Oinos, "one, one;" ointu, "unit, cohesion;"

Planetary ruler: Medb < Medua, "drunkenness."

Mystical sense: Meda, "balance, measure;" mana, "thinking mind;" mênmania, "thought;" mentio, "thought;" mena, "desire;" mentos, "project;" manda, "residence."

Zodiac: Cancer; Uillos, "horse," mandos, "pony."

South lunar node

Yoke: Iugon Ersā-Ambeios, "yoke of the dragon's tail;"

Strength: Oxtu, "eight;" oxtonoxs, "week;"

Planetary ruler: Cermait < cermatis, the "sorb;" also referred to as "the honey mouthed;"

Mystical sense: Ersacos, "tail, behind, appendix;" comarios, "the opposite hand;" cormogon, "profit;" comarta, "comparison, comparative impression;"

Zodiac: Libra; in conjunction with the South Node as an aspect of Mercury.

North lunar node

Yoke: Iugon Qennos-Ambeios, "the yoke of the dragon's head;"

Strength: Nouen, "nine;"

Planetary ruler: Bodb Derg < Dergos Boduos, the "red crow;"

Mystical sense: Derca, "aspect;" dercsma, "(sense of) vision;" dercsmen, "(faculty of) vision;" qacria, "vortex, spiral;" qernio, "victory;"

Zodiac: Scorpio: North Node, an aspect of Mars.

Mars

Yoke: Iugon Cocci, "yoke of the red;"

Strength: Duo > uo, "two;"

Planetary ruler: Ogma < Ogmios, "mystical champion," or Cumal < Camulos, "dynamic;"

Mystical sense: Aedon, "fervour, zeal;" auilla / euilla, "will;"

Astrological signs: Aries; Aros, "Ares / Mars;" Scorpio; Siltarios / Samonios, "the sower."

Sun

Yoke: Greinai Iugon, "the yoke of the beming one;"

Strength: Tris, "three;"

Planetary rulers: Bile < Belios, "clear;" Aonghus Mac Óg < Oinogustios Ogios Maqos, "the first choice young son," and Greine < Greina, "sunny, the Sun Goddess;"

Mystical sense: Grendmen, "advance progress;" anauo, "harmony;" anatios, "spirit;" anatmon, "soul;"

Zodiac: Leo; Aga, "doe."

Jupiter

Yoke: Tecti Iugon, "the yoke of the envoy;"

Strength: Qeteor, "four;"

Planetary ruler: Dagda < Dagodeuos, "good god;" Eochaidh < Iuocatuos, "good or strong warrior," or the "yew fighter;" Ruadh Rofessa < Roudios Rouesos, "the red great knowledge;"

Mystical sense: Tecto / tectu, "possession, custody;" tectos, "traveller, envoy, messenger;" carantia, "friendship;" lutu, "passion;" qeisla, "intelligence, thinking, understanding;" uercantlo, "education, instruction;"

Astrological signs: Sagittarius; Bogdariiios, "the archer;" Pisces; Escoi, "the fish."

Mercury

Yoke: Lucti Iugon, "yoke of the burden;"

Strength: Quenque > Qenqe, "five;"

Planetary ruler: Lugh < Lugus, "splendid;"

Mystical sense: Luctos / luctos, "part, burden, charge, bunch, party, people;" Condo / comdo, "understanding, intelligence, meaning;"

Astrological Signs: Virgo; Ecco, the "country priest;" Gemini; Roudiosuccoi, "the red pigs."

Venus

Yoke: Riiai Iugon, "yoke of the free;"

Strength: Suexs, "six;"

Planetary ruler: Brigid / Brigit < Brigantia, "nobility;" or Dana / Danu < Daua, "impetuous, vehement;"

Mystical sense: Briga, "value, power, might, insolence;" brigantia, "lofty, moral elevation, greatness of the soul;" cainieto, "beauty;" cerda, "art;" coimo, "love, kindness;" comruto, "emotion;" etanna, "poetry;"

Astrological signs: Taurus; Sciatos Ander, "the winged ox;" Libra; Indouelicon, "the ring or the ultimate circle."

Saturn

Yoke: Melni Iugon;

Strength: Sextan, "seven;"

Planetary ruler: Nuada < Nodons, "the angler;" Bress < Brestos, "broken, impetuous, split, cracked;" or, Bretsos, "beautiful."

Mystical sense: Ancommen, "loss of memory, amnesia;" amaro, "sorrow, grief;" ancauos, "death;" ancena, "hard necessity, violent coercion, violence;" cassia, "violent passion;" dilegnis / delegnis, dits > dis, "annihilation, destruction;"

Astrological signs: Capricorn: Attiluis, "sturgeon;" Riuri Prinnios Aquarius: Udesciocos, "aqueous," or Uisucios /Uiseceos, "raven."

The Breton Series

Le Druid et l'enfant, "the Druid and the Child," also called in French, *Les séries*, "The Series," is a Breton children's song from the *Barzaz Breiz* collected and edited by Hersart Villemarqué. It offers an interesting and rare view on continental British numerology. Through its symbolism, it is possible to understand what the yokes and astrological strengths could have been for the Druid-astrologers. After closer examination, this enigmatic riddle, long considered to be nothing but a simple nursery rhyme, is far from being naive. According to Hersart the Villemarqué, wet nurses of Lower Brittany used this repetitive ancient versification to put children to sleep. Most certainly Villemarqué went for the most archaic version of the song leaving out those that seemed to have suffered the most Christianizing censorship. Also noticed by the literary minded were the embellishments made by the genius of the poet's pen. Villemarqué just wanted it to be as it was in the earlier days. Many accused him of having invented these verses from scratch, while others cursed him for having transformed a Breton ditty into a kind of pseudo-Druidic prayer. Whatever the case, these rhymes were much older than anyone wanted to admit and in these verses were hidden esoteric teachings that went way beyond any retrospective critical appraisal. And to quote Jean Cocteau, who came to the defence of Villemarqué, the alleged author of the *Barzaz Breizh*, "he was too much of a poet to be despised so!"

Ar Rannou (Series)

1. No series (but the number one);

Red,⁵ the course only;

Ankon, death, ann Anken tad, father of sorrow⁶;

Nothing before, nothing more.

2. Two bulls yoked to a shell⁷

Pulling, they will expire.

Ponder the wonder!

3. Three parts worldwide⁸.

Three beginnings and three ends⁹

For man as for oak.

Three kingdoms for Marzin¹⁰;

Full-colour fruits of honey along with happy flowers.

And children's laughter!

4. Four grindstones,

Whetstones of Marzin

That sharpen poor swords¹¹.

5. Five girdles of the earth¹²,

Five ages in the periods of time¹³.

Five rocks on our sister¹⁴.

6. Six little children made of wax,

Sustained by the energy of the moon.

If you ignore this, I know.

Six (medicinal) herbs in the small cauldron¹⁵,

Drink that mixes (Körrig) the dwarf¹⁶,

His little finger in his mouth.

7. Seven suns and seven moons,

Seven planets along with the Hen¹⁷,

Seven elements with the flour of the air¹⁸.

8. Eight winds that blow,

Eight fires with Tantad, the Great Fire¹⁹

In May on the Mount of Battle.

Eight heifers as white foam,

Grazing on the deep island²⁰,

The eight white heifers of the Lady²¹.

9. Nine small hands on the area's table,

Near the tower of Lezarmeur²²,

and nine mothers who greatly mourn,

Nine goblins (korrigans) who dance²³
With flowers in her hair and dresses of wool,
Around the moonlit fountain.
The boar-sow and her nine piglets,
At the door of their lair,
Growling and burrowing,
Burrowing and growling.
Small ones, small ones, small ones, hasten to the apple-tree!
The old boar will give you a lesson.

10. Ten enemy ships
we saw coming from Nantes²⁴:
Woe to you, woe to you people of Vannes²⁵!

11. Eleven armed priests from Vannes,
With their broken swords;
And their bloody robes;
And their hazel crutches²⁶;
Three hundred more than they, the eleven!

12. Twelve months and twelve signs, the penultimate,
Sagittarius delivers his arrow, armed with a dart,
The twelve signs are at war²⁷.
Beautiful cow, black cow with the white forehead,
Out of the forest of Spoils;
In his chest is the sting of the arrow;
His blood is flowing,
She bellows, head up.
The trumpet sounds with fire and thunder,
Rain and wind, thunder and fire;
Nothing, nothing more, and no more series!

Decryption of the Strengths and Planetary Yokes from the Breton Series of the *Barzaz Breizh*

1. Capricorn (330°-360°):
Yoke: Red (< reida, “race,” reidos, “runner”); Tad an Anken (< Tatis Ancenas “father of the hard necessity”);
Planet: Saturn; strength: 7.

2. Aquarius (300°-330°):

Yoke: two oxen yoked to a shell (the sky vault);

Planet: Saturn; strength: 7.

3. Fish (270°-300°):

Yoke: the three worlds, three beginnings and ends, the three kingdoms of Marzin (Merlin);

Planet: Jupiter; strength: 6.

4. Aries (240°-270°):

Yoke: the four whetstones of Marzin (Merlin);

Planet: Mars; strength: 3.

5. Taurus (210°-240°):

Yoke: the five girdles of the earth, five ages in the length of time; five stones on our sister (Earth);

Planet: Venus; strength: 5.

6. Gemini (180°-210°):

Yoke: six grandchildren, the energy of the moon, herbs, small pot (the cauldron of Cerridwen, the constellation of Crater), and the drink that mixes the dwarf (Corros);

Planet: Mercury; strength: 4.

7. Cancer (150°-180°):

Yoke: seven stars (plus the sun and moon with the five planets) with the Hen (an asterism of the Pleiades), the seven elements along with the flour of the air (bracis, "flour;" cobrextio, "fog, mist;" brectu / brextu / bricto, "magic;" = "quintessence");

Planet: Moon; strength: 2.

8. Leo (120°-150°):

Yoke: the eight winds, the eight fires along with Tantad (< tepnedo < tepneto, "fire;" Belotepnion, "bonfire"), the Great Fire, the eight white heifers of the Lady (Moon?).

Planet: Sun; strength: 1.

9. Virgo (90°-120°):

Yoke: nine small hands, nine mothers and nine goblins (< corrigena, "gnome"), the sow, its nine piglets and the old boar (baedd coed < baeðos caiti, "the solitary woodland boar;" constellation of Pegasus);

Planet: Mercury; strength: 4.

10. (60°-90°):

Yoke: ten enemy ships (lestr < Lenster, "ship," the constellation of Navis, the Ship);

Planet: Venus; strength: 5.

11. Scorpio (30°-60°):

Yoke: eleven armed monks with their dull swords and their broken hazelwood crosiers (more than three hundred and eleven priests);

Planet: Mars; strength: 3.

12. Sagittarius (0°-30°):

Yoke: twelve months and twelve zodiacal signs, the penultimate, Sagittarius delivers his arrow, the beautiful cow, the black cow with the white forehead out of the forest of Spoils (that were, trees, cusps of the zodiacal constellations);

Planet: Jupiter; strength: 6.

Geoffrey of Monmouth (ca. 1100 – ca. 1155), in his *Historia Regum Britanniae (History of the Kings of Britain)*, translated from Latin by Norma Lorre Goodrich, 1987)²⁸, there exposed Merlin's prognostics and cosmological visions there painting a highly symbolic and prosaic picture of the relationship of the planets, the constellations, and their many conjunctions:

“1. The stars shall turn their faces away from them (those mortal men) and shall quit their usual tracks across the sky.

2. In the wrath of the stars, crops shall wither and the rain from the vault of heaven shall be withheld.

3. Roots and branches (the constellar cusps) shall exchange places and the novelty of this shall seem a miracle.

4. The shining sun shall be visible to those who see it.

The planet Mercury from Arcadia shall change its shield and the helmet of Mars shall call to Venus.

The helmet of Mars shall cast its shadow; the fury of Mercury shall pass the bounds. Iron Orion shall draw his naked sword.

Oceanic Apollo shall whip the clouds.

Jupiter shall emerge from his established bounds and Venus shall abandon her salutary tracks.

The Star of Saturn shall rush forth in lead-coloured (rain?) and with a crooked sickle shall kill mortals.

The twice six houses of the stars shall weep that their hosts jump their tracks.

The Twins shall depart from their usual embrace and shall call the bowl to the water-bearer.

The scales of Libra shall swing free until Aries shall place his crooked horns under the balance.

The tail of Scorpio shall ferment lightning and Cancer shall contend with the sun. Virgo shall rise on the back of Sagittarius and shall forget her virginal flowers.

5. The chariot of the Moon shall disturb the Zodiac and the Pleiades shall burst into tears.

None shall return to their appointed course, but Adriana (Arianrhod, the Northern Crown) behind a closed door shall seek refuge in her causeways. (The occultation of Corona Borealis at the gateway of the underworld in Taurus)

At a stroke of the wand the winds shall rush forth and the dust of Uentu(rum?) shall blow on us again. (The Moon, travelling at night in the spring in his chariot by its passage in the Hyades in Taurus causes rain. The Hyades, “the rainy fairies,” were precisely the Greek nymphs of rain.

6 The winds shall collide with a dire thunderclap and their blast shall echo among the stars.”

To conclude, the gold plates of the Clandon Barrow Lozenge, found in 1882 near Stonehenge (Maiden Castle, in the area of Dorchester), are very similar in detail and graphic layout to the Ogham Square depicted in the *Book of Ballymote*. It is relatively easy, starting from the Irish and Indian examples, to configure the Stonehenge grid or Clandon Barrow Lozenge in order to calculate the forces and yokes for a working Celtic astrological chart.

Significators and aspects of the planetary rulers (the first significator is in brackets):

BRIGA (strong), more or less beneficial or slightly beneficial:

1. Moon; 2. Mars; 3. Sun.

MATA (auspicious), or beneficial:

1. Jupiter; 2. Mercury; 3. Venus.

ANMATA (harmful), or not auspicious, evil:

1. Caput Draconis (Dragon's Head); 2. Cauda Draconis (Dragon's Tail); 3. Saturn.

LAGUS (vile), or greatly evil:

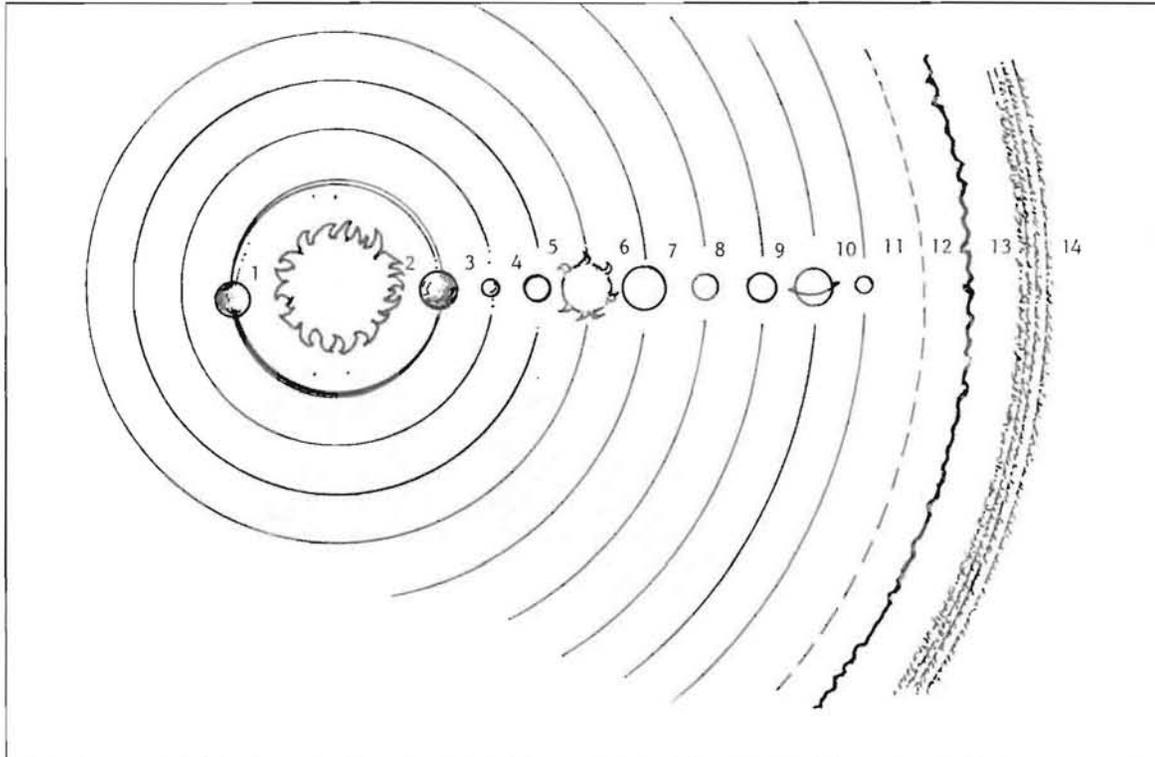
1. Counter-Earth; 2. The Postern, the black moon in conjunction with Taurus (?); 3. Uranus (?).

Please note that, prior to modern times, Uranus was not a known planet. It was perceived as one of the epiphanies of Mercury since it appeared and disappeared at whim. Was not Mercury (the Celtic Lug) the messenger of the gods? Also, it is not certain whether if the ancient Celts knew the astrological concept of the Dark Moon either. However, the mention of a door occulting the Northern Crown and obscuring the Moon clearly hints at a dark spot in Taurus which was only known by the ancient astronomers.

The plural form of “yokes” in old Celtic was Iuga. The Yugas are combinations or planetary conjunctions that occur in the signs of the Zodiac in Vedic astrology. The significator is a measure of power or strength given to each of these yokes according to the combinations and conjunctions of the planets entering the astral house. Also, the significator indicates the strength given to the yoke when the sun enters or leaves an astral or lunar mansion. For a house, the first cusp is the “ascendant,” and the second cusp is the “descendant.” In this case the ruling master of the sign or house is seen as the host. Once again, it is the aspect of the time period which tells us if the house is auspicious or inauspicious (unlucky). The significator defines any marker, good or bad, on the qualities or aspects

attributed to the house ruler.

Also note that, to the best of our knowledge, for the interpretation of astral themes, Druid-astrologers could sometimes have recourse to the astral houses of the solar Zodiac while sometimes could resort to the lunar mansions.



Representation of the solar system as imagined by the astronomers of Antiquity.

1. Anti-Earth (hidden from sight); 2. Sun (luminary); 3. Earth (sphere); 4. Moon (phasing luminary); 5. Mercury (fast wandering star); 6. Venus (luminary, evening and morning star); 7. Mars (wandering star emitting cosmic rays); 8. Jupiter (wandering star emitting fire bolts); 9. Saturn (slow wandering star); 10. Uranus (cloaked, an aspect of Mercury); 11. The invisible world; 12. The region of the fixed stars; 13. The Empyrean; 14. The heavenly ring of fire.

Combinations and planetary conjunctions

In astrological terms, conjunctions (Gaelic cuing, “yoke, bond, obligation;” Old Celtic *comiugon, “conjunction”) are defined as links between signs and their various aspects. A meaning or significator is given to the various possibilities of planetary encounters and combinations. Therefore, the significator varies according to the planetary conjunctions. For example, when two or three planets are found in the same sign or house during the sun's passage, the significator varies according to the planets therein. The sun, in the presence of a host or house master, can then be under good or bad auspices. That is, he finds himself in good or bad company. For some planets are granted beneficial qualities and for others, evil ones. Thus, the masters of different signs also have their strengths and qualities. As for the houses, the masters number twelve. Since that there are only seven planets, each

house cannot have its own planet. Some planets are doubled in order to accommodate the remaining five houses. Nevertheless, try to imagine the number of possible conjunctions and yokes. It would be a bit long to go through all the combinations, a much too complicated and tedious exercise, so let us just retain the qualities given to the astral planets and houses (according to the Old Irish order as found in the *Book of Ballymote*).

Old Irish order for the planets

1. MOON

The Moon, as queen of heaven, has the greatest cosmic force. If we are to calculate its position in the order of importance, the following calculation yields: Moon: 1 + lunar nodes: 8 = 9. To wit, nine, as triple of three, for the Triune Goddess, the three matrons or fate fairies.

2. MARS

Mars as the god of war brings opposition. This planet is under the sign of duality and thus takes the power of 2.

3. SUN

The Sun takes the cosmic force of 3. Its symbol is traditionally represented by the symbol of the three rays called Tribann Breton.

4. JUPITER

Jupiter's cosmic force is of 4, thus the doubling of 2. Being the king of the gods, he is the king of warriors under the command of Mars.

5. MERCURY

Mercury takes the cosmic force of 5. This figure is emblematic of the cosmic wheel with the four spokes and hub. The wheel also represents inner space including the centre along with the four directions.

6. VENUS

Venus takes the strength of 6, doubling its tripling. This number is in association with the three fairies.

7. SATURN

Saturn, in connection with the agrarian world, takes on the cosmic force of 7. This figure shows the different dimensions of the world: the 4 directions, top, middle and bottom. This figure is also in association with the seven stars of the North and the seven Pleiades.

8. LUNAR NODES

The lunar nodes each have the strength of eight. The north lunar node, the Dragon's head, is considered beneficial or favourable while the south node is evil and unfavourable.

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