

# **The Celtic Connection Revisited**

## **ANCIENT EUROPE AND AMERICA - THE NORTH ATLANTIC CELTIC SEA LINK**

**By Michel-Gérald Boutet**

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**Part 1**

## Foreword

An intense debate on the possible visitations of Old World cultures prior to Columbus was fueled after Barry Fell's highly controversial claim in *America BC* (first published in the late 70s) that Celtic Druids, among others, introduced Ogham writing to Native Americans. The *Celtic Connection* was published in 1996 after I had jumped in the diffusionist versus isolationist debate on the invitation of rock-art theorist and writer-publisher Donald L. Cyr. With the following paper, I wish to revisit and refresh on the material I first presented decades ago. The topic focuses on possible Old World / New World contacts, from Antiquity on to the Age of Discovery, prior to the Columbus expeditions.

Admittedly, a discussion of alphabets and Ogham inscriptions in North America with ties to Europe is a controversy in the making. Few established scholars have risked their hard-earned reputations by trying to answer relatively simple related questions. Those who do try are accused of being in the lunatic fringe, and thus beyond the pale. Forgetting emotions and grey zones, one should preferably concentrate on methods used. The methodology used in the Art History field, for instance, is often the same as that used by historians, anthropologists, ethnographers, mythographers, epigraphists and archaeologists even. For interdisciplinary work, all parties place a high value on the ability to interpret cryptic signs. Therefore, the ideas and interpretations given in this study are but propositions for a working model and are not the final conclusion. Hopefully, our model should be realistic enough to have been acceptable and understandable by the Algonquians traditionalists themselves. In this book, I will tentatively explore the subject of early European and American contacts by interpreting ancient scripts and ogam-like inscriptions in Northern woodlands culture and propose a plausible sound and letter ranking. But before we explore the European imprint and influence in North-American Rock Art, we must start at the beginning, at the origins of Celtic culture. To set the record straight, it is important to understand how it all started before we get into the details of the complexities of Celtic and Amerindian civilisations. In doing so, my only hope is to present what I believe are the facts without too much speculation and let the reader draw his or her own conclusion or interpretation. Every curious mind should be open to any of the propositions involving the



possibility of transoceanic travel. After all, as Scott Wolter keeps reminding us in his TV show *America Unearthed*, aren't the oceans, seaways and other important waterways just highways?

People often question if the Celts were civilized, could write or even that they had boats that could take the seas? Not only could they do these things but did so at a very early date in time and history!

## **Introduction**

### **The Gallic French-Canadian Connection**

Back in the 90s, I was introduced to the idea of Celts in the Americas after having seen a report on the CBC news in which Gérard Leduc claimed to have found archaeological proof of such a presence. Gérard Leduc, an amateur archaeologist and founder of the Potton Heritage Association. Leduc, a retired biology university professor from Montréal, Québec, had attracted much media attention after having claimed that the famous "Indian Stone" of Vale Perkins, Potton Township, Québec, was not native but Celtic! At the time, I was an Art History student and was working on a master's study on Amerindian rock art. Through Gerard Leduc, I became acquainted with Donald L. Cyr, an independent researcher in the fields of petroglyphs and archaeoastronomy and publisher of *Stonehenge Viewpoint*. Here is how Donald Cyr, in his introduction to *the Celtic Connection*, p. 5, neatly sums up our collaboration:

"With a surname like Cyr, it doesn't take a rocket-scientist to figure out that there are French genes in my family. Indeed, my grand-mother was born in New Brunswick, Canada, and my grand-father was born just across the border in Maine. Had the boundary been decided differently, he might too have been born in Canada. The point of this digression is that when I first met Gérard Leduc at a NEARA (New England Antiquities Research Association) convention, I offered to print an article for his friend John Morrissy in Issue No. 79 of *Stonehenge Viewpoint*, entitled "Stonehenge in

Quebec". And as described in the letters that follow, it was Gerard Leduc who led Michel-G rard Boutet to me."



Ruins of an ancient monolithic Celtic mill (ca. 1500 AD), Jones Farm, Vale Perkins, Potton, Qu bec. Photo Denis Bombardier, 2010.

From his many archeological findings, Mr. Leduc became convinced that the Celts had visited southern Qu bec, to the south of the St-Lawrence River, at around 1500 AD, after having made a carbon dated test on the wooden spruce pegs found during the archeological dig of the Jones's Mill site on the brook adjacent to the "Indian Stone". From this confirmation, he was able to surmise that the Celts, following the Vikings, had explored the St-Lawrence valley and surroundings. Indeed, Gerard Leduc had also stumbled on Viking petroglyphs atop Mount Pinnacle. Other presumable dates put forward by Leduc concerning Celtic visitations to Quebec were from around 1500 to 1800 BP (years before present) and 400-600 BP at the



White Mountain and Leigh-Smith sites on Sugar Loaf Pond Road, Potton Québec (Leduc, 1991). Along with usual Azilian type markings, these sites were typified by stone alignments and cairns mounted by quartz crystals.

One thing we should all know about Gérard Leduc is that he is a sharp debater, not only does he do his homework, but also takes a very creative look into science. No other scientist of the fields of cultural history and archaeology has found as many new and previously unknown sites in all of Québec. Gérard has the way with punchy words and slogans, the kind that just knock old PHDs off their faculty chair.

Traditionally, the Indian Rock, situated at the base of Owl's Head in Vale Perkins which has intrigued the local population for generations, was interpreted as relating to an Abenaki Indian raid against Vernon, a British settlement in Vermont (Auger, 1977).

So forth, concerning archaeological proof of Old World visitors, here is how professor Leduc summarized it himself on his archeoastronomy webpage:

"Another set of well-known petroglyphs are those of the *Potton Indian Rock* discovered by the late David Perkins in 1927, in Vale Perkins, Potton Township (Photo 4). It also stirred a lot of attention and controversies but Irish Ogham letters of the 14th century were identified in the script. The archaeological context put these markings at around the year 1500 AD."



One of the inscribed stones on the Jones site of Vale Perkins, Quebec, photo: La Société d'histoire de Coaticook.

From all this Rock Art bearing witness to Irish Ogham, then would it not be easy to call for rock solid proof of a Celtic contact in America before Columbus?

The French scholar Joseph Monard, in *Celtic Connection* (pp. 42, 45), was very careful about calling the "Indian marks" anything other but marks:

"A thing about the "ogham" from all over: France, Canada, the U.S.A etc. In my humble opinion, we should not use the term "ogham" for marks that have not been normalized and identified with the other recognized varieties: Irish, Scottish, or Pict. Many of the disorderly bars result from the trial of writing or from the need to engrave hastily on stone, wood, or bone in simple incisions. Curves were inevitably avoided. This is the case with many different primitive writings, like the Coelbreni and the ancient runes, for example. It is my belief that we do not stand much chance in understanding the mark counts in bar patterns along the lines of true



ogham. This is rather discouraging, but it's better not to keep the illusion of having to do with configurations that are not typically oghamic.

There are however no laws to prevent one from trying. I tend to agree with Willem van Oranje (William of Orange): "*Niet nodig te hopen om te ondernemen; niet nodig te slagen*" roughly, "It is not necessary to hope to succeed to persevere."

But Gérard Leduc not only has, to smoke, heard the bang, but found Iceland and Greenland before them that they were in America first.



Gérard Leduc

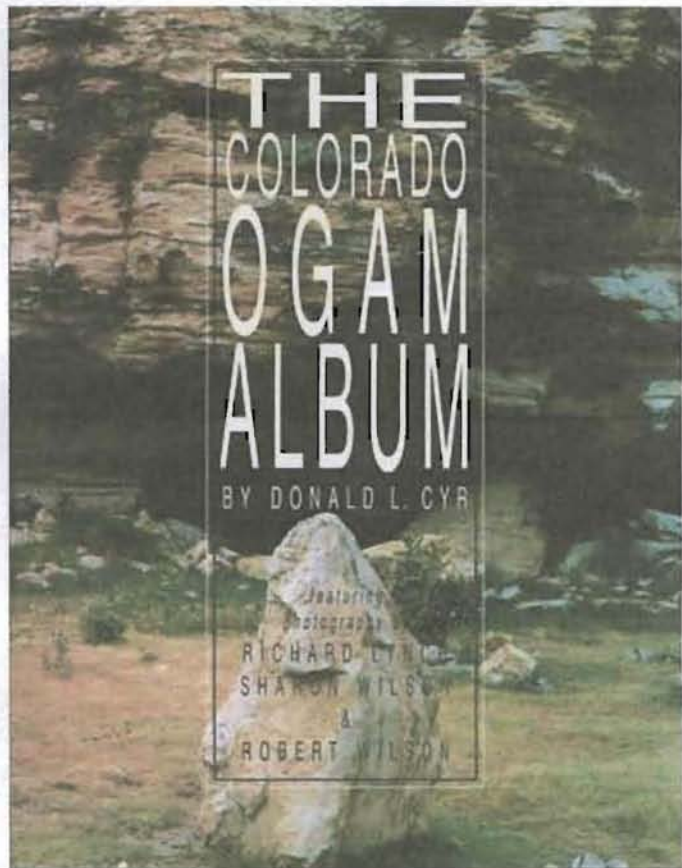
1. Gérard Leduc during a field trip to Mount Pinacle.
2. Gérard Leduc on top of Mount Pinacle of Coaticook near Frelighsburg whereas Runic letters (Viking) were identified.

Gérard, who is very much interested in stone markings and alignments, was very quick to place the rock art motifs in the greater overall pattern. Likewise, Donald Cyr had that special insight, those X-ray eyes, to see right

through the apparent picture and decode the inner workings of cultural paradigms. As for me, my main interest was in the area of rock art interpretation, linguistics and cosmology. Therefore, it should not be surprising that our shared discussion should revolve around rock art and archaeoastronomy.



Donald L. Cyr



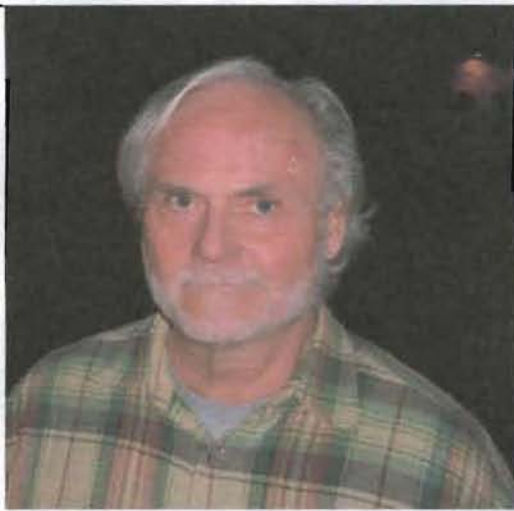
Donald L. Cyr, age 79, died in his sleep while flying over Montana, his birth state, on May 31, 1999. Donald and his wife Joan were returning to their home in Santa Barbara, California from Ripon, Wisconsin, where Cyr had just addressed a conference of international scholars from 30 countries at the American Rock Art Research Association (APARA).

For some time I had studied Rock Art and was always fascinated by the strange markings on the Indian rocks. My professors in Art History were always keen to remind us that the symbols were prehistoric or preliterate and that they were magical signs whose meaning was now lost. So imagine my shock as I watched the television one night, and there on the late news came good old Gérard Leduc with his Celtic ogham proposal for the "Indian Rock" marks!

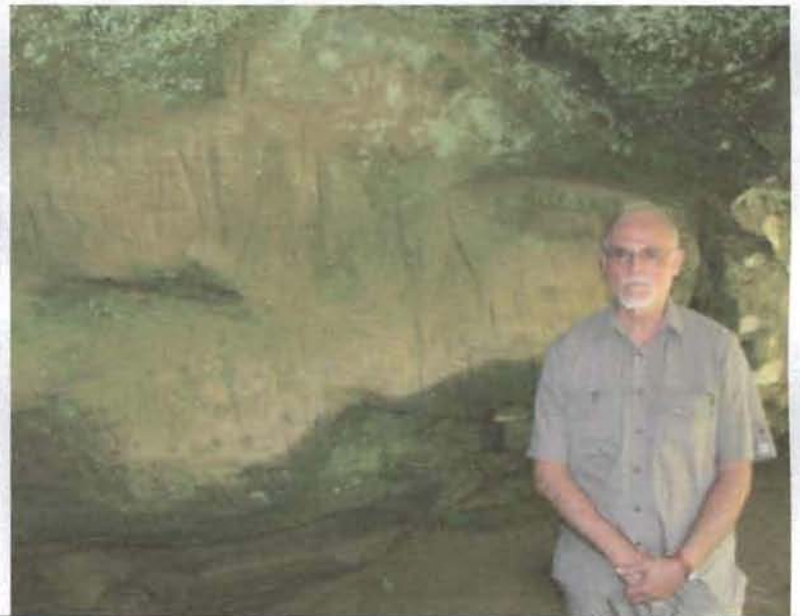


Having some knowledge of Celtic languages and alphabets, I immediately understood where Gérard was getting at. Not long was I seeing not only the trees in the ogham bush but was also catching words and then entire phrases. Try explaining this to archaeologists! It was not long before I got to cross iron with some of them. This put me right in the center of the isolationist versus diffusionist feud.

My iconographical studies of compared cultures led me to understand that the cryptic symbols found in abstract Rock Art carried cosmological, astronomical / astrological significations. I had been working on possible Old World / New World contacts and had amassed much information on the subject.



Michel-Gérald Boutet



Michel-Gérald Boutet on invitation of the Midwestern Epigraphic Society during the Kentucky Ogham expedition, august 2009.

Ever since I am young, I keep having a recurrent dream in which I am walking along a dried-up river bed in late summer with siblings and friends only to stumble on stones with strange markings and writings. As we go along, more and more are discovered. On some occasions I copy the symbols while on others, I gather the engraved stones. At the end of the trail, we come facing to a split cliff or a waterfall where the walls are

covered with glyphs. In a letter, I once asked Donald Cyr if he had such dreams and he replied no...

I guess it's imbedded in me!

In light of this, I've always had trouble seeing the difference between a horse wearing blinders and an opinioned ideologist. If it is natural, it is not manmade, therefore arbitrary. Where, to the contrary, art and writing is intentional and manufactured. Plow marks are not writing, just like glacial groves, they are random patterns not linked to human culture... And of course they don't even count as tally marks!

Cultural signs in the landscape are self-evident and should never be confused with the works of nature, no matter how crafty. Then again, this does not exclude man's wisely sense of taking advantage of nature's musings.

In the following, never will I, I hope, attempt to trick the reader on false leads. The material here presented was gleaned and gathered, and reflected upon, over decades of careful study and scrutiny.



**Part I**

**THE CELTIC CONNECTION  
REVISITED**

**Old World Diffusion**

**Chapter I**

**The Danubian Proto-Indo-European Culture**

The Danubian Culture was most likely the mother culture of the Hittite (1700 to 1200 BC) and Mycenaean, Achaean (1600 to 1100 BC) cultures. By the fifth millennium BC, the Danubians had reached a high level of sophistication which included a unified priesthood, political organisations and farming practices. Archaeologists who had uncovered many ancient sites in the Lower Danube of Serbia, Rumania and Bulgaria (Lepensky Vir, Vinča, Tartaria and Varna) have now discovered its northern extension in Germany, Austria, Slovakia and Hungary. The northern sites, where more than 150 temples involving large-scale earthworks were unearthed, date from between 4800 to 4600 BC. These were constructed of earth embankments and wooden palisades and stretched for up to a half mile. The temple sites were built by a highly religious people who lived in communal long-houses that were about 50 meters long grouping sizeable villages. One of these highly organised

village and temple complexes at Aythra, near Leipzig, covers an area of 25 hectares. Also uncovered were two hundred communal long-houses. The population was estimated at over 300 people living in buildings grouped 15 to 20. Their economy and lifestyle were based on husbandry raising cattle, sheep, goats and pigs. After a 200 years period of growth and consolidation, these pan-tribal mini-states collapsed and dispersed. Their artisans manufactured pots, toys, weapons and tools made of stone, wood and bone and ceramics. They decorated their pottery with geometric designs and carved statues in animal and human shapes. The Danubian nations probably dispersed at a time when they became familiar with copper work since *\*ayes-* is the main common term to designate metal along with bronze, gold and silver. The bronze tools, parts of harnesses, chariots were fired and fitted from mountain hardwoods. This activity furnished words that embraced the smelting of metals. On the other hand, lithic work is also very present at the common level as testified by the many derivatives of root *\*ak-* = "stone" and also "acuteness". Terminology for wheeled and nautical transport is abundant in the proto-language. There are words for "wheel" (*\*rotho-*), "axle" (*\*hakhs-*), "yoke" (*\*iak'om*) and associated gear for harnessing and ploughing. They domesticated the horse, *\*ekwos-*, as shown by the term *\*ekwo-wiros* = "horse-man", "cavalier". Other animals included *\*gwous*, cattle, *\*tauros* = "bull", *su-* = "pig", *\*porko-* = "hog", *\*peku-* = "sheep", *\*kapros* = "goat", *\*pholo* = "fowl", *\*ghans-* = "goose" and *\*anHt-* = "duck". Cereals included: *yawa-* = "wheat", *zeiai* = "barley" and *kera* = "oat". The landscape described by the proto-language is that of wooded valleys, mountainous ranges with lakes and quick flowing rivers from snowy sources. The IE had no original common word for "ocean" but had many words for "sea», *\*mar-*, "moorland", *\*ag'her-* and "lake", *\*lakw-*. The great waterways were better known: *\*dh[e]n(w)-* or *\*ap-*, the "river" since they had boats: *\*nāw-*, "nave" and *\*dul-*, "ship", "vessel". At the time, the Ocean was probably ice locked. This explains the many terms pertaining to ice cover: *\*lad(h)-/-e-* = "ice", *\*eig'-* = "ice flow", "glacier", *\*g(')lak(')-*, *-g(')-* = "ice", "ice cover", "frozen surface", "ice shelf", *\*preus-* = «frost.



The Greek word *thalassa* was borrowed from Pelagian, a non-Indo-European language, showing that the notion was not known to them before they reached the Mediterranean Sea. The Black Sea level before 5000 BC was much lower than it is at the present and was a large fresh water lake. The most catastrophic event of the VI<sup>th</sup> millenium was the flooding of this great lake turning it into the salty Black Sea. So around 5550 BC, within two years, 20,000 square miles of prime Ukrainian lowlands were flooded under 510 feet deep undrinkable sea water. This event displaced lake populations up the river valley highlands and into the Danubian basin. It coincides with new cultural artefacts and North Danube cultural expansion. The root \*lak- for "lake", Germanic, lox, echoed by Sanskrit lak- for lacquer, a salmon-pink colour, also denotes "fish" in many of the IE languages of Europe, as well as in the Celto-Italic dialect of Central-Asia known as Tocharian. Indeed, the root \*mori in the Celto-Italic and Germanic branches stood for: "great body of water", "great lake". Hence derived are the Celtic mori, Latin mare, German, Meer and Slavonic, Moje. In fact, the Celtic name for the Black sea was Moria and this shows that they were at an early period acquainted with the Black Sea north-shore. Salmon was at a time common in the post Ice-Age Rivers of Europe and one species, *Salmo trutta*, is still found in the streams of the Caucasus. The landscape was also dominated by the beach tree along with the oak and vine (\*woi-no / \*wei-no; Hittite \*wiiana; Celtic \*uiniia) in the valleys spreading further north of the Black Sea as the climate became warmer at the turn of the fourth and third millennium BC. Migrations of the northern Danubian peoples after 4600 BC into the Baltic and northern Eurasian areas gave rise to a hybridisation with the Finno-Ugric and Altaic shamanic cultures. Words borrowed from Finno-Ugric languages attest an IE presence in the northern hinterland of the Baltic and Eurasia.

<b>Chronology of the Danubian civilisation</b>
Lepenski Vir artefacts (Serbia) from 6500 to 5500 BCE.
Vinča artefacts and inscriptions (Serbia) from 5000 to 4000 BCE.
Tartaria artefacts and inscriptions (Rumania) 5300 BCE to 2700 BCE.
Varna artefacts (Bulgaria) 4400 BCE to 4100 BCE.

## Indo-European religion

The French scholar Georges Dumézil, in *Naissance de Rome (Jupiter Mars Quirinus, II)*, was the first to expose the underlying structure of IE myth and religion. He found that the original Roman religion was based on an archaic pre-Capitoline triad composed of Jupiter, Mars and Quirinus. Each of these god figures played a role in the sacred cosmic play. Jupiter, the priest, looked over spiritual matters, Mars, the warlord, maintained political and legal order, and Quirinus represented agrarian and manufacturing society. For each these, Dumézil proposed a function: 1. flamines, religion, 2. equites, war and 3. the plebe, society.

IE religion was essentially cosmic in accord with the cycles of nature ordered and maintained by divine agents but nevertheless having man, the free man, at its center.

Another French scholar, Émile Bénéviste (1902-1976), clarified Dumézil's notion of tripartition describing the role of dualism in IE thought. The divine is qualified by light, is positively charged, and all that which is not, is disorderly and destructive, therefore unproductive, unholy, unhealthy and death inducing. This sacred godly order, although non-dogmatic, is organized by a legal and moral code called \*dherma or \*dhrēma "to hold, to bear, to keep" thus yielding: Old Greek thrēskéuō, Old Persian dārayeiti, Sanskrit dharma, Latin firmus, Old Celtic dedma, Old Baltic darna or derna and Old Slavic dārītī. This is what was termed "Law of Manu" in the Vedas. A Latin pun played on *vir* "man", *ver*, spring (*ver sacrum* "wish to consecrate to the gods everything to come") and *veritas* "truth", all that is truthful, sincere, honest and true to life, that is reality". This ethic is also found in *Meditations*, the stoic philosophical work of the Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius (121 – 180 CE):

"Waste no more time arguing about what a good man should be. Be one."



The Cosmos was divided into three regions: the upper world, the middle world and the lower world. And, for each of these constituents of the *multiverse*, a quality of divine light was attributed:

**\*Dyew-**, “white”: day, daylight, the upper world;

**\*Reg<sup>w</sup>os-**, “red”: shady, dawn and dusk, the aurora, the middle world;

**\*Temó-**, “dark, somber” or **\*Dhūw-**, “black”: night, lightless, the lower world or underworld.

In turn, these three worlds were re-divided into three other realms or regions. Thus, the nine levels separating the median level of the sky and the underworld in which the cosmic tree takes root. The cosmic tree is a representation of the axis mundi (the earth’s pole) supporting the sky’s vault or firmament. For the Hittites, this concept was represented by nine scale ladder. Apart from light and dark, the world is conditioned by two other states: plenty and void. These concepts were fully debated in Antiquity by the Greek philosophers, among others. In Epicurus’ letter to Pythocles, only the principle of light can truly traverse these two states.

“A world is a circumscribed portion of the universe, which contains stars and earth and all other visible things, cut off from the infinite, and terminating in an exterior which may either revolve or be at rest, and be round or triangular or of any other shape whatever. All these alternatives are possible: they are contradicted by none of the facts in this world, in which an extremity can nowhere be discerned. That there is an infinite number of such worlds can be perceived, and that such a world may arise in a world or in one of the intermundia (by which term we mean the spaces between worlds) in a tolerably empty space and not, as some maintain, in a vast space perfectly clear and void. It arises when certain suitable seeds rush in from a single world or intermundium, or from several, and undergo gradual additions or articulations or changes of place, it may be, and waterings from appropriate sources, until they are matured and firmly settled in so far as the foundations laid can receive them. For it is not enough that there should be an aggregation or a vortex in the empty space in which a world may arise, as the necessitarians hold, and may grow until it collide with another, as

one of the so-called physicists says. For this is in conflict with facts."

Although the gods share character traits with fleshy mortals, their beings are mainly constituted of light. This is expressed by the IE root \*dei- "light (of day)" yielding Latin *dies*, Gaelic *dia*, Thracian *dios*, Lithuanian *diena* and modern English *day*. Or again, the same root expanded into \*deiwo- for "shine" gave \*deiwo- "god". This etymology is found in many IE languages such as:

Celtic *déuos*, Latin *divus* or *deus*, Sanskrit *deva* or *dyaus*, Greek, *zeus*, *dios* and *theos*, Hittite *šiuua-* and Louvite *tiwaz*. Daytime is expressed by the root syllables \*a<sup>h</sup>- («day», «duration») and \*ayer- for « morning ». The names were reconstructed such: \*deiwo- "god", \*deiwa "goddess", neutral \*deiwo- or \*deiwo- and plural \*deiwoi. In the Philistine tablets, god is spelled diu-, nominative dius. The IE sky god at the head of the pantheon was \*Dyēus P<sup>at</sup>ér "Day light Father" or \*Déiwo- Patér, "God Father". The name is attested in the related daughter cultures as: Vedic Indian Dyaus pitar, Greek Zeus patér, Illyrian Deipaturos and Roman Iupiter, Umbrian Iupater (both from \*Diespiter). This notion of a "Sky Father" is also found in a Luwite epithet *tiwaz tatiš*, a Latvian theonym Debess tévs and Kalasha Dizau. He was also called \*Dagodeuos (> Dagda "Good God") in Goidelic and probably \*Dagonos (> Dagon "Good one") in Old Philistine and early Hittite. The Sky God also had a female companion called \*Diwyâ "Clear Sky" attested by the names Devî in Sanskrit, Dezalik in Kalasha, Deua in Gaulish and Dé in Irish.



	
<p>The Mother Goose or Swan Queen chariot, Danubian culture.</p>	<p>Philistine Pottery shard showing swan motif. Tel Miqne-Ekron, publications, Albright Institute and Hebrew University Institute of Archaeology, Directors S. Gitin and T. Dothan.</p>

## The primordial ancestral couple of Indo-European Gods and humans

The ancestral mythic couple who begat the gods, demi-gods and mortals of Indo-Europeans have been restituted as \*B<sup>h</sup>elos Manus «brilliant man» and \*Deua D<sup>h</sup>enwa «goddess impetuous», the celestial waters in godly form. These reconstructed forms were obtained through comparative studies; for example a compound of the name of the Indo-European Adam is found in the Kalasha theonym Balomain and the name for the goddess is found in the Vedic and Celtic Danu. Her other cultural names were \*Dg<sup>h</sup>em-Māter «Earth mother» and \*Dēmos Māter «Mother of the people» evolving into the Attic Greek Démétér or Doric Dāmâtér. She was seen as the patroness of agriculture, fertility and prosperity and referred to as «mother of storms». The Old Russians called her Mat' syra zemlja «Mother of the Earth». As \*Maiia (> Maya), «whimsical, bewitching», the fairy queen of the Pleiades, she initiates the spring celebrations of May.

Otherwise, she was simply called Māter in Greek, Matra in Celtic and Ma in Phrygian, all for «Mother».

As Medua (Irish Medb, Vedic Maduva), «Intoxication through mead», or Greek Melissa (μέλισσα), "honey bee", she is the queen bee who couples with the bumble-bee god \*B<sup>h</sup>elos B<sup>h</sup>emb<sup>h</sup>os (also Vedic Soma, Irish Aillil,

Welsh Gwion Bach). Melissa was the nymph who nurses the god Zeus. The Mother Goddess couples with \*Deiwos, the Sky God. In Hittite myth, she gives birth to natural phenomena and living beings with the god Dagan-zipaz who also fathers humans.

### **Etymologies for the primordial couple Belos and Danua**

\*B<sup>h</sup>elos > Belos « bright, clear » cf.: Gaulish, Belos ; Greek, Belos ; Latin, Belus ; Welsh, Beli ; Irish, Bilé.

\*Dh[e]n(w)-a > Danua « mighty flow, torrential, impetuous ». Son Danaüs, ancestor of the humans (the Danan race). Danaüs is from the Indo-European root \*Dh[e]n<sup>a</sup>(w)-os “the gifted, skilled”.

### **The founding ancestral twin gods**

The primordial twins or Dioscuri as the Greeks called them were juvenile sky gods. One represents the morning sun while the other the afternoon sun. As sun of \*Danua, they are the first \*Danauoi (Sanskrit \*Danavas), the sons of the celestial goddess. This sets them apart from \*Manos (Germanic Mannus, Gaulish Manos, Sanskrit Manu), «man, human», whose offspring are referred to as the \*Manauoi / \*Manawoi (Sanskrit Manavas). The PIE root \*dg'hem- gave the Latin names humus «earth» and hommo «man». Thus, humans were drawn from the humus of the earth and given breath by their bright celestial ancestors. Of these demi-gods, were the Manauoi originating from the Septentrion, the seven stars of the Great Wain or Dipper.

The PIE root word \*Yémos « twin » (pl. \*yémoi) yields Sanskrit, Yama and Celtic Emnos. Philistine Yamir and Germanic Ymir are both from a probable PIE root \*yemiros / \*gemiros, Proto-Germanic root \*ymyros, for «twinly». In Indo-European myths, the Dioscuri or Twins are always associated to chivalry and horses.

According to Greek mythology, the Danaoi originated from the land of Argos



Belus was the father of Danaüs, great-grandfather of Danae and the ancestor of the Danaids (Δαναΐδες). The Danaids, numbering fifty, were the daughters of Danaus who married the sons of Aegyptus. On their wedding night, the Danaid maidens murdered each of their husbands except for one. Hypermnestra therefore had spared Lynceus because he had respected her virginity. For their crimes, the forty-nine maidens were sent to the Underworld where they were condemned to endlessly fill leaky jars.

Therefore, all of the Indo-European pantheons claim to descend from the prime mother \*Danua, from whom the Danube River was named. And this included other great courses such as the Don, the Dniepr and the Donets.

For the Hibernians, the ancestral couple was Danu or Anu and Bilé and for the British it was Dôn and Beli. The Greeks remembered them as Danae and Belos (Latinised as Belus) while the Indian Aryans knew them as Dânu and Danayu. Danayu is most likely akin to Danaos. The Greek Danaos, meaning «Judge», was the son of Belos and Anchimhoe and grandson of Poseidon. This sets the entire dynasty as sea or water divinities. He is said to have reigned fifty years on the kingdom of Argolid after having taken the throne from king Gelanor. Argolid or Argolis, once peopled by the Pelasgians, is a peninsula of Greece and a seven city state comprised of: Argos, Mykenes, Tiryntha, Nafplio, Troezen, Ermionida and Epidaurus.

The ancient Ionians of Peloponnesia referred to themselves as Danaeans that is, Danaoi or Danawoi. According to the Rig Veda, the dragon god Ahi-Vritra, son of the goddess Danu, withheld the celestial waters from the high mountains by blocking them in the meanders of the vast plain. His brother Indra opposed and slayed him thus undamming the torrential waters which rushed to the sea.

This myth, no doubt, reminisces the great deluge which filled the inland Black Sea (Pont-Euxinus) with sea water around 5500 BCE. This cataclysmic event marked forever the peoples who then were forced upon another in exile. Most of the early myths of these peoples bear the

memory of this event, be it the Sumerian cycles of Gilgamesh or the Biblical flood accounts.

And according to the Puranas, Kasyapa, the eponym of the Caspian Sea or Hyrcanian Sea, Sea of Wolves», as it was prosaically called, was not only the ancestral father of the Danavas but also of the Devas (gods), the Asuras (Titans) and Nagas (demons).

Kasyapa, as it is proposed by Vedic scholars, is from the Sanskrit kacchapa, «marsh dweller», from which is also derived Kaccha, the Caspian Sea, literally, «of vast shores». But then, Indo-European etymology hints at another root altogether for the name: Kassi < \*kas- «grey», therefore «tin»; akin to Greek Kassiteros (Κασσίτερος), Gaulish Cassiteron, «cassiterite, tin mineral». The Greek name Kassiteros, quoted from Homer, was traditionally taken to mean «metal from the land of the Kassi», that is, the Casseterides.

This Greek and Philistine Belos, therefore confused with the Phoenician Ba'al, was the son of Poseidon and father of Danaos.

The story surrounding the myth maintains that Dryops, «Oak face», was the son of the river god Sperkheios and the nymph Polydora, a daughter of Danaos. Druops reigned over the country of Oita and had an only daughter called Drypa who kept her father's sheep. The Hamadryad nymphs took much liking for Drypa and took her as a godly playmate teaching her sacred song and dance. Apollo caught sight of her as she stood in the midst of a joyous chorus of nymphs and desired to take her. In order to lure her, he took the shape of a turtle. Drypa took the turtle as play thing and put it against her breast. Then he shape shifted again and took the shape of a snake. This frightened the nymphs who left Drypa alone with it. Then Apollo took again his godly aspect and made love to her. (A.L. Mét., XXXII, 1 – 3., citation from Bernard Sergent in *Le livre des dieux celtes et Grecs* p. 232.)



The Celts also knew the myths surrounding the goddess Danu and the Danube River but it is not known, however, if they remembered the stories concerning the Caspian Sea.



An androgenous Cycladean oath-taking devotee or priest wearing the sacred knotted ribbon or cordon from the island of Syros. Note the delta sign on the solar plexus for deiwos "god". Old Cycladean culture dated from 2700 to 2400 BCE, Goulan Museum, Athens. Redrawn after a photo by G. Nimatallah / IGDA.



A fish-lipped figure called the "water fairie" by archaeologists bearing scale-like markings and knotted cords. The anthropomorphic fish is thought to represent a male deity. Lepenski Vir site, Serbia, drawing by the author after a photo from the National Museum in Belgrade.

## On The European Origins of Alphabets

According to current accepted theory, the 24 letters alphabet was devised from a stylisation of an evolved version of the Egyptian hieroglyphs called Demotic (= "popular" in Greek). The alphabet was then introduced from Egypt to Gebal in the Sinai, where it was passed on to the miners of Serabit El-Khaden. Then in 1000 B.C., the proto-alphabet was brought to Byblos, Phoenicia, where it was found engraved on a sarcophagus belonging to king Ahiiram. Phoenician sea merchants then, in the VIII<sup>th</sup> century, made it known to the Grecian Cretans at Knossos who, in turn, passed it on to the continental Greeks who then passed it on to the Etruscans of Italy, whence the Roman alphabet. So for the academics, this is the general itinerary for the diffusion of the alphabet from Egypt to Europe via Canaan and Phoenicia. Using this scenario, experts can then date the other known alphabets from the Roman, Tartesian, Celtiberic, Venetic, Runic and Gothic, plus other miscellaneous dead alphabets, on to the Irish Oghams. The problem with this theory is that the Demotic cursive script was in use at a time in Egypt from only about the VII<sup>th</sup> century BC to the V<sup>th</sup> century AD. Another problem with the theory is that, looking back in time, one should expect to find a fixed prototype for the oldest original alphabet. That is, as time elapses, variant forms are developed and tend to be more numerous. In contradiction, this is not the case for the alphabet. For example, the many variants of alphabets originally used in Greece became standardised only at a much later date, around 403 BC. So if, according to one of the origin myths for the Greek alphabet, it was Cadmus the Phoenician who first introduced it to the Greeks, what then of the much older Cretan scripts, Linear A and B dating back into the XIV<sup>th</sup> century B.C.? The reason for this is that the pre-historians and archaeologists are only starting to suspect the meaning of the importance of the Danubian civilisation which appeared in Europe starting from around 6000 B.C.

In late Neolithic inscriptions, Danubian Lepenski Vir, Vinça culture (dated from 5000 to 3800 BC) are found both alphabet-like and ogham-like symbols, sometimes side by side. The Danubian Neolithic culture, stretching through the valleys from Bulgaria to Germany via Hungary, Slovakia and Austria,



ranges from around circa 6000 to 3500 BC. Undoubtedly, one of the world's oldest civilisations predates the Sumerian (3500 to 2300 BC) by 2500 years, the Egyptian (3100 to 30 BC) by 2900 years, and the Canaanite (3200 to 2200 BC) by 2800 years and the Minoan (2400 to 1500 BC) civilisation by 3600 years.



Deity (female?) from Lepenski Vir. Drawing by the author after a photo from the National Museum in Belgrade.

↑ = U < úderos "uter, uterus"

Sheela na Gig, Kilpeck, Herefordshire, England.

## Alphabet-like and Ogham-like inscriptions in Neolithic Art





















Similar marks are also found at a number of sites in Central and Western Europe, ranging from Danubian valley to the British Isles. Rock Art of the Azilian (Mas d'Azil, France) type has been found in all parts of France, Italy, Spain, Rumania and as far north as Scotland.

Two other sites bearing striking similarities to the Danubian inscriptions are the Seine River valley (France) and Windmill Hill site (England) petroglyphs. The Windmill Hill site dates older than 2200 BCE when carbon-14 adjustments are made. Surprisingly, many of the alphabet-like symbols are close matches to the Mycenaean hieroglyphs and syllabic signs found at Knossos or on Linear B tablets from Pylos and which have been translated from archaic Greek in 1953 by Michael Ventris with the help of linguist John Chadwick. The Pylos inscriptions of south-western

Peloponnese date from the XIII<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Prior to this, the archaic Greeks were in the area of the lower Danube north to the Black Sea in the Pontic area. A bilingual cuneiform tablet found in the Hattusas archives records the mythological tale of a hunter in the then already dead Hurrian language along with a translation into Hittite.

### **The Anatolian Luwian Script**



 Â A	 I
 U	 Ha
 Ka	 Hâ
 Ki	 Hi
 Ku	 Hu
	 La
	 Lâ/Lâ
	 La/Li
	 La/Là/Lá
 Ma/Mi/Mi/Mu	 Na/Nâ/Ni/Ni
 Pa/Pâ/Pi/Pu	 Nu/Nû
 Sa/Sâ	 Ra/Râ/Ru/Rû
 Si/Si/Su/Sû	 Ta/Tâ
 Ti/Ti/Tu/Tù	 Za/Zâ/Zà/Zâ
 Wa/Wi/Wâ/Wi	 Zi/Zi/Zi/Zu

## Trial Decipherment of the Danube Culture Inscriptions




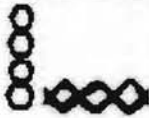





### The Danubian Script (Vinča / Târtâria)

Radiocarbon dating on the Târtâria and Vinča artefacts place them around 5500 BCE. These sites contemporaneous with the first Eridu phase of the Sumerian civilization. Pre-cuneiform Sumerian writing was based on pictograms and therefore does not qualify as a sound transcription system. The universal representation of a corn sheaf bears the meaning of corn but not the sound of the name as expressed in different languages. Therefore, the inscriptions could not have derived from this early Mesopotamian

culture. The orderly repetition and arrangement of set symbols are indicative of a form of writing. The Danubian inscriptions predate Sumerian cuneiform and Egyptian Hieroglyphs, thus making them the oldest known writing.

Due to the great number of symbols found in the Balkan, Vinča, Lepenski Vir (Serbia) and Tartaria (Rumania) inscriptions, it can be surmised, much like Linear B and Anatolian, that they constituted a syllabary cipher. But then again, considering the little we know on the origins of alphabets, it cannot be ruled out that this script was alphabetical. The following table is but a trial decipherment of the old Danubian script using the early Greek sound attributions and possible Indo-European names. The sound and letter rankings were obtained by comparing Linear B, Luwian and Philistine cyphers.

### Vowels and semivowels

 <p>A - Agh- "animal that bears young"</p>	 <p>É - Esos "house master"</p>	 <p>Ê/H - Edh- "fence of stakes"</p>
 <p>E - Ent- "weave"</p>	 <p>O - Oqos "eye"</p>	 <p>Ô - Ôwiom "egg"</p>
 <p>Û - ūdhros "udder"</p>	 <p>W - wísogā "club"</p>	 <p>I - ieugôm "yoke"</p>



## Consonants

 <p>B - Bheug- "refuge, shelter"</p>	 <p>P - Pods "foot" Pet "crooked"</p>	 <p>(s)P &gt; Φ / Ph (s)Per- "rafter, pole, spear" Speros "sparus, fish"</p>
 <p>Q - qasjos "basket" Qorjom "cauldron"</p>	 <p>K/C- Kam- / kem- "pole, stick, horn"</p>	 <p>K - Kankus "branch"</p>
 <p>X &gt; Kh / Ch - Krūtis "dome, vault"</p>	 <p>G - Ghaisom "stick"</p>	 <p>(s)T &gt; Θ / Th - *sTeuko- &gt; Teukos &gt; Tougos "bow"</p>
 <p>T - Tormos "bolt"</p>	 <p>D - Dānus "river"</p>	 <p>Ø / Dh - Dhōnā "cereal"</p>
 <p>L - Lendhā "spring, fountain"</p>	 <p>M - Men- / menth- "mount, mountain"</p>	 <p>N - Natriks «serpent, snake» Niktis "corn"</p>
 <p>R - Regs</p>	 <p>S - Sāweljos</p>	 <p>Š / Sq - Sqijā</p>

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<b>"king"</b>	<b>"sun"</b>	<b>"thorn"</b> sqalos <b>"large fish"</b>
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