

Whispering Woods Celtic Pantheon course

Welcome to our Celtic Pantheon course. The goal of this course is to provide you with an overview of the Celtic pantheon. This course was developed with three options in mind. The first is to cover the members of the Tuatha De Danann, the second Celtic (primarily Irish) Deity and last but not least, other Celtic Deity as they appear in England, France and so forth.

While such a course won't cover the entire Celtic pantheon, it is hoped that this course will provide a comprehensive view of the Celtic pantheon.

Whispering Woods coven Celtic Pantheon Course

A Brief History of the Five Invasions

Lesson One



The "Book of Invasions" (the Leabhar Gabhála), was compiled by monastic scholars around the 12th century CE (Common Era). It records a series of mythical occupations of Ireland, beginning with relatives of Noah and culminating in the coming of the Sons of Mil, the Milesians, who were known as the Gaels.

The earliest inhabitants according to the "Book of Invasions" were the company of Cessair. She arrived at Dun na mBarc (in Co. Cork), Ireland, with 50 other women, and three men. Her father Bith (said to be a son of Noah), her husband Fintan, and a third man, Ladia. Cessair married Fintan Mac Bochra. The three men were to divide the women among them, as well as dividing Ireland into three.

They were thought to have come from Hibernia. After being denied a place on the ark, they built their own ship and sailed for some seven years before landing in West Munster. The "Book of Invasions" records this landing:

**"Fleeing from threatened flood they sailed;
Seeking a fair island, without serpent or claw;
From the deck of their hasty barque watched
The soft edge of Ireland nearward draw".**

The "Book of Invasions" mentioned that two of the men perished, one died from an embrace, one was buried in a stone heap "not of mind, all passion spent". Fintan fled from the women lest he, too, by love be rent". According to one source, he hid for a year in a cave on the Hill of the Wave. As the rising flood waters (possibly from the Biblical flood)

engulfed the land, drowning the remaining women, Fintan saved himself by changing first into a salmon, then an eagle, and finally a hawk.

The second invasion arrived some three hundred years later and was that of the Partholians, named after their leader, Partholon, who originated from the eastern Mediterranean. He was the son of Sera, who was the king of Greece. Partholon and his wife, Dealgnaid, were escaping punishment for murdering his father and sovereign, and came to Ireland with 24 men and woman. They were said to have landed on May 1st, the festival of Bealtaine.

During their occupation, four plains were cleared and seven lakes had appeared. The Partholians were farm laborers and, as the land became fertile, they introduced cattle, practiced churning and milling, as well as brewing beer.

The Partholians were the first to come into conflict with the Fomorians. They managed to defeat and drive away the Fomorians.

The Fomorians were ugly, misshapen giants, who lived on Tory Island. They were cruel, violent and oppressive. They were considered to be nothing more than pirates or raiders, since they never settled in Ireland

Partholon lived in Ireland for 30 years before passing away. The rest of the Partholonians died 120 years later from pestilence. The only survivor of the plague was Tuan, a nephew of Partholon.

Tuan still lived on, for many generations.

He survived because he was transformed into various animal shapes, first as a stag, then as a boar and later as an eagle. In each form, he witnessed each successive invasion of Ireland. When he was transformed into a salmon, he was caught one-day, and eaten by the wife of Cairill, who immediately fell pregnant as the result of her meal. She gave birth to a son, who was named Tuan mac Cairill. It was this reborn Tuan, who was said to have written a book about the early history of Ireland.

The Nemedians

The third invasion of Ireland was that of the Nemedians who were said to have arrived via Scythia (from the north of Greece). They arrived 30 years after the demise of the Partholon. This group sailed for a year and half, wandering the sea with a fleet of 32 ships, carrying less than a thousand persons. Only one ship would survive the journey, including Nemed as their leader, and Nemed's four sons.

Nemed was said to be a descendant of Japheth, the son of the biblical Noah. Nemed was married to Macha; a woman associated with the Morrigan, from the race called the Tuatha Dé Danann.

After Nemed's's death, the Nemedians battled against the Fomorians in the three upper provinces, being Connacht (modern day Connaught), Ulaidh (modern day Ulster) and Laigin (modern day Leinster). This resulted in the Nemedians being obliged each year to give the Fomorians two thirds of their grain, milk and their property. Origins of the Halloween trick or treat custom is said to have been based on the tax the Fomorians imposed upon the Nemedians to be paid at Samhain (October 31st).

Though the Nemedians were at first successful against the Fomorians, with four decisive victories, a pestilence decimated the population, until less than two thousand Nemedians survived.

The Nemedians had to suffer from Fomorian tyranny and oppression, paying heavy tributes to their Fomorian victors.

Later three Nemedian chieftains led their people in revolt. They attack the Fomorian stronghold on Tory Island. Though the Nemedians managed to kill one of the Fomorian kings and captured one of the towers, the Nemedians was almost totally annihilated. Only thirty Nemedians survived the battle.

These survivors fled from Ireland and the Nemedians as we know them, were never heard from again. Fergus Lethderg fled with his son Britain Máel to Alba (Scotland), where the whole island was named after Britain, Nemed's grandson. While Semeon son of Erglan son of Beoan son of Starn son of Nemed had fled to Greece, where they were subjugated and became slaves. The descendants were known as the Fir Bolg, who would later return to Ireland.

The Fir Bolgs

The Fir Bolg, the fourth invasion, were thought to be pre-Celtic people, taking their name from the God "Buila". They were said to be descendants of the Nemedians, but yet another source connects them to the Belgae, who were European Celts.

It was the five sons of Dela, descendants of Semion, who took his people out of slavery in Greece and Thrace, bringing them back to Ireland, 230 years later.

The Fir Bolg landed on Irish shores in three groups, being the Fir Domhainn landing in Connacht, the Gailioin in Laigin, and the Fir Bolg proper in Ulaidh. The entire race was governed by five brothers, who divided Ireland into five provinces and connected the kingship with the Goddess of the land in order to bring health and vitality to both the land and their people. Their rule lasted for 37 years prior to arrival of the Tuatha Dé Danann. The kings of the Fir Bolg were the most ancient of Ireland. During their occupation there was no mention of any battles with the Fomorians.

Tailtiu was the daughter of King of the "Mag Mor" (Great Plain), from the Land of the Dead, which was a poetic name for Spain. Tailtiu was married to the last Firbolg king, Eochaid Mac Eirc, who later died in the First Battle of Moytura. At her husband's death, she remarried again to Eochaid Garb Mac Dúach, a Danann warrior. Since she was the foster-mother of Lugh Lamfada, she was held in honor at the Lughnasadh by the Tuatha dé Danann.

The Tuatha De Danann

The next people to arrive in Erin (Ireland), was the Tuatha Dé Danann or the "Children of the Goddess Danu".

The northern isles from which the Danann were said to have come from have four magical, otherworldly cities, each one ruled by a druid. The cities were called Falias, Gorias, Finias and Murias.

They brought with them four powerful talismans. From Falias, the Danann brought the talking stone of truth, called "Lia Fail". It was sometimes called (Stone of Destiny), because the Lia Fail would reveal who was the rightful king of Ireland.

The second treasure from the city Findias was the great magical sword, called "Freagarthach" (the Answerer), that Lugh and Nuada wielded. Lugh also brought with him the invincible spear from Gorias. The last treasure came from Murias, which was the Cauldron of Dagda. This cauldron could feed everyone in Ireland without emptying. Their arrival is mentioned in the "Book of Invasions" as appearing in a prophetic dream of the Fir Bolg king:

"A great flood of black birds coming to us from the depths of the ocean. They settled oveal of us and fought with the people of Ireland. They brought confusion on us, and destroyed us. One of us, I thought, struck the noblest of the birds a blow and cut off one of its wings".

Another source indicates that the Tuatha de Danann burnt their boats behind them giving rise to a cloud that "cast darkness upon the Sun for three days and nights" which obscured their landing. The Fir Bolgs were then pursued into exile onto Rathlin Island off the north coast of Ireland, and the Aran Islands off the west coast, where they are accredited to the building of the many stone forts, including Dun Aonghusa on Inishmore.

The Sons of Mil

The final invasion to arrive in Ireland was that of the Milesians, the Sons of Mil, who took their name from a Scythian mercenary soldier, Mil. They were also known as the Iberian Gaels. The most notable of the Milesians was the poet Amergin, who, upon their landing on Bealtaine eve, chanted a magical poem identifying with the orders of creation within their new land:

**"I am the wind which breathes upon the sea,
I am the wave of the ocean,
I am the murmur of the billows,
I am the ox of the seven combats,
I am the vulture upon the rocks,
I am a beam of the sun,
I am the fairest of plants,
I am a wild boar in valor,
I am a salmon in the water,
I am a lake in the plain,
I am a word of science,
I am the point of the lance of battle,
I am the God who created in the head the fire.
Who is it who throws light into the meeting on the mountain?
Who announces the ages of the moon?
Who teaches the place where couches the sun?
(If not I)"**

The Milesians battled with the de Danann and as they made their way to Tara (the seat of sovereignty) where they met the three aspects of the Goddess of Sovereignty of Ireland; Bandha, Eriu and Fodha. Amergin promised Eriu that Ireland would bear her name as its first and only name, and she, in turn, declared Ireland to belong the Milesians until the end of time. The Milesians then called upon the three original Danann kings at Tara, Mac Cuill, Mac Cecht and Mac Greine, to surrender. After a ritualistic and magickal contest, it was clear that the Milesians had the blessings of the Goddess.

After the defeat of the Tuatha De Danann by the Milesians, the Danann established a realm beneath the Earth, the Sidhe's, which are a mirror image of the upper world. Even though they were vanquished, the Danann were still able to deprive the Milesians of corn and milk, and used their power to bargain. This created a mutual agreement that Ireland would be divided into two parts; the upper being the realm of humans and the lower being the realm of the Tuatha De Danann.

An often told story says that when

Still Ireland was far from peace. A dispute erupted between the Milesian brothers Eremhon, who had led the expedition, and Ebher, over kingship. A division was made and, as was recorded in a poem attributed to an author of the 9th century CE, Eremhon took the north as the inheritance of his race. Ebher took the south of Ireland as his realm.

An often told story says that when Eber and Eremon had divided their followers, each taking an equal number of soldiers and an equal number of the men of every craft, there remained a harper and a poet. Drawing lots for these, the Harper fell to Eremon and the poet to Eber; which explains why, ever since, that the North of Ireland has been celebrated for music, and the South for song.

Eventually Ebher, encouraged by the jealousy of his wife, rebelled and killed his brother.

Quiz:

1. The father of Cessair is _____.
2. The second invasion was that of the _____.
3. Tailtiu was the daughter of King of the _____.
4. During the battle against the Fomorians, only _____ Nemedians survived.
5. The second treasure of the Tuatha De Danann is from _____.
6. The Final invasion was that of the _____.
7. Eremhon of the Milesians took the _____ as his inheritance.

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First Battle of Magh Tuiredh (Cét-chath Maige Tuired)

Lesson Two



The Tuatha De Danann arrived in a cloud of mist after which the Firbolg discovered them in Connacht. According to Cath Maige Tuired, this mist was actually thick smoke from their burning ships. The Tuatha Dé Danann decided that they would not flee back to their ships in the event that they were defeated.

During this time, Eochaid Mac Eirc was High king of Ireland, and the leader of the Firbolg. He had become High King by overthrowing Fodbgen, (the despoiler) son of Sengann, who had ruled for only four years before being overthrown by Eochaid. Eochaid was married to Tailtiu, the daughter of the King of the Great Plain (Mag Mor or Magmor also known as Spain). Upon marrying her, Eochiad named his capitol (modern Teltown in county Meath) after her.

He ruled for ten years prior to battle with the Tuatha De Danann. He was said to be the first king to establish a system of justice in Ireland.

Upon their arrival, the Tuatha Dé Danann was at peace with the Fomorians. For an alliance had been formed between the Tuatha Dé Danann and the Fomorians, so the Fomorians had no objection to the Danann settling in Ireland. To seal the alliance, Balor gave his daughter, Ethlinn (Eithne), in marriage to the Danann, Cian, a son of the Tuatha De Danann physician, Dian Cecht.

The Tuatha De Danann wanted to share the land with the Fir Bolgs and so both sides exchanged ambassadors. However the Fir Bolgs were ill at ease with the newcomers and their superior weaponry and knowledge.

The Firbolg decided that they did not want to divide and share the land with the Tuatha De Danann. And so they declared war against the Tuatha De Danann. This battle took place in Magh Tuiredh (Moytura). The name Mag Tuired (Magh Tuireadh) means "the plain of pillars".

The Firbolg were said to have lost 100,000 warriors. Among those killed was Eochaid Mac Eirc, king of the Firbolg, (a cairn marks his grave on the strand at Ballysodare).

The Tuatha De Danann also lost many warriors in this battle as well. According to the Cath Maige Tuired; Edleo Mac Allai, Ernmas, Fiacha and Tuirill Biceo were killed. The Tuatha De Danann won a convincing victory, because of their superior weapons and skills, but at the cost of losing their king.

Though their king, Nuada, was not killed, he lost his right arm in battle to the Fir Bolg champion, Sreng mac Sengainn. To the Tuatha De Danann, losing any body part resulted in losing the right to become king of Ireland. Any form of physical blemish would disqualify a king from ruling. The Tuatha Dé Danann had no choice but to choose a new king; and so they chose Bres, the son of Elatha mac Delbaith who was king of the Fomoir. A peace treaty was drawn up, with the Firbolg receiving the province Connacht as their territory, while the Tuatha De Danann took control of the rest of Ireland.

As Bres was half Formorian and half Tuatha De Danann, the Tuatha De Danann hoped he would bring peace to the land. His reign, however, was harsh and oppressive reducing the Tuatha De Danann to slaves of the Fomorians. Bres was finally satirized for his mean and unjust nature by the poet "Corbre". The magickal power of the satire was dreaded by the ancient Celts for a powerful poet could reduce a man to not only a figure of ridicule, but in physical health as well. Bres was affected as such and the Tuatha de Danann declared that he was no longer fit to rule as king.

During this time, Nuada was fitted with a silver arm by the physician of the Tuatha De Danann, the God Dian Cecht. And it was at this time that the former king received the title "Nuada Argetlamh", (Nuada of the Silver Hand).

He was later reinstated as leader while Bres, having been ousted, assembled an army of Fomorians to support him. This resulted in the second battle the Tuatha De Danann fought against the Fir Bolgs.

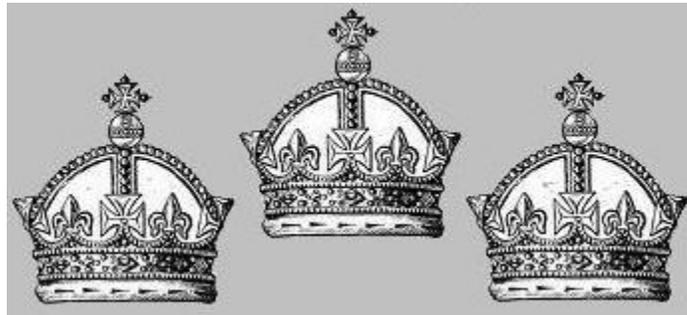
Quiz:

1. The Tuatha De Danann wanted to share the land with the ____ ____.
2. Bres was satirized by the poet _____.
3. Mag Tuired means the _____ _ _____.
4. The King of the Fir Bolgs was ____ _ ____.
5. The champion of the Fir Bolgs was ____ _ _____.
6. Nuadha was fitted with a silver arm by the physician, ____ ____.
7. Eochaid Mac Eirc was married to _____.

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The Second Battle of Mag Tuired (Cath Tánaiste Maige Tuired)

Lesson Three



Prior to the second battle of Mag Tuired, Bres Mac Elatha, who had been conceived from a union between Ériu of the Tuatha De Danann and Elatha of the Fomorians, had been selected to replace the former king, Nuada, whose arm had been severed in the first battle of Mag Tuired. After Bres had assumed the sovereignty, three Formorian kings; Indech mac Dé Domnann, Elatha mac Delbaith, and Tethra, imposed their tribute upon Ireland. The Tuatha De Danann was severely oppressed by Bres' misrule and the heavy tributes that they paid to the Fomorians. They were uncertain of Nuada Airgetlám's (Nuada of the Silver Hand) fitness to rule, since his right arm was made of silver.

But then Miach, a son of Dian Cecht, proved to be an even greater healer than his father ever was. With his healing magic and his sister's (Airmed) assistance, Miach was able to restore Nuada's real hand, after three days and three nights. Dian Cecht was upset and extremely jealous of his son's superior skill in healing. And so in a fit of rage Dian Cecht struck three times on his son's head and each time Miach was able to heal himself. The fourth time that Dian Cecht had struck his son; he had cut out his son's brain, ensuring that Miach died from his wounds.

Dian Cecht then buried his son and from his grave sprang 365 magical herbs. Dian Cecht's daughter, Airmed, gathered and categorized the herbs according to their healing properties.

With Nuada's hand restored, the Tuatha De Danann used a satirist to depose the rule of Bres and they sought to reinstate Nuada as the High King. As part of the deposition the Danann allowed Bres to remain as king for a period of seven years at which time he would relinquish the throne.

Bres who was outraged at his impending deposition, appealed for assistance from the Fomorians to take back the kingship, and although his father Elatha refuses, he sends him to another Formorian leader, Balor of the Evil Eye, grandson of Net, who is the king of the

Isles, and to Indech son of Dea Domnann the king of the Fomorians, who agrees to help him to raise a huge army. Meanwhile, Lugh, who is also half Danann and half Formorian, arrives at Nuada's court, and, after impressing the king with his many talents, is given command of the Tuatha De Danann.

In order to delay the impending battle with the Fomorians, Lugh sends the Daghdha to spy out the Fomorians and to delay them. So the Daghdha went to the camp of the Fomorians and asked them for a truce of battle. This was granted to him as he asked. Porridge was then made for him by the Fomorians, and this was done to mock him, for great was his love for porridge.

They filled for him the king's cauldron, five fists deep, into which went four-scored gallons of new milk and a like quantity of meal and fat. Goats, sheep and swine were also put into it, and they were all boiled together with the porridge. This gruel was poured for him into a hole in the ground, and Indech told him that he would be put to death unless he consumed it all, as it would be considered an insult if he did not consume the meal that the Fomorians had prepared for him.

So the Daghdha took his ladle, which was big enough for a man and woman to lie on the middle of it. These then were the bits that were in it, halves of salted swine and a quarter of lard. "Good food this," said the Daghdha.

At the end of the meal he even scraped up some gravel with the last bite. Sleep came upon him then after eating his porridge. His belly was bigger than a house cauldron, and the Fomorians laughed at it. Then he went away from them to the strand of Eba. Not easy was it for Daghdha to move along due to the size of his belly.

Then the Fomorians marched till they reached Scente. The men of Ireland were in Mag Aurfolraig. These two hosts were threatening battle. "The men of Ireland venture to offer battle to us." Bres, son of Elatha to Indech, son of Dea Domnann. "I will fight anon," said Indech, "so that their bones will be small unless they pay their tributes."

Because of Lugh's vast knowledge, the men of Ireland had made a resolution not to let him go into battle. So his nine fosterer brothers were left to protect him, they were Tollus-dam, Ech-dam and Eru, Rechtaid the white, Fosad and Fedlimid, Ibor, Scobar and Minn.

The chieftains of the Tuatha De Danann were gathered round Lugh in council. And he asked his smith, Gopibniu, what power he wielded for them? "

Not hard to tell, said he. Though the men of Erin bide in the battle to the end of seven years, for every spear that parts from its shaft, or sword that shall break therein, I will provide a new weapon in its place. No spear-point which my hand shall forge, said he, shall make a missing cast. No skin which it pierces shall taste life afterwards. That has not been done by Dolb the smith of the Fomorians.

And thou, O Dian Cecht, said Lugh, what power canst thou wield?

Not hard to tell, said he. Every man who shall be wounded there, unless his head be cut off, or the membrane of his brain or his spinal marrow be severed, I will make quite whole in the battle on the morrow.

And thou, O Credne, said Lugh to his brazier, what is thy power in the battle?

Not hard to tell, said Credne. Rivets for their spears and hilts for their swords, and boses and rims for their shields, I will supply them all.

And thou, O Luchta, said Lugh to his Wright, what service wilt thou render in the battle?

Not hard to tell, said Luchta. All the shields and javelin shafts they require, I will supply them all.

And thou, Ogma, said Lugh to his champion, what is thy power in the battle?

Not hard to tell, said he. I will repel the king and three enneads of his friends, and capture up to a third of his men.

And ye, O sorcerers," said Lugh, :what power will you wield?

Not hard to tell, said the sorcerers. We shall fill them with fear when they have been overthrown by our craft, till their heroes are slain, and deprive them of two thirds of their might, with constraint on their urine.

And ye, O cupbearers, said Lugh, "what power?

Not hard to tell, said the cupbearers. We will bring a strong thirst upon them, and they shall not find drink to quench it.

And ye, O druids, said Lugh, what power?

Not hard to tell, said the druids. We will bring showers of fire on the faces of the Fomorians, so that they cannot look upwards, and so that the warriors who are contending with them may slay them by their might.

And thou, O Cairbre son of Etain," said Lugh to his poet, what power canst thou wield in the battle?

Not hard to tell," said Cairbre. I will make a satire on them. And I will satirize them and shame them, so that through the spell of my art they will not resist warriors.

And ye, O Be-cuile and O Dianann, said Lugh to his two witches, what power can ye wield in the battle?

Not hard to tell, said they. We will enchant the trees and the stones and the sods of the earth, so that they shall become a host under arms against them, and shall rout them in flight with horror and trembling.

And thou, O Daghdha," said Lugh, what power canst thou wield on the Fomorian host in the battle?

Not hard to tell, said the Daghdha. I will take the side of the men of Erin both in mutual smiting and destruction and wizardry. Under my club the bones of the Fomorians will be as many as hailstones under the feet of herds of horses where you meet on the battlefield of Moytura.

And so with these preparations having been made by the Tuatha De Danann, they engaged the Fomorians in battle.

Now the Fomorians marveled at a certain thing which was revealed to them in the battle. Their spears and their swords were blunted and broken and such of their men as were slain did not return on the morrow. But it was not so with the Tuatha De Danann. Dian Cecht and his two sons, Octriull and Miach, and his daughter Airmed sang spells over the well named Slane. Now their mortally wounded men were cast into it as soon as they were slain. They were alive when they came out. Their mortally wounded became whole through the might of the incantation of the four leeches that were about the well. Now that was harmful to the Fomorians, so they sent a man of them to spy out the battle and the actions of the Tuatha De Danann, namely Ruadan son of Bres and of Brig the Daghdha's daughter. He was well known to be a son as well as a grandson, of the Tuatha De Danann.

Then he related to the Fomorians the work of the smith and the Wright and the brazier and the four leeches that were around the well. He was sent again to kill one of the artisans, that being Goibniu.

From him he begged a spear, its rivets from the brazier and its shaft from the Wright. So then all was given to him, as he asked. There was a woman there grinding the weapons, Cron mother of Fianlug, it was she who ground Ruadan's spear.

Now the spear was given to Ruadan by a chief, wherefore the name "a chief's spear" is still given to weaver's beams in Ireland.

Now after the spear had been given to him, Ruadan turned and wounded Goibniu. But he plucked out the spear and cast it at Ruadan, so that it went straight through him, and he died in the presence of his father in the assembly of the Fomorians.

Brigid, mother of Ruadan came and bewailed her son's death. This was the first keening heard in Ireland.

The battle was a gory, ghastly melee, and the river Unsenn rushed with corpses.

Nuada and Macha, daughter of Ernmass, were felled by Balor, grandson of Net.

Cassmael was felled by Octriallach son of Indech.

And then Lugh, who had eluded his protective guard and Balor of the Piercing Eye met in battle. An evil eye had Balor the Formorian. That eye was never opened save only on a battlefield. Four men used to lift up the lid of the eye with a polished handle which passed through its lid.

When the lid was raised from Balor's eye, Lugh used his sling to cast a stone at him, which carried the eye through his head causing its gaze to be cast back at the Fomorians.

Afterwards the Fomorians were beaten back to the sea.

Thereafter Lugh and his comrades found Bres son of Elatha unguarded. He said:"It is better to give me quarter than to slay me."

Lugh agreed to spare Bres if he answered the following;

**"How shall the men of Ireland Plough? How shall they sow? How shall they reap?
After making known these three things thou wilt be spared." Bres agreed to these requests
and was spared.**

**Then Lugh and the Daghdha and Ogma pursued the Fomorians, for they had carried off the
Daghdha's Harper, whose name was Uaitne.**

**Upon rescuing Uaitne they returned to the Danann and thus the second war of the Second
Battle of Mag Tuired was decided in favor of the Tuatha De Danann.**

Quiz:

- 1. After Nuada, _____ ruled the Tuatha De Danann.**
- 2. The Smith of the Danann is known as _____.**
- 3. The Brazier of the Danann was _____.**
- 4. To embarrass the Daghdha, the _____ made him a huge bowl of porridge.**
- 5. The father of Bres was _____.**
- 6. Dian Cecht killed his son _____.**
- 7. The mother of Bres was _____.**

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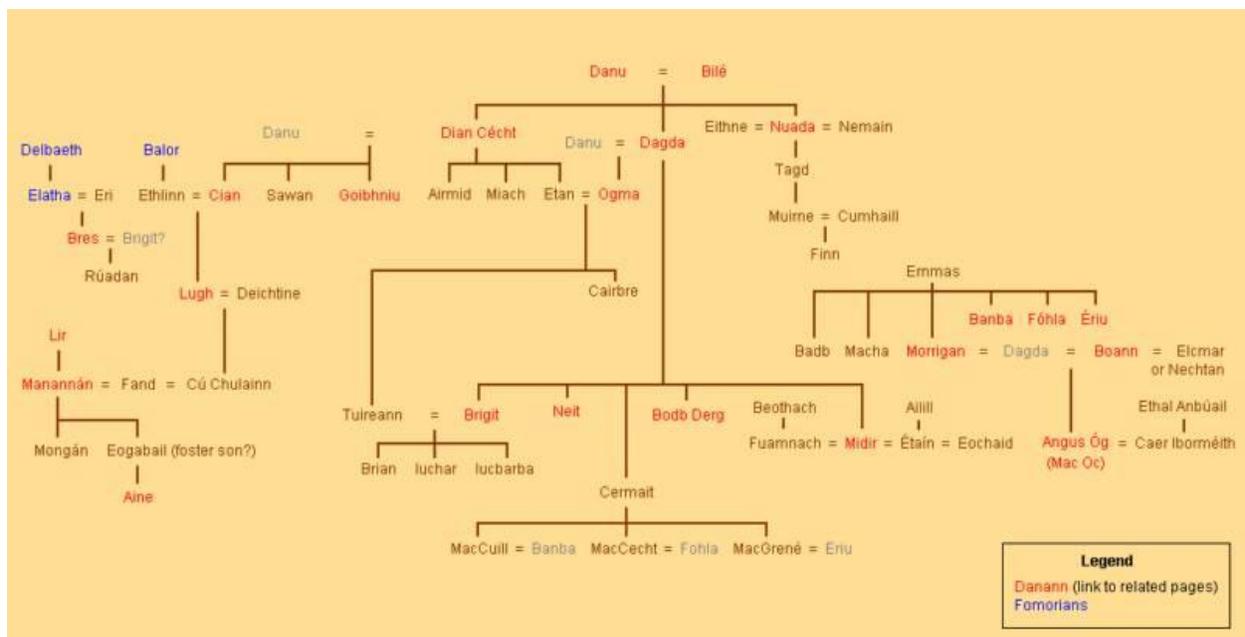
Genealogy of the Tuatha De Danann

Lesson Four

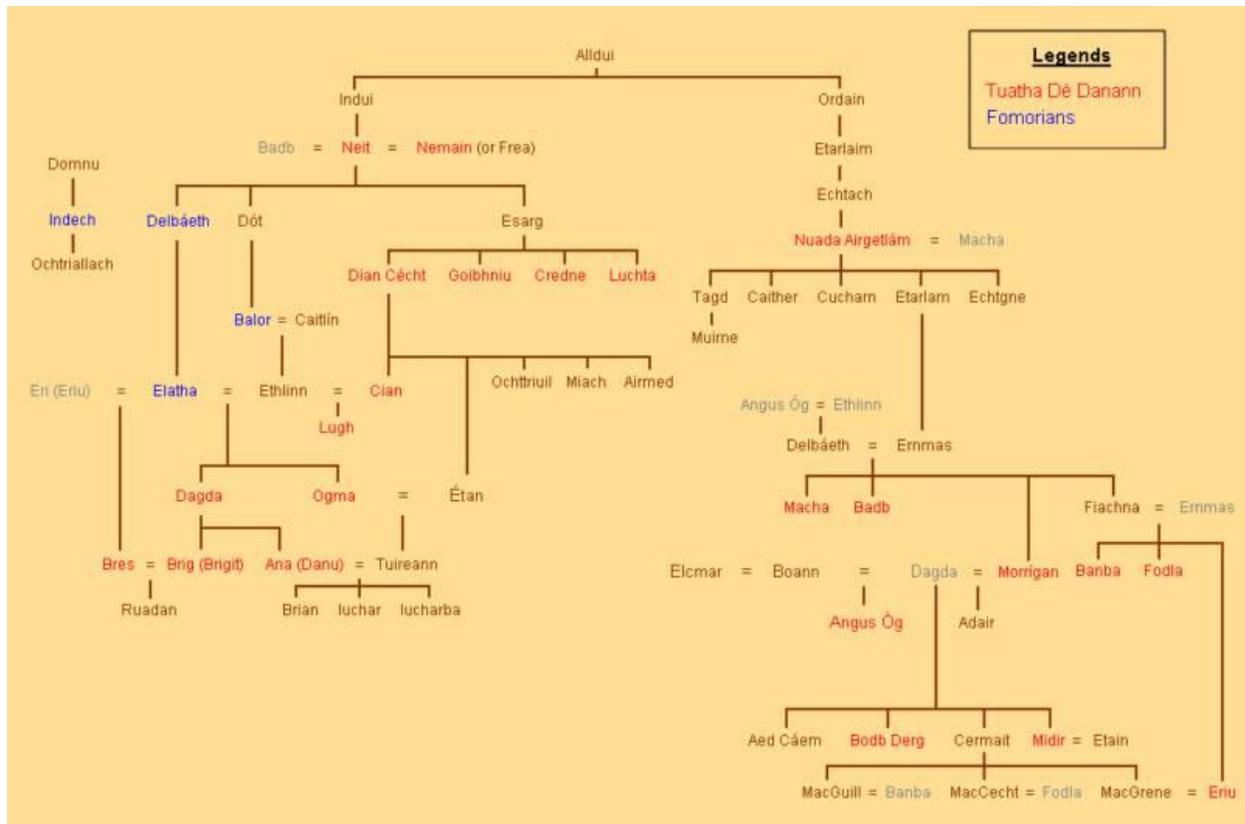
The genealogy in Irish myths, particularly those of the Irish deities are very confusing. This is particularly true, if you are using several different sources to construct the family tree.

Not only is the genealogy of the Tuatha De Danann conflicting or contradicting from one source to another source, but the genealogy can be conflicting within the same material (source).

The following family trees, while not completely accurate show the relationships of the Tuatha De Danann. They are used with permission from Joe, Jimmy Timeless Myths, 1999
[<http://www.timelessmyths.com/>]



Note that all the Tuatha De Danann and the Fomorians, shown below, are descendants of Alldui, a shadowy figure. Alldui was the grandfather of Neit and the great, great grandson of Nuada Airgetlám (Nuada of the Silver Hand).



Another name for the Tuatha De Danann was the "aes sídhe" or the "People of the Sidhe". In the Ulster Cycle, the Tuatha De Danann was still seen as Celtic deities. However, in the Fenian Cycle, the Danann's had degenerated into simply the "Faery Folk".

Quiz:

1. Cermait was the result of a union between Brigid and _____.
2. The Dagda is the son of _____ and Bile.
3. The mother of Macha is _____.
4. The sisters of Macha are _____ and _____.
5. Alldui was the grandfather of _____.
6. The offspring of Alldui was _____ and _____.
7. In the Ulster cycle the Tuatha De Danann were still seen as Celtic _____.

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Danu and Bile

Lesson Five



Danu (DAWN - oo)

The Sacred Mother Goddess Danu (DAH-noo) or Ana, as she is sometimes known as, is the mother of the Tuatha Dé Danann. The name literally means "Children of Danu". Danu was a Goddess of Fertility and the Earth. Some believed that Danu and Ana were separate entities, even though both are known as Mother Goddesses.

Danu was widely worshipped throughout Europe. Though few stories about her have survived, and yet the reverence in which she was held still remains to this day. I personally am one of her deep admirers and am honored to be so...

There is a Goddess named Danu found in Hindu mythology. She is associated with water and is the Mother of a race of Asuras called the Danavas. In Vedic mythology the Danavas are known as Demi-Gods. As Danu, she appears in the Vedic creation story "The Churning of the Oceans," as the Goddess of the Primordial Waters of Creation.

She was known under various names, such as Danu, Dana and Anu in Continental Europe and Ireland and in Wales, she was known as "Don".

In Irish, the name means "swift flowing". The root word, dan, means "knowledge" in Gaelic. In Welsh dan means "low ground" or "moist earth." The name Danu seems cognate with the Sanskrit, "Dana" which means "waters of heaven." In Hindu, Danu means "unknown."

Danu was married to her consort Bilé (The Sacred Tree) and was the mother of the Daghdha, Her other offspring are thought to be Dian Cecht and Nuada.

With the Daghdha, Danu became the mother of Ogma. Other sons she is thought to be the mother of are; Cian (Kian), Sawan and Goibhniu by way of Dian Cecht.

There is a school of thought that believes that her name is Danand and she slept with Delbhaeth (Turenn) her own father to produce Brian, Iuchar and Iucharba.

This is just an example of the confusions existing within Irish Mythology.

Some scholars believe Danu and Anu (also Ana) are the same deity, while others state that the two are separate individuals.

This sacred Goddess has had many rivers named after her; some of these are the Danube, Dniestr, Dniepr and the Don water ways.

In Munster, Danu was associated with two round-topped hills, which was called Da Chich Anann or the Paps of Ana, because they resembled two breasts.

"Da Chich Anann" literally means the "two breasts of Ana".

There is also a mountain on the face of Venus that has been named after this great Goddess.

A note of interest is that the Hindu Brahmins deem that the river's edge, the brink of the water, was always that place where wisdom, spiritual enlightenment knowledge, and illumination were revealed.



Bile (BIL - AY)

"Bel" means "shining one," or in Irish Gaelic, the name "bile" translates into "Sacred tree."

The story is that the waters of Danu fed the Oak and produced their son, The Daghdha. To the Welsh he is known as Beli, and is the father of Arianrhod by Don.

He was the brother of Bran the "Blessed".

He is considered to be a minor Sun God by the Welsh.

He is also known to the Irish as Belenus "the shining one" God of Light for the Gauls.

He is the caretaker of sheep and cattle. The Lebor Gabala states that Bile 7 Mílidh, is dia cloind Gáidil uile; "Bile and Mílidh, it is from their progeny the Gaels come."

It is likely that he is the so-called "Dis Pater", Lord of the Underworld and ancestor of the Celts as mentioned by Caesar.

As a patron of sheep and cattle, Bel is associated with Beltain, as well as with Samhain.

He is the God of Death and the ruler of the Underworld.

Some believe this deity is the equivalent of Belatucadros, the consort of Belisama, another patroness of light, fire, the forge and crafts.

Belatucadros, whose name means "fair shining one" or possibly "the fair slayer," is the God of Destruction and War and transports the dead to Danu's "divine waters."

The one name which appears prominently in the text and has a similar name is Danand (or Donand) daughter of Delbaeth son of Ogma, who lies with her own father and has three

sons by him, Brian, Iuchar and Iucharba.

These three are known as the tri Dé Danand, the "Three Gods of Danand"

Also, Oidheadh Cloinne Tuireann (The Violent Death of the Sons of Tuireann), which is noted as one of the three sorrowful tales of Ireland is, according to the Lebor Gabála, another name of Delbaeth.

And elsewhere in the Lebor Gabála the "Three Gods of Danand" are said to be Triall, Brian and Cet, sons of Bres (with Danand), the half-Formorian ruler who is the foe of Lugh in Cath Maige Tuired.

Confused yet?

It is thought that Bile may be somehow related to the Welsh figure Beli Mawr, a mythological king of Britain and ancestor of many of the royal lines of Wales, especially that of Gwynedd.

Many Welsh scholars compare the Annales Cambriae, which mentions one Beli ap Elfin (Alpin), and the Annals of Ulster, which also mentions the same figure as Bile mac Elpin (Alpin).

In one version of Irish mythology, after his Uncle Ith, was killed by the Tuatha De Danann, Bile joined forces with another son, "Mil Espáine" and forty others in an effort to invade Ireland, but he and his companions were drowned in a storm called forth by the Tuatha De Danann.

It was Mil's death that led to the battle between the Milesians and the Tuatha De Danann who ended the fight in defeat, and thus their exile into the Sidhe's.

Quiz:

1. Bile means _____ .
2. In Wales. Danu was known as ____ .
3. The root word, "dan" means _____ in Gaelic.
4. In Hindu mythology, Danu is the mother of the _____ .
5. Bel is a patron of _____ and _____ .
6. The tri Dé Danand are; _____, _____ and _____ .
7. With the Daghdha, Danu became the mother of _____ .

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Lesson Six

Children of Danu and Bile



Daghda, Dian Cecht and Nuada

Daghda: (Good God) Eochaid Ollathair (All-Father)

The Daghdha is the father of the Goddess Brigid and the God Aengus Mac Oc.

He is known as the God of Knowledge and Wisdom. In addition, he was known as the God of the Earth and Treaties, as well as the ruler over life and death.

His lover was Boann and his wife was Breg.

Prior to the battle with the Fomorians, he coupled with the Goddess of War, Morrigan, on Samhain in exchange for a plan of battle.

Daghda had an affair with Boann, wife of Nechtan. In order to hide their affair, Daghdha made the sun stand still for nine months; therefore, Aengus was conceived, gestated and born in one day.

He, along with Boann, helped their son, Aengus, search for his true love.

The Daghdha was also the father of Bodb Dearg, who succeeded him as king of the gods. He was the father of Ogma by Danu.

The Daghdha was one of the leaders of the Tuatha De Danann and perhaps the wisest one of them.

The Daghdha is associated with several implements in Celtic Lore.

They are the Cauldron of Bounty (Coire Anseasc) (Undry) (Never Dry) which is one of the four treasures that the Tuatha De Danann brought with them from the four mystical cities.

This was a large cooking pot which never emptied and which left none hungry, and when not in use, it stored the blood-dripping Spear of Lugh.

It originated from the mystical city of Murias. Murias was known as the most southerly of the four mystical Cities.

There is also the Harp of the Seasons (Four Cornered Music). The Daghdha would play this magic harp in order to make the seasons come and go.

And there is the Club that Slays and Revives. The Daghdha's great war-club slays with one end and grants life with the other.

In Gaul, the Daghdha appeared in the guise of Sucellos, the striker, equipped with a hammer and cup.

Irish tales depict the Daghdha as a figure of immense power armed with a magic club and associated with a cauldron.

When the Tuatha De Danann was defeated by the Milesians, it was the Daghdha who led the Tuatha De Danann into the Sidhe's to begin life as the Irish faery race.

He was later deposed by Bov the Red.

Dian Cecht: (Cainte, Canta) Dian Cecht is the God of Healing and a member of the Tuatha De Danann.

Dian Cecht was considered a Craft-God, who also practiced healing through the use of magic.

According to the poem "Mag Corainn" in the Dindsenchas, his father is the Daghdha, while the Lebor Gabála Érenn lists his father as Esarg son of Net.

He is the father of Cian, Cú, and Cethen. His other children are Miach, Airmed, Étan and Ochtriullach. Dian Cecht is the grandfather of Lugh Lamhfada.

Dian Cecht, as the physician of the Tuatha De Danann along with Creidhne, the Builder God, made a silver arm for King Nuada which he had lost in battle with the Fir Bolgs.

It was Dian Cecht's son Miach who later made a human arm for King Nuada. By doing so he infuriated his father who in a jealous rage slew Miach. Dian Cecht struck Miach four times with his sword, each time Miach would heal himself, until the fourth time, when Dian Cecht struck through the skull to the neck.

Miach's sister, Airmed then went and gathered all 365 of the healing herbs that grew from her brother's grave. But again in a jealous fit, her father, Dian Cecht, scattered the herbs about so that no one would have knowledge of all of the herbs of this world.

It has been suggested that these herbs were put in the Well of Slaine, of which waters could heal the mortally wounded, and was presided over by Dian Cecht and his daughter Airmed.

Cian, another son of Dian Cecht, had met the Formorian princess Eithne, and with her, sired a son, who was named Lugh Lamhfada, who in turn was raised by Manannan Mac Lír and Taitiu.

Nuada: (Nuada Airgetlam, "Nuada of the Silver Hand") As Mentioned above, as the first king of the Tuatha De Danann, Nuada lost his right arm in the first great battle at Mag Tuired, in combat with the Fir Bolg champion, Sreng.

When this happened he abdicated the throne as per Celtic law and the half Formorian, half Danann, Bres, ascended to the throne for a short period of time.

When Nuada was given a silver arm by his brother Dian Cecht, he regained the throne of the Danann, forcing Bres out.

It was the conflict between Nuada and Bres that led to the Second Battle of Magh Tuiredh (Moytura).

Nuada was later killed by Balor (of the evil eye), the grandfather of Bres. Balor was then killed by Lugh who ascended the throne in place of Nuada.

Nuada is known as a God of the sea, children and childbirth. He is also the God of the sun, beauty, healing, sorcery, poetry and writing.

He owned one of the four great treasures of the Tuatha de Danann, which was his sword, Fragarach (Claíomh Solais) (sword of light).

This sword had the power to cut enemies in half and had its origins in the mystical city of Gorias.

It is thought that Nuada is related to the Romano-British god; Mars Nodens.

His Welsh equivalent is Nudd or Lludd Llaw Eirint.

He is associated with the Gaulish and British God, Nodens.

Quiz:

- 1. Dian Cecht is the Celtic God of _____.**
- 2. It is thought that Nuada is related to the Romano-British god; ____ ____.**
- 3. The Dagda was also the father of _____, who succeeded him as king of the gods.**
- 4. It was the conflict between Nuada and _____ that led to the Second Battle of Magh Tuiredh.**
- 5. Dian Cecht is the grandfather of _____.**
- 6. _____ was known as the most southerly of the Four mystical Cities.**
- 7. Eochaid Ollathair translates as _____.**

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Danu's Other Children

Lesson Seven



With the Daghdha, Danu became the mother of Ogma. Other sons she is thought to be the mother of are; Cian (Kian), Sawan and Goibhniu by way of Dian Cecht.

Ogma: Cermait (Honey-tongued), Trenfher (Strongman) and Grianianech (Sun-faced). Ogma is thought to be related to the Gaulish god Ogmios. The Gaulish Hercules was thought to be identical with the god Ogmios.

We know of the god Ogmios from the writings of Lucian of Samosata, a Greek author who wrote during the 2nd century. Lucian described Ogma as a bald old man leading a group of smiling followers with chains linking their ears to his tongue. This depiction was seen as a testament to his ability to use the power of the spoken word.

In Ireland he is shown as large muscular man dressed in skins and carrying a club.

His name is also mentioned on Austrian curse tablets.

He is the son of the Goddess Danu and the God Daghdha. Ogma is the God of Eloquence and Learning.

It is written that Elin was his wife. The god Ogma is described as the father of Mac Cecht who married Fodhla, sister of Banba, the first Queen of Ireland.

The identities of his children vary, but include Cairbre the satirist and Tuirenn. Mac Cecht, Mac Coll and Mac Graine are also linked to him. The first is son of the plough. The second is son of the hazel, tree of wisdom. The third is son of the sun.

Ogma is described as a strong man, like Hercules. When Lugh sought admittance to Tara, one of the trials he underwent was against Ogma. Ogma hurled a massive flagstone out into a field. Lugh picked up the stone and threw it straight back so it landed in its original hole.

Ogma is a master of poetry and inventor of ogham writing, the word being derived from his name.

Ogham is an ancient form of Irish writing. Ogma is a patron of the "filidh" (Gaelic poets-seers).

In one interpretation, Ogma fought and died as the champion of the Danann in their battle at Mag-tured, but in other accounts he survived, captures the sword of the Formorian king, Tethra, and then goes on the quest for Daghdha's harp

In the Cath Maige Tuired; Ogma, Lugh and the Daghdha pursue the Fomorians after the battle to recover the harp of Uaitne, the Daghdha's personal Harper.

He often appears in a triad with Lugh and the Daghdha, who are sometimes collectively known as the "trí dée dána" or Three Gods of Skill.

Cian: (Kian) Cian was the son of Dian Cecht and Danu. Cian had two brothers: Goibhniu (master smith), and Sawan.

But according to the Oidheadh Chlainne Tuireann (Death of the Children of Tuireann), his brothers were Cu and Cethe; and they were the sons of Cainte.

Remember, the Celtic pantheon is not cut and dried. There are many inconsistencies and different versions depending upon which Gebor or manual is being used for tracing their lineage and associated feats.

Cian was known to have possessed a magic cow that had an endless supply of milk. It came about that the Formorian chieftain Balor, deceived Sawan (who was guarding Cain's cow) and thus stole the cow. Cian then took revenge on Balor by seducing Balor's daughter Ethlinn. In this manner, Ethlinn bore Cian three sons.

It had long been prophesied that Balor's grandson would one day slay him. And so Balor had his daughter Ethlinn (Ethnea, Eithliu) imprisoned within the tower. When her triplet sons were born, Balor took and threw each newborn infant from the tower into the sea.

Only one of these infants was saved by Manannan Mac Lir and a Druidess by the name of Birog. It was Birog who brought the child to Cian. Cian put the child, whom he named Lugh, into the fosterage of his brother Goibhniu.

When Lugh reached manhood, he became the champion of the Tuatha De Danann. When the Tuatha De Danann started to gather an army to fight the Fomorians, Cian was sent to enlist the fighting men of Ulster.

On his journey, he encountered the sons of Turenn, Brian, Iuchar, and Iucharba whom he had blood feud with. Cian shape-shifted into a pig, and joined a wild pig herd which was rooting nearby. However the brothers still discovered him and Brian mortally wounded him with a spear.

Cian, realizing that his end was near, begged the brothers to allow him to transform back into a human to die like a man. Brian, who was the eldest brother agreed. Standing before the brothers as a man, Cian told the brothers, "I have outwitted ye!

For if ye had slain a pig ye would have paid the blood-fine of a pig, but ye have killed a man, and shall pay the blood-fine of a man.

The weapons ye kill me with shall tell this tale to the one who shall avenge me. "Then we shall not kill you with weapons", said Brian, and then they stoned him to death and then buried him underneath a cairn.

Shortly there afterwards as Lugh was passing by, the stones cried out and told him the story of the death of his father at the murderous hands of the sons of Turenn.

Lugh recovered the body of his father, and brought it to Tara where he brought his case to Nuada, who rules that the sons of Turenn are to be executed, and that Lugh was to have his choice of blood-fine.

Lugh revealed his blood-fine as follows: three apples, the skin of a pig, a spear, a chariot with two horses, seven swine, a hound, a cooking spit, and finally to give three shouts on a hill.

But, as the sons of Turenn were beginning to sigh a breath of relief, Lugh reveals that the three apples are those that grow in the Garden of the Sun; the pig-skin is a magical skin that heals every wound and sickness when it is laid upon the patient, and is currently owned by the King of Greece; the spear is a magical spear owned by the King of Persia; the seven swine belong to King Asal of the Golden Pillars, and may be killed and eaten every night only to be found whole the next day; the spit belongs to the sea-nymphs of the sunken Island of Finchory; and the three shouts are to be given on the hill of a fierce warrior known as Mochaen, who along with his sons, are under vows to prevent any man from raising his voice on their hill.

To clear themselves of the death penalty, the sons of Turenn must complete these blood-fine tasks.

They completed the tasks, except for retrieving the cooking spit and giving the three shouts, at which time Lugh put a spell on them to make them forget the remaining tasks and return to Ireland with their prizes. After receiving the gifts, Lugh reminded the three brothers of the remaining tasks.

Dejected, they go on their way to complete the tasks. Brian, in a magical water-dress went under the sea to the sunken Island of Finchory, and seized the golden spit from the nymphs.

Finally they must perform the ordeal of the three shouts. After a great battle with the protectors of the silence on the Hill of Mochaen, the three brothers, lying fatally wounded, lift three faint cries and their blood-fine is paid.

They manage to make the journey back to Ireland, where their father Turenn urges Lugh to give them the magic pig-skin that they may heal, but Lugh refuses and thus the three brothers die, thereby avenging Cian's murder.

Sawan: There is not a whole lot written beyond that he was the brother of Cian and Goibhniu.

Other than when one day, Kian and Sawan arrived at the place of Goban to have some new weapons forged. Kian went into the forge, leaving Sawan to protect his magickal cow. But then Balor appeared, taking the form of a little red-haired boy, telling Sawan that he had overheard his brothers inside devising a plan to use the best steel for their own swords leaving the common metal for Sawan. Enraged, Sawan rushed into the forge to put a halt to the scheming, and meanwhile Balor made off with cow, bringing her to Tory Island.

Goibhniu: (gwiv'ni) (Goban) Goibhniu was the Smith God of the Tuatha De Danann. He was one of three divine craftsmen who were known as "na tri dée Dána". The other two craftsmen are Credne and Luchta.

Goibhniu was known as the son of Dian Cécht and Danu. Goibhniu had two brothers: Cian (father of Lugh), and Sawan.

Sometimes, Goibhniu was called the son of Esarg and grandson of Neit, which would make him the brother of Credné, Luchta and Dian Cécht.

Goibhniu was also known as the son of Ethliu. Which would then, make him the brother of the Daghdá, Nuada, Dian Cécht, Credne, Luchta and Lug Mac Cein.

This is typical of Celtic pantheon intricacies.

Goibhniu was known as the originator of arts and crafts.

Goibhniu raised Lugh as his foster son, teaching the boy many different skills within his crafts.

During the second battle of Moytura, Goibhniu and the other craftsmen, Credné (artificer) and Luchtanel or Luchta (carpenter or wrights) quickly repaired the damaged weapons for the Danann's.

Goibhniu was said to have been able to make a spear or sword with three blows of his hammer. He was known for brewing ale that imparted immortality on those who drank it. This ale was also known for its healing abilities.

He would host a great feast known as the Feast of Goibhniu (Fled Goibhnenn).

During the second battle of Magh Tuiredh, Goibhniu killed Rúadan, the son of Bres and Bríg (Brigit).

In Welsh myths, his Welsh counterpart was called Govannon, who had killed Dylan, the son of Aranrhod.

Quiz:

- 1. It was ____ who captured the sword of the Formorian king, Tethra.**
- 2. Cian was known to have possessed a magic ____.**
- 3. Goibhniu raised ____ as his foster son.**
- 4. ____ mortally wounded Cain with a spear.**
- 5. Ogma is thought to be related to the Gaulish God ____.**
- 6. ____ was the brother of Cian and Goibhniu.**
- 7. The seven swine belong to King Asal of the ____ Pillars.**

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Lesson Eight - The Morrigan

Morrigan (Morrigu) - The Morrigan is a Goddess of Battle, Death, and Destruction. Her name translates as either "Great Queen" or "Phantom Queen". Ernmas is said to be her mother.

The Morrigan appears as both a single goddess and sometimes as a trio of Goddesses. The deities who form the trio are Badb (Crow) Badb Catha (battle crow), and either Macha (also Crow) or Nemain (Frenzy). The Morrigan frequently appears in the guise of a hooded crow. It is said that when in human form, the Morrigan is large enough to straddle a river.

Boa Island is named for Badb. Badb is said to have recited the following prophecy of the end of the world:

**Summer without flowers,
kine without milk,
women without modesty,
men without valour;
captives without a king,
woods without mast,
sea without produce
— (Ó Cuív 37)**

Badb is described as one of the three daughters of Delbaeth son of Neid whereas Nemain is said to have been the daughter of Elcmar of the Brugh, who was the son of Delbaeth.

The sites of Armagh and Emain Macha in County Armagh, are named for Macha. A poem in the Lebor Gabála Éirenn mentions Macha as one of the daughters of Partholón, leader of the first settlement of Ireland after the flood, although it records nothing about her.

In the Yellow Lecan, the term Mesrad Machae, "the mast (acorn crop) of Macha", refers to "the heads of men that have been slaughtered."

One well known story about Macha is as follows:

Macha, daughter of Sainrith mac Imbaith, was the wife of Cruinniuc, an Ulster farmer. After Cruinniuc's first wife died, she appeared at his house and, without speaking, began acting as his wife. As long as they were together Cruinniuc's wealth increased.

When he went to a festival organized by the king of Ulster, she warned him that she would only stay with him so long as he did not mention her to anyone, and he promised to say

nothing. However, during a chariot race, he boasted that his wife could run faster than the king's horses. The king heard, and demanded she be brought to put her husband's boast to the test. Despite being heavily pregnant, she raced the horses and beat them, giving birth to twins on the finish line.

Thereafter the capital of Ulster was called Emain Macha, or "Macha's twins". She cursed the men of Ulster to suffer her labor pains in the hour of their greatest need, which is why none of the Ulstermen but the famous hero Cuchulainn was able to fight in the Táin Bó Cuailnge (Cattle Raid of Cooley).

As written in the Tain Bo Cuailnge, when the forces of Queen Medb arrive at Magh-Tregham, in the present county of Longford, on the way to Cuailnge, Neman appears amongst them:

“Then the Neman attacked them, and that was not the most comfortable night with them, from the uproar of the giant Dubtach through his sleep. The bands were immediately startled, and the army confounded, until Medb went to check the confusion.” Lebor na hUidhre, fol. 46, b1.

And in another passage, in the episode called “Breslech Maighe Muirthemhne,” where a terrible description is given of Cuchulainn’s fury at seeing the hostile armies of the south and west encamped within the borders of Uladh, we are told (Book of Leinster, fol.54, a2, and b1):

“He saw from him the ardent sparkling of the bright golden weapons over the heads of the four great provinces of Eriu, before the fall of the cloud of evening. Great fury and indignation seized him on seeing them, at the number of his opponents and at the multitude of his enemies. He seized his two spears, and his shield and his sword, and uttered from his throat a warrior’s shout, so that sprites, and satyrs, and maniacs of the valley, and the demons of the air responded, terror-stricken by the shout which he had raised on high. And the Neman confused the army; and the four provinces of Eriu dashed themselves against the points of their own spears and weapons, so that one hundred warriors died of fear and trembling in the middle of the fort and encampment that night.”

A poem in the Book of Leinster (fol. 6, a2), couples Badb and Neman as the wives of Neid or Neit:

“Neit son of Indu, and his two wives, Badb and Neamin, truly, Were slain in Ailech, without blemish, By Neptur of the Fomorians”.

As a member of the Tuatha De Danann, the Morrigan helped defeat the Firbolg at the First Battle of Mag Tuireadh and the Fomorians at the Second Battle of Mag Tuireadh.

During the Second Battle, the Morrigan "said she would go and destroy Indech son of Dé Domnann and 'deprive him of the blood of his heart and the kidneys of his valor', and she gave two handfuls of that blood to the hosts.

When Indech later appeared in the battle, he was already doomed."

It was custom for the Celt warriors to leave the battlefield until dawn so that the Morrigan could collect the heads of their fallen foes.

In the earliest copies of the Lebor Gabála Éirenn, there are listed three sisters, named Badb, Macha, and Anann. In the Book of Leinster version, Anann is identified with Morrigan, while in the Book of Fermoy version, Macha is identified with Morrigan. Go figure.

She was said to hover over battlefields in the form of a raven or hooded crow and frequently foretold or influenced the outcome of the battle. The Morrigan was often depicted as a triune goddess whose other aspects were manifested in the Goddess Badb (Vulture or Venomous) and the Goddess Nemain (Frenzy or Fury).

The Morrigan is also closely associated with horse symbolism and may, on occasion, have been linked with the Horse Goddess, Epona.

Another guise of the Morrigan is that of the "Washer at the Ford," (Bean Nighe) who could usually be found washing the clothes of men about to die in battle. In effect, she is thus choosing those whose lives will be lost in the upcoming battle. It is said that the Morrigan sang runes and cast charms to assist her favorites on the battlefield.

In one common legend concerning the Morrigan, she appears to the hero Cuchulainn (son of the God Lugh) and offers her love to him. When he fails to recognize her and rejects her, the Morrigan is deeply wounded and informs Cuchulainn that she will hinder him while he is in battle. When Cuchulainn finally perishes, she settles on his shoulder in the form of a crow, the hero's misfortune being that he never realized the feminine power of sovereignty that the Morrigan offered to him.

By some accounts, she is the consort of the Daghdha, while the Badb and Nemain are sometimes listed as consorts of Néit, an obscure War God.

Quiz:

- 1. The Morrigan helped defeat the _____ at the First Battle of Mag Tuireadh.**
- 2. Boa Island is named for _____.**
- 3. The term Mesrad Machae means the _____.**
- 4. A poem in the Book of Leinster, couples Badb and Nemain as the wives of _____.**
- 5. Nemain is said to have been the daughter of _____.**
- 6. In the earliest copies of the Lebor Gabála Éirenn, there are listed three sisters, named Badb, _____ and Anann.**
- 7. The Morrigan is also closely associated with horse symbolism and may, on occasion, have been linked with the Horse Goddess _____.**

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Lesson Ten - The Formorian Influence



Net - Net (Neit, Neith) - Net is an Irish God of War, associated in the ancient texts with the Fomorians. His father was Alldui and his son was Delbaeth. His grandsons are Balor, Goibnui and Elatha. His great-grandsons are Daghdha and Bres. His wife is often cited as either Badb or Nemain which are aspects of the triple Goddess, Morrigan.

Fea is also cited as his wife, Badb, Nemain and Fea are known as the three furies that are all aspects of the "phantom queen" known as the Morrigan.

Net was killed in Ailech by Nemptuir the Red of the Fomorians.

Delbaeth - Delbáeth (Dealbhaeth) was the son of either Aengus or Ogma of the Tuatha Dé Danann, and Ethniu of the Fomorians.

He succeeded his grandfather Eochaid Ollathair, aka the Dagda, as High King of Ireland.

He was the father, by Ernmas, of the three Irish Goddesses Ériu, Banba and Fodla.

He ruled for ten years, before dying at the hand of his son, Fiacha.

Certain portions of the Lebor Gabála Érenn identify Delbáeth as the father of Brian, Iuchar and Iucharba, mentioning that Delbáeth has another name "Tuirill Biccreo" or "Tuirill Picreo".

For this reason Delbáeth is identified as the same character as Tuireann.

Brian, Iuchar and Iucharba, were the three brothers who murdered Cain, the father of Lugh. They in turn were left to die by Lugh after succumbing to a grueling quest imposed on them by Lugh.

The Delbhna, a people of early Ireland, claimed descent from him.

Balor (Balar, Bolar) - Balor was the son of Buarainech and the husband of Cethlenn. Balor was a chieftain of the Formorian giants and grandfather of Lugh. He was known as the God of Death. He had one giant, evil eye which drooped shut, and had to be propped up in order to open it. At this point it was used as a weapon, killing all that it gazed upon. Prophecy had it that Balor was going to be killed by one of his grandchildren. And Lugh was the only one to survive Balor's attempt to kill his newborn grandchildren. To avoid his fate, Balor locked his daughter, Ethlinn, in a tower made of crystal to keep her from becoming pregnant. However, Cian, one of the Tuatha De Danann, with the help of the Druidess Birog, managed to gain entrance to the tower. Afterwards, Ethlinn gave birth to triplets by way of Cian, but Balor threw them into the ocean. Birog saved one, named Lugh, and gave him to Manannan Mac Lir, who then became his foster father. He was known as Lugh Lamhfada. And during the Second battle of Magh Tuiredh, Lugh fulfilled this prophecy in regards to Balor, his Formorian grandfather. One legend tells us that, when Balor was slain by Lugh, Balor's eye was still open when he fell face first into the ground. Thus his deadly eye beam burned a hole into the earth. Long after, the hole filled with water and became a lake which is now known as Loch na Suil, or "Lake of the Eye", which is to be found in County Sligo. And another version has it that Lugh used a sling and shot a stone at Balor's eye which drove it out the back of his head, where it continued to wreak its deadly power on the Formorian army. In yet another version, Lugh blinded Balor with a spear made by Goibniu, one of the three master craftsmen of the Tuatha De Danann. In this second and final battle, Balor killed King Nuada of the Tuatha De Danann with a glance from his eye.

Elatha - Elatha (or Elathan) was the son of Dalbaech and was a prince of the Fomorians. He was the father of Bres by Ériu of the Tuatha Dé Danann. The legend is that he came to her over the sea in a vessel of silver, himself having the appearance of a young man with yellow hair, wearing clothes of gold and five gold torcs. During the Second Battle of Magh Tuireadh, Elathan watched over Daghdá's magic harp, sometimes known as Dur-da-Bla, "the Oak of Two Blossoms", and sometimes as Coir-cethar-chuin, the "Four-Angled Music". Elatha was known to have a sense of humor and a sense of nobility. In addition to Bres, Elatha was also the father of the Daghdá, Ogma, Delbaeth and Elloth (the father of Manannan Mac Lir) which is noted in the Lebor Gabala Erinn. One legend has it that Ethne (the suspected mother) told Elatha that his father was Elathan, one of the Kings of the Fomorians; that he had come to her one time over a level sea in a great vessel that seemed to be of silver; that he himself had the appearance of a young man with yellow hair, his clothes decked with gold and five rings of gold around his neck. She had refused the love of all the young men of her own people, had given him her love and cried when he had left her. Before he left he had given her a ring from his own hand and had bade her give it only to the man whose finger it would fit. Eri brought out the ring and put it on the finger of Bres and it fit him well.

She and Bres and some of their followers then set out for the land of the Fomorians. After awhile, they came to land on the shores of the Fomorians. Elathan the local King saw the ring on Bres's hand and asked him the whole story and said that Bres was his own son. Elathan then asked Bres what it was that drove him out of his own country and his own kingship.

Bres answered truthfully: "Nothing drove me out but my own injustice and my own hardness; I took away their treasurers from the people and their jewels and their food itself. And there were never taxes put on them before I was their King. And still I am come to look for fighting men that I may take Ireland by force". Elathan listened intently and then bade him go to the chief King of the Fomorians; Balor of the Evil Eye for aid. He is said to have had a sense of humor and nobility.

Bres (Eochaid Bres, Eochu Bres) - Bres was the God of Fertility and Agriculture. He is the son of Elatha, a prince of the Fomorians, and the Goddess Eriu. When king Nuada lost his hand in the first battle of Mag Tuireadh, he was deemed unfit to rule the Tuatha Dé Danann.

Hoping to reconcile relations between the Fomorians and the Tuatha Dé Danann, Bres was named king and Brigid of the Tuatha de Danann married him.

Bres forced the Tuatha De Danann to pay tribute to the Fomorians and worked the Danann as slaves. Ogma was forced to carry firewood and the Daghdha had to dig trenches around forts. He neglected his duties of hospitality; the Tuatha De complained that after visiting his house their knives were never greased and their breaths did not smell of ale. Cairbre, poet of the Tuatha De, composed a scathing poem against him, which was the first satire in Ireland

After Bres had ruled for seven years, Nuada was once again restored to the kingship after his hand was replaced with a silver one by Dian Cecht and Bres was exiled.

He went to his father for help to recover his throne, but Elatha would not help him gain by foul means what he had been unable to keep.

Bres was guided by his father to Balor, another leader of the Fomorians, for the help he sought.

He led the Fomorians in the Second Battle of Magh Tuireadh but lost.

He was found unprotected on the battlefield by Lugh and pleaded for his life. Lugh spared him because he promised to teach the Tuatha De Danann the art of agriculture.

Ethne - Ethne is the mother of Lugh; a woman of the Fomorians and the daughter of Balor. The myth associated with her is similar to that of Danae of the Greeks; she was locked in a tower by Balor, who knew that her son would kill him.

Cian the son of Dian Cecht found his way into the tower and impregnated her. She gave birth to Lugh, who was then raised by the Fir Bolg queen Tailtiu and Manannan Mac Lir.

Tailtiu - Tailtiu was the wife of Eochaid Mac Eirc, whom was the last Fir Bolg High King of Ireland. Tailtiu thus was the last Queen (Rígh-bhean) of the Fir Bolg.

Tailtiu was the daughter of Mag Mor king of Spain.

She was the foster mother of Lugh Lamhfada.

After her death, Lugh established a festival "Áenach Tailteann" in her honor, which continued to be celebrated as late as the 18th century.

One year the Fir Bolg had a bad harvest and many were starving. Tailtiu took up an axe and began to clear a forest with her own two hands in the space of one year. She died after clearing the plain of Breg in County Meath, and Lugh instituted funeral games (Oenach Tailtenn) in her honor at the festival of Lughnasadh.

A Tailtiu wedding consists of one year and a day.

The town of Teltown in County Meath is named for her.

Quiz:

- 1. Ethne is the mother of ____.**
- 2. During the Second Battle of Magh Tuireadh, _____, son of Dalbaech, watched over Dagda's magic harp**
- 3. _____ succeeded his grandfather Eochaid Ollathair, as High King of Ireland.**
- 4. _____ is the father of Bres by Ériu.**
- 5. Balor was known as the God of _____.**
- 6. Bres was the God of Fertility and _____.**
- 7. Loch na Suil is known as the _____.**

Whispering Woods Celtic Pantheon course

Lesson Twelve

A visit to the Sea



The Sea Deity of the Tuatha De Danann is well known but no less confusing as far as the family tree goes.

They are indeed Deities surrounded by mystery. I would just like to mention that Manannan Mac Lir is my personal patron God and I respect him dearly. Danu is my patron Goddess.

Fand - Fand started out as an Irish Sea Goddess, but was later described as a "Queen of the Fairies". Her name is variously translated as "Pearl of Beauty" or "A Tear".

She is associated with the Other World islands of pleasure, youth and women. Her twin sister is Liban, Goddess of Healing and Pleasure.

The Goddess Fand can be found listed in the Ulster Cycle tale, "Serglige Con Culainn" (The Sickbed of Cuchulainn). She appears first as an otherworldly sea bird, and later as an avenging Goddess.

In her sea bird form, she flies with a flock of enchanted birds, with each pair joined together by a silver chain. Fand, flying with her sister Lí Ban, stands out from the rest as they are connected by a gold chain.

The hero Cuchulainn hurled stones at the seabirds, of which one passed through Fand's wing feathers. Later, Fand and Lí Ban returned in the form of "Otherworldly women" and confronted him on the shore of the lake. They beat Cuchulainn with horsewhips until he fell ill and lied in bed for a year, unable to rise.

Cuchulainn did eventually regain his health by the favor of Fand. She was persuaded to do so, by Lí Ban, and Cuchulainn's charioteer, Láeg.

Cuchulainn reluctantly agreed to travel to Fand's otherworld island and help her in a battle against her foes. Cuchulainn and Fand then became lovers.

The relationship did not last, as Cuchulainn's wife, Emer was very jealous and came to attack the couple with a troop of women armed with knives.

Fand saw that Emer was worthy of Cuchulainn, and obviously very upset by their affair, so Fand choose to leave him. She chants a poem, and then returns to her husband Manannan Mac Lir, who shakes his magical cloak of mists between Fand and Cuchulainn, that they may never meet again.

Fand is also mentioned in the Táin Bó Cúailnge (the Cattle Raid of Cooley).

Niamh - The Goddess or otherworldly woman, Niamh of the Golden Hair, is said to be a daughter of Manannan Mac Lir.

As Niamh and Fand obviously share some of the same characteristics, it is possible Niamh is also the daughter of Fand. Some sources also mention her as another possible daughter of "Cliodna" by way of Manannan Mac Lir.

Manannan Mac Lir - Manannan Mac Lir is the Celtic God of the Sea. He is often seen as a psycho pomp, and is said to have strong connections to the Otherworld islands, as well as to weather and the mists between the worlds.

He is usually counted as one of the Tuatha De Danann, although many scholars consider him to be of an older race of deities.

In the tale "His Three Calls to Cormac" Manannan tempts the Irish King Cormac mac Airt with treasure in exchange for his family. Cormac is led into the Otherworld and taught a harsh lesson by Manannan Mac Lir, but in the end his wife and children are restored to him, and Manannan rewards him with a magic cup which breaks if three lies are spoken over it, and is made whole again if three truths are spoken.

The tale "Manannan at Play" features the God as a clown and beggar who turns out to be a Harper. Manannan Mac Lir, presented here in his trickster guise, plays a number of pranks, some resulting in serious trouble, but by the end of the tale he once again sets everything to right.

In the Voyage of Bran, Manannan prophesied to Bran that a great warrior would be descended from him.

The 8th century saga Compert Mongáin recounts the deeds of a legendary son, "Mongán mac Fiachnai", fathered by Manannan Mac Lir by the wife of Fiachnae mac Báetáin.

Manannan Mac Lir has strong ties to the Isle of Man, where he is referenced in a traditional ballad as having been the nation's first ruler.

On Midsummer, the Manx people offer bundles of reeds, meadow grasses and yellow flowers to Manannan in a ritual "paying of the rent", accompanied with prayers for his aid and protection while fishing.

He is also believed to have been a magician who could make an illusory fleet from sedge or pea shells in order to discourage would-be invaders.

According to the "Book of Fermoy", a Manuscript of the 14th to the 15th century, "he was a pagan, a lawgiver among the Tuatha De Danann, and a necromancer possessed of power to envelope himself and others in a mist, so that they could not be seen by their enemies."

It was by this method that he was said to protect the Isle of Man from discovery.

Manannan was associated with a "cauldron of regeneration". This is seen in the tale of Cormac mac Airt, among other tales.

Here, he appeared at Cormac's ramparts in the guise of a warrior who told him he came from a land where old age, sickness, death, decay, and falsehood were unknown.

As guardian of the Blessed Isles as well as Mag Mell he also has strong associations with Emhain Ablach, the Isle of Apple Trees, where the magical silver apple branch is found. To the Celts, the Blessed Isles that lie beyond the sea are the gateways to the Otherworld, where the soul journeys to after death.

Manannan is the guardian of these gateways between the worlds. He is the Ferryman, who comes to transport the souls of the dead back through the veils. To some this land was known as Tir na nog, Mag Mell or Ablach.

According to Táin Bó Cuailnge (the Cattle Raid of Cooley), his wife is the beautiful Goddess "Fand" (Pearl of Beauty). In later years she was depicted as a "Fairy Queen", though earlier texts mention her as being a sea deity.

Other sources say his wife was the Goddess Áine, though she is at other times said to be his daughter. Manannan had a daughter whose name was Niamh of the Golden hair.

It is also probable that another daughter was Clidna, but sources treat this differently.

Either way, she is a young woman from Manannan's lands, whose surname is "of the Fair Hair".

Aife was said to be his mistress. She was the Goddess Queen of the Isle of Shadow along with her rival sister Scathach. Aife had a son by Cuchulainn who grew up to join his father's Red Branch Warriors.

Legend has it that she stole an alphabet of knowledge from her fellow deities to give to humankind for which in turn, she was turned into a crane.

In Irish legend she succeeded her older sister, Aobh, as the wife of the sea God Llyr. She was jealous of her step children, so she turned them into swans for nine hundred years.

Aífe's story appears in "Tochmarc Emire" (The Wooing of Emer), and the death of her son is recounted in "Aided Óenfhir Aífe" (The Tragic Death of Aífe's Only Son).

Mongan is a late addition to the Mac Lir family tree. The historical Mongan was a son of Fiachnae mac Báetáin, born towards the end of the 6th century.

According to legend, "Fiachnae", who was at war in Scotland, came home with a victory because of a bargain made with Manannan Mac Lir to let Manannan have a child by his wife. This child, Mongan, was supposedly taken to the Otherworld when he was very young, to be raised there by Manannan Mac Lir.

Manannan is often seen in the traditional role of foster father, raising a number of foster children including Lugh and the children of Deirdre.

Manannan Mac Lir owned many magical items.

To Cormac mac Airt, he gave his magic goblet of truth.

Manannan Mac Lir also had a ship that did not need sails named "Wave Sweeper".

He owned a cloak of mists that granted him invisibility, a flaming helmet, and three swords named; Retaliator (Fragarach) which never missed its target, Great fury, and little fury.

He also owned a horse called "Enbarr of the Flowing Mane" which could travel over water as easily as land. He owned as well as two magickal spears named Yellow Shaft and Red Javelin.

Manx legends also tells of four items that he gave to Lugh as parting gifts, when the boy went to aid the people of Dana against the Fomorians.

These were; "Manannan's coat, which while wearing he could not be wounded, his breastplate, which no weapon could pierce and his helmet which had two precious stones set one in front and one behind, which flashed as he moved. Manannan also gave him his own deadly sword, called the "Answerer", from which wound of which no man ever recovered. Lugh also took Enbarr of the Flowing Mane, and was joined by Manannan's own sons and Fairy Cavalcade.

In the Irish manuscript, The Yellow Book of Lecan, there are said to be "four Manannan's". The name given for the "first Manannan" is:

Manandan mac Alloit, a Druid of the Tuatha De Danann and in the time of the Tuatha De Danann was he. Oirbsen, so indeed, was his proper name.

It was from Oirbsen that Loch Oirbsen is named.

Manannan's Welsh equivalent is Manawydan fab Llyr.

Lir - (Llyr, Cymru) Lir is a Celtic Sea God and father of Manannan Mac Lir.

The Manx Sea God, Lir has given his name to many places, such as Leicester, and his Welsh counterpart is Shakespeare's King Lear. In Welsh mythology, Llyr is the father of Bran, Branwen, and Manawydan.

In early genealogies, he is named "Allód" and corresponds to Llŷr in Welsh mythology.

Lir is a key character in the well-known mythological story Oidheadh Chlainne Lir, however it is not clearly established whether this is the same person as Manannan's father or a different Lir.

The Lir in this story was the rival of Bodb Dearg for the kingship of the Tuatha De Danann after their retreat into the fairy mounds. In order to appease Lir, Bodb gave one of his daughters "Aeb" to marry him.

She bore him four children, one girl, Fionnuala, and three sons, Aed and twins, Fiachra and Conn.

Aeb died and, not wanting the children to remain motherless, Bodb sent another of his daughters, Aoife, to marry Ler. Aoife grew jealous of the children and cursed them to live as swans for 900 years.

Dylan: Dylan is a Celtic God of the Waves. He is best known as the Welsh Sea God. He is the brother of Lleu and son of Gwydion and Arianrhod. His grandmother is the Welsh Great Mother, "Don".

He was eventually accidentally slain by his uncle, Govannon the Smith God.

Shoney: Though the Shoney are now associated with sea faeries off the coast of Scotland and Northern Ireland, they were once personified as a single God of the North Sea.

Quiz:

1. The "Book of _____", is a Manuscript of the 14th to the 15th century.
2. Llyr is the father of Bran, _____, and Manawydan.
3. Serglige Con Culainn appears in the _____ cycle.
4. Niamh is known as Niamh of the _____ _____.
5. Mongan was a son of Fiachnae mac _____.
6. Aeb was the wife of _____.
7. When flying, Fand was connected to Li Ban by a _____ _____.

Whispering Woods Celtic Pantheon course

Lesson Thirteen

A Walk beside the Rivers



According to the old Irish, Dindshenchas are the "tradition or lore of places".

Dindshenchas are prose and verse relating to the origins of place-names.

They are the Metrical Dindshenchas (Lore of places), the Banshenchas (such as the An Banshenchas which is found in the Book of Leinster, Book of Hy Many, and the Great Book of Lecan), and the Prose Dindshenchas. The majority of these collections draw from the dindshenchas found in the Book of Leinster.

The most famous collection is the Dindshenchas ascribed to Amhairgin mac Amhalgaidh, a poet to King Diarmaid during the 6th century. It describes the naming of more than 200 locations and was an important source for Irish poets, who were expected to be familiar with the lore of each area.

It is through the Dindshenchas that we become familiar with the Deity of the Celtic pantheon who are associated with particular locations such as Rivers, Wells and Lakes.

Dea Sequana: She is the Celtic deity of the river Seine (northern France) as well as the springs at the source of the Seine where she was worshipped by the tribe of the Sequanae. The springs, are called the Fontes Sequanae (The Springs of Sequana) and is where a healing shrine was erected in her name, circa late first century B.C.E.

Believers filled a large pot with bronze and silver models of parts of human bodies to be cured by her. Wooden and stone images of limbs, internal organs, heads and complete bodies were offered to her in the hopes of a cure. They also gave to her, coins and other wealth as an offering in the hopes of a cure.

The "duck" is said to be sacred to her.

Sinann - Goddess of the River Shannon. From the Metrical Dindshenchas comes the story of Sinann.

Sinann was a Goddess in ancient Celtic mythology associated with the river Shannon which is named after her. "Shannon" is the anglicized spelling of "Sinann" .

Sinann was originally a mortal woman who searched for the Well of Knowledge (Well of Segais). Within this well lived Salmon who had gained great knowledge by eating the sacred hazel nuts which had fallen from nine magical, hazel trees. When Sinann found the well, she opened the cover and the water immediately flowed out and became the river Shannon. In the process, it also drowned her and then transformed her into the Goddess Sinann.

Coventina: Celtic Goddess of Water and springs in Britain. She was known locally in the area of Carrawburgh (Roman Brocolitia) along Hadrian's Wall.

Little is known of Coventina, On one bas relief found at Carrawburgh (near Hadrian's Wall) her name is associated with three nymphs holding vessels with issuing streams of water; on another she is pictured as a water nymph on a leaf, pouring water from a vessel. At least ten inscriptions to Coventina are recorded from Carrawburgh and several stone altars contained dedications to Coventina, as do two pottery incense burners.

She is looked upon as the Queen of River Goddesses, particularly of the watershed where the Celts believe the power of the river deity can be seen and its energy most keenly felt.

She was most closely associated with England's Caldew River.

Like most river deities, she represents abundance, inspiration, and prophecy.

Folks would offer coins to her as a sacrifice while performing sympathetic magick in which "like attracts like".

There is also evidence of her having been worshipped in Celtic Gaul where reliefs have been found depicting her reclining on a floating leaf.

She apparently had high status, and is referred to in inscriptions as "Augusta" and "Sancta".

Adsullata (Esyllt) (She who is gazed upon): Adsullata was a Celtic River Goddess, associated with the River Savus (Sava) in the Balkans.

She is known from a single inscription found at Saudörfel, Austria and also from the character of "Esyllt" from the Cymric (Welsh) tale of "Drystan ac Esyllt" which later became the tale of "Tristan and Isolde".

It is thought that she originated as a Celtic solar deity and may well have had a healing aspect.

Belisama (Summer Bright): She is connected with lakes and rivers, fire, crafts and light. She has also been associated with Minerva/Athena and has been compared to Brigid. Some say that Belisama is the consort of Belenus.

A Gaulish inscription found at Vaison-la-Romaine in Provence shows that a nemeton was dedicated to her: "Segomarus Ouilloneos tooutious Namausatis eiōrou Bēlēsami sosin nemēton".

A Latin inscription from Saint-Lizier, Aquitania associates her with Minerva:

"Minervae / Belisamae / sacrum / Q(uintus) Valerius / Montan[us] / [e]x v[oto]?"

Among the ancient Celts she was known as the Goddess of the River Ribble. The River Ribble is a river that runs through North Yorkshire and Lancashire, in the North of England.

Clota (Clud, Clutida, Clutioa) (Divine Washer): Clota was the patron Goddess of the River Clyde. She was worshiped by the local Welsh-speaking Damnonii tribe who held the territory which later was to become the Kingdom of Strathclyde.

Her name is cognate with that of the Irish deity Clothra one of the four daughters of Eochad Feidlech and the sister of Medb.

One view is that she is the same Goddess as found in the Mabinogi of Pwyll Pendefig Dyfed where Pwyll's rival for the hand of Rhiannon is Gwawl ap Clud.

Boyne (Abhainn na Bóinne): Boann or Boand was the Goddess of the River Boyne. According to the Lebor Gabála Éirenn she was the daughter of Delbáeth, son of Elada, of the Tuatha De Danann.

Depending on which source one uses, her husband is Nechtan, Elcmar or Nuada. Her lover is the Dagda, by whom she had a son, "Aengus".

As told in the metrical Dindsenchas, Boann created the River Boyne by way of her actions.

Though she was forbidden by her husband, Nechtan, Boann approached the magical well of Segais (also known as the Well of Wisdom), which was surrounded by hazel trees. Nuts from the hazels were known to fall into the well, where they were eaten by the salmon who in turn gained great wisdom. Boann challenged the power of the well by walking around it counter-clockwise; this caused the waters to surge up violently and rush down to the sea, creating the River Boyne.

In this catastrophe, she was swept along in the rushing waters, and lost an arm, leg and eye, and ultimately her life, in the flood. The poem equates her with famous rivers in other countries, including the Severn, Tiber, Jordan, Tigris and Euphrates.

She also appears in Táin Bó Fraích (author unknown) as the maternal aunt and protector of the mortal Fróech.

Her name is interpreted as "white cow" (bó fhionn) in the dindsenchas. Her story is identical to the story of Sinann.

Yonne (Icaunis)" She is a Celtic river deity. She is the Goddess of the river Yonne in Gaul (Roman name for the region of Western Europe comprising present day northern Italy, France, Belgium, western Switzerland and the parts of the Netherlands and Germany on the west bank of the River Rhine). She is known from a single inscription, found at Auxerre in Burgundy.

Condatis (waters meet): He was worshipped primarily in northern Britain but also in Gaul. He is a Celtic God associated with the confluences of rivers, in particular the Tyne (A river in northern England which flows eastward to the North Sea) and the Tees (both of these rivers are located in Northern England and they flow eastward towards the North Sea).

The name Condatis is derived from condate and means "God of the Confluence".

In ancient Roman times he was equated with Mars, it is thought as a healing God.

Condatis is known from several inscriptions in Britain. As well as a single inscription found at Alonnes, Sarthe, France.

Dea Matrona (Divine Mother Goddess): She was the Goddess of the river Marne in Gaul ((northeastern France). Dea Matrona was often worshipped as a triple goddess, and was then known as Deae Matres (or Deae Matronae). Her associated aspects were similar to the Fates, Furies, or the Norns.

Sabrina: Celtic river Goddess associated with the Severn, (a river of England and Wales that flows into the Bristol Channel).

Verbeia: She is the Celtic Goddess of the river Wharfe. Verbeia was a Goddess worshipped in Roman Britain. She is known from a single altar-stone dedicated to her at "Ilkley" (a town known for its spa, located in West Yorkshire, in the north of England). There is an image of a woman in Ilkley who is thought to represent the goddess; she is depicted with an overlarge head and schematic features. She wears a long, pleated robe and has two large snakes, represented as geometric zigzags, which she grasps, one in each hand.

Quiz:

- 1. The most famous collection is the _____ ascribed to Amhairgin mac Amhalgaidh.**
- 2. Coventina is associated with three _____ holding vessels with issuing streams of water.**
- 3. Dea Matrona is the Goddess of the river _____.**
- 4. Clota is the patron Goddess of the River _____.**
- 5. The story of Sinann is found in the _____ Dindshenchas.**
- 6. The majority of collections draw from the dindshenchas found in the _____ .**
- 7. Belisama is the Goddess of the river _____.**

Whispering Woods Celtic Pantheon Course

Lesson Fourteen

Hot springs and wells



Rag trees or "cloutie trees" are located close to wells and the supplicant asks for something (generally healing) and ties a rag to the branch of the tree. It is thought that by the time the rag rots off of the tree branch, and then the request will manifest.

Other offerings included pins, garlands of flowers, something to represent the illness or favor asked, and other small gifts. In the seventh century CE, the Penitentials of Theodorus said that "no one shall go to trees, or wells, or stones or enclosures, or anywhere else except to God's church, and there make vows or release himself from them."

In spite of efforts by the Christians to eradicate this practice, it continues on to the present time.

Sulis:

Sulis was the local Goddess of the thermal springs that still feed the spa baths at Bath, which the Romans called *Aquae Sulis* (the waters of Sulis). Sometime in the 1st century Roman engineers converted the shrine at the springs into a great ornamental pool, enclosed within a building erected in the style of a Graeco-Roman temple, theatre and bath suite. The Roman temple is dedicated to *Sulis Minerva*, as the primary deity of the temple spa. *Sulis Minerva* is one of the few attested pairings of a Celtic goddess with her Roman counterpart.

Sulis was also a Goddess of Wisdom and Decisions. Her name appears on inscriptions at Bath, but nowhere else.

Inscribed lead tablets suggest that she was viewed as both a nourishing, life-giving Mother Goddess and an effective agent of curses as requested by her followers.

One of the curses found at her shrine goes as follows:

"I have given to Minerva the Goddess Sulis the thief who has stolen my hooded cloak whether slave or free, whether man or woman. He is not to redeem this gift unless with his blood."

Grannis: Grannus (Granus Mogounus Amarcolitanus) was a deity associated with spas, the sun, fires, and healing, thermal and mineral springs. He is the embodiment of therapeutic heat. To some he is considered a minor Sun God. He has also been purported to be the consort of Sirona.

One of his most famous cult centres was at Aquae Granni (Aachen, Germany). Aachen means "water" in Old High German.

Many inscriptions to Grannis have been uncovered in Germany, though this is by no means the only area where the cult of this widespread Celtic deity occurred.

His name is recorded on inscriptions at cult sites throughout Gaul.

In all of his centres of worship where he is assimilated to a Roman god, the God Grannus, was equated with Apollo. In Trier, he is identified more specifically with Apollo Phoebus.

Ban Naomha: An Irish fish goddess who takes the form of a trout.

She occupies an ancient well at Kil-na-Greina in County Cork where, if the right ritual is performed, she will answer any question.

This magical trout was invisible to all but the second-sighted. By taking three drinks from the well, crawling around the well three times, and placing an egg-sized stone on the altar with each pass, an individual could force the fish to show herself and to answer any question.

Ceibhfhiinn: (CAY-vun) She is the Celtic Goddess of Intelligence, Inspiration and Knowledge.

She is said to be the guardian of the Well of Knowledge, and refuses to let one drink if they seek wisdom.

She would constantly fill a vessel with water from the sacred well only to pour it on the ground.

Airmed: Airmed, her brother, Miach and father DianCecht, sang spells over the well of Slane in Ireland. Their mortally wounded men were cast into it as soon as they were slain. They were alive when they came out again.

Borvo: In Gaul, he was worshipped at Bourbonne-les-Bains, in the territory of the Lingones. Votive tablets inscribed "Borvo" show that the inscribers desired healing for themselves or others.

Inscriptions have also been uncovered in the Netherlands at Utrecht, where he is called "Boruoboendua Vabuso Labbonus", and in Portugal at Caldas de Vizella and at Idanha a Velha, where he is called Borus and identified with "Mars".

At Aix-en-Provence, he was referred to as "Borbanus" and "Bormanus" but at Caldas de Vizella in Portugal, he was hailed as "Bormanicus".

Wherever he is assimilated to a Roman god, Borvo was equated with "Apollo". He bore similarities to the Goddess Sirona, who was also a healing deity associated with mineral springs, but he is clearly distinct from her.

Some inscriptions associate Borvo with the Goddess Damona.

In other areas, Borvo's partner is the Goddess Bormana.

Nemausus: (Deus Nemausus) Nemausus is often said to have been the Celtic patron god of Nemausus (Nîmes) from whom the city derived its name.

He was the local Celtic spirit guardian of the spring that originally provided all water for the settlement of Nimes.

Quiz:

1. Cloutie trees are located close to _____.
2. _____ is assimilated to the Roman god, Apollo.
3. Airmed, sang spells over the well of _____.
4. Aachen means _____.
5. Sulis Minerva is one of the few attested pairings of a Celtic goddess with her _____ counterpart.
6. Ban Naomha takes on the form of a _____.
7. Some inscriptions associate _____ with the Goddess Damona.

Whispering Woods Celtic Pantheon course

Lesson Fifteen

Of the Arts



The first Irish Harp was designed by the Celtic Goddess of Music, "Canola". During a lovers' quarrel she went for a walk in night. While walking she heard some beautiful music and fell asleep on the spot. Upon awakening in the morning light, she discovered that the music had been made by the wind as it gently flowed through some rotted sinews attached to an old whale skeleton. She took the concept and the sound and created the first Irish harp.

Abhean: Abhean is the Harper God of the Tuatha De Danann. Abhean is the son of Bec-Felmas and personal Harper to Lugh. He was killed by Óengus in front of Midir, according to a poem by Fland Mainistreach in Lebor Gabála Érenn.

Abarta: (Performer of Feats) Abarta is a member of the Tuatha Dé Danann. He was a master performer but his true passion as a warrior was unfulfilled due to his cruel nature.

He is a good one to path work with if dealing with issues of jealousy.

In the Fenian cycle (The Fenian Cycle or Fiannaidheacht is a body of prose and verse centering on the exploits of the mythical hero Fionn mac Cumhaill and his warriors the Fianna Éireann), the deeds of Finn Mac Cumhaill, tell of how Abarta leads Finn and 14 members of the Fianna on a journey to the Otherworld on a wild gray horse.

Adna: He was a Bard God in the employment of King Conchobar. He was considered to be one of Ireland's greatest bards. He was the father of another bard named, Neide.

Aengus: Also known as Aengus MacOg. He was a harpist of the Tuatha De Danann and the son of the Dagda and Boand.

He is associated with "songbirds" and is seen as a God of Beauty, Perfection and Love.

He was a renowned musician, though there is no record of him being a bard.

He is a Patron God of Poets and Musicians.

Ai: or Aoi Mac Olloman The bard and poet God of the Tuatha De Danann. He is the son of Olloman. He was a bard and poet of the Tuatha De Danann who fulfilled a Druidic prophecy with his great talents and powers of music.

The prophecy said that if a great wind rocked the house where his pregnant mother dwelled that he would be this gifted person, as it turned out, he in fact was.

Aoi Mac Olloman was also thought to have been one of the four gods who drove the three sons of Carman, a reputed warrior-woman and sorceress from Athens, out of Ireland, imprisoning Carman and leaving her to die of "heartbreak". Her sons were Dian (violent), Dub (dark) and Dothur (wicked). The other three gods of the Tuatha De Danann who assisted Aoi, were, Crichinbel, Lug and Be Chuille.

Aitherne: He is a Bard and Celtic God of Courage.

He stole the infamous three cranes of denial, deceit, and Churlishness from King Midhir, which took away Midhir's access to the Land of the dead leaving him vulnerable.

Amergin (Amergin mac Miled) (white knee): A Harper God of Magick and Seer's.

Amergin was a son of Mil Espáine and served as a druid, bard and judge for the Milesians.

A number of poems attributed to Amergin are part of the Milesian mythology.

One of his most popular poems is as follows:

The Song of Amergin

I am a stag of seven tines,
I am a wide flood on a plain,
I am a wind on the deep waters,
I am a shining tear of the sun,
I am a hawk on a cliff,
I am fair among flowers,
I am a god who sets the head afire with smoke.
I am a battle waging spear,
I am a salmon in the pool,
I am a hill of poetry,
I am a ruthless boar,
I am a threatening noise of the sea,
I am a wave of the sea,
Who but I knows the secrets of the unhewn dolmen ?

Amorgin: There is yet another poet God known as Amorgin who is boasted of for wisdom, wealth, and his quick tongue. He is the father of "Conall" of the victories. He is also thought to be one of the tutors of Cuchulainn.

Cermait: Called the "honey-mouthed" King of the bards and God of eloquence and Literature. Sometimes he is considered an aspect of Ogma.

He was a son of the Daghdha.

He was killed by Lugh after he had an affair with Lugh's wife.

His three sons, Mac Cuill, Mac Cecht and Mac Gréine, avenged his death, and went on to become the High Kings of Ireland.

Quiz:

1. _____ stole the infamous three cranes of denial, deceit, and Churlishness.
2. Abhean is the _____ God of the Tuatha Dé Danann.
3. Amorgin is the father of _____.
4. Adna is a Bard God in the employment of _____.
5. Amergin was a son of _____.
6. Aengus is associated with _____.
7. _____ created the first Irish harp.

Whispering Woods Celtic Pantheon course

Lesson Sixteen

A Walk through the Woods



Adamair: He is sometimes known as the husband of Flidais. In many Celtic versions he is the God of the Wild. He is also known as a God of Sex and Stamina.

Flidais: "Foltchaín" (beautiful hair) - As a member of the Tuatha De Danann, She is a shape-shifter, and worshiped as a Goddess of Nature and as a patroness of wild beasts. In the Lebor Gabála Éirenn, she is said to have been the mother of Arden, Bé Chuille, Dinand, and Bé Téite.

In the Middle Irish glossary *Cóir Anmann* (Fitness of Names) she is said to be the wife of the legendary High King Adamair and the mother of Nia Segamain, who by his mother's power was able to milk deer as if they were cows.

According to the *Metrical Dindshenchas*, she was the mother of Fand.

She also appears in the Ulster Cycle, where she is the lover of Fergus mac Róich and the owner of a magical herd of cattle.

The *Táin Bó Flidais* (Driving of Flidais's Cattle) tells how Fergus carried her and her cattle away from her husband, Ailill Finn.

During the *Táin Bó Cúailnge* (Cattle Raid of Cooley) she slept in the tent of Ailill mac Máta, king of Connacht, and every seven days her herd supplied milk for the entire army.

In a later version of *Táin Bó Flidais* she has one cow which can feed 300 men from one night's milking.

Abellio: (Abelio and Abelianni) A God worshipped in the Garonne Valley in Gallia Aquitania, known to us primarily by a number of inscriptions which were discovered at Comminges. He is thought to have been a God of Apple trees.

Some believe that Abellio is the same name as the Greek God, Apollo.

Buxenus: In the Gallo-Roman religion, Buxenus was an epithet of the Gaulish Mars, known from a single inscription found in Velleron in the Vaucluse.

He was invoked as "de[o] Marti Buxeno" (to the god Mars Buxenus). He is thought to be

associated with box trees. He was worshipped primarily in Gaul along with Abellio, Fagus and Robur.

Fagus: Also in the Gallo-Roman religion, Fagus was a God known from four inscriptions found in the Hautes-Pyrénées. Fāgus is Latin for "beech".

He was worshipped primarily in Gaul and the Pyrenees.

Fagus is also the genus of beeches.

Robor: Robor or Roboris was a God invoked alongside the genius loci on a single inscription found in Angoulême. Genius Loci (genius of the place) refer to the presiding deity or spirit of a specific locale or area.

Arduinna: She is the Gallic Goddess of Moon, Woods and Hunting in the Ardennes (Lady of the Forests). The Celts of Gaul honored her as Goddess of Justice and Childbirth.

The Ardennes Forest, named after her, was her special domain.

She is depicted as being accompanied by a boar, her sacred animal.

The Romans equated her with their goddess Diana.

Blodeuedd:

According to Welsh mythology, Blodeuwedd (Blodeuedd), is a woman made from the flowers of broom, meadowsweet and the oak by Math fab Mathonwy and Gwydion and who is destined to be the wife of Lleu Llaw Gyffes.

Her story is part of the "Fourth Branch of the Mabinogi, the tale of Math son of Mathonwy".

The story goes that Lleu Llaw Gyffes has been placed under three curses by his mother Arianrhod; the last of these dictates being that he will never have a human wife.

And so King Math and Lleu's uncle Gwydion create Blodeuwedd from flowers and she marries Lleu.

As time goes on, Blodeuwedd has an affair with Gronw Pebr, who is the Lord of Penllyn and together they plot to kill Lleu.

However Lleu can only be killed under certain conditions and Blodeuwedd tricks him into telling her what these conditions are.

He cannot be killed indoors or outdoors, on horseback or on foot; and can be killed only by a spear forged when people are attending mass. Consequently he can only be killed whilst he had one foot on a bathtub and one on a goat (the bathtub being placed on a river bank but under a roof) and by someone using a weapon created according to the above specifications.

Under the persuasion of Blodeuwedd on how these conditions might be fulfilled; Lleu places himself in this position, unaware that Gronw was lying in wait with the required weapon. Lleu is killed and Gronw and Blodeuwedd assume power together. On hearing of this deceitful act, Gwydion set out to find and cure Lleu, who at his death, was transformed into the form of an eagle. Gwydion finds and restores Lleu to human form and Lleu then kills Gronw.

Gwydion in turn, curses Blodeuwedd, turning her into an owl. "You are never to show your face to the light of day, rather you shall fear other birds; they will be hostile to you,

and it will be their nature to maul and molest you wherever they find you.
You will not lose your name but always be called Blodeuwedd."
And thus is the plight of the owl to this very day.

Abnoba: Gallic Goddess of Woods and springs and Protector's of Hunting and Beasts. She was closely associated with the Black Forest in Germany and is seen as the patron goddess of the Black Forest.

She is known from about nine epigraphic inscriptions. Epigraphy is the study of inscriptions as a form of writing.

One altar at the Roman baths at Badenweiler, Germany and another at Mühlenbach identify her with Diana, the Roman Goddess of the Hunt. There she is known as Dianae Abnoba.

There is some speculation that the river Avon is named for one of the variations of her name.

Quiz:

1. Buxenus was an epithet of the Gaulish, _____.
2. Another name for Flidais is "Foltchaín" which means _____.
3. To be slain, Lleu had to have one foot on a bathtub and his other foot on a _____.
4. Buxenus is thought to be associated with _____.
5. Adammair is sometimes known as the husband of _____.
6. Robor or Roboris was a God invoked alongside the _____ on a single inscription found in Angoulême.
7. Abnoba was associated with the _____ in Germany.

Whispering Woods Celtic Pantheon course

Lesson Seventeen

Of Wine and Spirits



Accasbel: The Irish, Partholon God of Mead and Wine. He is credited with having created the first public drinking establishment in Ireland.

Latis - She was originally a Lake Goddess but eventually transformed into a Goddess of Water and Beer. Latis is the name of two Celtic deities worshipped in Roman Britain. One of these is a Goddess (Dea Latis) who is known from a single inscription.

Goibniu or **Goibhniu** (Goive-nu) has already been mentioned as a son of Brigid and Tuireann and the smith of the Tuatha De Danann. He and his brothers Creidhne and Luchtaine were known as the Trí Dee Dana, the three Gods of Art, who forged the weapons which the Tuatha De used to battle the Fomorians. Goibniu was also known for sacred beer-brewing which provided the imbiber with immortality.

Braciaca (Gaulish God of Beer) He is remembered in an inscription located at Haddon House, Derbyshire.

Because the modern Cymric word for malt is "brag" and brewing "bragu" it is reasonable to propose that Braciaca was a God of brewing.

Many Celtic Deities such as Braciaca are remembered in such a manner, an inscription or two and no more...

Mabon: (Wales): He is generally depicted as a youthful Harvest and Wine God who is similar to Dionysus. His name represents the second of the three harvests and is a celebration of the grape harvest and the wine.

The Celts often celebrated by drinking "new" wine in honor of Mabon.

Meduna: Meduna (Essence of Mead) is a Celtic Goddess known from a single inscription found at Bertrich in Germany.

Maeve (Mebd): (the inebriating one) The Goddess Maeve's drink was the Sacred mead. She was known as the Intoxicating Queen of War. She was also known as the Celtic Goddess of War and Drinking. The Celts had a well known practice of getting intoxicated before they engaged in battle.

Dyfed (Dyfel, Demetos): His name literally means the God of Mead, or the God of Drunkenness. He was the patron deity of the Demetae of South Wales and lends his name to the modern county of Dyfed.

Quiz:

1. Latis was originally known as a ____ Goddess.
2. Braciaca is known as the Gaulish God of ____.
3. Essence of Mead refers to the Celtic Goddess. _____.
4. Goibniu was known for sacred _____ - _____.
5. Accasbel created the first public _____ in Ireland.
6. The Celts had a well known practice of getting _____ before they engaged in battle.
7. The Celts often celebrated by drinking "___" wine.

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Lesson Eighteen

Changing of the Weather



Crom Cruach: He was a God of Weather and Fertility. A great gold idol was set up in Mag Sleact (Plain of Adoration) in Ulster in his honor. Crom Cruach was a bloodthirsty god, who required human sacrifices.

The early Irish were said to have sacrificed their first-born child as a sacrifice for fair weather and good crops.

According to the Book of Leinster, the worship of Crom Cruach was said to have been started by Tigernmas (lordly), the Milesian High King of Ireland.

On one Samhain night, Tigernmas and two thirds of fellow worshippers were killed at Magh Slécht during the bloody rites.

St Patrick was said to have called upon the Christian, Christ, to destroy the idol that had been crafted by the Wright "Iuchadán".

Ard Greimme: His name means "high power" or "High Sun". He was an ancient Sun God and father of the famed warrior's sisters Aife and Scathach.

Curoi Mac Daire: A Celtic Sun deity; who is depicted as a giant armed with an ax, which brings forth storms.

Curoi Mac Daire was known for shaming Cuchulainn by shaving off all of Cuchulainn's

hair. This God is cited in several Celtic proses including a poem by Taliesin: "The Song of the Death of Corroy". His magickal fortress is located in Kerry.

Mog Ruith: The one-eyed God of the Sun who rides through the sky in a shining bronze chariot, or who flies through the sky like a bird. The word "ruith" is possibly derived from the Irish "roth", meaning "wheel" (representing the sun).

Taranis: The Roman poet Lucan, mentions Taranis in his epic poem "Pharsalia" as a Celtic deity to whom sacrificial offerings were made. Taranis is the God of Thunder and was worshipped in Gaulish Britain and Hispania. His association is the wheel, which is thought to be the symbol of thunder. Taranis was said to fill the sky with thunderous energy when he became inebriated after drinking too much Celtic mead. It's said that when it thunders, it is Taranis rolling his wheel the length of the sky.

Bel: (Belenus, Belinus, Belenos, Belimawr, Apollo Belenus (Brilliant Apollo) Bel is a minor Sun God who is the Welsh equivalent of Balor.

Cailleach Bheur: (Scota) The Cailleach Bheur was a blue hag associated with winter, she was reborn on every All Hallows Eve and returned to bring the winter and the snowstorms. She controlled the seasons and the weather. She turned to stone on Beltane Eve.

On the Isle of Man, she was a weather-spirit who came out to warm herself at Imbolc. If she found that it was a wet day, she would return to her hiding. This was a precursor to the American Groundhog Day.

Leucetios: (white light) He was a Gaulish God of Thunder. In Roman times he was equated with Mars.

Quiz:

1. Ard Greimme was the father of ____ and _____.
2. The one-eyed God of the Sun is ____ _____.
3. The early Irish were said to have sacrificed their first-born child to _____ _____.
4. Bel is the equivalent of _____.
5. _____ _____ _____ shamed Cuchulainn.
6. The worship of Crom Cruach was said to have been started by _____.
7. Cailleach Bheur is also known as _____.

Pronunciation Guide:

Adsullata: Ad-sūg-lat-ā

Aife: AY-fah

Ailech: al-yuch

Ailill: AL il

Aine: AHN-yuh

Airmed: air-med

Alldui: Al-tu

Amergin: ah-mer-gin

Angus Mac Og: angus moc og

Annwn: aw-noon

Anu: an-oo

Aobh: eh

Arawn: ar-awn

Arianrhod: ar-ree-an-rod

Badb: bav

Balor (Balar, Bolar):

Banba: BAHN buh

Belisama: (Bēlēsama)

Beothach: Bo-hach

Bile: (Bel, Beli, Belenus) - BIL - AY

Boann (Boand):

Bodb Derg: bohve dahrg

Boyne: boin

Bran: Bran

Bres: brehs

Brian: Brian

Brigid: Breed

Cairbre: kar-bruh

Cernunnos: KER noo nohss

Cetnenn: KET-leen

Cian: KEE-uhn

Clota (Clud, Clutida, Clutioa):

Coventina: ko-ven-TEE-na

Creidhne (Credne): creynya

Cu: koo

Cu Chulainn: coo HOOL in

Cumhaill: Coo-al

Dagda: Dah dah

Danu: DA noo

Dea Sequana:

Deichtine: Dec-tine

Delbaeth: Del'-bith

Dian Cecht (Cainte, Canta): DI an ket

Don: Don

Dylan: DIH-luhn

Eithne: ehn-e

Elatha: eel-ah-tah

Emmas: Em-as

Eochaid: YEO hay

Ériu: AIR ruh

Etan: et-ain

Etain: et OYN (oy as in boy)

Ethniu: ehn-u

Falias: fah-lee-ahs

Fand: fahn

Fea: Fe

Findias: Fin-dee-ass

Finn: fin

Fohla: foh-la

Fomorians: foe-moor-ee-ans

Goibhniu: GOI nyoo

Gorias: Gor-ee-ass

Indech: In-dec

Liban: lee-van

Lir: lir

Lucharba: lu-har-ba

Luchar: Lu-car

Luchtaine (Luchta): loo-tain

Lugh: LOO

MacCecht: MAK KET

MacCuill: MA kool

MacGrene: MAK GRAN

Macha: MOH Ka

Magh Tuiredh: MOYG TEARa (oy as boy and tear falling from the eye)

Manann: MaNa Nan

Medb: MAEV

Miach: mee-ahk

Midir: mid-ir

Mongan: mon-an

Morrigan (Morrigu): MOR RE GAN

Murias: moor-ee-as

Nechtán: nekh-tan

Neit: Nyit

Nemain (Nemhain, Nemon, Neman):

Net: net

Niamh: nee-av

Nuada: NU ah

Ochtriúllach:

Oghma: Og-ma

Ruadan: ROO-an

Sawan: *suh*-wahn

Scathach: SKa ha

Setanta: shay-tant-ah

Sidhe: Shee

Sinann: sheh-an

Sreng: share eN

Sucellos: soo-kell-us

Tadhg: TAW-eeg

Tailtiu: tile-too

Taranus: tah-rah-n-us

Tethra: tet-ra

Tir na Nog: teer-nah-nogh

Tuatha De Danaan: too-ah-ha day dan-an

Tuireann: Toor-enn

Whispering Woods

Celtic Pantheon Course

Final Exam

- 1. Ard Greimme: His name means "high power" or** A. Emperor B. High King
C. High Sun D. High Lord
- 2. A _____ was carried in procession by maidens also dressed in white.** A. Cross
B. White flower C. Corn Dolly D. Staff
- 3. _____ is the smith of the Fomorians.** A. Credne B. Dolb C. Etain
D. Bile
- 4. Cian was known to have possessed a magic** A. Crow B. Salmon C. Horse
D. Cow
- 5. Sabrina is the Celtic river Goddess associated with the _____ river.** A. Seine
B. Avon C. Devonshire D. Severn
- 6. Adna is a _____ god.** A. Agriculture B. Harper C. River D. Sun
- 7. Ceibhfhionn is the Celtic Goddess of Intelligence, Inspiration and** A. Knowledge
B. Poetry C. Music D. Lore
- 8. The three Craftsmen of the Tuatha De Danann are Goibhniu, Credne and**
A. Govannon B. Lugh C. Luchta D. Ogma

9. Tailtiu was married to the last _____ king. A. Milesian B. Tuatha De Danann
C. Partholon D. Fir Bolg
10. When the peace treaty between the Tuatha and the Fir Bolg was signed, the Fir Bolg received the province of _____ as their territory. A. Ulster B. Connacht
C. Leinster D. Munster
11. The Morrigan frequently appears in the guise of a _____. A. Silver Salmon
B. Black Bear C. Hooded Crow D. Blue Huron
12. Dindshenchas are the "tradition or _____" of places. A. language B. food
C. Lore D. dances
13. In Hindu mythology, Danu is the Mother of a race called the A. Milesians B. Peris
C. Shivas D. Danavas
14. The second invasion of Ireland was by the _____. A. Partholians B. Nemedians
C. Tuatha De Danann D. Milesians
15. Dyfed was the patron deity of the A. Demeters B. Demetae C. Demisea
D. Damons
16. Aengus is the son of Daghdha and _____. A. Brighid B. Cliota
C. Boann D. Danu
17. Who was it that killed Ruadan? A. Balor B. Ogma C. Miach
D. Goibniu
18. _____ was a Bard God in the employment of King Conchobar. A. Oghma
B. Adna C. Luchtan D. Aengus
19. Fintan was the husband of A. Brighid B. Flidias C. Etain D. Cessair
20. Coventina is looked upon as the Queen of _____ Goddesses. A. River B. Forest
C. Love D. Harvest
21. We know of the god Ogmios from the writings of A. Lucian B. Homer C. Nero
D. Augustus
22. Grannis is the embodiment of therapeutic A. water B. wine C. heat
D. muse
23. The Cailleach Bheur was a blue hag associated with A. Winter B. Spring
C. Summer D. Fall

24. The Firbolg discovered the _____ in Connacht. A. Milesians B. Partholon
C. Fomorians D. Tuatha De Danann
25. In Wales, Danu was known as A. Danu B. Dana C. Don
D. Anu
26. The Fomorians lived on _____ island. A. Hebrides B. Tory C. Isle of Man
D. Cath
27. Amergin was a son of A. Partha B. Noah C. Cessair
D. Míl Espáine
28. Another name for the Tuatha Dé Danann was the A. aes sídhe B. ciana sidhe
C. tadann sidhe D. dres sidhe
29. In Gaul, The Daghdha appeared in the guise of A. Nodens B. Esarg
C. Sucellos D. Mars
30. Sinann was originally a mortal woman who searched for the Well of _____ A. Life
B. Immortality C. Knowledge D. Health
31. Ethlenn or mac Ethnenn is another name for A. Macha B. Balor C. Ruadan
D. Lugh
32. _____ became Abbess of Kildare upon Brighid's death A. Sinan
B. Darlughdacha C. Deichtine D. Anna
33. Balor was the husband of _____. A. Fand B. Macha C. Cethlenn
D. Etain
34. Abarta is a good one to path work with when dealing with issues of _____.
A. Jealousy B. Anger C. Love D. Grief
35. It was custom for the Celt warriors to leave the battlefield until dawn so that _____
could collect the heads of their fallen foes. A. Nemain B. Badh C. Oghma
D. Morrigan
36. Brian, Iuchar and Iucharba are known as A. tri De Fomori B. tri De Danand
C. tri De Milea D. tri De Patholia
37. Latis was originally a _____ Goddess. A. Lake B. Sea C. River
D. Stream
38. According to the Book of Leinster, the worship of Crom Cruach was said to have been
started by A. Cettene B. Plato C. Tigernmas D. Horus

39. Elatha was the father of A. Bres B. Balor C. Streng D. Eochaid
40. Nemed was said to be a descendant of _____. A. Noah B. Mil C. Alba
D. Japheth
41. Goibhniu raised ____ as his foster son. A. Balor B. Ruadan C. Lugh
D. Talesin
42. Some say that Belisama is the consort of _____. A. Lugh B. Belemus
C. Manann D. Ogma
43. Nuada was the _____ King of the Tuatha De Danann. A. Fourth B. First
C. third D. second
44. Aitherne stole the infamous three cranes of denial, _____, and Churlishness.
A. Revenge B. Pity C. Selfishness D. Deceit
45. The Daghdha's Harper, is named, _____. A. Elatha B. Sinann C. Uaitne
D. Clota
46. Ruadan, was the son of the Goddess _____ and of Bres. A. Anu B. Tailtiu
C. Flidais D. Brighid
47. Braciaca was a God of A. Brewing B. Agriculture C. Muse D. Fire
48. The word "ruith" is possibly derived from the Irish "roth", meaning A. Wheel
B. Star C. Circle D. Chariot
49. Bel is the God of A. Poetry B. Forests C. Servants
D. Death
50. The Fir Bolg were thought to have taken their name from their God; _____. A. Bel
B. Buila C. Ulaidh D. Belenus
51. Amergin served as a druid, bard and judge for the A. Partholon B. Tuatha
C. Milesians D. Fir Bolg
52. The Morrigan is also closely associated with _____ symbolism. A. Bird B. Moon
C. Horse D. Sky
53. Clota was the patron Goddess of the River _____. A. Boyne B. Clyde
C. Avon
D. Marne

54. Oidheadh Cloinne Tuireann is noted as one of the _____ sorrowful tales of Ireland.

- A. Three B. Two C. Four D. Five

55. Ogma is the son of the Goddess Danu and the God _____ A. Daghdha B. Net

- C. Bile D. Manannan Mac Lir

56. Lugh's foster parents are Manannan Mac Lir and _____ A. Brighid

- B. Eri C. Airmid D. Tailtiu

57. Leucetios is a Gaulish God of: A. Thunder B. Storms C. Lightening

- D. Rain

58. Balor is the grandson of _____. A. Tethra B. Net C. Delbaith

- D. Domnann

59. _____ is the mother of Cuchulainn. A. Deichtere B. Macha C. Fionn

- D. Brighid

60. Bel is a minor Sun God who is the Welsh equivalent of _____ A. Mog Ruith B. Balor

- C. Taranis D. Mars