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The Celtic Goddess Arianrhod

By Judi Singleton

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Arianrhod

('Silver Wheel') Major Welsh Goddess. A star goddess. Her palace was called Caer Arianrhod (Aurora Borealis), Goddess of time and karma. Mother aspect of the Triple Goddess in Wales. Goddess of beauty, the Moon, fertility and reincarnation. Mother of Llew Llau Gyffes by her brother Gwydion. Her consort Nwyvre ('Sky, Space, Firmament') has survived in name only. Caer Arianrhod is the circumpolar stars, to which souls withdraw between incarnations, she is thus a Goddess of reincarnation. Honoured at the Full Moon.

Celtic Moon-Mother Goddess. Called the Silver Wheel that Descends into the Sea. Daughter of the Mother Goddess Don and her consort Beli. She is ruler of Caer Sidi, a magical realm in the north. She was worshiped as priestess of the moon. The benevolent silver sky-lady came down from her pale white chariot in the heavens to watch more closely over the tides she ruled. Her Festival is on 2nd December, she is also honoured at the Full Moon.

In addition to native variations by locality or over time, there are often several possible transliterations into the Roman alphabet used for English, Arianrhod Aranrhod – Arianrod.

A star and moon Goddess, Arianrhod was also called the Silver Wheel because the dead were carried on her Oar Wheel to Emania (the Moon-land or land of death), which belonged to her as a deity of reincarnation and karma. Her consort Nwyvre 'Sky, Space, Firmament' has survived in name only. Caer Arianrhod is the circumpolar stars, to which souls withdraw between incarnations, thus she is identified as a Goddess of reincarnation. The Mother aspect of the Triple Goddess in Wales, her palace was Caer Arianrhod (Aurora Borealis), or the secret center of each initiate's spiritual being.

The moon is the archetypal female symbol, representing the Mother Goddess connecting womb, death, rebirth, creation. (Albion, the old name of Britain, meant 'White Moon'). The Celts "know well the way of seas and stars", and counted time not by days, but by nights, and made their calendars, such as the famous Coligny Calendar, not by the sun, but by the moon. Ancient astrologers took their

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observations from the position of the moon and its progress in relation to the stars – the starry wheel of Arianrhod.

In Celtic Myth the Goddess has three major aspects: the maiden, the mother and the crone. These three represent the three stages in life of a woman. Blodeuwedd is the flower maiden, Arianrhod represents the mother and The Morrigan at last is the crone. These three aspects of the Celtic goddess may have different names in different regions and regional legends. For example, Morrigan also takes the mother role at times.

Arianrhod is said to be able to shapeshift into a large Owl, and through the great Owl–eyes, sees even

into the darkness of the human subconscious and soul. The Owl symbolizes death and renewal, wisdom, moon magick, and initiations. She is said to move with strength and purpose through the night, her wings of comfort and healing spread to give solace to those who seek her.

Arianrhod is the daughter of the Welsh Goddess Don and the sister of Gwydion. Gwydion was counselor to King Math who could only remain alive if his feet lay in the lap of a virgin at all times except when he led his armies into battle. During one such battle the virgin who had held King Math's feet was raped, and so there was need for a replacement. Gwydion recommended his sister, Arianrhod. King Math put her virginity to the test by asking her to step over his magic wand. As she stepped over the wand she gave birth to a boy child with yellow hair. The child cried loudly, and Arianrhod, humiliated, ran for the door, dropping yet another small object on the ground in the process. Before anyone could catch a glance at the object, Gwydion wrapped it and hid it inside a chest. King Math then performed rites for the yellow haired boy child, naming him Dylan. Dylan immediately ran for the sea and received the sea's nature and was never seen again.

A time later Gwydion presented Arianrhod with the object that he had hidden in the chest – a second boy child. Arianrhod was outraged at the "evidence" of her humiliation at the hands of King Math and rejected the child.

She laid on him three curses:

He shall have no name except one she gives him.

He shall bear no arms except ones she gives him.

He shall have no wife of the race that is now on the earth.

Gwydion was outraged by these curses and worked to break them. He disguised himself and the boy child as shoemakers and traveled to Caer Arianrhod. When Arianrhod went to have shoes fitted, the boy child threw a stone at a bird and deftly hit it. Arianrhod commented on the child's skillful hand. At that Gwydion revealed himself and the child and stated that she had just named him – Llew Llaw Gyffes, the Shining Skillful Hand. This threw Arianrhod into a fiery rage and she stormed back to Caer Arianrhod swearing that the boy would never bear arms or have a human wife.

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Again Gwydion tricked Arianrhod into breaking her own curse. He disguised himself and Llew as travelers and sought refuge in Caer Arianrhod. While they were there Gwydion caused an illusion showing a powerful armada of ships advancing on Caer Arianrhod. Making ready for battle Arianrhod threw open her armory and armed her retainers. Gwydion suggested to Arianrhod that she give arms to him and Llew (still in disguise) and they would fight at the defense of the castle. She readily agreed and thereby, unwittingly, granted arms to her son, breaking the second curse. Gwydion then revealed themselves to Arianrhod and told her that she may as well take the arms back from her son, as there really was no battle to be fought.

Enraged at being tricked a second time, Arianrhod took comfort in her third curse – that Llew would have no human wife. Gwydion, upset at the cruelty Arianrhod was showing her son, vowed to break this curse also. Gwydion went to King Math and explained Llew's plight. Combining their magic they created a woman made of flowers, Blodeuwedd, to be wife to Llew, and broke Arianrhod's third curse.

Humiliated by King Math, thwarted by her son, forsaken by her brother, Arianrhod retreated to her

castle Caer Arianrhod. Here she later drowned when the sea reclaimed the land.

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Anu Celtic Goddess of Fertility

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Anu

Celtic Goddess of Fertility

Anu, pronounced an-oo, (aka Anann, Dana, Dana-Ana) is the Irish Goddess of plenty and is the maiden aspect of the Morrighu. She is the Mother-Earth Goddess and the flowering fertility Goddess. Ireland – Mother Earth; Goddess of plenty, another aspect of the Morrighu; Great Goddess; greatest of all goddesses. The flowering fertility goddess, sometimes she formed a trinity with Badb and Macha. Her priestesses comforted and taught the dying. Fires were lit for her at Midsummer. Two hills in Kerry are called the Paps of Anu. Maiden aspect of the Triple Goddess in Ireland. Guardian of cattle and health. Goddess of fertility, prosperity, and comfort. Anu is associated with the Celts as the mother Goddess of the ancestors, reaching so far back into time there is very little record of her... externally at least. She is identified with the Goddess Danu and the Children of Danu (Tuatha De Danaan) and the four great cities Falias, Gorias, Finias and Murias. In the beginning it was Anu who watered the first Oak tree Bile from the heavens and granted life to the earth, from the tree fell two acorns which Anu nurtured as her own and in turn they became the God Dagda and the Goddess Brighid. Anu has been known to appear in the form of a swan, representing the purity of the female and gracefulness in motherhood.

Anu is considered to be the ancestor of all the Gods, the Tuatha dé Danann, who found themselves obliged to reside in the Otherworld when Miled brought the Celts to the British Isles. She still looks down on us from the night's sky where she appears as Llys Don, better known as the constellation of Casseopeia. Anu was especially popular in Munster, though her most lasting memorial is a mountain in County Kerry called the Dá Chích Anann or "Breast of Anu". The Dane Hills in Leicestershire are also named after her and this area, perhaps a major centre for her cult, is where her memory lives on as Black Annis. This hideous old crone's habit of eating young children was, no doubt, invented by incoming Christians to blacken the name of the Celtic Goddess. In Christendom, the lady usually took on the guise of St. Anne, however, in order to smooth the path of conversion. This saint's popularity in Brittany probably stems from the previous worship of the Celtic Goddess there. Anu was also the patroness of springs and fountains, hence the numerous St. Anne's Wells throughout Britain today. Symbols: Emeralds, Blood, Moonstones

About the Author Judi Singleton is the owner of <http://www.motherearthpublishing.com>. She publishes nine ezines a week. Subscribe to one of her ezines now by visiting the site.



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