

# Zodiacal Circles of Light

## Landscape Zodiac Temples in Britain

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*A Knight of King Arthur's Round Table, upon returning to Camelot from the Grail Quest, might have said this to his fellows:*

*I lived at the Belly of the Girt Dog where the Wick of the flame of the Dragon scorches his underside. At the spring equinox, I sat at Arthur's heart on the Archer on Windmill Hill. At summer solstice, I rode on the Eagle's back; at the autumnal equinox I stayed up all night in the illuminated eye of Taurus at Aldebaran upon Ivy Thorn hill. I have meditated by the well of the Water-Carrier in Glastonbury. I have gambolled under the floating clouds within the translucent dome on Castor the Twin's forehead. I have walked in silence along the Great Bear's thigh through a confusing wood. I have visited the stone chamber within the Dog's nose. I have marvelled at moonset on Oath Hill under Sirius starlight. I have jousting with Arthur's knights upon the flanks of Centaurus. I have sought the Holy Grail in Draco's Grove at Park Wood. Many full days and long nights have I sojourned in Caer Sidi, the endlessly revolving castle of the Grail. Where have I been?*

*I have been in the Region of the Summer Stars practicing geomancy, living the King Arthur and Grail myth in the landscape within the zodiac temple of Somerset in England....*

### ***The Outlines of a Vast Landscape Temple***

We can penetrate through the cultural setting of geomancy and explore another barely remembered Earth Mysteries context for what James Swan in his *Sacred Places* calls "reinventing the human species." I'm referring to a geomantic feature known as the landscape zodiac. To explicate this inner aspect of the geomancy behind ecology we must occasionally dip into the malleable, multi-nuanced vocabulary of myth, folklore, and legend.

The outlines of a once vast landscape temple occupying all of the British Isles—indeed, the entire world—are gradually being restored to post-industrial awareness. Much of this remembering of the ancient temple of Albion—the antique name for Britain, originally the Island of Prydein—comes from the earth Mysteries movement and its enthusiastic exhumation and examination of the more than 1000 megalithic sites throughout the "magical, mystical" United Kingdom.

In Britain at least a fair amount of attention of late has been accorded one particular megalithic landscape temple, a huge, elliptical *zodiakos kyklos* or twelvefold circle of tumbling zodiacal animals and effigies, in Glastonbury, Somerset, in the southwest of England. It's called various names: Star-Spangled Avalon, Somerset's Star Fields, King Arthur's Round Table, the Glastonbury Zodiac, or as one commentator has it, drawing on Hebrew scholarship, *Shamarsheth*, meaning, The Watch of the Heavens Established.

What a few bold Earth mystery advocates are claiming for Somerset—plus a handful of other ancient British sites—is the anomalous presence of a complete landscape zodiac temple, made of twelve huge earthen effigies accurately patterned and sequenced with their celestial counterparts (e.g., Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, etc.) along the cosmic ecliptic—except all of this is laid out like a template upon a thirty mile diameter circular portion of Somerset with Glastonbury (possibly the physical site of the fabled Celtic Avalon) in the middle. Within these massive landscape effigies (each several miles wide) are hundreds of numinous power points where falls "starlight" from many dozens of stars within the respective constellations above. Glastonbury's Temple of the Stars, one might expect, has attracted equal measures of wild enthusiasm and grave skepticism.

The knowledge of the extent and operation of the Temple of Albion and its possible terrestrial ecliptics was for long a guarded Druid secret. Aside from the isolated studies of the 16th century Elizabethan astrologer, scholar, occultist Dr. John Dee, little awareness of landscape zodiacs has been publicly expressed until the 20th century, when the outlines of the Somerset starry domain first began to be sketched. The Somerset zodiac would be the first of many to be rediscovered.

The indefatigably curious Dee immersed himself in matters of occult history and Druidic esotericism and made enough visits to the Somerset zodiac to prepare charts and a commentary around 1580 regarding what he called “Merlin’s Secret” around Glastonbury. Dee had noted “the unusual arrangements of prehistoric earthworks in the Glastonbury area, as Richard Deacon, his 20th century biographer notes, and the way they apparently represented the standard images of the constellations of the zodiac. “The starres which agree with their reproductions,” Dee wrote, “on the ground do lye onlie on the celestial path of the Sonne, moon and planets...thus is astrologie and astronomie carefullie and exactley married and measured in a scientific reconstruction of the heavens which shews that the ancients understode all which today the lerned know to be factes.”

But this Hermetic example of the topographical marriage of Heaven and Earth in Somerset wouldn’t be rediscovered until 1929 when a Canadian artist named Katherine Maltwood suddenly perceived a Somerset landscape replete with mythological giants. Maltwood had been preparing illustrations for a medieval French Grail text reportedly composed at Glastonbury Abbey and, as she discovered, it was apparently minutely referenced with the local landscape, as if it were a handbook to an esoteric topology written in mythic code. She remembered reading the 13th century antiquarian William of Malmesbury’s gnomonic comment that Glastonbury was “a heavenly sanctuary on Earth.” This would be an important clue.

Maltwood had aerial photographs prepared of the Somerset terrain, then in what must have been a grand moment of inspiration, Maltwood *saw*, imaginatively, overlaid on the photos like a delicate patterned doily, the complete zodiacal circle of images—the standard “skeletal” morphologies for the signs of the zodiacal twelve, Aquarius, Pisces, Aries, and the rest—whose outlines were etched out by streams, earthworks, drainage ditches, hedges, tracks, pastures, hills, mounds, and stone walls. Somehow, when seen from above, the ordinary domesticated features of the local British landscape sketched out the images of the signs of the zodiac; and more remarkably, in some unconscious way, local farmers, roadmakers, and grazers had maintained this unsettling landscape tapestry intact over the centuries.

Maltwood published her discoveries in *A Guide to Glastonbury’s Temple of the Stars* (1929) and *The Enchantments of Britain* (1944), two slender volumes, poetically opaque, frequently abstruse, but enthusiastic about this newfound “dual myth of earth and sky,” as she termed it: “the star constellations laid out on earth, and the Knights impersonating the stars above them.” The Knights were King Arthur’s, said Maltwood, transiting the Star Temple of Logres (the old name for Britain in the Arthurian sagas), which was Arthur’s “Magic Cauldron of unailing supply” (which Maltwood also called the Temple of the British Secret tradition, Man’s Oldest Scientific Heirloom), the mythological ecliptic of King Arthur’s Knights of the Grail through which they quested for lost Masonic secrets. For Maltwood, mystically giddy and spiritually appalled by her discovery, the landscape feature struck her as “a laboratory of thought and mystery” probably constructed by Sumerian-Chaldeans 5000 years ago.

It won’t seem surprising to us today that the zodiacal pioneer Maltwood was ahead of her times even in Celtically imbued Britain. She may still be. Even today her obscure speculations have a cutting-edge, top of the hour quality to them. It wouldn’t be until the late 1970s that her ideas would be taken up again in earnest and landscape zodiacal research would be renewed, sparked in part by a much more comprehensive, sympathetic treatment by another intrepid English woman, Mary Caine, in her *The Glastonbury Zodiac—Key to the Mysteries of Britain*.

Caine, who still lives in London, extended Maltwood's bold claims by stating that the Somerset temple was not only the original, presumably mythic, Round Table of King Arthur, but also the template origin of Egyptian, Greek, Chaldean, and Celtic mythologies. Further, said Caine, this Somerset landscape Round Table was "a table of measurements charting the movements of the earth and heavens" such that "myths and maths were united in a splendid spacetime scheme." Arthur's Knights were none other than the giant effigies in the earth and the famed "cauldron" in which they rode in bodies of earth, rock, and water, was "made by Nature in the first place and continued by man as its continuous development embraces all the ages of man down to the present day."

The purpose of the zodiac is hortatory, suggests Caine, to act as a perennial teacher in the Mysteries. Here we have in a majestic tableau "the star-lore of all the ages, the source of all religious teachings," plainly depicting "the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man," the process of creation, evolution, and resurrection, exemplified by a variety of mythic heroes. "By such parables were the initiates in the Mysteries instructed," says Caine. "Well might our Zodiac have been prepared by God himself for the salvation of men."

Such is the contention of American zodiacologist Caroline Hall Hovey in her *The Somerset Sanctuary*. Hovey's proposal—based on considerable Hebrew scholarship into myths and etymologies, a fresh examination of the aerial photographs plus numerous personal field trips to the strange Avalonian domain—is that the Somerset zodiac is "a Sanctuary patterned after the ancient Tabernacle in the Wilderness" of Moses, Aaron, and the Children of Israel. The tribe of Levi, principally, constructed the *Shamarsheth* Sanctuary, Hovey postulates, under divine covenant. Sacred sites were first indicated by planted stone, later by churches; in either case, these were places where the etheric starlight of at least 72 stars (with 21 landscape constellations) irradiated the nodes within *Shamarsheth*, all of which Hovey documents with charts and planispheres. The Levite geomancers left a glossary of "proto-Hebrew" place-names in Somerset as a mythic mnemonic for the initiate, says Hovey.

It's not always the outsider to Somerset who stakes a claim in the zodiacal explication sweepstakes. For Barri C. DeVigne, forty-year Somerset resident and lecturer in matters of myth and folklore, the Somerset zodiac finally intruded into his world only after many years of skeptical resistance. It was only "after many years, many discussions, many miles of walking, before I felt able to accept the possibility that this area did indeed contain a form of zodiac marked on the ground." The Glastonbury zodiac and Arthurian myths are linked, suggests DeVigne, by way of "the solar year as the guiding factor" and as part of an overall religious, seasonal cycle. In his estimation, the zodiac originated from a process of symbiotic interaction between humankind and Nature. "The natural lay of the land has been enhanced by altering footpaths, tracks, and in some cases, waterways, to create an outline," he notes, and no doubt had "great significance to inhabitants around 2500 B.C. and probably well before that."

How much before 2500 B.C. is a subject of wild, unsubstantiable speculation. The often extravagant claims put forward by zodiac advocates, one quickly learns, unrelievedly challenge orthodox views of history, cultural evolution, and methodologies of research. It's not uncommon for a zodiac proponent to wander much further back into history, well beyond the documented Chaldeans, and into that vague, contestable nether world John Michell and others call Atlantis, and whose demise Plato dated around 10,000 B.C., at least. This is territory in which Brinsley le Poer Trench feels at home. In his *Men Among Mankind*, he contended: "Britain is a remnant of Atlantis and that, prior to the sinking of Poseidonis, the 'Heavenly' half of the Human Race left the instructions to the earthly half in the shape of the colossal Zodiac in Somerset...leaving us to find our own fumbling way back to full recognition that we are but two halves of a whole."

Glastonbury Earth Mysteries savant and "geomythicist" Anthony Roberts amplifies le Poer Trench's speculation. For Roberts, who writes and thinks and speaks with a Blakean expansiveness, the landscape zodiac is all about myths in the landscape, or what he terms geomythics. "Imaginative Symbolism was physically writ large across the geomantic terrain of

Avalon's Holy Ground. Everything is really symbolically physical and physically symbolic. This is the core of my geomythics. It is also an excellent description of the Glastonbury Zodiac; those vast nature/star effigies that dreamingly spin on the Round Table of earth, the rich, seminal emanations of the Living Thoughts of God."

For another Glastonbury mystical exegist and zodiacal initiate, the American Robert Coon, the Somerset star temple is "Merlin's Atlantean Temple of Initiation, a Great Synchronicity Machine." In his mystical travelogue, *Elliptical Navigations Through the Multitudinous Aethyrs of Avalon*, Coon contends the zodiac is "a Grand Ideal latent in the Somerset landscape," keyed to the spiritual-magical unfoldment of human consciousness and based on the Hebrew behind Qaballah, the occult side of ancient Judaism. "Each star temple within the Somerset zodiac represents a progressive stage of initiation," proposes Coon, who suggests that formerly men and women purposefully transited the starry landscape as part of a cycle of initiations and perhaps akin to what native Americans call the vision quest.

### ***The Terrestrial Zodiac is Only Subjectively Real?***

The Avalon star temple is probably the best known of the proposed landscape zodiacs in Britain or anywhere else today, and certainly one that has attracted the gamut of sensible to outlandish commentary. Other possible zodiacs have been described and annotated in the last two decades including one based in London which Mary Caine, its explicator, calls the Kingston zodiac. Stephen Jenkins (author of *The Undiscovered Country*) has map-plotted the effigies for a zodiacal wheel in Walsingham, Norfolk, centered around Britain's Holy Mary shrine. In fact almost two dozen zodiacs have been proposed by other independent British researchers, as if England had a remarkable cosmic franchise.

But while the heady claims of the zodiac hunters often bubble like neo-Atlantean froth, so do the earthbound skeptics fire darts at these glorious geomythic hot-air dirigibles. Obviously a key problem with this sudden proliferation of "rediscovered" zodiacs is epistemological. What role can scientific method and peer review play in a field as rife with uncorroborable speculation as zodiac hunting?

One of the chief objections zodiac critics put forward is their sheer size. Often a landscape effigy measures 3-5 miles long and is visible, technically, only at elevations exceeding 5000 feet; you can't see them at ground level. Did the ancient Druid priests fly around Somerset observing their magnificent temple? Most unlikely, say the Zodiacophobes. Then there's the problem that the effigies don't always correspond to the standard shapes of the zodiacal images; there is in fact often a great deal of poetic license—distortion, say the critics—in how they are terrestrially rendered. In the Somerset zodiac, for instance, Aquarius the Water-Carrier is portrayed instead as a phoenix; Cancer isn't a crab but a ship; Libra is a dove and not the balance scales. Sloppy zodiacs don't impress the doubters.

The landscape zodiac has at best only a subjective reality, say the more gracious critics. Glastonbury Arthurian expert Geoffrey Ashe notes in his *Avalonian Quest*: "They are supposed to be obvious in aerial photographs. I have studied these photographs. I know what I am meant to see; I honestly try to see; and I simply do not. I cannot believe that the Zodiac is 'there,' as, say, Stonehenge is there. The phenomenon is akin to the Rorschach ink blot test, or to seeing pictures in the fire. It is a fact and must be admitted. The Glastonbury Zodiac is a magic circle, a stylised mandala which the Unconscious of some—but only some—takes hold of and projects on the landscape. As a result the landscape for them is charged with occult energies."

Further, comments Ian Burrow, Somerset's Planning Department staff archeologist, while the outlines of the effigies may be plotted today their antiquity is illusory. The particulars of terrain and land use today have come into this form only in the last several centuries through modern waterway and drainage engineering and other landscape alterations. Since the Somerset landscape morphology is thus relatively contemporary, it's fanciful but erroneous to claim medieval, Celtic, or Chaldean-Atlantean origination.

Ley line debunkers Liz Bellamy and Tom Williamson have points to make against zodiacs, too, in their *Ley Lines in Question*. They criticize the zodiac hunters for their morphological flexibility, for their easy, lax standards and somewhat makeshift approach to plotting zodiacal figures. Zodiacs, Bellamy and Williamson contend, seem to be constructed “by a process of picking and choosing figures in order to complete a pattern, rather than there being anything intrinsically significant about those which are chosen.” Folklore and place-names are relied on extensively for confirmation—“manipulated,” say the authors—but the methodology is dubious. “Zodiac hunters are prepared to interpret English place-names in terms of every language known to man. Folklore is contorted in a similar way...It is particularly damning when zodiac hunters reveal how easily alternative shapes can be found in the same landscape by continually altering and revising one another’s creations.”

### ***Probable Origin and Age of the Zodiacs***

Thus we have a precis of the claims of the zodiac promoters and their detractors. However, based on my 18 months of live-in research in the what Celtic legend remembers as the *Region of the Summer Stars* (1983-1985), I have an alternative view of the presumed zodiac temple, one that steers straight through the frothy shoals of advocates and denigrators. Some of the sights will be decidedly exotic, undoubtedly controversial. A key concept involved here is *geomythics*, Anthony Robert’s apt “portmanteau word” meaning the myth in the landscape, the geomyth.

The original and continuing use of the Somerset zodiac—of any authentic landscape zodiac—is geomythic, which means “living the myth in the landscape” through an active, participative, personal process of re-enacting the Arthurian myth in consciousness in the context of the multiple aspected landscape temple which is in astrological and astronomical attunement with the cosmos and Human. As Robert Coon suggests, the zodiac is a perfect preset initiatory matrix.

Fundamentally, the zodiac temple originated coincidentally with the geomorphological creation and consolidation of the Earth. The zodiacal ecliptic and its numerous constellation effigies are components of the planetary grid matrix which consists of many aspects, including the Oroboros lines, major etheric energy canopies (domes) and minor (dome caps). The terrestrial zodiacs were intentional microcosmic circles of light with variable astronomical-astrological coordinates. They were designed to embody the Hermetic principle, As Above, So Below. They were intended—as were the other subtle, numinous components of the world grid—for human use and interaction, to be used as a temple for the purposes of consciousness expansion, individuation, and enlightenment.

The numerous landscape zodiacs—for there are many around the planet—when appreciated over the full extent of human planetary residency, periodically come into activation then lapse again into dormancy, like preset alarm clocks, in a sine wave cycle somewhat keyed to the 25,900 year astrological cycle, called the Platonic Year (consisting of 12 months, or aeons, of 2150 years each, in which the influence of one zodiacal sign predominates—e.g., the Age of Aquarius—as the Sun precesses along the cosmic ecliptic). During this “age” of 2150 years the zodiac temple might be both stationary and mobile within a specific locale; that is, the temple’s major topographical features and size remain constant but the location of individual effigies revolve in small increments about an imaginary circle (the ecliptic), returning to point zero every 25,900 years.

It’s as if someone held a pinwheel with holes punched for all the stars, shone a light through it projecting the pinpoints of light onto the ground, then slowly turned the pinwheel disc around in a full circle so that where the star points fell on the landscape kept shifting. Each time he held the pinwheel steady for a moment, the landscape zodiac sprung into life with that specific landscape overlay. Although the zodiacs were inherent in the Earth’s energy matrix as part of our “divine legacy,” the initial period of activation and ritualized recognition didn’t occur until much

later. One date suggested in esoteric materials is 21.6 million years ago for the commencement of zodiac temple work. If this is true, it means that Maltwood's peripatetic Chaldeans or le Poer Trench's "Atlantean engineers" didn't so much build the zodiac as they replotted and refitted their primordial stellar coordinates, marking the currently accurate starfalls with appropriate megalithic monuments.

### *Identifying a Landscape Zodiac*

Correct, reliable methodology is crucial to locating and plotting a landscape zodiac. The initial step, for better or worse, is largely inspirational and intuitive. One may have an intuitive flash as to the possible location of a temple or one begins with clues from folklore, legend, or the occult, which states that, for instance, a temple of the stars is found at Glastonbury, or Walsingham, or London. Next, one analyzes the locale using a close-detail topographical map, looking for suggestive place-names, topological configurations, monuments, archeological sites, standing stones, wells, hills with unusual reputations, very old churches, and other possible clues. On-site investigation is always useful.

The next step has one preparing a reverse planisphere and overlaying it on the Ordnance Survey map. One makes a guess as to the size of the landscape temple. A standard star chart may be xeroxed onto clear acetate so that the diameter of its ecliptic is at the same scale as the Ordnance Survey map; *reversing* the star map, one lays it down on the map. The star map is reversed because the planisphere (celestial chart) when overlaid on the Earth appears as a mirror-image reversal, left/right rather than right/left.

With the Somerset zodiac we're fortunate because several detailed star maps of the effigies have already been prepared and published (most notably, Mary Caine's). The proposed figures and their locations, I have found, when matched with the results of this methodology, are inaccurate and at best only approximate guidelines. An important strategy here is to begin with the skeletal stellar outline, just the stars, without the "animals" drawn in; then look for the constellations landscape coordinates, star by star. Let's take Taurus the Bull. This constellation, one of the 12 occupying the ecliptic and thus one of the 12 standard Houses of the zodiac, has 16 principal stars (302 catalogued "naked-eye" stars) including Aldebaran (13th brightest star in the planisphere as seen from Earth) and the Pleiades (a star cluster of 7 major stars, and "famous" as an alleged UFO source).

When we consider the star components of Taurus as they overlay the landscape—which we call *star centers*—we note they don't often resemble the animal, the bull, but rather express the constellation's morphological essence. For example, Arcturus, a constellation pictured as a shepherd with a bright foot (Arcturus) was originally understood to be only the star Arcturus; obviously, this isn't going to look like a sylvan shepherd by any stretch of the imagination. This is where many zodiac hunters—and their critics—get confused: they're looking for the familiar outlines of the bull, the crab, and scorpion in the landscape, whether it's on a topographical map or aerial photograph; the fact is, this isn't necessary. Ultimately you need find only the principal, brightest stars in the constellation to identify the terrestrial presence of a zodiac; whether you later connect the (star) dots is optional.

### *The Extent of a Landscape Zodiac*

The Somerset zodiac is actually larger and fuller than most zodiac hunters have presumed. Caroline Hall Hovey was on the right track when she expanded the zodiacal domain from 12 to 21, but it's still much larger than that. There are far more constellations and stars than two dozen: the entire planisphere is represented on the landscape—144 constellation effigies in all arrayed in *two* ecliptics.

Standard zodiac thinking presumes a single ecliptic; this is true with respect to the cosmos, but not the planetary landscape. When you transpose a multidimensional reality—the cosmos—onto a three dimensional globe, a few structural changes must be accommodated. It's

most easily imagined with the image of an apple. If we take the cosmos to be the apple, the transposition of the cosmic apple onto the landscape requires that it be sliced in two. That's because there is no place on Earth where we may stand and be fully exposed to the starlight of stars in both the Northern and Southern Hemisphere. If we're in Australia, we have the physical presence of the Southern Hemisphere stars; if we stand in London, it's the Northern Hemisphere.

Thus each zodiac is bipolar: one half, one ecliptic, represents stars of the Southern Hemisphere, the other, the stars of the Northern Hemisphere. The 12 constellations of the ecliptic are repeated as a mirror-image of each other, leaving 120 different constellations. These are divided unequally between the two zodiacal ecliptics: 96 in the Northern Hemisphere, or physical ecliptic; and 48 in the Southern Hemisphere, or etheric ecliptic. Etheric here means indirect, subdued, attenuated; physical means, in a sense, directly overhead and present.

Thus within the Somerset zodiac, which is now enlarged to about 40 miles in diameter, we find not only the starfalls for Leo, Capricorn, and Pisces, but Bootes, Ophiuchus, Orion, Pegasus, Ursa Major, and many others. We have an extensive geomantic temple pinpricked with at least 1000 star centers, illuminated by approximately 22 primary domes and hundreds of smaller dome caps, criss-crossed by a myriad of straight and spiralic dome lines (ley lines), the totality constituting a powerful astrological network of light. The two circles, or ecliptics, briefly intersect, forming an imperfect vesica piscis (or geometrical "fish") with Glastonbury in its midst. No wonder it's been called *Secretum Domini*, "The Secret of Our Lord."

The star-spangled zodiac of Avalon has its triple-headed Cerberus guarding the western flanks of the temple. Cerberus here is called the Girt Dog of Langport and, classically, Canis Major, the Great Dog. The Dog is about 5 miles long and a little less than 2 miles wide; it includes 15 star centers including Sirius, the brightest star in the cosmos, which falls on a small rise called Oath Hill. A second zodiacal hound, corresponding to Canis Minor, lies nearby, and is known locally as the Polden Hound; this "dog" is sleeping, with two star centers, marked by old churches. Both these dogs face away from the Goddess Ceridwen's Cauldron of Wisdom (a Celtic designation of the zodiac), guarding her property the way any well-trained dog should. A third dog, not acknowledged locally, is Monoceros, technically a unicorn according to astrological convention, but in this case the third "head" of Cerberus, a seven star center female dog curled up her nose facing Beckery Island in Glastonbury, one of the temple's gateways.

Thus the three dogs fulfill their mythologically mandated function, known variously as the Egyptian Anubis or the Celtic Dormarth—or King Arthur's Cabal. The Dog is psychopomp, mentor, guardian, custodian, and watchdog for the temple of transformations. The geomythic dog guides the novice Grail Knight into the nature and requisites of the zodiacal temple by first conducting him or her through the energetic realities of his own landscape body. The novice in this way gets a preliminary understanding of how the geomythic temple works; then he's unceremoniously—some would say ruthlessly—thrown into the churning waters of the zodiacal cauldron for a more penetrating experience. Metaphorically speaking, the dogs tear him to shreds as he begins his sojourn through the Region of the Summer Stars.

### ***The Purpose of the Landscape Zodiac***

The Somerset star temple is available for use today just as it was for the 5th century Celtic Arthur and his cabal of geomantically-attuned Grail Knights, and for the Druids, Chaldeans, Atlanteans before that. It is a geomythic theater for the purification and transmutation of the individual under the aegis of a mythopoeic symbolic system and mediated by the energetics of a landscape astrological matrix. The temple is calibrated for a coincidence of macro astrological-astronomical events with micro individual human precipitation and unfoldment. In this initiation, one's natal horoscope is the road map.

The legendary Merlin in Arthurian times was the master astrologer, Qabalist, and "Star Worker." Merlin was the Druidic mastermind of the Round Table and Grail Quest; his involvement in the lives of the Knights was awesome. It's said that he arranged for their

conception through consultations with their future parents so that an astrologically balanced assortment of Knights could be cultivated. He set each knight to work through the personality dynamics of his or her birth chart using the zodiac temple as the workshop. Each knight had to experience and work through one's oppositions, squares, trines, and sextiles using the zodiac as a living experiential mirror of one's own astrological particularities. Merlin dispatched them at all hours of the day and night to specific star centers where their silent meditations and intuitive access might illuminate both their individual nature and aspects of the cosmos as well.

Their visits were often coincident with important astronomical events such as eclipses, equinoxes, solstices, full and new moons. Merlin's intent was to help each knight cast off the impediment of planetary, zodiacal, and elemental influences so that one's consciousness could live freely and operate without obstruction. The cultivation of this unimpeded human consciousness was the Grail Quest itself.

Of course this explanation throws us into even more epistemologically problematic water because most people do not credit Arthur, Merlin, the Grail Quest with any historical authenticity. Mythic, surely, but not actual living, historical reality. And there's the problem, too, of Arthur's profession. Arthurian convention renders him as a Desert Storm commando fighting off the Saxon infidels; nobody has thought to reposition Arthur as a kind of Celtic high lama and Sun King presiding over a court of initiates. Yet that may be the case, and frankly, even if an Arthur or Merlin never existed in human terms, this analogical interpretation of the zodiac still works. Which brings us to another useful term: *autogeomythics*. This means "one self living the myth in the landscape." It's like stepping into the energetic archetypes of Arthur, Merlin, the Knights, and the Grail Quest and using it as a mythopoeic impetus to transit the zodiac temple in a transmutative experience. The Arthurian matter is a serviceable vocabulary, a lexicon with which you can negotiate the subtle zodiacal terrain and come out, even today, with remarkable results.

The key that unlocks the gate into geomythics is consciousness. The zodiac is a giant interactive, mythologically primed mirror; the initiatory experience is the act of contemplating then transmuting one's reflection. The early Christians called this profound change of mind, *metanoia*. That's what all the landscape temples and their geomantic hardware hold as a prime intention. The Arthurian mythos offers the opportunity to wake up, to merge spiritual practice with geomancy, to cultivate a spiritual geomancy, to relight the starry heavens upon the mighty limbs of Albion, to invert a famous line by William Blake, an 18th century geomantic initiate and successor to John Dee. This is why in Welsh the Somerset zodiac is called *Gwlad yr Hav*, The Shining Place, evoking the zodiacal circle of light occupying most of Somerset. This is that same magically treacherous land—for enlightenment is the ultimate treachery from the viewpoint of the personality—about which Taliessin, the legendary Celtic bard, said (in Charles Williams' Arthurian poetry) "the stones of the waste glimmered like summer stars."

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