Fact to Fiction: How the Tuatha de Danaan of History Became the Fairies of Contemporary Fantasy.

Introduction:

Throughout the past twenty years, the fantasy genre has expanded and taken the literary world by storm. This is seen by the emergence of such famous fantasy literature as the *Harry Potter* series and the *Twilight Saga*. Yet one aspect of fantasy that has grown large even among fantasy writers is the emergence of what I call Irish fantasy.[1] In this essay, I will attempt to show that the role of Irish history and folklore in the fantasy genre has not happened by chance, but is instead caused by a combination of factors involving the transition from fact into folklore, including the Irish Revival, and what I believe to be the coming of a second revival. This Irish fantasy that has grown in the fantasy genre is made up of such historical and mythical characters as the Tuatha de Danaan. I will show an evolution of the Tuatha de Danaan from historical people into the fairies commonly associated with Irish myth, how the Tuatha de Danaan have changed and morphed into the contemporary fairies of the fantasy genre, and why this change has occurred and been allowed to take its place among fantasy.

Section I: The Beginning

The History:

The first questions I would like to address are who are the Tuatha de Danaan and where did they originate? Historians such as Ulick Bourke, T.F. O'Rahilly, and Seumas MacManus, have sought to dissect the history of Ireland since as early as the ninth century (O'Rahilly 15). Yet, through my research I have seen that many historians have different interpretations of early

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[1] When I refer to Irish fantasy, I am including all fantasy that is set in the country of Ireland or uses the Irish mythological and historical characters.

Irish history. The reason for this is the fact that much of Irish history is involved in myths. Historians have had a hard time dissecting fact from myth because of the Tuatha de Danaan. O'Rahilly writes that the Milesians who had come to Ireland via the Spanish peninsula have been the common idea of 'Celts' since the Christian scholars sought to create a unified ancestry for the Irish in the early centuries. They did this in an effort to "efface these distinctions from popular memory" (15). This was done, according to O'Rahilly, by making the Irish people have a common ancestor in the "Mil of Spain." By stating that the Milesians came two thousand years before their time and claiming no other invader to Ireland, the early Christian scholars suggest that the races before the Milesians did not exist, and thus they were regulated into fiction and myth (15).

Despite the writings and claims of the early Christian historians, many modern historians such as O'Curry and O'Rahilly still believed and wrote that the Irish race is made up of many different Celtic races, similar in characteristics and society, if not similar in physical appearance, that had migrated to Ireland at different times (O'Curry, 29-51, O'Rahilly, 15). O'Rahilly wrote that there were three previous invaders of Ireland: the Priteni, the Firbolg, and the Tuatha De Danaan (15). The Firbolg were addressed by historians such as MacManus, O'Curry, Raftery, MacNeill, and Bourke as the invaders directly previous to the Tuatha de Danaan. The Milesians that the early Christians referred to, then came and invaded Ireland some 800 years after the Tuatha de Danaan at or around one-thousand years before Christ (MacManus 7). The exact coming of the Tuatha de Danaan has been in debate since the beginning of recorded history as is seen by the many different historical accounts. The coming of the Tuatha de Danaan has been placed as early as 3500 years before Christ (Somerset Fry 2-3) and as late as the third century before Christ (MacNeill 2-5). MacManus and O'Flaherty recorded in their writing that the

Tuatha de Danaan came around 1800 years before Christ (MacManus 7). Due to recent archeological discoveries that support O'Flaherty and MacManus's estimate I believe that the Tuatha de Danaan were the third invaders of Ireland in or around 1800 years before Christ (Bourke 91, O'Rahilly 22).

Many historians believe that the Tuatha de Danaan are descended from Egypt, Israel, and Syria. MacManus, O'Donovan, and O'Curry all support that the Tuatha de Danaan originally came from the Middle East, through central Europe to land in Ireland (Bourke 92, MacManus 7, O'Curry 29-51). Around 1800 years before Christ, there was a massive wave of Celts that spread and migrated down to the Spanish peninsula and up through Brittany to what is now Britain and Ireland. MacManus explained that the wave was due in part to wars that had broken out between the Germanic Celts in central Europe and the rulers of the countries, particularly Greece, in Southeastern Europe (7). This is further supported by Bourke who explained that various inscriptions found in Ireland match the inscriptions of the Hebrews found in the Valley of Sinai (93) and by Ptolemy's explanation and history of Ireland as reported by O'Rahilly (1-43).

When the Tuatha de Danaan first came to Ireland, O'Rahilly and MacManus wrote that they landed in Ireland in what is now the western part of the province of Connacht (O'Rahilly 95, MacManus 2). When the Tuatha de Danaan landed in Connacht they were not alone. Instead, they had to face the previous invaders: the Firbolgs. At a battle on the Mayo-Galway border, MacManus accounted that the Tuatha de Danaan eventually conquered the previous inhabitants and gave the defeated Firbolgs the western half of the country, particularly the inhospitable Connacht (4).   The Tuatha de Danaan in turn migrated to the more prosperous lands of Leinster. O'Rahilly used evidence of the Tuatha de Danaan names still in use at his time of

writing in the sixteenth century as evidence that the Tuatha de Danaan did not stay in Connacht, but migrated to what is now Leinster and took over the hill at Tara in county Meath (92).

Many European scholars along with MacManus wrote that the Tuatha de Danaan then placed the defeated Firbolgs into a feudal society where the Tuatha de Danaan were the highest leaders (MacManus 7). O'Rahilly believes this tradition was then followed by the next conquering race, the Milesians, as they placed the Tuatha de Danaan under their own aristocracy, often-times as sword-hands and mercenaries (95). The Tuatha de Danaan were conquered by the Milesians and MacManus had this as the time of the reign of the Dagda's children, but no other historian states this same opinion (5).

European scholars have found that among the Tuatha de Danaan's gifts in creating a civilized society, they also held a complete governmental system with a judicial/legislative and executive branch (MacManus 7). Bourke showed evidence found in Gilbert, Sullivan, O'Donovan, and O'Curry's writing that the Tuatha de Danaan had a hierarchy made up of poets, healers, generals and leaders, Druids, Brehons (judges), and priests. The Brehons and priests ruled the judicial system where their word was law and none could dispute it, not even the high king. Due to this high standing, the Brehons held a revered place in the minds of the people. The Druids many times worked as advisors to the kings and as healers (88-95). MacManus supported by his interpretation of O'Curry's writing, stated that the Tuatha de Danaan held a complex feudal system made up of their people and those they had conquered (MacManus 2, O'Curry 1-228). According to MacManus, the high king of Ireland resided at Tara in county Meath. The high king ruled over everyone but the Brehons and could have no personal blemish, for the people believed that the high king must be as perfect in physical condition as possible[2].

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[2] This corresponds to Lady Gregory's account of Nuada, the King of the Tuatha de Danaan at their arrival in Ireland.

Underneath the high king were the lower kings that ruled various sized realms throughout the country. The Firbolgs who resided in Connacht and the lower kings of the Tuatha de Danaan paid tribute in the form of coins, livestock, and bronze workings to the high king, as well as contributing to the fighting forces by providing men (MacManus 2). This account by MacManus suggests that the Tuatha de Danaan had a complex feudal system that was similar to modern feudal societies. This further suggests that the Tuatha de Danaan were a civilized society and advanced for their era.

Many scholars and historians such as MacManus and Bourke believe that the Tuatha de Danaan were exceedingly advanced for their time (Bourke 88-94, MacManus 5-6). The Tuatha de Danaan appear to have been civilized and to have had a significant understanding of many of the arts and sciences. Bourke, based on evidence by Sullivan, Gilbert, O'Donovan, and O'Curry, claimed that the very name 'Dana' is a synonym for skills in science and literary achievement (91). MacManus and O'Curry then went on to claim that the Tuatha de Danaan were highly skilled in such crafts as bronze and iron making as well as the domestic arts such as medicine (MacManus 2). Archeological findings of elaborate iron and bronze workings dated back to the times of the Tuatha de Danaan also prove this (Raftery 22). MacManus, O'Curry, and O'Rahilly inferred in their writings that the advancements of the Tuatha de Danaan were so significant in these areas that the later Milesians and the Firbolg, whom the Tuatha de Danaan had conquered, revered them and placed them in a place of importance (MacManus 2, O'Rahilly 95, and O'Curry 1-228).

Not only were the Tuatha de Danaan advanced in the arts and sciences, but Bourke re-enforced the writings of O'Curry, Sullivan, O'Donovan, and Gilbert in restating their belief that the Tuatha de Danaan had the written word and had an understanding of literary knowledge

before their arrival in Ireland. Many excavations have uncovered countless cairns and monuments, and nearly 260 books on slabs of stone throughout Ireland written with engravings and letters in a form of Ogham writing. The historians listed by Bourke stated that this type of writing is similar to that of Cyprus, Lycia, Persia, Indie, and the Aryan regions that dates back as far as 1800 years before Christ (88-94).

Although the Tuatha De Danaan were conquered 800 years after their initial reign, I believe their impact was large. O'Rahilly, Bourke, O'Curry, and MacManus all placed the Tuatha de Danaan as the first civilized society in Ireland and believed that much of their culture and society was mingled with that of the Milesians who had conquered them (Bourke 88-94, MacManus 2, 5-6, O'Curry 1-228, O'Rahilly 1-42). In fact, O'Rahilly went so far as to state that the Tuatha de Danaan made up the future population of the Milesians and molded many of the Milesians' societal characteristics (1-42). In many circumstances, the invaders wished to wipe out the former systems of the conquered, but in the case of Ireland, the druidic practices and the government stayed mostly the same after the Milesians established their reign. This is due in part to the complex and advanced system of the Tuatha de Danaan and in part to the similar histories of the Milesians and the Tuatha de Danaan.

Section 2: The Transition

Folklore:

The next point I am going to address is how the Tuatha de Danaan evolved from the factual invaders of Ireland into the mythical fairies of Irish folklore that led to the literature of the Irish Literary Revival.

Due to the oral traditions of historical events being passed down by word of mouth in narrative stories, it is difficult to get a clear understanding of Irish history, and thus folklore is used as a vessel for a more thorough knowledge of a historical event (Hartland). In the early days of Irish history, MacNeill stated that the Druids of the Tuatha de Danaan and the later Milesians, did not write down the history of Ireland, but rather committed it to memory in the form of verses, poems, and songs. MacNeill wrote that these historical verses and poems were passed down through the Druidic schools and on into the existing population at the demise of the Druids (25-28).

Scholars such as Edwin S. Harland claim that in the days of early Ireland, the people, particularly the peasantry, would tell stories in order to entertain themselves by firelight during the long nights (6-7). Originally the stories were told in order to pass down the history of Ireland, as was set forth by the Druidic order (MacNeill 25-28). However, as the historical tales progressed and were told by one generation and then the next, the Tuatha de Danaan were given more and more supernatural abilities and magical powers [3] (Gomme "Folklore as an Historical Science" 1-13, Hartland 1-22). Thus, in this way the historical accounts grew further from the truth. The Tuatha de Danaan became less like real people and more like the mythical beings descended from gods (Bottigheimer 216, Hartland 1-22, and Gomme "Folklore as an Historical Science 46-84) that the early Christians claimed as history (O'Rahilly 15). With the telling by each generation the stories grew further and further from the truth and began to evolve into folklore; until the historical facts were so interwoven with the supernatural they were almost impossible to dissect (Hartland1-22).

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[3] This can be seen by *Gods and Fighting Men* by Lady Gregory. This point will be further addressed later in the essay.

George Gomme, Andrew Lang, Edwin Hartland, and many other scholars debate why the supernatural is attributed to historical events. Gomme claims that when an invading regime conquers an existing society, a lack of understanding between the two societies is created, particularly when the original religious customs of the conquered people are still being observed under the new regime. When this happens, a fear about the conquered indigenous society's religious customs by the invading population creates the belief that the indigenous are masters of such things as magical powers and spiritual intervening ("Ethnology in Folklore" 41-58). Seumas MacManus claimed that the Milesians feared the superiority of the Tuatha de Danaan and thus placed them into a superstitious belief that identifies them as mythical and legendary (7).

Scholars such as Andrew Lang and Edwin Hartland argue that historical events and characters incorporate the supernatural as a way to show the complex evolution of a society's thoughts and beliefs. Lang claims that what knowledge and understanding the contemporary world has of these ancient beliefs and customs derives from folklore. In much the same way the primary society learns what customs and beliefs are acceptable by the analysis of their society's folklore (1-7). Hartland claims "Man's imagination, like every other known power, works by fixed laws, the existence and operation of which it is possible to trace; and it works upon the same material, - the external universe, the mental and moral constitution of a man and his social relations" (2). Hartland's quote suggests that folklore as a representation of "man's imagination" works as a vessel to show how man views the societal and moral world around him. Thus, it represents the group's society and customs.

Hartland goes on to expand that folklore and its corresponding supernatural component interprets events that the primary society does not understand (1). Through this, the supernatural

component becomes a metaphor and representation of the societal customs and beliefs. Folklore holds thoughts and beliefs as the society changes and the knowledge of the world around them expands (Bottigheimer 211, Hartland 1-22, Lang "Custom and Myth" 1-34).

Edwin Hartland claims that much of a society's folklore collection originates from facts and accounts of ordinary people (1). This is because an individual or society sees an event that they do not understand and thus tries to explain that event through the supernatural, in turn providing a further understanding in the generations to come (Lang "Custom and Myth" 1-34, Hartland 1-22). Each time the storyteller tells an oral narrative, or folktale, he or she wishes to connect the story to the contemporary setting. This is done in an effort to adapt the folklore to an evolving and expanding society, and thus allow the primary society to interpret the implementation of those beliefs and customs (Hartland1-22). Several scholars, such as Hartland, Bottigheimer, and Gomme express that many times the tellers would embellish the stories with more supernatural characters and events as a way to connect the folktale to the changes in the society (Hartland 1-22, Bottigheimer 216-218, and Gomme "Folklore as an Historical Science" 238-261). Yet despite this, the oral narratives have held together with their outlines and general strands throughout the years (Hartland 1-5). This means that a story told in Connacht and the same story told in Leinster are in fact quite similar, even if the details are changed some, creating a unified and historical culture.

Folklore educates the populace on the history as well as social customs of the nation and it creates a unified national culture, particularly in the contemporary society (Hartland 5, Lang "Myth, Ritual, and Religion" 1-34). Once a national culture is established and the social customs and traditions become a norm, a sense of nationalism is created. For example, this was done during the Irish Literary Revival. Gomme and other scholars further claim that the beliefs and

customs of folklore belong to a unified community, and that recognition of the whole group must be made rather than individual sections ("Folklore as an Historical Science," 305). In reference to Irish folklore, the whole country is a unified society with complementary beliefs and customs, creating the sense of nationalism Hartland and Lang suggest (Gomme "Folklore as an Historical Science," 302-308).   The Irish Literary Revival further addresses this sense of nationalism. This revival used the nationalism aspect of folklore as its basis for the creation of a unified passion.

The Literary Revival:

The Irish Literary Revival was a literature and nationalist movement that took place from the 1890s to the 1920s (Felton 4). There had been a large political movement towards the freedom of Ireland from the British that had lasted many years prior to the Literary Revival. Many scholars such as Todd R. Felton, W.P. Ryan, and Cornelius Weygandt believe that the fall of Parnell in 1890 contributed to the shift from a political movement to the new literary movement (Weygandt 425, Felton 4, Ryan 3-4). Ryan claims that the participants in the literary movement hoped that their works using Irish history would cause the country to "treasure her legendary, eternalize her traditions, and people her scenery" (39). The people of the movement such as Wilde, Yeats, and Gregory, hoped to reawaken a purely Irish literary and cultural tradition, one that was distinct from the British. Felton states that they sought to do this by using Celtic mythology and history to weave together a national identity that would last through the ages (5). According to Ryan, these writers used the historical and mythical legends to create characters that would enrich the lives of the Irish and teach Ireland to "be herself and to see herself" as a nation in the world. They did this through "promoting the past, prizing the best in it, and making a background to the lives of noble action in the present" (183).

Authors such as Wilde, Gregory, and Yeats, along with the other writers of the movement, hoped to have an impact on English literature, giving it new characteristics and originality that were specific to Ireland. Scholars such as Cornelius Weygandt and W.P. Ryan believe that the authors did this through the use of themes from old Irish legends and folklore/folksongs. They gave "artistic forms of distinction to legends of the past" (Weygandt 421). They hoped to use the fruitful ground of imagery and heroes found in the old legends to create a basis for a country just coming into being (Ryan 176-184). They used such characters as the Tuatha de Danaan to create characters around which the nation could rally, to use as examples for becoming better men and women, and to enrich the lives of the country.

Through the use of folklore, the writers of the Irish Revival were able to create a unified history and culture. The Celtic history of Ireland is unique from any other country. Scholars such as Todd Felton, Karen Golighty, W.P. Ryan, and Cornelius Weygandt believe that the participants of the movement sought to show that Ireland has a rich and enduring culture, represented by such literature and history as folktales (Felton 5, Golighty 124, Ryan 176-184, and Weygandt420-431).   Lady Gregory's *Gods and Fighting Men* show this as well.

Lady Gregory's involvement in the Irish Literary Revival began in 1896 and she became one of the leaders of the Irish Literary Revival (Bowles 97). Literary scholar Cornelius Weygandt places her among one of the greatest contributors to the revival and one of the best writers of historical legendary in English literature (421). Weygandt goes on to claim that Lady Gregory's usage of Celtic mythology reawakened an interest in the subject matter not only among the Irish but among readers throughout the world (422). Lady Gregory hoped to use her

folklore as a way to renew interest in Ireland's mythological heritage and thus use it to create a sense of national identity. (Bowles 98-100 and Bobotis[4])

Scholars such as Karen Golighty and Noelle Bowles claim that Lady Gregory's *Gods and Fighting Men* was the first time that the folktales of Ireland were written down in a single place. This was in turn marked as the first piece of literature significantly containing the Tuatha de Danaan as more than historical people. Bowles and Golighty claim that Gregory sought to take the best of the different folktale translations, both oral and written, about the coming of the Tuatha de Danaan and create a more readable and realistic account of legendary history for the readers. Through this she sought to reawaken the historical coming of an ancient and enduring race that played a significant part in many of the lives of the peasantry at her time: the Tuatha de Danaan (Golighty 124 and Bowles 97-100).

Lady Gregory mixed magic, the supernatural, and history to create an in-depth folklore account of the history of Ireland that captured the audience and left a lasting impact. Many scholars represented by Golighty, Bowles, and Andrea Bobotis suggest that Gregory used the Tuatha de Danaan to establish and preserve a significant unified culture and history for the Irish (Golighty 124-125, Bowles 97-100, and Bobotis). These Tuatha de Danaan were the first representation of Otherworldly beings as portrayed by Irish folklore. Bobotis suggests that Gregory sought to distance the Irish from the views put on them by the British. By creating an "Otherworld" the Irish were able to create a separate reality, or world, that distanced them from other cultures and in turn bound the Irish together. These Otherworldly beings allowed for Gregory to mark the Irish history as unique to the Irish and something to take pride in as different from any other.

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[4] Bobotis's essay is void of page numbers, and thus ideas and concepts are taken from the entire essay.

<u>The Text</u>*:*

In the first paragraph of *Gods and Fighting Men*, Lady Gregory wrote "It was in a mist the Tuatha de Danaan, the people of the gods of Dana, or as some call them, the Men of Dea, came through the air and the high air to Ireland (1)." Lady Gregory, immediately separated the Tuatha de Danaan from other historical accounts by claiming that the Tuatha de Danaan were descended from the gods of Dana and came from the north through the air to land in Ireland. These beings were not given proper lineages in Gregory's account, which would make them common humans, but were instead immediately thrust into a mythological state by being claimed as descendents of gods. Bobotis's idea of the separation of the Irish from the British is seen by Gregory's use of the Tuatha de Danaan, as the Irish's ancestor, being descendents from gods which places the Irish race above others. This allowed Gregory to separate her account of the Tuatha de Danaan from a simple historical rendition.

The Tuatha de Danaan of Gregory's lore are similar to history in the fact that they are advanced in the civilized arts as stated by such historians as MacManus, O'Rahilly, O'Curry, and Raftery. However, Gregory took the Tuatha de Danaan one step further. In the historical accounts, no detail is given to the specific ways in which the Tuatha de Danaan are advanced or of their supernatural abilities. Gregory's account pushes the Tuatha de Danaan into the supernatural world that is not covered by history. This is seen by Gregory's descriptions of the Tuatha de Danaan women

and Eire and Fodla and Banba, daughters of the Dagda, that all three gave their names to Ireland afterwards ; and Eadon, the nurse of poets; and Brigit, that was a woman of poetry, and poets worshipped her, for her sway was very great and very noble. And she was a woman of healing along with that, and a woman of smith's work, and it was she

first made the whistle for calling one to another through the night. And the one side of her

face was ugly, but the other side was very comely. And the meaning of her name was

Breo-saighit, a fiery arrow. And among the other women there were many shadowforms

and great queens; but Dana, that was called the Mother of the Gods, was beyond them all

(2).

This goes further into the idea that Gregory gave more than a historical account. Gregory created

supernatural beings which far exceeded the limited existence of other races by their mastery of

the arts and sciences. Bobotis suggests that Gregory created characters in which the nationalists

could rally behind and be proud.

Folklore claims that the Tuatha de Danaan have great skill in enchantments as seen by the

"Children of Lir" and their transformation into swans.   Historical accounts only pay attention to

the facts and leave out this magical component. Yet, popular memory as shown by various

folktales placed significant supernatural ability onto the Tuatha de Danaan (O'Rahilly 15,

MacManus 2). In fact, the early people of Ireland used the Tuatha de Danaan's abilities as a way

to explain what the people did not understand, such as insanity and sick animals. They would

contribute these maladies to the interaction with fairies (Gomme "Ethnology in Folklore" 21-41).

The folklore Gregory uses took this popular acceptance of the supernatural and cast it onto the

Tuatha de Danaan at the time of their coming. For example, three queens of the Tuatha de

Danaan were so skilled in enchantments that they were able to "br[ing] mists and clouds of

darkness over the whole place, and they sent showers of fire and of blood over the people, the

way they could not see or speak with one another through the length of three days (4)"   This

follows the common belief that the Tuatha de Danaan cause mischief with their magic and that

their magical abilities far outstrip any other.

Furthermore, history claims that a king of Ireland during the time of the Tuatha de Danaan could have no physical blemish (MacManus 2). Gregory used this historical aspect of the Tuatha de Danaan, but went further by placing the Tuatha de Danaan as significantly advanced in magic and surgery. When Nuada, the king of the Tuatha de Danaan had his hand cut off during a battle with the Firbolgs, he was unable to rule. Gregory expanded the Tuatha de Danaan's ability to perform magic by using her folklore to show how Diancecht, a famous healer, was able to fasten an arm of silver with "movement in every finger of it" for Nuada, allowing him to reign once more. "Diancecht the healer, made an arm of silver for him, with movement in every finger of it and put it on him. And from that he was called Nuada Argat-lamh, of the Silver Hand, for ever after (12)." As a nearly impossible feat, this must be assumed to have been a representation of the Tuatha de Danaan's skills in the supernatural. Yet, this small token of the supernatural once more separates the Tuatha de Danaan from other races, allowing them to become a significant part of Irish culture (Bowles 97-100 and Bobotis).   By involving the aspect of magic into the account of the Tuatha de Danaan, the Tuatha de Danaan were placed into a category that is more than just history and ancestors. Bobotis claims that Gregory created a history that is alive and relatable to the people as something to take pride in.

Gregory's *Gods and Fighting Men* does more than exemplify the supernatural ability of the Tuatha de Danaan. Her folktale account of the coming of the Tuatha de Danaan functioned as a way to show the changes in societal customs and norms, as Hartland and Lang suggest. The Tuatha de Danaan represent characteristics that the Irish deem acceptable and that do not support the British vision of Ireland as a barbaric country that revels in brutality (Bobotis). Gregory's characters are fair and just as seen by the interactions between Bres and Sreng and the dividing of the country. After the coming of the Tuatha de Danaan and before the battle that defeated the

Firbolgs, Gregory accounted that two champions, Bres from the Tuatha de Danaan, and Sreng

from the Firbolg, were sent to speak with one another. Gregory accounted that even though they

were strangers and enemies, when "Sreng heard it was Irish [Bres] was talking, his own tongue,

he was less uneasy, and they drew nearer, and asked questions as to one another's family and

race" and that "whatever might happen in the future, they themselves would be friends" (3) This

further suggests that the Irish have a common ancestor, for those that descend from the Firbolgs

and those that descend from the Tuatha de Danaan are of the same family. But it also shows how

these two sides sought to understand one another before committing to a battle that could

potentially kill hundreds. These two sides had not known each other prior to their meeting, so

they did not know whether the other side was friend of foe. The Tuatha de Danaan and Firbolgs

showed a moral custom of their society that encouraged them to not kill unnecessarily. This

further supports Bobotis's idea that Gregory sought to undermine the English idea of the

brutality of the Irish. Therefore the Tuatha de Danaan work as an example of how the Irish really

behave. They choose to not kill unnecessarily and value life.

Bobotis's idea of Gregory giving the Irish a national identity free of brutality is further

shown by Gregory's claim that a quarter of a year was given before the battle so that each side

could befit themselves with spears similar to the opposing side's weapons.

> 'We must have a delay,' they said; 'for we want time to put our spears and our armour in
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> order, and to brighten our helmets and to sharpen our swords, and to have spears made
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> like the ones you have. And as to yourselves,' they said, 'you will be wanting to have
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> spears like our Craisechs made for you.' So they agreed then to make a delay of a quarter
>
> of a year for preparation (5-6).

The two sides agreed that the battle was further to be made even by having an equal number of

Firbolgs against an equal number of Tuatha de Danaan. This way neither side would lose all of

their fighting men. Finally, when the battle ended, Nuada, the king of the victorious Tuatha de

Danaan, gave choice of the provinces of Ireland, in which the Firbolg chose Connacht (4). This

is different than what the historians say happened[5], but works as a way to show that the Irish are

not unnecessarily harsh. This once more separates the Irish from other races who seek

dominance. According to Bobotis, Gregory used non-threatening folklore, such as the equal

footing the Firbolgs and the Tuatha de Danaan sought to gain in the passage above to show her

desire for nationalists to resist violent techniques.

The folklore of Gregory also conveys how the Irish treat one another by showing how

hospitality should look in an Irish household. Gregory explained how the reigning king, Bres,

was hated in all the land for his lack of hospitality and open hearth. In the Irish custom, it is

fitting for the head of the house to provide for any wanderer who may so happen fall upon his

doorstep. Yet, according to the account of Bres;

> He was no way open-handed, and the chief men of the Tuatha de Danaan grumbled
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> against him, for their knives were never greased in his house, and however often they
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> might visit him there was no smell of ale on their breath. And there was no sort of
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> pleasure or merriment in his house, and no call for their poets, or singers, or harpers, or
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> pipers, or horn-blowers, or jugglers, or fools (9).

 This shows that Bres had no concern for those in his house, nor the Irish social customs. This

eventually contributed to the dethroning of Bres and the reestablishment of Nuada.

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[5] Historians claim that the Tuatha de Danaan forced the Firbolgs into Connacht and took the more prosperous land in Leinster (O'Rahilly and MacManus).

The historians such as Bourke suggested in their writings that the Irish held much store by their poets and bards. Yet Bres, as king, did not have this same respect. Instead of housing the travelling poet Corpre in the royal palace, Bres placed him into "a little dark narrow house where there was no fire, or furniture, or bed; and for a feast three small cakes, and they dry, were brought to him on a little dish" (4). This once more shows how disregarding the Irish tradition, separates Bres from the nation, which contributed to his ruin.

Finally, Gregory used the Tuatha de Danaan as a symbol for unity and for how this unity can remake the face of Ireland. During Bres's reign, there was a high tax on the people, and Bres did nothing to attempt to dislodge this taxation. "And as to Bres himself, he put a tax on every house in Ireland of the milk of hornless dun cows, or of the milk of cows of some other single color, enough for a hundred men" (9). This shows how the greed and tyranny of Bres was unjust. This taxation was difficult for the people and they hated Bres for putting it on them, thus eventually dethroning him. "It was a hard tax put on them…there was no good luck for Bres, but it is going down he was for ever after" (8-11). This further separates Bres from the people, his reign lacking unity in the traditions of the nation. This shows the importance of national traditions to society. If one does not adhere to these traditions, it creates disunity in the society. Thus, the people removed him from the throne.

Historians such as MacManus claimed the Tuatha de Danaan elected their kings (7). But Gregory took this further and suggested that the Tuatha de Danaan overthrew corrupt kings to place a new one on the throne. The Tuatha de Danaan sought to be free from the tyranny of such a one as Bres. She wrote

Then when the Tuatha de Danaan saw Nuada as well as he was before, they gathered together to Teamhair, where Bres was, and they bade him give up the kingship, for he

had held it long enough. So he had to give it up though he was not very willing, and

Nuada was put back in the kingship again (12).

This suggests that the later Irish, who were facing their own sort of tyrant, the loss of a national

culture, at the time of Gregory's writing, could too fight for the better unification of their

country. This also shows what can be possible if the Irish united under one culture and history

and what happens when one person, or a group of people, stand apart. Bobotis and Bowles

suggest that Gregory's literature is a way to "express Ireland's political scene" (Bobotis) and

unite the Irish. By uniting, the Irish are no longer portrayed as weak, but can instead create their

own nationalism and separate themselves from the British.

The Tuatha de Danaan of legend are characters that many people in Ireland were familiar

with at the time of the Irish Literary Revival. Yet, Gregory's rendition of their coming gave

print to a unified history. Through such works as *Gods and Fighting Men*, the world became

aware of the folktales of Ireland and their unique history, causing a rise in the interest of Celtic

life. Now, a hundred years later, a new interest in Celtic life is evolving as seen by the

emergence of Irish fantasy and the use of the Tuatha de Danaan.

Through the use of these ancient Celtic stories and history, the early twentieth-century

Irish writers sought to create a passion for Ireland in people throughout the world. The literature

and dramatic works of these writers reached people in Europe, America, and throughout the

world. Ireland was able to awaken people and allow them to see the wonders of their country.

As Ireland grew more alive and nationalistic, the people that emigrated from Ireland were

brought to a passion, understanding, and knowledge of Ireland and its ideals.

Section 3: What it Means

Fantasy:

The next point I would like to address is what constitutes a fantasy and from where

fantasy originated. I will then attempt to explain the role of the Tuatha de Danaan in this genre

and conclude with my hypothesis as to why this role has occurred. I will first address where the

genre of fantasy originated, then what exactly makes fantasy a genre.

Fantasy has become exceedingly popular in the past twenty years but there is no exact

explanation as to why. Such epics as *Harry Potter* and *The Lord of the Rings* broke records with

the amount of books sold in recent years. *Harry Potter* sold as many as 77 million copies in

America before 2004 and Tolkien sold 11 million copies in America in 2001 alone (Grossman

1). Fantasy is not a new genre. Examples of fantastical work date back to as early as the

nineteenth century (Fredericks 33-44). Fantasy works such as Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*

trilogy held prominence in the mid-twentieth century in America and around the world, with a

reemergence in the 21st century (Grossman 1). The 2000s in turn marked the prominence of such

fantastical literature and films as the *Twilight* saga, *Harry Potter,* and *Eregon*.

Yet, the question still persists. Where has this fantasy come from? Lev Grossman and

his colleagues, authors of "Feeding on Fantasy," suggest that the increase in fantasy is due to the

decline of science fiction. The 80s and 90s were ruled by such science fiction epics as Star Wars

and Star Trek. Yet, in the past fifteen years, science fiction became less prominent and fantasy

became more prominent (1). Grossman and authors claim that the emergence of technological

advancements contributed to the rise of science fiction. But as technology continued to advance,

people became more comfortable with the rapid changes and stopped finding these changes

exciting. Thus, the magic began to fade. Grossman and his colleagues explain this as "The

magic would have to come from somewhere else, and we found it in fantasy. Swords, not lasers.

Magic, not electricity. Villages, not cities. The past, not the future" (1-5). In response, the people are turning to other vessels of finding the magic they experienced with the technology outbreak.

Grossman and his colleagues quote Darren Chermack claiming that technology has taken the world "further from morality and generous behavior." He believes that fantasy touches on what people want to feel as humans and citizens of the world: "courtesy, chivalry, and proper behavior." Grossman and his colleagues further support this claim, stating that currently America and the rest of the world are entering into conflicts of unfathomable proportions (such as nuclear war) with faceless enemies. Grossman claims that people take comfort in the clear battles between good and evil, between known enemies, and in open battlefields that are found in such works as Tolkien and Rowling. Fantasy, according to Grossman and his colleagues, has specific places in society, with specific rules, and a clear line between good and evil. This simplicity, they claim, has contributed to the increase in fantasy's popularity (1-5).

There have been many revolutions that have changed the popular culture. The fantasy revolution is no different. In scholar S.C. Fredericks' essay "Problems of Fantasy" Professor Rabkin suggests that fantasy allows people to stand outside the lines that create their reality and thus gain perspective. S.C. Fredericks goes further and suggests that fantasy "marks the rise of a non-conformist, pluralistic view of reality" (41). This is shown first by the increase of interest in new religions and cults such as Wicca. Second, Fredericks believes that altered "states of consciousness" as experienced by drug induced experiments encourages a rise in fantasy, due to the representations of non-reality (33-44). Finally, the technology that has encouraged less interaction with the natural world suggested by Grossman further separates the populace from their normal view of reality and encourages them to turn to fantasy (1-5).

Fantasy is its own genre within fiction. So, significant components mark fantasy as different among its peers. According to scholars such as Brian Laetz and Joshua J. Johnson in "What is Fantasy?" and S.C. Fredericks in "Problems of Fantasy," a fantasy is a work of fiction literature that is mainly supernatural. Yet a fantasy must have more than supernatural elements. According to Fredericks and Laetz and Johnson, a fantasy must have a substantial amount of the supernatural. If one scene in a book has a magical element, that does not classify the novel as fantasy. Instead, that scene is fantastical. The fantastic elements must be "irreducible" and a central theme to the novel (Laetz and Johnson 161-162, Fredericks 33-44).

Scholars like Laetz and Johnson suggest that in order for something to be considered fantasy, it must be believed by the larger audience as supernatural, whether science dictates that the element is in fact real or not. This separates religious fiction from fantasy, because a large part of the readers believe that the religious factor is real. This is seen by such novels as *The Left Behind* series. Many people believe in the events portrayed by the *Left Behind* series; therefore these books are not considered fantasy. In the same way, according to Laetz and Johnson, the supernatural in the novel must not be mocked or "lampooned within the work" (162). If the supernatural component is mocked, than the novel is not a fantasy. Instead, it works much like a satire, which fits into another genre of fiction. This leads the discussion into the next section of fantasy, the idea that the reality of a fantasy, though supernatural, must be an identifiable reality.

Fredericks uses various scholars' such as Manlove's critiques on fantasy. Manlove's definition of fantasy is "a fiction evoking wonder and containing a substantial and irreducible element of the supernatural with which mortal characters in the story or the readers become on at least partly familiar terms" (35). Manlove's definition suggests that a reader can become familiar with the characters of a fantasy, despite the fact that many of these characters, events, or

settings are distant from the real world. According to scholar Norman Kreitman in "Fantasy, Fiction, and Feelings," a reader becomes familiar with supernatural ideas by taking elements into the novel, such as emotions, which in turn connects onto familiar themes, images, or personalities within the novel. This allows the reader to create a reality that is separate from their own (605-622).

A fantasy novel deals with the relationship between reality and imagination, or a separate reality. Fredericks supports the idea of a separate reality by claiming that the fantasy must be understood "by the reader as an intelligible world to be taken on its own terms" (37). This is because a fantasy must deal with human realities such as love, aging, and communication. Fredericks states that "Fantasy must be regarded as dealing with human realities and as having a reality-oriented function despite the self conceived irreality of its hypothesis and conceptions" (37). This further suggests that the reader must accept that the supernatural component is real among the world of the novel. Fredericks uses Gunn's suggestions that "fantasy which is concerned with conflict between man and his imagination, which deals with the fanciful explanations man has created to rationalize himself, his origin, and his fact, and the mysterious forces that act upon him and his world" (39). The reader must be able to imagine the world within the fantasy without considering it ludicrous. In turn, the world must be believable. This is done by combining elements of the real world with the imaginary world. For instance, Kreitman uses the example if an author of a naturalistic novel bringing in a chimera, which "components of different animals are combined in a manner that we do not, and do not need to, believe to be credible (605-622).[6]" According to Kreitman, when an emotional response and thus a connection with the novel is unavailable it damages the world of the novel to the reader (605-

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[6] Kreitman's essay "Fantasy, Fiction, and Feelings" is void of page numbers, therefore ideas, quotes, and concepts are taken from the entire essay.

622). If a reader is able to believe for the duration of the novel in this "counter-structure or counter-norm" conception of reality, then the "impossible universe somehow converges creatively on the readers' understanding of the real world" (Fredericks 37). This shows how the fantasy must be believable in relation to the novel. In turn, an emotional response to the novel is created. This way the reader does not find the fantastical elements and the supernatural ludicrous.

According to Fredericks, the impossible worlds within a fantasy are based on "outmoded forms of intellection" such as myths, folklore, and legends (40). Despite this, Laetz and Johnson clarify that folklore and myth are not fantastic narratives. Instead, fantasy is inspired by myths, folklore, and legends. According to Laetz and Johnson these myths and folklore must be pre-modern and date back to before the sixteenth century (165). This is seen by the use of the Tuatha de Danaan in contemporary fantasy. Folklore uses factual and historical evidence combined with supernatural events in order to create a unified account of the unexplainable. Fantasy goes one step further. Fantasy uses these myths and legends to create a new world where supernatural forces take a more active role and separates the reader from the real world.

The Text:

The Tuatha de Danaan developed a role in fantasy due to their prominent role in Irish folklore. Many folklore stories, legendary accounts, and myths associated with Ireland contain one or more element of the Tuatha de Danaan, such as the 'Children of Lir.' Due to the Irish Literary Revival, these folktales became known throughout the world. Whenever people thought of Ireland, they thought of the fairies and little folk (Monagham 19-22). Their magic and supernatural abilities, combined with their having hidden underground, created folklore rich in the Tuatha de Danaan.

When fantasy emerged as a genre, more and more stories involving the fair folk[7] of Ireland have appeared. There are many authors who use the Tuatha de Danaan in some way throughout their works. However, for this essay, I will be focusing on the works by Juliet Marillier and Stephen Lawhead. In particular, I will focus on *Daughter of the Forest* by Juliet Marillier and *The Paradise War* by Stephen Lawhead. These authors combined their own stories with this idea of the 'fair folk' of Irish folklore to create a fantasy literature involving the Tuatha de Danaan.

Fantasy authors such as Marillier and Lawhead take these legends and combine them with their own interpretations. They use the folklore and legends as supplementary information and characters. An author takes a folklore story, such as the Tuatha de Danaan, and creates their own story and combines them with entirely fictional characters from the real world that may interact with the Tuatha de Danaan but are in no way supernatural. For example, in *Daughter of the Forest* the main character is Sorcha. She is a normal human girl that excels at healing, but has no magical qualities. Yet, when she faces difficult circumstances such as healing Simon, an escaped captive, or undoing the curse that turned her brothers into swans, Sorcha comes into contact with the Tuatha de Danaan. The Tuatha de Danaan at those times give hints and explanations to Sorcha that help her finish her tasks. She is guided by the Tuatha de Danaan but the story does not revolve around them. In the same way, in *The Paradise War* Lewis is a normal college student. He studies Celtic history but does not have any magical abilities. In this novel, Lewis goes to the world of the Tuatha de Danaan and lives amongst them. Lewis seeks to bring back his friend Simon and repair the holes in the plexus. Thus, the story revolves around Lewis and his task, rather than the Tuatha de Danaan; despite the fact that they are a large part of the

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[7] The 'fair folk' of Ireland are the modern representation of the Tuatha de Danaan.

story. However, much like *Daughter of the Forest* the Tuatha de Danaan of *The Paradise War* also guide and help Lewis throughout his journey.

Marillier and Lawhead use components of folklore to base the Tuatha de Danaan on, but mold the Tuatha de Danaan in different ways.   For example, the Tuatha de Danaan of Lawhead more closely resemble their human counterparts than the Tuatha de Danaan of Marillier. Lawhead uses a character closer to the historical Tuatha de Danaan. The Tuatha de Danaan written by Lawhead use bronze shields and create iron workings, fight with swords, and cook over fires in the open air. These Tuatha de Danaan excel in the domestic arts, just as history claims. They are fierce warriors and advanced for their time. For example, Lawhead describes the Tuatha de Danaan "warriors raced screaming down the hill, swords and spears flashing" and "I saw the glint of their bold eyes, the sweat on their firm muscled limbs. I saw their teeth gleaming white, their dark braids swinging free" (120). These descriptions put a much more human quality for the Tuatha de Danaan in Lawhead's novel, removing much of the obvious supernatural qualities seen in other fantasy novels. Marillier on the other hand uses Tuatha de Danaan that are closer to the mythical representation of the Tuatha de Danaan. These characters have unearthly beauty and have a greater knowledge of both their world and the world of the humans. Sorcha travels toward Father Brien's house in order to seek his help in escaping from the evil sorceress. Yet, she runs once more into the Tuatha de Danaan who offer her their explanations and clues. These Tuatha de Danaan emerge as if from nowhere.   Marillier writes that "the figure of a tall woman sitting quietly on the bench under the rowan trees, her black hair flowing down her back. Her long cloak was the blue of distant mountains at dusk" (151).   In this passage, the Tuatha de Danaan wears cloaks the color of a mountain which sets her apart from humans. Furthermore, she appears as if from nowhere, which hints at magic. After

communicating with Sorcha, the Tuatha de Danaan "in the blink of an eye she was gone" (155).

This further shows the Tuatha de Danaan's ability to appear and disappear at will, which once

more separates them from humans.

The Tuatha de Danaan of contemporary fantasy are similar in looks to those of the Irish

folklore. Marillier describes the Tuatha de Danaan as "exceptionally tall and slender, her face

milk-white, her black hair down to her knees, and her cloak the deep blue of the western sky

between dusk and dark"… "Her voice was like terrible music" (59). The Tuatha de Danaan in

Daughter of the Forest are more beautiful than humans, possessing an 'unearthly' beauty. This

is much like the Tuatha de Danaan of folklore. For example, in the "Children of Lir" the Tuatha

de Danaan are so beautiful that they are able to ensnare a human man and make him do their

bidding. Irish fantasy commonly contains a king with red hair and a queen with long black hair.

When Sorcha describes the queen as "palely beautiful, with dark intense eyes and hair like

rippling black silk." Both of these characters dress in fine linen, but have forest accessories on

their person, such as a crown of leaves or dew as jewelry. Marillier describes this as "Their heads

were crowned with strange adornments, of feathers and shells and seaweed, of nuts and berries

and leaves" (243). These differences allow the Tuatha de Danaan to be viewed as significantly

different from the humans and thus supernatural.

Among the differences of representations, the Tuatha de Danaan of both authors are

rarely main characters; instead they are supplementary characters that have a finger in the make-

up of the story but are not an active part of it. The main characters are commonly people from

the natural world that come into contact or are influenced by the Tuatha de Danaan. In *Daughter

of the Forest* this is seen by the main characters: the Sevenwaters family. The novel follows the

lives of these characters and the Tuatha de Danaan are merely influences on the family's actions

and paths. For example, the Tuatha de Danaan gave Sorcha a choice as to whether she would be willing to undo the curse that turned her brothers into swans or not. "For indeed you have a choice. You can flee and hide, and wait to be found. You can live out your days in terror, without meaning. Or you can take the harder choice, and you can save them" (152).   This suggests that the Tuatha de Danaan do not force their hand into the affairs of humans. Instead, they place before the humans a choice to allow the Tuatha de Danaan's involvement or not. The Tuatha de Danaan goes on to explain how the curse can be lifted.

> You must fashion a shirt for each of your brothers. The thread, the weaving, every stitch of these garments will be your own work…That would be an easy task indeed, even for a wild little thing such as you. But there is more. From the moment you leave this place till the moment of your brothers' final return to humankind, no word must pass your lips, no cry, no song, no whisper must you utter. Nor will you tell your story in pictures, or letters, or in any other way to living creature. You will be silent, mute as the swans themselves. Break this silence and the curse remains forever….The shirts will be made not of wool, nor of flax, nor of skins. They will be spun and woven from the fibers of the starwort plant. The barbed stems will cut you, the spines will tear at your flesh. There will be no brother to comfort you and bathe your ruined hands. You will weep in silence, biting your lip not to cry out in pain (153).

This passage shows that the choice to save her brothers lies with Sorcha, and it is she who will undo the curse, not the Tuatha de Danaan. Although the Tuatha de Danaan show her the different paths she could take, they do not actively involve themselves. This idea that the main characters are human, I believe, makes the world of their novels believable so that when the Tuatha de

Danaan emerge, the reader accepts their involvement as a significant and believable thread in the story.

Many times the Tuatha de Danaan meddle in the lives of humans, which causes chain reactions in the real world. Much like the folklorists used supernatural events to explain situations they did not understand, Marillier and Lawhead use the Tuatha de Danaan to explain the effects of choices and changes in the world of the novel. They do this in such ways as unraveling the fabric of the natural world, causing wars to break out, or by jeopardizing the lives of the Tuatha de Danaan.

These novels link the world of the Tuatha de Danaan and humans completely. The Tuatha de Danaan many time need the help of humans in order to save their world and to protect their culture. In *Daughter of the Forest*, the Tuatha de Danaan influence the choices and paths of the Sevenwater children in order for the larger plan of the Tuatha de Danaan to be played out, or to guarantee the fairies' survival.   For example, Sorcha's actions are many times controlled by the Tuatha de Danaan. After falling into a crevice, Sorcha walks down through the caves and accidentally crosses into the Otherworld. When she gets there she asks "What do you mean here at last?" In which the Tuatha de Danaan respond "'you didn't imagine you were here by accident, did you?' queried the Bright one'" (244).   This shows how the Tuatha de Danaan try to influence Sorcha's involvement in their plan. The Tuatha de Danaan designed for Sorcha to cross into their world so they could make sure she was following the path they had placed before her. The Tuatha de Danaan need the humans to get the Tuatha de Danaan's prophecy fulfilled. The Druid Conor, Sorcha's brother, explains the Tuatha de Danaan's effort to involve the humans. He says

It is a long, long game they play, and our stories are the slightest of pieces in its great

pattern…so strong, indeed, that you came close to thwarting them, for each of you chose

to give up what was loved best, in the hope that the other would find happiness. The Fair

Folk do not expect such selflessness…But in this game there is, as I said, a far greater

goal than we can comprehend. Perhaps I am wrong. Time will reveal it (534).

This shows how the Tuatha de Danaan need the humans in order to accomplish their own goals.

Therefore, the Tuatha de Danaan meddle in the lives of the humans to manipulate them into

doing the Tuatha de Danaan's will.

In Lawhead's *The Paradise War* the Tuatha de Danaan's unraveling of the real world

causes fantastical events to occur in the natural world where they had not before. Professor

Nettles explains this interconnection of the two worlds by stating that "When the balance

between the two worlds is upset, the harmony – the plexus itself that is- becomes

unstable…Unstable plexus equals cosmic chaos and catastrophe" (84). Due to the instability of

the plexus, mythical beings such as giant wolves and cairn guardians begin to cross over into the

real world, causing an imbalance between the two worlds (92). The Tuatha de Danaan in *The

Paradise War*, need help from Lewis and Professor Nettles in order to fix this instability among

the plexus. Therefore the two characters cross over into the otherworld to try and correct the

issue.

In Irish fantasy works, the Tuatha de Danaan are commonly part of another world,

usually referred to as "the Otherworld" (Lawhead, Marillier). This Otherworld component

marks a unique trait in contemporary fantasy, and many fantasy authors such as Marillier and

Lawhead have this otherworldly component. Sometimes this is an entirely different world that

has little connection with the world of reality, but more often than not, the otherworld is a world

tightly bound to the real world. For example, in Stephen Lawhead's *The Paradise War*, the

Tuatha de Danaan inhabit a world separate from the real world, but inexplicitly connected. In

the novel, Professor Nettles tries to explain the Otherworld theory and how they are connected

through the use of plexuses.

> The plexus is the fabric of their interconnection. For the world are not simply joined but
>
> woven together…two bands- this world and the Otherworld-entwined in dynamic,
>
> moving harmony, each dependent on the other, and each compliments the other (84).

The 'otherworld' is both the past and present of the real world yet occurs simultaneously with the

seasons of our own natural world.   These two worlds, according to Nettles, work like the Celtic

endless knot. They are two strands forever knotted so one cannot be distinguished from the

other, with no beginning and no end (84). The two worlds of *The Paradise War* have the same

seasons and topography. When Lewis crosses into the Otherworld, he lands in the same field.

Only, instead of being the field of the natural world, it is a field so stunningly beautiful that he

felt he had never existed in the real world (112).

This idea of the Otherworld is further seen in Marillier's *Daughter of the Forest*. The

Tuatha de Danaan of this novel live in a world which has gateways in such places as caves or

fairy rings. "In such a place were they found often enough, a cave or a crevice" (243). Many

times, the characters are unaware that they crossed a gateway until they are face to face with the

fair folk. For example, Sorcha fell into a cave and came into contact with the Fairy King and

Queen (243). This is further seen by the Tuatha de Danaan's ability to appear and disappear. This

suggests that the Tuatha de Danaan reside in another place and can only stay momentarily among

the world of humans.

In many fantasy works, time flows differently in the world of the Tuatha de Danaan than it does in the natural world. Marillier and Lawhead both use this idea. In Lawhead's novel, Simon was gone from the natural world for two weeks, but when Lewis crossed over into the world of the Tuatha de Danaan Simon had been living there for four years. In Marillier's novel, the Tuatha de Danaan came into the real world in order to interact with Sorcha. Commonly contemporary fantasy involve the Tuatha de Danaan by having a human character fall into the otherworld or have the Tuatha de Danaan enter the natural world to interact with the human characters in some way or another. Whenever a character or individual steps into the otherworld, they may spend several years there and return back to the real world the same time they left it. At other times, the character may go to the otherworld for only a day and return to see that several hundred years have passed.

Conclusion/Hypothesis:

I would like to conclude with my hypothesis as to why the interest in the Tuatha de Danaan has increased in the past twenty years. It is my belief that the use of the Tuatha de Danaan in contemporary fantasy has grown due to a second Celtic literary revival that is taking place and that corresponds to the economic boom known as the Celtic Tiger that occurred during the 1990s and early 2000s. It is my belief that this Celtic Tiger has not only raised the quality of life for the Irish, it has raised interest in their culture and a national identity among those who live outside of Ireland.

In 1991, Ireland entered into a large economic boom that placed it as one of the fastest growing and richest countries in terms of per capita in the world. According to *The Economist*, Ireland's quality of life was "the highest in the world" (Powers 3). It is my belief that this economic boom brought Ireland to the forefront of the world and everyone's eyes were on the

country. This in turn brought an interest into this suddenly rich country by people who otherwise might have ignored its presence. Powers suggests, and I must agree, that more than the economy was affected by this sudden boom (3). It is my belief that the increased attention on the country brought forth the old ideas that were exported during the Irish Revival and in turn revamped the old folklore stories.

Celtic studies have increased dramatically within the United States. There are more than 200 students at the University of Washington taking the "introductory Celtic-civilizations course" and more than 100 students in the Celtic civilization and language classes at the University of California at Berkeley (Monagham 19-22). Furthermore, Mulligan states that "the evidence is clear that Ireland is having more than an economic boom…..we have truly reached the Irish moment, a moment of unparalleled influence on America's and perhaps the world's imagination" (6). This increase in popularity of the Irish culture took place from the 1990s and has lasted to present day. This suggests that this rise is correlated with the Celtic Tiger which occurred at the same time frame (Mulligan 6)

The Celtic Tiger brought a sense of ancestral pride to many of the people who had previously emigrated away from Ireland (Mulligan 6). Mulligan suggests that these emigrants had accepted American or another culture, in which they were living, and rejected their old ancestry. Yet, because of the economic boom, these emigrants now took pride in the country of their birth or their ancestry. Mulligan goes further and suggests that the Irish emigrants now embrace the Celtic culture out of a sense of "guilt and loss" (6).

Because of this interest in Ireland and the more common identifying as Irish, anything and all things Irish have a large market in the world (Powers 3 and Monagham 19-22). One of the biggest exports out of Ireland was its culture (Powers 3 and Monagham 19-22). People

everywhere want to know more about the death and wars, the fairies and the romance of the old folklore. This is because

> The literature of the Celts is replete with sex and violence that rivals anything in today's popular entertainment- heads lopped off with great aplomb in boisterous skirmishes, kings coupling with horses and then boiling and devouring them afterward. Druids, myth-tellers, and hundreds of monarchs – some of whom ruled realms no larger than a cow paddock (Monagham 21).

In turn, the Tuatha de Danaan are one of the greatest legends in Irish history; they contain these same popular components. Thus, the Tuatha de Danaan are steadily becoming more popular among fantasy writers. By using these components, any author can turn their fantasy into a book that will catch Irish sympathizers.

This new type of literature is full of everything the fantasy genre embodies as well as one of the most loved myths in the world. Whereas before, the Irish were working from the inside, trying to establish Ireland as nationhood and create to a passion, many authors such as Marillier and Lawhead are not Irish citizens. Therefore, it is my belief that the second revival is working from the outside in response to the passion and interest in those that are not living in Ireland. This has occurred in part because of the Celtic Tiger. The Irish Revival brought forth a new branch of Irish literature in the usage of folklore. Just as the Irish Revival used folklore to create their compelling literature, the contemporary authors also re-invent that folklore to fit into the larger fantasy genre. The contemporary usage of the Tuatha de Danaan in fantasy has created its own sense of literature. The second revival is using the genre of fantasy along with the myths of the Tuatha de Danaan to create a lasting literature that catches the eye of readers everywhere.

The Tuatha de Danaan of the Irish Revival were used to form a national identity and to help Ireland emerge as a unified nation. In the same way, the authors of contemporary fantasy are trying to catch the sense of Irish identity that is reverberating around the world. The second revival is bringing a sense of nationhood to all of the Irish that have emigrated from the shores of Ireland. By using this folklore and turning it into fantasy literature everyone has a claim to Ireland and their history. There is a sense of 'worldwide Irish identity' that had not been present before.

Through the emergence of a new genre of fantasy, the more detailed use of Tuatha de Danaan has also increased. This is due to the worldwide attention on Ireland and people's desires to be a part of this monumental change. Where the Irish Revival sought to create a national pride and remake English literature, the authors of contemporary fantasy want to create a pride for Ireland amongst non-citizens and remake the genre of fantasy. Through oral commentary and folklore, the factual Tuatha de Danaan evolved from a factual race to being used as fairies and symbols of culture in the new contemporary fantasy.

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