



CELTIC AND IRISH MYTH AND FOLKLORE IN THE
FICTION OF JAMES JOYCE AND MORGAN LLYWELYN:
THE PHYSICAL HERO, THE DEVOURING
FEMALE, AND MYTH-MAKING

BY

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ABSTRACT

There is a substantial amount of academic criticism on James Joyce, of which only a small percentage is on the influence of Irish myth and folklore. The clear allusions to Greek myth in Ulysses and in A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man through the character Stephen Dedalus (and perhaps the popular knowledge of Greek myth) tend to overshadow Joyce's allusions to Irish myth. In a comparison of Joyce to Irish author Morgan Llywelyn, I examine the ancient Irish hero Finn Mac Cumhail, the "Devouring Female," and the value, process, and effects of making myths and folklore. Although there has not been any academic criticism on Morgan Llywelyn, I believe that the value of her novels will soon be discovered, particularly their worth as rewritings of ancient Irish myth and folklore. My primary texts are Joyce's Ulysses, A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, and Dubliners, as well as Llywelyn's Finn Mac Cool.

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Introduction

This thesis is an investigation of the use of Celtic and Irish myth and folklore in the fiction of James Joyce and the fiction of Irish author Morgan Llywelyn. The focus of the thesis is to reveal Joyce's use of Irish and Celtic myth and folklore, and to examine how Llywelyn's use of the same myth and folklore modifies our perception of Joyce. During the investigation, I also analyse the myths and folklore that the authors use in order to offer a more complete understanding of the effects of the authors' use of those particular tales.

To read James Joyce without acknowledging the elements of Irish and Celtic myth and folklore in his texts is to limit our understanding of Joyce. It would be equally limiting to read Ulysses without acknowledging the elements of Greek myth in the text. I admit that I am by no means attempting to offer a comprehensive reading of the myth and folklore in Joyce in seventy-five pages. I will instead isolate specific elements of Irish and Celtic myth and folklore, building on suggestions from other critics of Joyce. Joyce's use of Irish and Celtic myth and folklore is a field which has not been exhaustively investigated. Several critics (including Patrick Keane, Maria Tymoczko, and Marguerite Quintelli-Neary) have revealed allusions to Irish and Celtic myth and folklore in James Joyce's literature, with attention focussed on Finnegans Wake, Giacomo Joyce, and Ulysses. However, Joyce also subtly incorporates Irish and Celtic myth and folklore in his earlier texts, Dubliners, Exiles, and A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man.

Since I frequently use the phrase "Celtic and Irish myth and folklore", which is

somewhat ambiguous, I will define exactly what I mean by it. “Celtic and Irish myth and folklore” is a blanket phrase that accounts for the various sources which I examine. I use the term “Celtic” because many of the myths and folklore that I examine are common to the Irish, Welsh, and Scottish peoples. I include the term “Irish” because the focus of the paper is to reveal the myth and folklore in novels that are specifically about Ireland and its myth and folklore.

“Myth” is also an ambiguous term. Its meaning covers a broad spectrum of ideas, ranging from legend and parable to fantasy and illusion. The definition of “myth” that I work with in this paper is borrowed from Northrop Frye’s Anatomy of Criticism: a fiction whose hero is “superior in *kind* both to other men and to the environment of other men, the hero is a divine being, and the story about him will be a myth in the common sense of a story about a god” (33; emphasis in original). “Folklore” is a more specific term, and I use it in its standard sense, namely: traditional tales that are (or have been) widely circulated and preserved by a people (Webster 452). Thus, in this paper, the phrase “Celtic and Irish myth and folklore” is used to include a wide range of sources. The ancient sources which I focus on contain stories about the ancient heroes Finn Mac Cumhail¹ and CuChulainn, and stories about the “Devouring Female”.

¹Alternate spellings of Finn Mac Cumhail are: “Finn/Find mac Cumhaill/mac Cumhail [Old Irish], Finn MacCool [anglicized], Fionn Mac Cumhaill, Feunn Mac Cuail [Scottish Gaelic], Finn McCooil [Manx]; also Fingal, Finn Mac Cumhal, Finn mac Cumal, Find mac Umail” (MacKillop 204).

For the purposes of simplicity and coherency, the alternate spellings of proper names and places will only be given when necessary to the comprehension of this paper.

The novels of Morgan Llywelyn that I examine, Finn Mac Cool, Red Branch, and Lion of Ireland, rely heavily on Celtic and Irish myth and folklore. In Finn Mac Cool and Red Branch, Llywelyn retells the ancient stories about the heroes Finn Mac Cumhail and CuChulainn, respectively. Although Llywelyn's novels are of a different kind from Joyce's (they are not considered "literature"), Llywelyn's use of myth and folklore in her novels supplies some revealing grounds for comparison.

In my examination of Joyce and Llywelyn, I focus attention on the ancient Irish physical hero² (specifically, Finn Mac Cumhail), the process by which myths and folklore are made (hereafter referred to as "myth-making"), and the Devouring Female. During the process of comparing Llywelyn with Joyce, I establish the relevance of Llywelyn's texts to the study of Irish and Celtic myth and folklore. I closely examine her presentation of the Finn Mac Cumhail myths and folklore in Finn Mac Cool in terms of its ability to reveal aspects of the original sources (and thus to clarify the reflection of the sources in Joyce), its relevance to Joyce's ideas of history and myth (including myth-making), and its relevance to Joyce's use of the Devouring Female. My examinations of Red Branch and Lion are less extensive, and are used primarily to support the study of Llywelyn's concepts of myth and folklore, history, and the Devouring Female.

Joyce undermines the status of the ancient Irish physical hero because it was being used by Irish nationalists as a tool to incite violence (Kiberd xv). Although critics,

²A "physical hero" is a hero who relies heavily (though not necessarily exclusively) on his physical prowess to achieve greatness.

such as Fairhall and Kiberd, suggest that the Citizen is a representation of Michael Cusack, founder of the Gaelic Athletic Association, I suggest that the Citizen is also a representative of Finn Mac Cumhail. Using the Citizen, Joyce parodies Finn, and undermines the status of both characters. He explains why the deflation of the physical hero is necessary by his suggestion of the power and importance of myth and folklore. In Ulysses, Portrait, and Dubliners, he addresses the process of myth-making (transforming ordinary people and events into heroes and events of myth and folklore), the consequences of myth and folklore, as well as the place of myth and folklore in history. Llywelyn also examines myth-making, the consequences of myth and folklore, and the their place in history. An examination of Llywelyn's views on myth and folklore (and Irish myth and folklore in particular) offers us a clearer vision of Joyce's use of Irish myth and folklore.

The thesis is divided into three chapters and a conclusion, where each section works with comparisons between Joyce and Llywelyn. Chapter One is an exploration of the Devouring Female. After a brief definition of the mythological figure, I examine its presence in Joyce's and Llywelyn's texts. Then I examine the ancient figure itself, and its prevalence in female characters of Celtic and Irish myths and folklore. In Chapter Two I suggest that in the "Cyclops" chapter of Ulysses Joyce uses the character named "the citizen" to parody the ancient Irish hero Finn Mac Cumhail. To assist my examination, I refer to the Fenian tales and to Llywelyn's rewriting of those tales in Finn Mac Cool. The final chapter is on the process and effects of myth-making. Chapter

Three includes an examination of the relationship between myth and folklore, history and pseudohistory. The conception of truth and the value of non-historical texts are both discussed, particularly in the light of how they are relevant to the writings of Joyce and Llywelyn.

An important question to address is: How powerful are myths and folklore; how much of an impact does Joyce's use of myth and folklore have? Joyce was well aware that myth and folklore have the power to influence and to motivate (Fairhall 177-8; Kiberd xv), and thought it necessary to deflate the myth of the Irish physical hero through the parody of the Citizen in the "Cyclops" chapter of Ulysses. Unlike Joyce's use of myth and folklore in his presentation of the ancient Irish physical hero, his use of the Devouring Female is not for the purpose of deflating the past concepts of the myth and folklore.³ The Conclusion deals with the effects of Joyce's and Llywelyn's use of myth and folklore, particularly their use of that figure in myth which promotes a negative view of women, the Devouring Female.

³It is also possible to argue that, at times, Joyce is portraying the Devouring Female in order to deflate the very notion of a Devouring *Female*. However, I do not trace the undermining of the Devouring Female in this thesis.

Chapter One

Promoting the Devouring Female

In Dubliners, Exiles, and A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Joyce incorporates the image of the Devouring Female, and reinforces the ancient Irish tradition of portraying women as destructive forces. He portrays several of his female characters as the Devouring Female: sexually consuming, dominating, and destructive. I do not suggest that Joyce portrays women in a consistently negative or malicious light, or that all of his female characters exhibit traits of the Devouring Female; Joyce also incorporates some very positive female figures in his texts. As Keane suggests, the vibrant image of the girl on the beach in Portrait ends the novel with a positive female figure (xv). Similarly, Molly Bloom⁴ in Ulysses completes the novel with a positive image of a female figure who proclaims the “life-affirming ‘Yes’”(Keane xv). My investigation includes all characters who could be considered Devouring Females. I present my investigation in order of descending persuasive evidence, in order to suggest that the cumulative effect of Joyce’s use of the Devouring Female is a negative depiction of women. While I do not think that Joyce is a misogynist, I think that his portrayal of

⁴Molly Bloom, like Anna Liffey of Finnegans Wake, is a highly complex and diverse character who does not easily fit into categories. Molly is allied with the forces of creation and life (Keane xv), but is also allied with the image of the Devouring Female in its aspect of the Sovereignty (Tymoczko 107-119). A proper examination of Molly, or Anna, would require the entire attention of a project this size, and thus will not be investigated in this paper.

women supports the idea that the power that women have is a destructive power.

The Devouring Female is a common figure in Celtic and Irish mythology. In Terrible Beauty, Patrick Keane points out that the Devouring Female commonly appears in one of three aspects. He suggests that the three dominant Celtic versions of the “Terrible Mother” (x) are: “the ‘Leahnaun Shee,’ the Morrighu [also spelled Morrigan], and Sheela-na-gig” (x); muse, war-goddess, and mother, respectively. Keane describes the Terrible Mother as “a Triple Goddess at once creative and destructive, benevolent and malign, nurturing and devouring” (7).

The Leahnaun Shee is like the fairy woman of Keats’ “La Belle Dame Sans Merci”. She is a devouring muse who enslaves the men who love her. She inspires men, and incites devotion in those who follow her until their devotion becomes self-destructive and she consumes them. William Butler Yeats also describes the Devouring Female in the form of the Leahnaun Shee: “She is the Gaelic Muse, this malignant fairy. Her lovers, the Gaelic poets, died young” (Keane x).

The warring aspect of the Terrible Mother, the Morrigan, is often identified with a crow or a raven, birds of carrion that scourge the battle fields and feast on the flesh of the dead warriors (Keane xi). Rosalind Clark explains the Morrigan’s position as the goddess of war: “She instigates war, gives the victory, interferes in combat, eulogizes the dead, and prophesies the future” (3). Maria Tymoczko writes about the Morrigan aspect of the Devouring Female in ancient Irish female characters: “As leaders of armies or warriors themselves, or as frankly supernatural characters who can metamorphose into carrion

crows delighting in battlefields, many female characters in early Irish literature are imposing characters associated with violence and destruction” (98).

A Sheela-na-gig is a stone carving of a woman with “grotesquely exaggerated and prominently displayed genitalia” (Keane 113). Carvings of the goddess can be found throughout Ireland, and are common in Irish churches and castles (Keane 113). Keane’s concept of the Sheela-na-gig⁵ is the mother figure who is the womb and the tomb of her children; she is the creator and the destroyer.

The three aspects of the Terrible Mother come together in the figure which is Ireland personified: the Sovereignty. Clark writes: “The Sovereignty as an Old Irish goddess had three aspects: that of the young beautiful maiden [the Leanhaun Shee], the powerful, sexual woman [Sheela-na-gig], and hag or death goddess [the Morrigan]” (8). The figure of the Devouring Female is reflected in ancient Irish characters outside of the three mentioned, but where such characters occur, they are often modelled after one of the three versions of the Terrible Mother.

Keane discusses some of the obvious instances of the Devouring Female in Joyce’s texts. In an examination of Yeats’ Cathleen ni Houlihan, a play about the consuming Sovereignty, Keane proposes that most of the female characters in Dubliners are, in part, devouring females. He claims: “The ‘Kathleen’ of [‘A Mother’] is, like the

⁵In The Witch on a Wall, Jorgen does an extensive examination of the Sheela-na-gig in terms of its historical symbolic importance. Keane uses the image of the Sheela-na-gig to highlight the consuming aspect of the mother figure, “The Universal Mother” (Jorgen 19), or the primal earth mother, who rules over live and death.

servant girl of ‘Two Gallants’ and like other women in Dubliners, at once a character and an allegorical depiction of Ireland” (2). Keane specifically examines Gretta Conroy of “The Dead”, and suggests that she echoes a line of the Sovereignty in Yeats’ play (3). In her form of “Old Woman”, the Sovereignty says: “He died for love of me: many a man has died for love of me” (Keane 108). In the light of Yeats’ play, Gretta’s line, “I think he died for me” (220) becomes more significant because it equates Gretta with the Sovereignty. Keane writes that Leanhaun Shee is the muse of poets whom she inspires and inevitably destroys (xii). Ensnarement and destruction are typical of the Devouring Female, whose astounding qualities such as great beauty or unusual wit are more than any man can resist. The man is brought to his destruction by a blinding obsession with the Devouring Female. Michael Furey of “The Dead” is so consumed by his love for Gretta that, when he finds out that Gretta is leaving town, he foolishly ignores his sickly and weakened physical condition, and exposes himself to the cold, rainy weather so that he may see Gretta one last time before she leaves town (221). When Gretta warns Michael that he will catch his death in the rain, he replies that he does not want to live (221). Gabriel is seized with a “vague terror” (220) because he recognises his wife as a Devouring Female.

Keane also directs attention to Dante Riordan of Portrait, whose outburst at the supper table allies her to the consuming female: “Destructive from the outset, Dante represents, like the ‘old lady’ of Mr. Casey’s more-than-amusing anecdote, Ireland at her worst” (48). Dante attacks the memory of Charles Stewart Parnell, an Irish political

leader who died shortly after being stripped of his political power by his own political party when his affair with a married woman was exposed. Dante glories in Parnell's destruction, and shouts: "'Devil out of hell! We won! We crushed him to death! Fiend!'" (39). Keane also refers to Dante's first appearance, and suggests that "She is allied with predatory, castrating forces from the outset, she sadistically threatens Stephen as a child, borrowing her 'eagles' who 'will come and pull out his eyes' from Isaac Watt's hymn ('The ravens shall pick out his eyes/ And eagles eat the same')" (44). The alliance with the Devouring Female through the raven allusion is subtle, but Dante's role as a Devouring Female is undeniable.

Keane also discusses the significance of Stephen's proclamation: "Ireland is the old sow that eats her farrow" (203). He directs attention to the image of the consuming mother, and writes: "The image of Ireland as farrow-eating sow returns in Ulysses . . . in which the Devouring Female appropriately assumes comic, tragicomic and tragic forms: from the passionate 'Sheila, my own' of 'Cyclops' to the phantasmagoric 'Bella/Bello' and the terrifying 'corpse-chewer'-of-a-mother Stephen confronts both in 'Telemachus' and, climactically in 'Circe,' all culminating in the appearance of Ireland as 'Old Gummy Granny'" (51). Amilia Propper of Giacomo Joyce is also associated with the Devouring Female. She "assumes almost all forms of the Triple Goddess. As bird, filly, basilisk-eyed devourer; virgin, Virgin Mother, lover; whore, corpse, and lamia . . . this protean femme fatale is an inspiring and destructive muse" (Keane 35).

Another aspect of the Devouring Female that Joyce uses in his earlier texts is the

female's tendency to have a relationship with a man that is functional rather than personal. Tymoczko argues that "Though there is no Celtic goddess of love, most of the female figures in the early [Celtic and Irish] literature display a vigorous sexuality, illustrating their connection with love in its functional and ritual aspects rather than its personal aspect" (97). The woman's vigorous sexuality and lack of personal attachment to the man are indicative of a markedly detached behaviour. Similarly, several of Joyce's female characters in his earlier texts are portrayed as callous and functional in their relationships rather than intimate and personal. Not all of Joyce's women are Devouring Females who purposely destroy, but many of them are vehicles of destruction. Their destructive role, even if destructive only in the eyes of other characters in their stories, associates them with the Devouring Female, and contributes to a negative depiction of women.

In Joyce's "The Boarding House," Mrs. Mooney and her daughter, Polly, act together as a Devouring Female. Mrs. Mooney is described as "a butcher's daughter," "a determined woman," and "a big imposing woman" (61-2) who "dealt with moral problems as a cleaver deals with meat" (63). She is portrayed as the puppet-master of her daughter's affair with Bob Doran. Her "frank" discussion with Polly about Polly's pregnancy reveals Mrs. Mooney's role as the directing force that motivates her daughter (64). It is the women's silent agreement to "give [Polly] the run of the young men" (63, Dubliners). The young woman first draws Bob's attention to her by flirting with him and flaunting her seductively clothed body (67). Later, echoing the ancient Irish tales where

Maeve uses sex to gain control, she strengthens the bonds of their relationship through sex, and ensnares Bob by becoming pregnant. This method is understood by both mother and daughter as the way to get power over a man. Polly's sexuality gives her power over Bob that takes away his freedom, and forces him to become her husband or to lose his job, and become a social outcast (66). Although Mrs. Mooney is ready to accuse Bob of taking advantage of "Polly's youth and inexperience," Joyce lets the reader know that Mrs. Mooney is using Bob to get her daughter "off her hands" (64-5). Mrs. Mooney lets Polly sift through the "young men [who] were only passing the time away" (63) and find Bob Doran, whom "[Mrs. Mooney] knew . . . had a good screw for one thing and she suspected . . . had a bit of stuff put by" (65). When she notices that "something was going on" (63) between the two, she encourages Polly to pursue Bob by showing tolerance of the affair (64), which Polly recognises as a cue to further pursue her relationship with Bob. Bob is trapped by the women, and consequently considers himself to be "done for" (66). The actions of the manipulative Mooney women contribute to a negative portrayal of women by reinforcing the notion that the power of women is the power to destroy.

In his notes to Exiles, Joyce clearly indicates the status of the women in the play in a derogatory statement that brings to light some of his thoughts surrounding the play: "[Richard] must show at times a deep contempt for the long-haired, short legged sex" (348). Joyce then suggests that Richard must struggle to attain a freedom from the tyranny of Beatrice, Bertha, and all women: "He is in fact fighting for his own hand, for

his own emotional dignity and liberation in which Bertha, no less and no more than Beatrice or any other woman is co-involved” (348-9). In the notes to Exiles, Joyce also cites what he believes to be examples of the destructive forces of the female in the lives of Swift and Parnell: “The two greatest Irishmen of modern times– Swift and Parnell– broke their lives over women” (354).

In A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man, Joyce reflects the Devouring Female’s tendency to conquer and destroy by using sex in his presentation of the prostitutes. The prostitutes function on a wholly ritualistic basis with no personal attachment to Stephen, consuming his soul through sex. The narrator describes Stephen’s first kiss with a prostitute as an act of submission to the woman who engulfs him: “He closed his eyes, surrendering himself to her, body and mind” (101). After visiting several prostitutes, “A cold lucid indifference reigned in [Stephen’s] soul” (103). Like vacuums, the women suck Stephen’s soul further away from him with each visit. The separation of his soul from his body is presented as leading to the destruction of his soul: “no part of body or soul had been maimed, but a dark peace had been established between them” (103). Stephen sees the women as catalysts that set his soul on the path to hell (119). The priest affirms Stephen’s fear for his spiritual sanctity, describing Stephen’s relationships with the prostitutes as destructive: ““It kills the body and it kills the soul”” (144). Thus the priest offers the idea that Stephen’s sexual encounters with prostitutes are the causal factors in the ruination of Stephen’s soul. Although Stephen actively seeks out the prostitutes, the women facilitate the draining away of his soul and are therefore the

destructive agents.

Similarly, in the Dubliners story “Ivy Day in the Committee Room”, the woman is blamed for her role in her affair with Parnell. Parnell, who “brought Ireland to what many thought was the very verge of home rule” (Keane 38), is seen as a fallen hero by some of the men. Although Parnell is equally responsible for the affair, the men place the blame on Katherine O’Shea, and deem her the cause of their leader’s death. Likewise, Stephen places the blame on the women although he is (at least) equally responsible for his affairs. Although he does not realise it, Stephen is responsible for, what he believes to be, his spiritual downfall (the damning of his soul).

Like Stephen, Richard (in Exiles) torments himself because of his sexual relationships with women. Richard is obsessed with the idea of his wife being both virtuous and promiscuous. He tortures himself, agonising over his sexual relationships and his wife’s. For Richard, it is his sexual relationships with women that consume his soul. Although Richard’s, Stephen’s, and Parnell’s promiscuity and inability to control their sexual behaviour is at the root of each of their troublesome relationships, the women are portrayed as the negative forces of the relationships, Devouring Females who conquer and destroy men through sex.

In “Araby” the protagonist pines for a girl who is never given a name, who is identified only as “Mangan’s sister”. His relationship with the girl is mostly contrived by his imagination; she is an idealised female figure who has no personal relationship with him: “I had never spoken to her, except for a few casual words, and yet her name was like

a summons to all my foolish blood” (30). This attraction to Mangan's sister becomes an unconditional devotion that consumes him and causes him to take up a quest to win her love. The protagonist says: “I could not call my wandering thoughts together. I had hardly any patience with the serious work of life which, now that it stood between me and my desire, seemed to me . . . ugly monotonous child's play” (32). When this quest fails, he realises that his foolish love has led him to self-betrayal: “...I saw myself as a creature driven and derided by vanity; and my eyes burned with anguish and anger” (35). Joyce does not put Mangan's sister in the position of blame; he suggests that the protagonist has betrayed himself. However, Mangan's sister is the object of the protagonist's desire which drives him to vanity. Although Mangan's sister does not physically destroy the protagonist, her taking away an integral part of the boy Joyce portrays as a tragic loss.

Like the protagonist in “Araby”, Little Chandler, in “A Little Cloud”, is moved to action by what he perceives to be a controlling female. Chandler also feels as though he suffers from a loss as a consequence of a relationship with a woman. He resents his wife's mean nature, and feels trapped because of his marriage. He decides that “Certainly [his wife's eyes] were pretty and the face itself was pretty. But he found something mean in it” (83). He begins to recognize the futility of his situation, and wonders: “Could he not escape from his little house?” (83). Although these women do not physically destroy the men, as most Devouring Females in Celtic and Irish myth do, they destroy an essential part of the man. In Dubliners, Joyce presents all Dubliners, men, women, and children, as trapped in their situations. But while he shows the desperate situations of the

Dubliners, he often makes the women vehicles of destruction. Even the echoes of the Devouring Female in “Araby” and “A Little Cloud” contribute to a negative view of women.

In Irish myth, the Devouring Female and the image of Ireland come together in the image of the Sovereignty. The Sovereignty is equated with the earth's creative and destructive aspects: “The great mother, especially when she is associated with the earth is at once the source of life and the repository of life after death” (Tymoczko 98). In this sense, Ireland itself is a female entity that eventually consumes all her people. The depiction of Ireland as a destructive and devouring woman is used by Joyce in Portrait and in his notes to Exiles. In Portrait, Stephen speaks of the aggressive, constraining and smothering effect that Ireland has on the artistic soul: ““When the soul of a man is born in this country there are nets flung at it to hold it back from flight. You talk to me of nationality, language, religion. I shall try to fly by these nets . . . Ireland is the old sow that eats her farrow”” (203). The image of Ireland that Joyce presents in this scene is of a woman who is both creative and destructive like Keane's depiction of Leanhaun Shee who creates art through inspiring the poet and then destroys the poet. Joyce suggests that Stephen's soul has been held by or consumed by Ireland. In the notes to Exiles, Joyce elaborates on the idea that the soul can be taken away. Joyce writes: “the soul like the body may have a virginity” (343). Thus, like physical virginity, the artistic soul can be lost and never again recovered. Therefore, we can assume that Joyce is suggesting that the artistic soul can be consumed by Ireland in the same way that Stephen's virginity has

been consumed by the sexually devouring prostitutes.

Like Joyce, Llywelyn often incorporates the figure of the Devouring Female in her presentation of female characters. Looking at Llywelyn, we can identify the element of the Devouring Female in female characters of Celtic and Irish myth and folklore. Llywelyn's novels show that the female characters of the source myths promote a negative portrayal of women, especially women with power. In many cases, her female characters exhibit the qualities of the Devouring Female because she is following the guidelines of early Irish literature, which often places women in the roles of Devouring Females. The Devouring Female, or Triple Goddess, despite her creative roles, is ultimately a consumer. The cumulative effect of Llywelyn's use of the Devouring Female is the same as in Joyce: a negative light is cast on women, and women with power are seen as negative, destructive forces.

An intense investigation of the roles of women in Celtic and Irish myth and folklore is made by Rosalind Clark in The Great Queens: Irish Goddesses from the Morrigan to Cathleen ni Houlihan. She records the alterations made by authors' transformations of ancient myth and folklore, and pays particular attention to the way that authors present goddesses and women. Clark notes the contrasting roles of men and women in ancient Irish literature: "Although early Irish society was male-dominated, women had a prominent role in the literature. While the male heroes were idealized portraits of human warriors, women dominated the world of the supernatural" (2). Clark examines the Ulster cycle (which deals with the ancient Irish hero CuChulainn, and the

Red Branch), and suggests that though most of the characters are men, the women stand out as more important and more interesting (11). Clark claims: “Probably the greatest achievement of the *Tain* [a group of ancient Irish tales that belong to the Ulster cycle] and the Ulster cycle is the series of women, some in full scale and some in miniature, on whose strong and diverse personalities the action continually turns: Medb [also spelled Maeve], Derdriu [also spelled Deirdre], Macha, Nes, Aife [also spelled Aoife]. It may be as goddess-figures, ultimately, that these women have their power; it certainly is they, under all the violence, who remain most real in the memory” (206). Although Clark’s opinion shows a bias in her preference for the female characters over the male characters, who can be argued to remain equally real in the memory, it is testimony to the importance of the women in ancient Irish myth and folklore.

What may be more important to note about the aforementioned women of the Ulster cycle is their function in the stories. While Clark is correct in suggesting that the women of the Ulster cycle are very powerful and memorable, what she dismisses with the phrase “under all the violence,” is the fact that all six of the women that she lists on page 202 are in part Devouring Females. By going through the list of these “most memorable women,” who are usually the ones with the most power, we can see that they are all characters who reflect aspects of the Triple Goddess, and are all Devouring Females.

In Women in Celtic Myths, Caldecott defines Maeve’s position in Irish myth and folklore:

Maeve is practically the most written about of any of the Irish heroines; she is forcefully strong, proud, devious,

bloodthirsty. Daughter of Eochaid, the High King, she married a relatively minor king, Ailell . . . king of Leinster . . . Although Ailell was no weakling, he was without a doubt secondary to Maeve in many ways. She had property of her own, cattle and treasure and land that matched anything he had. In fact the whole bloodbath of war to steal the Brown Bull of Cuailnge [which includes the hero CuChulainn] was brought about because there was one possession Ailell had that outshone her own: Ailell had a better bull. (167)

Caldecott praises Maeve as a female character who shows that women can be superior to men, and as a female character who “shows the privileged position of Celtic women in the Iron Age” (167). However, like Clark, Caldecott overlooks the fact that Maeve’s power is the negative power of the Devouring Female. Clark suggests that “Although [Maeve] is presented as a mortal queen, she retains the arbitrariness and some of the destructiveness of a Celtic goddess . . . she is the dominant partner in all her marriages. She gives her sexual favours to any lover she chooses, and confers the kingship on her many husbands. She also protects the tribe in war . . . [and acts] as a warrior herself instead of just an inciter to battle” (126).

Deirdre, the second woman of Clark’s list, is also destructive, though not intentionally so, and reflects the Leanaun Shee aspect of the Triple Goddess. In Women in Celtic Myth, Caldecott tells the story of Deirdre (139-50). Her extraordinary beauty, prophesied at her birth to be the root of much sorrow, causes a split in the king’s army, the warriors of the Red Branch, which results in many deaths. Like the muse aspect of the Devouring Female, Deirdre enthralls the men who see her. She is raised in an isolated tower for the sole purpose of marrying the king when she reaches marrying

age. However, when she sees the Red Branch hero Naoise, she rebels against the king, and chooses Naoise to be her husband. Naoise is convinced by his two brothers to leave Deirdre to the king, but as he leaves her isolated tower, Deirdre escapes and catches up with him. Naoise initially refuses to allow her to join him and his brothers since she is to be married to the king, but with a kiss she convinces him to marry her. Although fate can be blamed for the ensuing destruction since it was prophesied at her birth, Deirdre remains the cause of the destruction, and is thus a Devouring Female.

Macha, daughter of the High King Red Hugh, is also a Devouring Female, echoing the muse aspect of the Triple Goddess. Macha kills one of her brothers and marries the other at sword-point so that she can rule as queen (Caldecott 127). In order to keep her position of power from her slaughtered brother's sons, she uses her "extraordinary and seductive beauty" (Caldecott 128) to seduce her nephews, one by one. After making love to one of her nephews she physically overpowers him and takes him as a prisoner to do labour on her fortress (Caldecott 128). Caldecott also examines another ancient Irish female character named Macha, who plays the role of a Devouring Female (128-30). The men of Ulster force her to run a race against horses while she is pregnant. She wins, but collapses at the finish line and gives birth. Because of the cruelty shown to her, she curses nine generations of the men of Ulster to suffer the pains of childbirth for five days and four nights whenever they need their strength the most. Macha's curse prevents the men of Ulster from coming to the aid of the hero CuChulainn, who dies alone while defending the city. She reflects the Morrigan aspect of the Triple Goddess

since she interferes with the warfare of the Ulstermen.

Caldecott tells the story of Aoife (111-6) (the fourth character in Clark's list of "most memorable women"), a formidable woman warrior who seduces the hero CuChulainn, and has his child. Before she gives birth, CuChulainn leaves her, and requests that she send their child (a son) to him when it is old enough. Aoife agrees, believing that CuChulainn will eventually return to her. When she finds out that CuChulainn has married, she attacks him by tricking his son into fighting CuChulainn. CuChulainn has never seen his son before, and kills him in battle because he believes that his son is his enemy. Aoife reflects the Morrigan because she predicts the outcome of the battle between CuChulainn and his son, and also reflects the Sheela-na-gig because she destroys what she creates (CuChulainn's son).

Nes is a minor character in the Ulster cycle, but like the rest of Clark's "most memorable women", she is a Devouring Female. Gregory writes of Nes's part in the Ulster cycle in CuChulainn of Muirthemne (21). Nes uses sex and trickery to make her son Conchubar the king of Ulster. Fergus, the king of Ulster, asks Nes to marry him, and she agrees on the condition that her son rule as king for one year. Fergus consents and they marry, but at the end of one year "Fergus was deposed, and the youth remained king" (MacCulloch 140). She is both a creative and destructive female; she establishes her son as king, but she does so by enthralling Fergus.

The negative portrayal of women is not limited to the Ulster cycle. The Fenian myths and folklore also contain lead characters who reflect the Devouring Female. One

should recognise that many of the women in Celtic myth and folklore are Devouring Females. Their power and violence make them memorable, as Clark suggests, but also contribute to a negative portrayal of women. Llywelyn offers insight into the female characters of the Fenian myths in her rewriting of the myths and folklore in Finn Mac Cool. Her portrayal of “three-dimensional” characters allows us to more easily identify the dynamics of the characters’ relationships with one another, and thereby isolate aspects of the Devouring Female in the female characters.

Mac Cool⁶ considers himself to be completely enslaved to his wife Sive, and equates her with the Devouring Female. Shortly after Sive’s disappearance, he tells a myth about a shape-changing otter, one of the Tuatha de Danaan, who captures and drowns a man because she thinks that he is someone that she once loved:

The creature who was not an otter drew him deeper,
deeper into the water, and even though he was beginning to
drown, he did not know he was drowning. A wild joy overcame
him. He allowed himself to be locked in her embrace and it felt
like coming home. He surrendered everything to her

. . . but at some point she must have decided he was not
the one . . . and she released her hold on him.

She abandoned him to the current and he began to move
upward again . . . But it was too late . . . when his body reached
the surface, it floated lifeless on the breast of the river. (336)

Mac Cool’s tale is an analogy of his relationship with Sive. She is the otter and he is the shepherd; she is a Devouring Female who enthrals and destroys him.

⁶In order to clearly separate the Finn Mac Cumhail of myth and folklore from Llywelyn’s presentation of Finn Mac Cumhail (or as she calls him “Finn Mac Cool”), from this point on, when I am writing specifically about Llywelyn’s character, I will refer to him as “Mac Cool”.

Llywelyn suggests that because Finn was raised in isolation from society with two unkind, old women as his only female role models, Finn is unable to socialise well with civilized women. Llywelyn suggests that his uncivilized upbringing makes Sive particularly attractive to him. Sive is also incompletely civilised because she can shape-change into a wild doe. The narrator writes:

Finn's sole female contact during his childhood had been with two leathery old women who never caressed him, never sang to him, hardly even talked to him . . . They merely kept him alive.

Finn had been nurtured by the hills and forests, the wild places. Only wild Sive fitted the shape of his soul. Otherwise, women would always be a mystery to him. (428)

After his marriage to Sive, Mac Cool becomes enthralled by her: "He was aware of the Fianna as he was aware of sky above and earth below, but he did not think of them. He thought only of Sive" (267). That Mac Cool is wholly captivated by Sive is in keeping with the Fenian tales. Gregory writes: "And so great was his love for her, he gave up his hunting and all the things he used to take pleasure in, and gave his mind to no other thing but herself" (175).

Llywelyn also accentuates the aspect of the Devouring Female in another of Finn's wives, Grainne (Grania). Grania plays the role of the Devouring Female who makes Mac Cool mad with rage (446) when she abandons him for Diarmait. After Diarmait's death, Grania blames Mac Cool for the death of her husband, and plans to take revenge against Mac Cool. The narrator defines Grania's revenge as particularly feminine: "the slow and subtle and very female revenge" (504). Llywelyn aligns Grainne with the Devouring Female by her suggestion that Grania remarries Mac Cool for the sole

purpose of making his remaining days miserable ones.

Llywelyn's novels, rewritings of Celtic and Irish myth and folklore, help to show that the ancient texts are biased against women. Joyce's use of the Devouring Female is a continuation of an ancient Irish tradition of depicting women as negative forces. Not all of Joyce's female characters are Devouring Females, and indeed, some of the characters that I suggest reflect the Devouring Female do so only partially. Nonetheless, any reflection of the Devouring Female strengthens and promotes a negative portrayal of women.

In Terrible Beauty, Keane also writes about the Devouring Female in Ulysses, and suggests that the Citizen reflects the figure of the mythical consuming female: "the single-minded, narrow, rabid Nationalism most memorably embodied in Joyce's crude and violent Citizen, the one-eyed Fenian of 'Cyclops' . . . not only represent[s] Homer's Polyphemus but also stand[s] as the male equivalent of Ireland's one-eyed Morrigan" (14). Since the Morrigan is described as the "one-eyed goddess who drives men to battle" (15), and since there are quite a lot of mixed gender portraits in Ulysses, most notably Bloom's role play of both the male and female in the "Circe" chapter, Keane's suggestion should be considered. However, I believe that there is stronger evidence that supports the idea that the Citizen reflects, albeit in parody, the hero Finn.

Chapter Two

Deflating the Ancient Irish Physical Hero

Although the popular consensus among critics (such as Fairhall and Kiberd) is that the Citizen is modelled after Michael Cusack, founder of the Gaelic Athletic Association (G. A. A.), I would argue that the Citizen also alludes to Finn. By recognising the parody of Finn in the portrayal of the Citizen, we can identify Joyce's contempt for Irish nationalists who use rhetoric and violence as platforms to gain Irish independence. The Citizen is portrayed as an Irish hero by the narrator, but the portrayal is done in parody, which undermines the status of the physical hero.

It is easy to dismiss the Citizen as merely a parody of the cyclops Polyphemus from Homer's The Odyssey, and to overlook the content of Celtic and Irish myth and folklore in the "Cyclops" chapter of Ulysses. Understandably, much critical attention has been given to the role that Greek myth, particularly the epic myth The Odyssey, plays in Ulysses. In the introduction to Ulysses: Annotated Student's Edition, Declan Kiberd examines the structure of Ulysses, and asks the question: "if Joyce wished to base his narrative on an ancient legend, why did he turn to Greek rather than Gaelic tales?" (Kiberd xv). Kiberd suggests that Joyce preferred the "warm humanity of Odysseus" to the violence of Irish myth and folklore, which was already being used by nationalists to promote violent uprisings (xv). However, Joyce does incorporate Irish and Celtic myth and folklore in Ulysses, albeit much of it is in the form of parody. Ulysses is a mirror of

life in Dublin, on June 16, 1904, that presents the minute details of Leopold Bloom's life, and at the same time conveys the notions of Irish culture, including myth and folklore. An intense examination of the "Cyclops" chapter, a chapter filled with allusions to myth, proves that Joyce incorporated a considerable amount of Celtic and Irish myth and folklore into Ulysses.

In order to recognise the elements of Celtic and Irish myth and folklore in Joyce, I will begin with an exploration of the myths and folklore that Joyce draws on. The "Cyclops" chapter of Ulysses, the ninth section of the novel, alludes to the myths and folklore of Finn Mac Cumhail and the Fianna. Finn Mac Cumhail is a character in Irish and Celtic mythology who is a giant among men, and a hero to the ancient Irish and Celtic people. He is also the leader of the group of hunter-warriors known as the Fianna. Because Finn is cited as the best warrior and leader that the Fianna ever has, tales concerning Finn have become synonymous with the Fianna. Under his leadership the Fianna reaches its highest point of fame as a warrior band (Cotterell 130). Most Fenian tales (or "Ossianic tales", named after Finn's son Ossian (Oisín), who recites the stories of the Fianna to St. Patrick) (Cotterell 155) are stories about Finn Mac Cumhail and the Fianna. There are always a number of variations to the myths and folklore of Finn and the Fianna, ranging from the purely mythical to the realistic or historical. Although some texts give several variations on a single tale, there is usually a consistency in the points or results of the stories. For example, in The Fians John Campbell offers two variations to the tale of Finn's discovery of his wisdom (19-20). In one version, the wisdom stems

from a magic salmon that Finn has cooked. While cooking the salmon for a Seer who has spent his whole life searching for the magic “salmon of knowledge”, Finn accidentally raises a blister on the skin of the fish, a mistake which the Seer warned Finn against, threatening him with a beating. Out of fear of the Seer, Finn pushes his thumb on the blister in an attempt to level the skin. However, this causes boiling juice of the fish to burn his thumb. Finn sticks his thumb into his mouth to cool it, and in doing so tastes the magic fish which gives him access to profound and extensive wisdom. After the incident, Finn is able to call on his wisdom by chewing on his thumb.

In the second version offered by Campbell, the wisdom is innate to Finn, and the incident with the salmon is only the catalyst in the discovery of his wisdom. As in the first tale, Finn discovers his wisdom while he is cooking a salmon for a Seer who warns him against raising a blister on the skin of the fish. When Finn accidentally blisters the skin, he presses his thumb on the blister, is burned by the juice of the fish, and sticks his thumb in his mouth. When he sticks his thumb in his mouth, he presses against his back molar (his wisdom tooth) and gains access to inexhaustible wisdom, which he can later call on at any time by pressing his wisdom tooth.

In both tales, the essence of the story is the same. Finn attains the power of wisdom and can access it at will by putting his thumb in his mouth. Unless otherwise noted, further illustrations of Finn Mac Cumhail will be taken from the stories as recorded by John Campbell in The Fians, Augusta Gregory in Gods and Fighting Men, James MacKillop in Dictionary of Celtic Mythology, and Thomas O’Rahilly in Early

Irish History and Mythology, where I will use the most common and most relevant tales.

Although there is no conclusive proof that Finn actually existed, except in myth and folklore, most of the Fenian tales suggest that Finn Mac Cumhail lived during the reign of Cormac Mac Art, High King of Ireland from 222 AD to 266 AD. Some Irish history and mythology experts maintain that Finn was a real man. O’Rahilly quotes O’Curry, who claims: “It is quite a mistake to suppose Finn Mac Cumhail to have been a merely imaginary or mythical character. Much that has been related of his exploits is, no doubt, apocryphal enough; but Finn himself is an undoubtedly historical personage” (272). Another scholar, W. M. Hennessy, supports the claim of Finn's existence, suggesting that over time, perceptions of the hero have been altered: “a person named Finn Mac Cumhail did live in the third century [but] his history has degenerated into a pure myth” (O’Rahilly 272). Most scholars on the subject of the Irish and Celtic myths and folklore of Finn Mac Cumhail suggest that the stories are somewhere between pure imagination and historical truth. I am inclined to agree with Hennessy on the subject, but I think that his suggestion that Finn’s history has *degenerated* into myth is not quite correct. The movement of Finn’s character from history to myth is an elevation of character. In becoming an epic hero of Irish myth, Finn’s character, or person, became emblematic for Irish and Celtic people, his life story speaking not merely of events of personal importance but also of national importance. The idea that Finn was a poet-warrior, a wise and a physical hero, who raised the social status of warriors reflects the Irish and Celtic culture’s vision of the glorious status of war heroes. As a mythical hero,

Finn's actions represent the best and the noblest intentions of his society's culture.

Among his listed accomplishments, Finn raises the band of hunter-warriors known as the Fianna, an organisation that exists at least a generation before Finn, to an unprecedented social status that is well above the commoners and just below the nobles. The Fenian tales suggest that during the early existence of the Fianna, the warriors are divided into two parties: the Clan Morna, led by Goll Mac Morna, and Clan Baoisgne, led by Cumhail (Finn's father). During Cumhail's life, the two factions of the Fianna are at war with each other, but Finn, in his wisdom, joins the two groups in peace and becomes the leader of the combined power (Campbell 10).

Although Finn's desire for peace within the Fianna makes him seem like a character that Joyce models his hero Leopold Bloom after, in the "Cyclops" chapter of Ulysses, Joyce reflects, albeit through parody, the epic hero in the Citizen. The physical appearance of the Citizen, his dog, Garryowen, and the writing style of the "Cyclops" chapter indicate that Joyce alludes to the hero Finn.

The most prominent description of the Citizen as the ancient Irish hero Finn is given by the narrator of the "Cyclops" chapter on page 382. The description of the Citizen is like a description of Finn Mac Cumhail, both in the elevated style of the prose, and in the physical features of the character described. James Fairhall suggests that "the gigantesque description of the citizen [is] a monument to ancient Irish glory" (179). The narrator describes the Citizen as a giant:

The figure seated on a large boulder at the foot of a round tower was that of a broadshouldered deepchested stronglimbed

redhaired freely freckled shaggybearded widemouthed largenosed
 longheaded deepvoiced barekneed brawnyhanded hairylegged
 ruddyfaced sinewyarmed hero. From shoulder to shoulder he
 measured several ells and [had] rocklike mountainous knees . . .
 The widewinged nostrils . . . were of such capaciousness that
 within their cavernous obscurity the fieldlark might easily have
 lodged her nest. (382)

The exaggerated details and the excess of superfluous information found in the description of the Citizen are similar to what can be found in Fenian tales. Gregory writes:

And as to Finn himself, he was a king and a seer and a poet; a Druid and a knowledgeable man; and everything he said was sweet-sounding to his people. And a better fighting man than Finn never struck his hand into a king's hand, and whatever anyone ever said of him, he was three times better. And of his justice it used to be said, that if his enemy and his own son had come before him to be judged, it is a fair judgment he would have given between them. And as to his generosity it used to be said, he never denied any man as long as he had a mouth to eat with, and legs to bring away what he gave him; and he never left no woman without her bride-price, and no man without his pay; and he never promised at night what he would not fulfil on the morrow; and he never promised in the day what he would not fulfil at night, and he never forsook his right-hand friend. (168)

Finn is also described as superhumanly large; Kiberd describes the giant size of the hero: "the Fenian hero Fionn Mac Cumhail could permit 'five times fifty fosterlings' to play handball against his backside" (1067). Campbell also suggests that "At one time [Finn] was represented as a giant of portentous dimensions: 'His mouth was twelve miles broad,\ His teeth were ten miles square'" (175). Also fitting the description of Finn is the Citizen's red hair; Finn has either light red or blond hair, and is named for this trait, Finn or Fionn meaning fair (Campbell 18).

Another important distinguishing trait of Finn Mac Cumhail is his wild appearance. The Clan Morna kills Finn's father and seeks to kill Finn before he can avenge his father's death. Thus, from the time of his birth, Finn is raised in isolation from society. He is fostered in an isolated forest by two women who raise him in a rough, demanding manner so that he will grow up to be strong enough to regain his father's position as the leader of the clan and Fianna. When Finn first comes into contact with society, he has the appearance of a giant "wild child" or "caveman". In The Irish Fairy Book, Finn's apparel is said to be made out of rough animal skins: "He was dressed in the skins of wild beasts, and wore over his shoulders a huge thick cloak of wild boars' skins, fastened on the breast with a white tusk of the same animal" (Graves 2). In the description of the Citizen's clothing, Joyce's narrator almost mimics the popular depiction of Finn: "He wore a long unsleeved garment of recently flayed oxhide reaching to the knees in a loose kilt . . . Beneath this he wore trews of deerskin, roughly stitched with gut. . . the feet being shod with brogues of salted cowhide laced with the windpipe of the same beast" (382).

Another affinity of the Citizen to Finn Mac Cumhail is his dog, Garryowen. It is important to establish the symbolic significance of Finn's dogs, particularly of his most noted dog, Bran. That Finn's dogs are a representative of Finn's feral nature, and act as an extension of his wilder self, is important in the discussion of the Citizen and Garryowen.

Llywelyn's Finn Mac Cool highlights the role that Finn's dogs play in the Fenian

tales. She shows how his dogs, and thereby his ferocious nature, separate him from the rest of the Fenian heroes. As Mac Cool and his fian of nine warriors approach the king, “[Finn’s] hounds followed at his heels, putting a space between himself and his men” (93). When Mac Cool feels vulnerable because he is not yet a match for the wisdom of his elders, Bran’s presence comforts him, and reminds him of his physical ability and strength (93). Although Bran’s comforting presence could be argued to be a comfort derived from familiarity, the relationship between Finn and Bran goes well beyond the normal relationship between an owner and a pet.

In almost all of the Fenian tales, Finn is accompanied by Bran, his faithful dog. Bran is often joined by Sceolaun because the two dogs, who have human wits (Gregory 175), are both whelps of Finn’s shape-changing aunt. Though Finn has several other dogs (Gregory 263), Bran is the most important to the Fenian tales, and the most written about, because Bran acts as a representative of Finn’s feral nature, or as an extension of his ferocity. Like Finn, Bran is an immense figure with fantastic attributes, including a venomous claw which can kill all adversaries (Campbell 175) and the ability to communicate with Finn and the Fianna (Glassie 241-3). Campbell suggests that “The prowess of the dog Bran was the subject of winter evening tales as much as the sword which Fionn was alleged to have had . . . that never required a second blow, the first cutting its way completely through whatever object it struck” (210).

The Citizen’s dog resembles Bran in the way that it acts as an extension of his master’s savage nature. Like the Citizen, the dog is portrayed by the narrator as an

imposing figure. The narrator comments on Garryowen's ferocious behaviour: "I'm told for a fact he ate a good part of the breeches off a constabulary man in Santry that came round one time with a blue paper about a licence" (381). Similarly the narrator dubs him "a savage animal of the canine tribe" (383). Another allusion is made to the Fenian tales by the fact that the Citizen speaks only Gaelic to Garryowen, a language Finn spoke to Bran (and to everyone else). In Folklore and the Fantastic in Twelve Modern Irish Novels, Marguerite Quintelli-Neary suggests that Garryowen's recitation of a poem (Joyce, Ulysses 404) is a parody of traditional Irish poetry (45). However, another explanation is possible. In Irish and Celtic mythical accounts, Bran is noted for his "great sense and knowledge" (Campbell 304-5). The dog regularly communicates with Finn and the Fianna, sharing wisdom and knowledge (Glassie 37, 241-3).

Llywelyn suggests that Mac Cool shares an unique bond with Bran and Sceolaun. When Mac Cool gives an order to Bran and Sceolaun as though they were people, Curag notes the unusual connection between the hero and his dogs. The narrator reveals Curag's thoughts: "Had any other man issued such an order to any other hounds, Curag would have laughed. But he had observed Finn's relationship with these two over many hunting seasons and he knew they understood him as if all three spoke the same language" (354). Llywelyn's portrayal of the relationship between Finn and Bran and Sceolaun suggests that the unusual bond between Finn and his dogs was modified (over time and through the same process of embellishment and myth-making that changed the Fenian warriors into heroes of myth) to include Bran's ability to speak with Finn and with

the Fianna. The idea that “all three spoke the same language” became Bran’s ability to literally speak the same language.

Like the myths and folklore, Llywelyn suggests that, of all Finn’s dogs, Bran is special. She relates the importance of Bran to Finn in Mac Cool’s particularity when selecting a confidant; part of Mac Cool’s reason for selecting Cailte (Caoilte) is because Bran accepts Cailte. Llywelyn’s narrator writes: “Cailte was his choice after considerable thought. The thin man tended to keep to himself as Finn did . . . And he was the only one of the fian from whom Bran would accept food, other than Finn himself” (140).

Garryowen and the Citizen’s relationship is comparable to that of Finn and Bran. The Citizen is described as having an unique rapport with his dog: “Then he starts hauling and mauling and talking to him in Irish and the old towser growling, letting on to answer, like a duet in the opera” (Joyce, Ulysses 403). Similarly, Bran is Finn’s faithful and constant companion; during his battles and quests, and on lonely nights, Bran accompanies Finn. It is important to remember that Bran is Finn’s cousin, and has the “wits of a human” (Gregory 175); Bran chooses to remain with Finn.

Finn suffers as a result of several failed relationships. His wife Sadbh (also spelled “Sive”) leaves him to return to her people, the Tuatha de Danaan; his wife Grainne leaves him to be with his nephew, the hero Diarmait; and his right-hand-man, Goll, eventually turns against him. When Bran dies, Finn loses interest in hunting and fighting, as though he has lost the joy in his role of physical hero. The impact of the death of Bran on Finn is compared to the impact of the death of Finn’s grandson Osgar on

Finn: “And there was great grief on him after [the death of Bran], and he cried tears down the same as he did when Osgar died” (Gregory 430). Like Garryowen and the Citizen, Bran and Finn exist together like two singers of a duet, each contributes to the other, and is incomplete on his own.

Llywelyn emphasises the similarities between Finn and Bran. She shows that Bran mirrors Finn at his most wild. In Finn Mac Cool, the dog is the leader of Mac Cool’s pack of hounds because of its physical superiority: “Finn had added Lomair and Braod and Lomluath to his personal pack [of dogs], and rejoiced in watching Bran lay down the law to them. No dog questioned Bran’s leadership, ever” (200). Similarly, Mac Cool “lays down the law” to those around him. When a guard refuses him access to the king’s cloakroom, Mac Cool becomes “an enraged colossus” (132) whose lips “might have been interpreted as a smile— or a preliminary baring of fangs” (132). Outraged, he punishes the guard by throwing him “for the distance of an ordinary spear’s throw” (132), and even after coming out of his “wild rapture”, Finn still appears to be wild. King Cormac notes the eyes of Mac Cool: “the feral light was still in them. For the first time, the king saw what others had seen in Finn Mac Cool. In spite of his warm cloak, Cormac shivered” (133).

When Mac Cool is enraged, he reveals a feral nature, like that of a dog or wolf. People do not question Mac Cool’s leadership because they can recognise the savage nature that they see in his eyes. On several occasions, when someone thinks of questioning or refusing Mac Cool, a look into the warrior’s eyes makes that person decide

to give him what he demands. Mac Cool's wife Manissa regards his savage nature:

"There was something wild in his eyes, something she could not begin to understand . . .

Living with Finn Mac Cool was like living with something only half-tamed, elusive and unpredictable— and probably dangerous" (348). Mac Cool is allowed to marry outside of his social status (and thus improve it) by marrying the king's daughter Ailvi, because Cormac is afraid of Mac Cool's wild appearance. Mac Cool's feral nature is revealed in his eyes: "The Thing in Finn's eyes shifted again. Cormac had the sudden chilling conviction that [Mac Cool] was reading his thoughts as a wolf reads the thoughts of the stag at bay" (369).

Llywelyn presents the wildness of Finn as part of his magic or mythic nature. She suggests that his wildness is linked to his shape-changing ancestry in the Tuatha de Danaan, and is visible through his eyes. The idea that Finn's wildness is a link both to the magic of the Tuatha de Danaan and to his dog Bran is consistent with the Fenian tales, where Bran is the son of Finn's aunt, who is a member of the Tuatha de Danaan (MacKillop 46). Goll notes the wildness of Mac Cool, and equates it with shape-changing: "As Goll watched, Finn's features seemed to blur, shift, re-form themselves. A feral light glowed in his eyes" (458). Similarly, Cormac suggests that Mac Cool's savage nature is his link to the shape-changing race of the Tuatha de Danaan: "a Thing looked out of his eyes that had not been there before, a creature more feral than a wolf, more terrible than a storm. A creature wild beyond imagining, an elemental force, a power capable of destroying everything in its path if opposed . . . Cormac recalled that Finn

claimed kinship with the Tuatha De Danaan. Shapechangers” (202).

Like Bran, Garryowen acts as an extension of the Citizen’s ferocity. Garryowen is not a lapdog or a lazy, disinterested pet; he is a dog who makes Bloom feel uncomfortable before he even begins his debate with the Citizen (Joyce, *Ulysses* 391). When the Citizen bursts out in anger, his dog supports the angry outburst with a growl of his own: “‘Don’t tell anyone,’ says the citizen, letting a bawl out of him. ‘It’s a secret.’ And the bloody dog woke up and let a growl” (443). The dog reinforces the consequences of ignoring the Citizen’s warning, and acts as an extension of the Citizen’s anger. Like his master, the dog takes a dislike to Bloom, and voices his contempt when he sees Bloom: “Old Garryowen started growling again at Bloom that was skeezing round the door” (391).

Joyce directly alludes to the Fenian tales in the “Cyclops” chapter by listing some of the Irish and Celtic heroes who are most important to the Fenian tales, including Oscar (Osgar), Ossian (Oisín), Caoilte, Dermot (Diarmait), and Goll Mac Morna (419). Although Oisín, Oscar, and Caoilte are prominent characters in the Fenian tales, Goll Mac Morna and Diarmait are more important in equating Finn Mac Cumhail with the Citizen. Goll and Diarmait are the cause of much joy and pain for Finn, and they sully his great accomplishments as leader of the Fianna. A close examination of the narrator’s dense description of the Citizen on page 382 reveals an allusion to Finn’s troubled past. The narrator implies that the Citizen’s eye reflects the inner conflict that Finn experiences, partially because of Goll and Diarmait: “The eyes in which a tear and a smile strove ever

for the mastery...” (Joyce, Ulysses 382). Although Kiberd suggests the reference is to Moore’s melody Erin, the Tear and the Smile (1062), I believe that the competition between the tear and the smile of the Citizen is also a reference to the effects of the complex and tragic events that plague Finn despite his heroic achievements.

A closer examination of the actions of the heroes Goll Mac Morna and Diarmait helps to establish a basis for the inner conflict that Finn experiences. Goll is an essential character to the Fenian tales. He is one of the founding members of the Fianna, and leads one faction, the Clan Morna, while Finn's father, Cumhail, leads an opposing, or competing faction, the Clan Baoisgne. Finn temporarily unites these two factions, and makes them a major power in Ireland. Goll (or *Gol-shuil*) means “squint-eyed” (Campbell 49) or one-eyed (O’Rahilly 278). He is often presented as having lost one of his eyes in battle, and is in some ways a Cyclops figure. He is a great war hero, and is praised for his physical feats. Goll is usually cited as being the second greatest warrior of the Fianna, and is a friend to Finn, and often a nearly equal partner with Finn. However, his motives for joining Finn are not entirely positive. When the High King of Ireland gives the leadership of the Fianna to Finn, Goll is given the option to join Finn or leave Ireland (MacCulloch 165). Goll joins his faction of the Fianna with the Clan Baoisgne, but he later reveals that he has always hated Finn for taking his position as the leader of the Fianna. Goll is also responsible for the death of Finn's father, in some sources directly, and in others as the commander of Cumhail's killer. MacKillop suggests that “Within Ireland, Fionn’s mortal adversaries are often identified with Connacht . . . Over

the centuries this rivalry is embodied in Goll macMorna” (205-6). The dual nature of the relationship between Goll and Finn leads Finn to a troubled existence. The tension caused by the unavenged death of Cumhail creates an atmosphere of mistrust and hatred which eventually destroys the Fianna when the Fianna of the Clan Morna join the High King of Ireland in a fight against Finn and the Fianna loyal to him (the Battle of Gabhra). Despite all of the heroic deeds done by Goll and Finn together, their comradeship disintegrates, and the Fianna disintegrates with it. Goll stands out in the Fenian tales as both a hero and a destroyer of Finn’s Fianna.

Llywelyn offers some insight into Finn’s agonising relationships. She portrays the relationship between Goll and Mac Cool as a fragile, silent agreement to hide their feelings of hatred for one another. In the myths and folklore, the heroes Finn and Goll do not give voice to their thoughts about the murder of Cumhail until near the end of the Fenian cycle, where Goll provokes Finn to attack. It is reasonable to assume, however, that the murder of Cumhail was never far from the minds of Goll and Finn, regardless of their silence. As in the ancient Celtic and Irish sources, in Finn Mac Cool Goll is the first to congratulate Finn when the young hero earns his position as the new leader of the Fianna (94). Goll, the leader of the Fianna before Finn, and the strongest of the Fianna in the myths and folklore (Gregory 178), serves Finn loyally until close to the end of the Fenian cycle. Llywelyn explains why the friendship did not last.

Goll is trapped between hating and loving the younger man; he hates Mac Cool for his ability to take the position of leader of the Fianna and succeed in his ambitions

that raise him to a higher status than Goll achieved or even imagined; he loves Mac Cool for the same reasons (116). Llywelyn portrays the two characters' tolerance of each other as both a necessary evil and a bond between two great warriors and friends (397, 413). Llywelyn gives a rational explanation for the relationship of the two warriors which existed for so long, yet completely disintegrated: "The love [Goll] had borne Finn had always been mingled with resentment and fear, but it had been, in its own way, the proud affection of a father toward a son" (459).

In Finn Mac Cool, that the two warriors will fight is inevitable from the moment of their first meeting (42). In all of his musings about Mac Cool's actions, Goll assumes that Mac Cool is working towards Goll's destruction. The narrator reveals Goll's thoughts: "Finn was his opponent, he had no doubt of it, and the only way he could prepare himself for what ever Finn might do was to stay close to him, study him, understand him, anticipate him" (216). As in the myths and folklore, by the end of Llywelyn's tale of Finn Mac Cumhail, an animosity between Goll and Mac Cool leads to the death of Goll. Goll's death is a major marker in the disintegration of the Fianna (in both Finn Mac Cool and in the original sources) because it comes out of an act of vengeance for the murder of Finn's father. Finn commits an act of retribution which he had made unlawful for any member of the Fianna.

Diarmait is also a character who is both loved and hated by Finn; like Goll, he causes Finn to break the law that prohibited members of the Fianna from seeking revenge. Besides being a great warrior of the Fianna, Diarmait has a familial relationship

to Finn; he is his only nephew, and is the best friend of his son, Oisín. However, he spurns Finn when he runs away with Finn's wife Grainne, on Finn's wedding night. Again Finn is faced with conflicting emotions: love for his nephew and warrior, and hatred for the man who has cuckolded him. The actions of Diarmait ultimately contribute to a conflict within the Fianna that destroys its unity.

In the “Cyclops” chapter of Ulysses, the Citizen also cites an unfaithful wife as the cause of calamity. The allusion to Parnell's downfall by the Citizen– ““A dishonoured wife . . . that's what's the cause of all our misfortunes”” (420)– is also an allusion to an initiating cause of the destruction of the Fianna: Grainne's unfaithfulness.⁷ Although Parnell is not cuckolded, as Finn is, the result of his affair with the married Katherine O'Shea is similar. Finn is responsible for Diarmait's death, and consequently causes the Fianna members who sympathised with Diarmait to begin to abandon their devotion to Finn and side with Goll. Similarly, Parnell's affair causes his party members to betray him, and strip him of his political power.

Another source of bitter-sweet emotion for Finn comes from the death of Bran and the rediscovery of Sadbh. Finn's wife Sadbh is a shape-changing woman of the magical race called the Tuatha de Danaan. She first meets Finn in the form of a doe while Finn is hunting with Bran. After Sadbh is taken back by her people, whenever Finn hunts, he searches with Bran for the doe that is his wife. When he finally finds her, with

⁷Although Kiberd proposes that the Citizen is referring to the dichotomous relationship between the “feminine” Ireland and “masculine” England (1073), I do not think that his idea needs to exclude my suggestions.

the help of Bran, he has to kill his dog to stop it from hurting his wife. Gregory writes the story “Death of Bran”:

One day Finn was hunting, and Bran went following after a fawn. And they were coming towards Finn, and the fawn called out [for Finn’s help] . . .

‘Go out through my legs,’ said Finn then. So the fawn did that, and Bran followed her; and as Bran went under him, Finn squeezed his two knees on her, that she died on the moment.

And there was great grief on him after that, and he cried tears down the same as he did when Osgar [his grandson] died . . .

And some said it was Finn’s mother the fawn was . . . It is more likely it was Oisín’s mother [Sadbh] was in it. (430)

Llywelyn’s depiction of Finn also suggests the inner conflict of the hero. Since Llywelyn gives the motivations and the thoughts of the characters, her portrayal of Finn also offers a deeper understanding of the hero. In Finn Mac Cool, she explicates the essentials of Finn’s character: “Finn Mac Cool was suspended between two contradictory aspects. Warrior and Poet. Could a man be both? And what sort of man would he be?” (60). Llywelyn suggests that since Finn is a warrior-poet, he understands the duplicitous nature of feeling. She writes of Mac Cool: “Sometimes he could not resist sinking into melancholy. His was the nature of the poet who understands intuitively that pain is the balance of pleasure” (207). Her treatment of Finn supports the idea that the line “The eyes in which a tear and a smile strove ever for the mastery” (Joyce, Ulysses 382) is a reference to Finn, in addition to being a reference to Moore’s poem, as Kiberd suggests (1062).

Thus, although Finn achieves great deeds in his lifetime, and becomes a renowned hero, he is also a man who is plagued by misfortunes in his personal life. After the Battle

of Gabhra, which was the self-destruction of the Fianna, and caused the death of Finn's grandson Osgar, Finn is nostalgic, and laments the past. Thus the quotation from the "Cyclops" chapter "The eyes in which a tear and a smile strove ever for the mastery" (382) is an apt depiction of the psychological state of Finn when he is older.

Like Finn and Oisín, who lament the better days of the past when the Fianna was at its greatest, the Citizen laments the better days of the past. He too is somewhat past his physical prime, and sits with the locals remembering that "'There was a time when [he] was as good as the next fellow anyhow'" (Joyce, Ulysses 410) at shot put. The narrator suggests that the Citizen is eager to talk about the golden days of action and the Fenian rebels of 1867: "So of course the citizen was only waiting for the wink of the word and he starts gassing out of him about the invincibles and the old guard and the men of sixtyseven" (394). The Citizen calls for drinks in the memory of the dead (396), and raises the call "'*Sinn fein amhain!* [ourselves alone] The friends we love are by our side and the foes we hate before us'" (396), as though he is going into battle instead of merely drinking. That the narrative style of the "Cyclops" chapter also alludes to the stories of Finn Mac Cumhail supports the link between Finn and the Citizen. The high feuilleton tone, which Kiberd calls the epic, is also the tone of the Fenian tales; the epic tone is a reflection of not only the Homeric narratives but also of the Fenian narratives. One example of the epic tone in Ulysses, though not in reference to the Citizen, mimics a description of Finn in his youth. Joyce writes: "And lo, there entered one of the clan of the O'Molloys, a comely hero of white face yet withal somewhat ruddy" (414). In The

Irish Fairy Book, Graves recounts a similar description of Finn as a boy: “Though of huge stature his face was that of a boy, smooth on the cheeks and lips. It was white and ruddy, and very handsome . . . It was Finn” (3).

In addition to the epic tone, the narration of the “Cyclops” chapter is sometimes casual or realistic narration (and at times crude) that avoids the language of grandeur. The opposition of the two methods of narration, epic and common, can be interpreted as Joyce's acknowledgement of the mixture of fact and fiction in the Irish and Celtic mythological tales of Finn Mac Cumhail. On page 384 of Ulysses, while changing the subject from the Citizen and Garryowen to Terry and Joe, the narrative tone changes from an epic to a common or realistic narration:

A couched spear of acuminated granite rested by him while at his feet reposed a savage animal of the canine tribe whose stertorous gasps announced that he was sunk in uneasy slumber, a supposition confirmed by hoarse growls and spasmodic movements which his master repressed from time to time by tranquillising blows of a mighty cudgel rudely fashioned out of palaeolithic stone.

So anyhow Terry brought the three pints Joe was standing and begob the sight nearly left my eyes when I saw him land out a quid. O, as true as I'm telling you. A goodlooking sovereign. (383-4)

The change of narrative tone from common to epic is examined by Kiberd in the notes of Ulysses: “The first voice is acidly factual; the second is at once dreamy and heroic. The ironic fusion of the mythical and matter-of-fact becomes the underlying project of Ulysses...” (1060). Taking into consideration the evidence that suggests that Joyce compares the Citizen to Finn Mac Cumhail, the two tones of narration in the chapter can

be identified as Joyce's homage to the two opposing schools of thought on the origins of the Fenian tales, both the claim that Finn is a real, historical personage and the claim that he is a purely mythical character.

But for all of the similarities between the Citizen and Finn Mac Cumhail, the Citizen is far from an Irish hero. The drunken man, enraged by Bloom, “waddle[s] to the door, puffing and blowing with the dropsy” (Joyce, Ulysses 444), and his physical feat is to hurl an empty tin can that misses its target. The narrator envisions the Citizen with “A couched spear of acuminate granite” (383), recalling the image of Finn’s magical “spear that never misses its mark” (MacKillop 204), but the Citizen throws a tin can that misses its mark. The narrator’s depiction of the Citizen is a parody of Finn Mac Cumhail, and his actions resemble those of The Odyssey’s Polyphemus, who hurls a boulder at the hero and misses.

Also, the Citizen’s dog is not the majestic Bran but is an “old mongrel” (Joyce, Ulysses 446), and a “Mangy ravenous brute sniffing and sneezing all around the place and scratching his scabs...” (394). Garryowen is described as a “thoroughbred dog and intelligent dog” (395), a description which echoes Bran’s divine lineage and wisdom, but only in parody. Campbell suggests that “Fionn occupies in Gaelic the position of a model gentleman or noble man in the original and best sense of the words” (xiii). The same cannot be said of the Citizen, whose barbarism equates him with the one-eyed giant from The Odyssey, Polyphemus. A self-proclaimed pacifist, Joyce likely portrays the Citizen as a combination of hero and barbarian as a way of deflating the heroic status of epic

heroes who use violence as their primary tool (Quintelli-Neary 45).

In James Joyce and the Question of History, Fairhall suggests that “the Citizen must take satisfaction from past and future glories [not present triumphs]. As Declan Kiberd writes: ‘Like all colonised peoples whose history is a nightmare, the Irish have no choice but to live in the foreglow of a golden future. For them history is a form of science fiction, by which their scribes must rediscover in the endlessly malleable past whatever it is they are hoping for in an ideal future’” (179). One of Finn’s great accomplishments is to protect Ireland with a single, united force, ending the self-destruction of competing clans and keeping Ireland strong enough to repel invaders. The Citizen claims to want a strong, free Ireland (396), but he does not *do* anything to help Irish independence; he only sits in a bar and talks of action.

Kiberd suggests that the nostalgic inaction of the barflies contributes to their colonial situation. Kiberd writes: “Joyce might thereby be implying that the real problem is the failure of these timid men (like the Citizen or the singers in the Ormond) to tackle the British, and that they have failed because they are secretly in awe of them” (1069).

Another aspect of the Citizen that binds him to Celtic and Irish myth and folklore is his attempt to mythologise his socio-political views. Fairhall suggests that the Citizen tries to form a mystical community in order to add strength to his views. In a debate with Bloom over patriotism, the Citizen says: “‘We’ll put force against force . . . We have our greater Ireland beyond the sea. They were driven out of house and home in the black 47. . . But those that came to the land of the free remember the land of bondage. And they

will come again and with a vengeance . . . the champions of Kathleen ni Houlihan” (427-8). He incorporates the language of the Bible with the phrase “the land of bondage”, which refers to the Exodus where Moses leads the Israelites out of Egypt and out of slavery. The writer of Exodus 20:1-2 says: “And God spake all these words, saying, I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage” (Zondervan 60). The Citizen’s language evokes the spirit of the Exodus and the idea of freedom from tyranny by a hero chosen by God. Additionally, the Citizen evokes a mystical band of warriors by referring to the Irish ex-patriots as: “the champions of Kathleen ni Houlihan”. The Citizen draws on myths to make his socio-political views seem epic. Fairhall says: “He evokes a vast imagined community [a nation], including ‘our greater Ireland beyond the sea’[427] that comprises the dead, the living, and the yet unborn” (177). The Citizen is unable to rationally argue with Bloom about nationalism because his concept of nationalism is interwoven with fiction and myth. Bloom’s attempt to clarify his position for the Citizen– ““What I mean is. . .”” (396)– is stopped by the Citizen’s nationalist chant: ““*Sinn Fein!*. . . *Sinn fein amhain!* [Ourselves alone!] The friends we love are by our side and the foes we hate before us”” (369).

An analysis of the motivations of Llywelyn’s characters is also helpful in the discussions of Joyce’s Citizen. Llywelyn’s Goll Mac Morna is something of a cyclops figure; like Joyce’s cyclops Citizen, Goll has a destructive monovision that makes him believe that he should be in the position of power (leader of the Fianna) rather than Finn.

Similarly, the Citizen believes that the Irish should hold the position of power (the role of colonizer) that is held by the British.

Goll always filters his vision of Mac Cool through his hatred for him. As Mac Cool continually raises the expectations of the Fianna, he makes them legendary for their pursuit of excellence under his leadership. The response to Mac Cool is adoration from the Fianna, with the exception of Goll. Red Ridge describes the situation: “Looking around at them, Red Ridge saw their adoration in their eyes— except for the single eye of Goll Mac Morna” (194). Goll considers Finn’s success to be stolen from himself: “Every new honour heaped on Finn Mac Cool seemed taken from Goll’s own shoulders” (218). Goll’s belief that Mac Cool is an usurper that is intent on destroying him leads to a battle between the two.

Similarly, the Citizen filters his vision of the hero Bloom through his hatred for outsiders. That the discussion between Bloom and the Citizen ends as a fight is not surprising. The Citizen is so consumed by hatred for outsiders that he will not consider Bloom to be Irish, nor will he rationally argue with Bloom.

The Citizen’s nationalist concepts reflect the ideals of the Irish nationalist group Sinn Fein. According to Fairhall, Sinn Fein operated on the principles of “Irish essentialism and . . . invocation of dead heroes and a romanticized national history” (178). Joyce was aware of the power that Sinn Fein had by making their own myths about heroes and history. In 1916 he was confronted with the horrors and the deaths of the Easter Rising, an event which was driven by the myths of Irish nationalist groups, and

by 1918 he saw Sinn Fein win an “electoral landslide” (Fairhall 177). Fairhall suggests that it was Sinn Fein’s myth-making that gained them the support of the people: “the *ideal* of an essential national community, stretching backward and forward in time, had power to command the loyalty of people. . . It had power, in fact, to triumph over the realities of division and change and mortality, and to bring to life as a political entity what previously had only an imagined existence” (177). Irish nationalist groups used rhetoric that drew on myth and mysticism to incite violence in followers (Kiberd xv). Joyce wanted to undermine the violence surrounding the concepts of nationalism, which was one reason why he created the Citizen as an ironic portrayal of an ancient Irish hero.

Chapter Three

History and Myth-Making; the Power and Consequences of Myth and Folklore

A comparison of Joyce's use of Celtic and Irish myth and folklore to Llywelyn's use of Celtic myth and folklore helps to reveal several aspects of Joyce's use of myth and folklore. On a superficial level, since Llywelyn's Red Branch and Finn Mac Cool are each a retelling, or rewriting, of Irish myth and folklore, reading Llywelyn is useful in getting to know the source myths themselves. More importantly, in Finn Mac Cool, Llywelyn's attention to how myth and folklore can be made, and how they function in society, highlights the way that Joyce's characters make myths, and points to the consequences of myth-making.

The myth-making process is a paramount concern for Llywelyn in Finn Mac Cool. She shows how important the process of myth-making can be in a society. Her display of the power of myth helps us to better understand why Joyce was so opposed to the revitalisation of Irish myth in the form of the physical hero. Joyce was against the political use of the Irish physical hero, which was being used to promote violence by nationalist groups such as the Fenians and the Gaelic League (Fairhall 178). Llywelyn develops and expands on the idea of converting history into myth, and suggests that the myths of Finn Mac Cumhail were instigated by the hero himself; she proposes that Finn was the narrator of his own myths, which helped to promote him to heroic status. Mac

Cool's myth-making is Llywelyn's way of reconciling how the man Finn Mac Cumhail became the mythical hero Finn Mac Cumhail.

Mac Cool acts as a reflection of what is known about the hero; there is conflicting evidence of Finn's existence outside of myth and folklore, and Mac Cool cannot distinguish if he is a mundane human or if he is a fantastic hero as his myths suggest.

Llywelyn describes the confused mind of the myth-maker Mac Cool:

And the dreams coming...

Were they fantasies or memories? In Finn's mind, the distinction was becoming blurred. When he told a tale, he convinced himself of its reality so his listeners would believe. In his imagination, he envisioned events so vividly he lived them, with the result that now his brain could hardly differentiate between fact and fiction. Both had the ring of truth for him. (84)

Llywelyn's proposal is not without academic and historical precedence. As mentioned above, there is controversy over the question of whether or not Finn was a real person; some academics and historians believe that he is purely a character of fiction and others believe that he was a real man on whom myths were based. MacCulloch writes:

The annalists gave a historic aspect and a specific date and ancestry to Fionn and his men, the Feinn [the Fianna], but they exist and are immortal because they sprang from the heroic ideals of the folk . . . Their main story possesses a framework and certain outstanding facts, but whatever far distant actuality the epos has is thickly overlaid with fancy, so that we are in a world of exaggerated action, of magic, whenever we approach any story dealing with the Feinn. (160)

Llywelyn's suggestion that Finn's greatness originated from the power of the stories told about him is also a suggestion given by Campbell in The Fianns. Campbell suggests that Finn and the Fianna "were no stronger than other people, but the excellence

of their bards made them excellent” (10). Since Finn was a “poet-warrior-seer” (MacKillop 204), it is not unreasonable to suggest that he was the bard of his own tales.

Llywelyn bridges the gap between the two opposing ideas of the origins of Finn Mac Cumhail; she presents him as a man, but as one who may have ancestry that links him to the mythical race of the Tuatha de Danaan. The reader is invited to believe that Mac Cool is a demigod, ancestor of the god Lugh, and thus that Finn Mac Cumhail was not a real, historical person but only a creation of myth. However, Llywelyn presents Mac Cool’s link to the mythical as something which is shrouded in doubt. Her ambiguous presentation of Finn’s ancestry echoes the debate of whether or not Finn was real.

In The Great Queens, Clark provides an examination of alterations made to original ancient Irish myths and folklore that is similar to my examination of Llywelyn. Clark analyses the translations of ancient Irish myth and folklore done by Standish O’Grady in his CuChulainn Trilogy (The Coming of Cuculain, In the Gates of the North, and The Triumph and Passing of Cuculain, published in 1894, 1901, and 1917 respectively), and by Lady Augusta Gregory in Cuchulain of Muirthemne. Her arguments against the alterations made by O’Grady and Gregory can also be applied to Llywelyn.

Clark offers some necessary criticism on Gregory’s Cuchulain of Muirthemne: “Since Lady Gregory’s [book is a translation], meant to adhere as closely as possible to the original texts, her few changes are all the more significant” (83). Clark’s text focuses

on the great queens and goddesses of the Celts and the Irish, thus she pays particular attention to the alterations made to the Morrigan in Gregory's translation of the Ulster cycle. The Morrigan's role of sexuality and her role of "arbiter of fate" are left out of Cuchulain (Clark 83). Similarly, Gregory diminishes the goddess's destructive role, and thus makes the Morrigan seem less potent (Clark 83).

The same criticism cannot be used against Llywelyn because her novels are not straight translations of the ancient texts; rather, they are transformations of the myths and folklore into fictional form. Llywelyn says that she was "retelling" Irish myth and folklore ("Celtic" 1), not translating ancient sources. It should be noted that Llywelyn does make a significant alteration to the myths and folklore in her fictionalization of the life of Finn. She suggests that Finn was abandoned by his mother and found by his kin (170), rather than given up by his mother out of fear for his life (Gregory 159). Llywelyn takes a psychological approach to Finn, and makes abandonment a theme of Mac Cool's life, and a driving force of his actions. Although abandonment can be seen as thematic in the Fenian tales since he is left by his mother and by two of his wives, the ancient sources do not directly say that Finn's motivations stem from feelings of abandonment. The addition of character motivation, which is not found in the sources, is a significant alteration, but it does not affect the plots of the stories.

O'Grady also fictionalises ancient Irish and Celtic myths and folklore in his CuChulainn Trilogy, but to a lesser degree than Llywelyn. Regardless, Clark's arguments against O'Grady are useful in examining Llywelyn; many of the

“shortcomings” that Clark sees in O’Grady can also be seen in Llywelyn. Clark says: “It is clear that O’Grady feels free to use poetic license. He changes not only the style of his sources but even the plots– the so-called ‘facts’– of the tales. He remakes the Morrigan in a way pleasing to his own imagination, omitting her entirely from some tales and mentioning her in others where she has no place. In still other tales he retains her as a character but alters her role” (54). The “so-called ‘facts’ of the tales” are a matter of considerable importance to the discussion of Llywelyn’s texts. What is important in a myth? What should be retained in order to properly retell the tales: the characters, their relationships with one another, their actions? The importance of the “so-called ‘facts’ of the tales” brings us back to the discussion of history and pseudohistory, and the question of where the truth is found.

Llywelyn makes some significant alterations to the ancient sources, but I believe that she keeps the ‘facts’ of the original stories intact. In Llywelyn’s novels, part of her transformation of the bare facts of the original stories into fiction involves the insertion of interior monologues and character motivations. There is very little interior monologue of characters in Irish and Celtic myth and folklore. Llywelyn uses the interior monologue to make the hero appear more human, and the reader more sympathetic to the hero. The language and the style of the original sources (including translations) limit the stories and the characters to a “two-dimensional” existence; the language of myth and folklore tends to keep the characters in a world that can only exist on paper. The original lines of the myths and folklore have gone somewhat stale; the metaphors need to be interpreted, and

there are gaps that would not be present in a contemporary story. Llywelyn breathes new life into the myths and folklore, revitalising the characters and the stories. She manages to capture the spirit, or the essence, of the original Celtic and Irish sources, and at the same time gives the ancient characters new life in a “three-dimensional” existence. Unlike the original heroes, her versions of the Irish heroes express indecision, confusion, and self-doubt.

One of Llywelyn’s most noticeable embellishments in her transformation of myth and folklore into fiction (which also occurs in the transformation of history, myth and folklore to fiction in Lion) is her addition of love stories. Whereas in the history, myth, or folklore records, relationships (e.g. a friendship or marriage) are referred to or briefly discussed, Llywelyn extensively develops relationships from their inceptions, including sexual aspects.⁸

In Red Branch, Lion, and Finn Mac Cool she arrives at a single, fluid narrative that has dealt with the fact, fiction, error, and speculation involved in the ancient Celtic

⁸Perhaps it is Llywelyn’s focus on relationships, including descriptions of sexual encounters, that places her outside of the genre of literature and into the more ambiguous genre of fiction. I have also heard that Llywelyn’s novels have been placed in the science-fiction sections of bookstores. I take consolation in the fact that every public library that I have visited places Llywelyn’s novels in their fiction/literature section. I also recognise that novels from authors of literature such as C. S. Lewis and J. R. R. Tolkien were also confined to the genres of science-fiction and fantasy before they were accepted as literature. Although Llywelyn’s texts do not fit the genre of science-fiction, since her stories are not based on any scientific principles, I can understand why some people might mistake her novels for flights of fancy (and perhaps as fitting the genre of “fantasy”). After all, myth and folklore are realms of fantasy, in that impossible events occur in their stories, and Llywelyn’s texts are firmly rooted in myth and folklore.

and Irish myth, folklore, and history accounts. Llywelyn writes:

Red Branch was written by drawing upon the vast body of bardic tales still in existence in various forms and translations. Most of them are fragmented and episodic; often it was necessary to assign an arbitrary chronology where none existed . . . *Red Branch* represents a search for a skeleton of possible truth beneath the glamour of myth, yet in dealing with ancient Ireland one can never totally divorce fact from magic, for they were the two faces of one reality for the Gael. (Red Branch 491)

Perhaps Llywelyn's most interesting work, and the one which is most useful in the study of Joyce, is Finn Mac Cool, a retelling of the Finn Mac Cumhail myths and folklore. In Finn Mac Cool, Llywelyn captures the spirit of the myths and folklore of the hero, and presents a single, continuous story out of the vast collection of writing on Finn, a demanding feat in itself. Although the myths and folklore have definite originating stories and tend to agree on the wearing away of the Fianna, most of the stories do not have a chronological order. With the additional complication of the question of whether or not Finn was an actual person, the creation of a coherent story about the life of Finn which stays true to the Irish and Celtic sources is an ambitious task.

Llywelyn's fictional account of the hero Finn alters the Finn Mac Cumhail myth and folklore in two ways: she introduces interior monologues and character motivations, and she writes the story with a romantic bias. One must ask whether Llywelyn compromises the original myths and folklore for the purpose of creating a contemporary romance novel? I think that the answer is "No". Although she liberally, and colourfully, fills in the blanks on love affairs and character motivations, she preserves the original spirit of the myths and folklore. Llywelyn mimics the myths and puts them into a

contemporary romance-fiction form.

Llywelyn's focus on the romantic in her rewriting of the Fenian tales is understandable. Examined as a complete cycle of tales, the Fenian tales suit a tragic and romantic portrayal of the hero. Finn becomes a national hero in his youth, accomplishes incredible deeds in his adult life, setting new standards for the warriors of the Fianna, and late in life is party to the destruction of the Fianna and the standards that he set for it.

Since Llywelyn is presenting Finn as a real person and not a purely mythical character, she does make some alterations to the myths and folklore which are necessary in order to make her romance-fiction seem realistic. She takes the people of myth and folklore and changes them into ordinary people who have extraordinary qualities on which myths and folklore were based, and at the same time keeps true to the spirit of the ancient sources. For example, in the Fenian myths and folklore, Diarmait (one of the leading heroes) has a beauty mark, or "*ball seirce* [love-spot]" (MacKillop 123), which makes him irresistible to women. His beauty mark magically allures women; "no woman may see [his spot] without loving him" (MacKillop 124). Llywelyn alters the myth of Diarmait's beauty mark by suggesting that he has no magical attribute beyond natural beauty. In Finn Mac Cool, the handsome young man, already considered to be very attractive by women, is scarred by a battle wound that accentuates his beauty. The scar serves the same purpose as the magical beauty mark of the myths and folklore: "when the scar healed, it drew up one corner of Diarmait's mouth in the faintest hint of a mysterious smile. Women ever after would find it irresistible"(414).

Another good example of the type of alteration that Llywelyn makes to the Fenian tales is her presentation of the death of Diarmait. As in the ancient Celtic and Irish sources, in Finn Mac Cool Diarmait is killed while hunting for boar with Finn. Unlike the myths and folklore, Mac Cool does not know that Diarmait will be killed by the boar, nor is Mac Cool able to save Diarmait from dying because of his encounter with the boar. The result of Diarmait's death in Finn Mac Cool is the same as in the myths and folklore: Mac Cool is considered to be responsible for the death of Diarmait (496, 522), and thereby is thought to have sought revenge. Thus, although Llywelyn alters the specifics of the myths and folklore, she keeps the basic plots of the tales intact.

Llywelyn addresses the issue of creating a psychological profile of, or character motivations for, Finn Mac Cumhail through a discussion between Goll and Mac Cool. Goll asks Finn: "What do you know of yourself," and Finn replies: "I know that I am quiet in peace and angry in battle" (206). When Goll asks Finn to take an internal look at himself and his motivations, Finn's reply is consistent with the amount of information available to Llywelyn about the nature of the hero. Although the sources give information on what Finn was like in his actions (wise, just, generous, furious in battle, etc.), they do not suggest why Finn acts the way he does. To quote Gregory's description again:

And as to Finn himself, he was a king and a seer and a poet; a Druid and a knowledgeable man; and everything he said was sweet-sounding to his people. And a better fighting man than Finn never struck his hand into a king's hand, and whatever anyone ever said of him, he was three times better. And of his justice it used to be said, that if his enemy and his own son had

come before him to be judged, it is a fair judgment he would have given between them. And as to his generosity it used to be said, he never denied any man as long as he had a mouth to eat with, and legs to bring away what he gave him; and he never left no woman without her bride-price, and no man without his pay; and he never promised at night what he would not fulfil on the morrow; and he never promised in the day what he would not fulfil at night, and he never forsook his right-hand friend. (168)

His motivations seem to be to keep peace, and fight heroically when necessary.

MacKillop describes the hero as “Fionn the poet-warrior-seer who resides in the countryside and is ready to defend his people while not ruling them” (204).

There are several instances where Llywelyn provides motivations for the characters’ actions which are not given in the original tales of Irish and Celtic myth and folklore. Although supplying character motivations involves supposition, her suggestions do not conflict with the “so-called ‘facts’” of the sources. In many cases she simply gives logical explanations for the characters’ actions based on character relationships. For example, Mac Coll chews his thumb as a habit of stalling for time to think when he is under pressure to supply wisdom (74, 110). The result of the action is the same as in the myths and folklore about Finn; though Mac Cool’s action is not magical, it nonetheless results in wise words (110).

In the process of making the myths and folklore into believable, realistic fiction Llywelyn suggests that many of Finn’s actions were motivated by his will to promote himself and elevate his status and power. For example, she fictionalises the myth of Finn’s generosity as the hero’s way of mending broken egos. After Mac Cool demonstrates a feat of physical strength, or the power of his position, he is quick to

compensate the unfortunate (though deserving) man whom he has used in his demonstration (135). Mac Cool reveals that he is generous so that he will make friends whom he can trust rather than frightened enemies, including men who have crossed him. Mac Cool demonstrates his legendary wisdom by saying: ““An animal who is afraid of you may well turn on you and do you a mortal injury. I don’t want men . . . whom I must work with to be afraid of me”” (136).

By making the characters “three-dimensional,” real or mundane people, Llywelyn necessarily compromises the ancient sources. Unlike the myths and folklore, by the time Mac Cool is middle aged, he is not the fierce hero he used to be; he ruins his back, and can no longer perform his amazing physical feats that separate him from the rest of the warriors (413). Similarly, since she is presenting Finn as a man among mortals, she presents the heroes of the Fianna as having interests outside of war and heroic deeds. For example, Lugaid is interested in mills and dreams of owning and operating one. Llywelyn’s Lugaid comments on the life of a local miller: ““What a wonderful life that must be! His own business, his own snug house, a wife, and an oven for baking, and children playing underfoot. He has everything a man could want, I’d say”” (65). His concept of an ideal life is not the same as that of a Fenian hero of myth or folklore who would prefer to feel alive in battle or embrace death in it. W. B. Yeats writes about the joy found in the death of the hero Osgar: “When one of the Fianna finds Osgar dying the proud death of a young man, and asks is it well with him, he is answered, ‘I am as you would have me be.’ The very heroism of the Fianna is indeed but their pride and joy in

one another, their good fellowship” (Gregory xvii).

With the exception of changing the myths into men, Llywelyn remains true to the Fenian tales. Like many academics and historians, Llywelyn suggests that Finn was a real person who was made into a hero of myth and folklore. However, Llywelyn does not wholly discount the idea that Finn is a purely fictional creation; she also suggests that Finn was a son of the Tuatha de Danaan who was living among mortals (a myth placed in historical context), and thus that he was never a real person. Although the result is a hero who is confused about his identity and has trouble distinguishing facts from fabrications, Llywelyn’s method of representing the story of Finn and the Fianna shows how fact and history can become myth and folklore. Involved in the discussion of the relationship between history and myth and folklore is the question of how to keep the truth of an event intact when creating a written account of the event.

Although Llywelyn writes with a focus on romance, she does not compromise the original spirit of the myths and folklore. Mac Cool remains the giant war hero of the Fianna who unites the warring factions for a time. Llywelyn shows him rising from an orphan to a powerful leader who implements higher standards for the hunter-warriors, and she shows his involvement in the collapse of the Fianna by his failure to maintain the standards that he instigated.

Similarly, Llywelyn remains true to the spirit of the ancient stories of CuChulainn in Red Branch, and to the stories and histories of Brian Boru in Lion. CuChulainn remains the young, demigod (son of Lugh) hero of the Ulstermen, who single-handedly

defends the border of Ulster from the Connacht men. Llywelyn shows the Morrigan's love-hate relationship with CuChulainn, and the goddess's influence on the life of the hero. Her work of pseudo-historical fiction, Lion of Ireland: The Legend of Brian Boru, is true to the historical accounts of the High King's life, while at the same time it accounts for the myths and folklore that surrounds Brian Boru. As in her fictional accounts of myths and folktales in Finn Mac Cool and Red Branch, her fictional account of the life of Brian Boru does not compromise the facts that are available from sources of history, myth and folklore. Brian is the High King of Ireland, who is born in 941 and dies in 1014 on Good Friday, in the Battle of Clontarf (OCroinin 266). Llywelyn shows how Brian wins support from all of Ireland, and suggests how he is compromised between the Christians and pagans, as well as between the Irish and the Norse. Additionally, Llywelyn incorporates the myths and folklore surrounding Brian Boru, including tales such as the sounding of "the stone Fal, which screams under the feet of the rightful king" (Clark 138). She uses the stories and histories of Brian Boru as templates to construct a single story about his time and life, adding a "third dimension" to the characters by suggesting character motivations, and by giving the characters interior monologues.

Clark is wary of alterations to the sources that are made to suit the author's interpretation of the story. She criticizes O'Grady's embellishments on original Celtic and Irish tales: "In O'Grady's work, long-winded descriptions and passages of bombast take the place of simple, matter-of-fact narrative. In the early Irish tale, the action is the important thing. The plot is set forth clearly and economically" (59). She suggests that

O'Grady makes unnecessary omissions and changes to the tale for unknown reasons (55), and that he dilutes the tale by expanding its contents unreasonably (57). Llywelyn also makes changes and omissions but, unlike O'Grady, she maintains the original emphasis of the myths and folklore (in Finn Mac Cool and Red Branch), and keeps the plots of the sources intact. The alterations that she makes have more to do with adding a human quality to the men and women of myth. Her fictionalising of the myths and folklore tends to demystify the hero and gloss over the mythical aspects of the stories (i.e. she presents the hero's human side and his link to ordinary people, and she marginalizes the actions of the gods). She does not discount the fantastic actions of heroes and gods, but she highlights the human components of the actions. Of course, this can also be seen as one of Llywelyn's weaknesses: the alteration of the hero changes the story from a tale of supernatural being to a tale of a mere human.

In a review of O'Grady's treatment of the supernatural in his CuChulainn Trilogy, Clark notes that he makes supernatural events unclear, and allows for speculation. Conversely, in the myths "there is no 'seems' about it; everything is clear and stark" (Clark 57). O'Grady makes the Morrigan into a shadowy, "formless thing", rather than the concrete figure that she is in the original myths. Llywelyn also presents the supernatural in such a way as to allow for speculation, though not to the same degree as O'Grady.

In Red Branch, Llywelyn makes some of the appearances of the Irish gods (such as the goddess the Morrigan and the god Lugh) shadowy events, placing them in the

realms of day-dream, hallucination, and speculation. The reader is first introduced to the god Lugh through the feverish dream of CuChulainn's mother, Dectera (16-19). It is not until the end of the novel that the Lugh is conclusively presented as CuChulainn's father. Like Dectera's encounter with Lugh, the Morrigan appears to CuChulainn in a day-dream-vision (323-4). Although I propose that Llywelyn places Lugh and the Morrigan in the realm of speculation, she does so only in the eyes of her hero, while she lets the reader know of the actions of the god and goddess. The Morrigan describes CuChulainn's reaction to seeing her: "He knuckled his eyes as if I might be an apparition, but I was very real" (373). When a raven enters the scene and CuChulainn is taunted by a voice that he does not know, the reader knows that the Morrigan is taunting the hero.

Llywelyn's attention to the relationship between the goddess and the hero, while not unlike the myths and folklore, is highlighted in an attempt to make the story of the Ulster cycle more accessible to readers. In her creation of a modern version of the story of CuChulainn, Llywelyn puts considerable effort into making the hero a character with whom the reader can sympathise. Although Llywelyn allows for speculation as to the physical occurrence of the supernatural events, by the end of the novel, Llywelyn reveals the mythic nature of the story. When CuChulainn invokes the name "Father," "thinking in his heart of Conor mac Nessa [his foster father]" (378), he summons the god Lugh. When CuChulainn is confirmed to be the son of the god Lugh (483), no doubt can be left in the reader's mind as to the mythic nature of Red Branch. By revealing CuChulainn's demigod status, Llywelyn removes the hazy veil of doubt that surrounds the previous

encounters with the gods. Thus, although Llywelyn does not strictly hold to the form of the Irish and Celtic myths and folklore of CuChulainn, her rewriting does not destroy the original spirit of the ancient sources.

The Morrigan of Red Branch is a true representation of the goddess of the original tales; she is as Clark describes her: “She instigates war, gives the victory, interferes in combat . . . and prophesies the future” (Clark 3). Llywelyn shows the role that the Morrigan plays in the Ulster cycle, with particular attention focussed on the effect that the goddess has on the life of the hero CuChulainn. Clark suggests that the Morrigan is stripped of her power as goddess and of her central role in the stories of CuChulainn, that the Morrigan is demoted to a “portent and a vision” (4) by Anglo-Irish authors. Llywelyn restores the Morrigan to her original status as the goddess of war. In Red Branch, the Morrigan instigates war (310), gives the victory to CuChulainn by enraging him through taunting (39, 402), interferes in CuChulainn’s combat (402), and prophesies CuChulainn’s future (374, 416).

Clark might be more opposed to Llywelyn’s treatment of the supernatural in Finn Mac Cool. Llywelyn makes the mythical accounts of Finn seem unlikely, though not impossible, in her tale. Llywelyn’s addition of an element of obscurity and mystery to her presentation of Finn Mac Cumhail is justifiable since the records of the hero are obscure. The difference between Llywelyn’s alteration and O’Grady’s is that Llywelyn’s ambiguity represents the fact that records of Finn’s origins are obscure. She gives a more realistic account of the Irish hero, and suggests logical reasons for the emergence of the

tales about Finn. In her presentation of Finn as both a man and a creature of myth, Llywelyn obscures the supernatural events, where there is reason for the reader to doubt the reality of what Mac Cool believes he is experiencing. When Mac Cool meets Sive for the first time, or believes that he does, the reader is presented with the possibility that Mac Cool is not perceiving things as they really are. He encounters a doe while hunting, and believes that he is seeing a woman, a shape-changer of the Tuatha de Danaan. In the moment that Mac Cool believes that the deer is a woman, the narrator says that “the final line of demarcation between fantasy and reality was forever destroyed for Finn Mac Cool. There was no going back” (208). Despite passages that make the supernatural obscure, there are instances in Finn Mac Cool that suggest that the hero’s interaction with the supernatural is real.

Mac Cool’s myth-making, where he is first associated with the supernatural, is initially portrayed as a form of trickery that the hero uses in order to promote himself, and give himself the advantage over others. Like the men in Portrait who sit around the supper table contemplating Parnell’s demise and promoting myths about their leader, Llywelyn’s Mac Cool begins his own myth-making while sitting around a fire, eating venison. Llywelyn suggests that Finn is the creator of the myths about himself and the Fianna. When telling a tale about his ancestry, he recognises the possibilities that myth-making offers: “Until this night, his youth had seemed an insurmountable obstacle . . . he was scarcely old enough to lead one fian, much less entertain higher ambitions. But for a man who would do magic– or was believed capable of doing magic– age was irrelevant”

(21). The narrator reveals that Mac Cool's myth-making is necessary in order to free himself from the limits of his station in life: "his skills had been enough to entitle him to leadership of one band of warriors. But to lead the entire army, a man must be extraordinary" (25). Similarly, Mac Cool claims that he is a prince of the Tuatha de Danaan in order to promote himself in the eyes of the king (153-4).

However, Mac Cool's supposed embellishments become questionable when he begins to doubt that they originated in his mind. The distinction between history and myth becomes obscured: "Were they fantasies or memories? In Finn's mind, the distinction was becoming blurred" (84). When Mac Cool begins to believe in the myths that he has made about himself and his past, the reader is invited to believe that Mac Cool's self-made myths are in fact truths which he has temporarily forgotten. When Finn recites his ancestry to the King, and links it to the Tuatha de Danaan, the fictional status of his history is questioned in the narration of Mac Cool's thoughts:

How brilliantly it ties together! Finn congratulated
himself silently. Almost as if I were not making it up.
Is that possible?
Am I remembering facts I did not know I knew?
Finn Mac Cool did not know what reality was. (154)

Mac Cool's association with his wife Sive (Sadbh) accentuates his wild nature, and also links the hero to the shape-changers. If Mac Cool is believed to be a shape-changer, then he must also be considered to be a fictitious character. In the myths and folklore, Sive is of the Tuatha de Danaan (MacKillop 117), but because Llywelyn chooses to present Finn as a real person among real people, she leaves out direct

presentation of the Tuatha de Danaan. However, Llywelyn still accounts for the magical race of shape-changers because they play an important role in the Fenian tales. For example, in the scene where Bran and Sceolaun chose to walk next to Sive over walking next to Mac Cool (245), Llywelyn is demonstrating several things. One is the idea that Mac Cool is not making myths about himself, but is realising his mythic nature; Sive is a member of the Tuatha de Danaan, shape-changers, and Bran and Sceolaun would naturally choose to be with Sive over Finn because the dogs' mother was a shape-changer (thus confirming myths that Mac Cool has told earlier about his ancestry, and the ancestry of Bran and Sceolaun). Similarly, Bran and Sceolaun choose to be with Sive and greet her as if they know her (242) because they have met her previously, when she was in the form of a deer (208-9). Both reasons support the idea that Mac Cool is part of a magical race, and that his stories about himself are not fictions but are facts.

Similar to the final scene of Red Branch, the final scene of Finn Mac Cool is an epiphany scene that supports the idea that Mac Cool's involvement with the supernatural is real. Mac Cool's son Oisín, who has been opposed to Mac Cool's myth-making because he perceived the embellishments to be lies (523), sees Mac Cool's magic revealed. Mac Cool wanders away from a feast, and, "As Oisín watched, a red deer emerged from a clump of hawthorn and glided gracefully forward to walk beside Finn Mac Cool" (528). The appearance of the red deer suggests that the Oisín's mother is a shape-changer, and that Mac Cool's myths about his magical ancestry and his interaction with the Tuatha de Danaan are the truth.

Finn Mac Cool has its shortcomings if examined in terms of its adherence to the ancient Irish and Celtic sources. Llywelyn portrays Finn as a man among mortals; Mac Cool does heroic deeds, but they are not feats of mythic proportions. Mac Cool makes his feats seem of mythic proportion by embellishing details and by fictionalising accounts of his actions. For example, when he is attacked by a man who has a “huge, grossly malformed” head (88), Mac Cool cuts the man’s head off, displays it to the king in dim lighting and claims that it is a head of a monster whom he has killed with magic, and then destroys the evidence before a closer inspection can be made (88-91).

Part of Llywelyn’s strength is her ability to present Finn as both a descendant of the Tuatha de Danaan, a creature of myth, and as a descendant of a man. She successfully bridges the gap between the opposing views on the real or fictitious basis of the Fenian tales. Mac Cool shows that he is bound to the real (mundane) world when he reveals the “ugly truth” of his history to his wife Sive (271).

However, Llywelyn also suggests that there is something magical about Finn. When he is pushed to his limit Mac Cool displays the abilities of his shape-changing ancestors. The narrator describes the transformation that binds Mac Cool to the realm of myth and folklore: “Something flickered across Finn’s face, heralding a subtle change as if the bones beneath the skin shifted ever so slightly. While Goll stared incredulously, they realigned themselves in a new configuration. The face was no longer that of Finn Mac Cool. The hot, bright eyes looking out of it were not even human” (287). There are several other suggestions throughout the novel that point to, but do not confirm Mac

Cool's magical ancestry. For example, Cormac believes that he has seen him with a "silvery shimmer" (155) like one of the Tuatha de Danaan. Similarly, Red Ridge has "stared at Finn Mac Cool . . . and felt the touch of magic" (194). All of the suggestions of Mac Cool's magical abilities become validated when Llywelyn ends the novel with a picture of Mac Cool, the hero, fading into the obscuring mists of time and into myth (528). The ending echoes the saying: "heroes never die, they just fade away", an idiom that fits well with Finn Mac Cumhail since records of his death are obscure and controversial (O'Rahilly 271-6).

By examining Llywelyn's rewriting of myth (or history) we can better see what Joyce has accomplished in creating Ulysses. He reconstructs a specific day in Dublin's history by taking into consideration every possible aspect of "historical reality". What Joyce does with history in Ulysses, Llywelyn does with myth and folklore in Finn Mac Cool; Llywelyn shows the process by which history (past events) becomes myth and folklore (popular accounts of past events).

The idea of shape-changing is also important to the concept of myth-making. As a supposed shape-changer, Mac Cool shows that one of his abilities is to shape-change the truth. He explains his embellishments on a history of a man's ignoble death: "'So I made it sound heroic... And that was the truth of it in a way, don't you see? When I told her the tale of his death, I told it as he would have wished it to be, a glorious death in the midst of a mighty battle'" (268). Llywelyn seems to address the question of the truth that lies in myth and folklore in Sive's question: "'Is there always a seed of truth in the tales you

tell?'" (268). Mac Cool's affirmative reply echoes Llywelyn's opinion on the topic of truth and myth. She says: "I have continued to explore myth and folklore because of my own belief that such material always contains a seed of truth" ("Celtic" 1).

Fairhall questions and comments on the definition and characteristics of history:

What *is* history, anyway? Something that happened in the past, or an account of the thing? How true are historical narratives? How do they differ from fiction? How firm, controllable, and even referential is that common medium of history and fiction, language? Joyce's works—grounded in a dense historical reality, yet at the same time free-floating in a universe of endlessly signifying interconnected words—provoke such questions. (xi; emphasis in original)

Fairhall's questions deconstruct the notion that history is a true representative of what happened in the past. His point is that "history is *not* a text, not a narrative" (2; emphasis in original). Likewise, we do not consider the present to be a text or a narrative. Joyce works with the idea that the past is unstable, and suggests that the truth of an event will not be accounted for by a single narrative of the event; he suggests that an event cannot be recorded as a single, unbiased account.

In Ulysses, Joyce presents June 16, 1904 in the form of pseudohistory. He shows different perceptions of events, and shows that each perception carries part of the "truth" of an event. Fairhall explains Joyce's presentation of pseudohistory: "Ulysses shows us a past event transformed into felt or popular history— a many-faceted narrative, made up of fact, fiction, error, and speculation, whose emphasis in the telling depends on the tellers' varying perspectives and the nature of the dialogues in which they are engaged" (36).

The event of the Phoenix Park murders, the murders of Thomas Henry Burke and Lord

Frederick Cavendish (two of Ireland's top administrators of the time) in Phoenix Park on May 6, 1882, is presented in Ulysses from different perspectives. Fairhall discusses the many-faceted narrative of the presentation of the Phoenix Park murders in Ulysses:

In the case of the Phoenix Park murders, Joyce set about portraying the process by which history (past events) becomes history (accounts of past events), especially in popular culture. Imagine the Trojan war– or that of the Trojan war hero, Odysseus– being passed down from poet to poet in archaic Greece and being heard and discussed by their various audiences. Everyone 'knows' the story, yet certain details become hazy or change, and emphases shift. So Myles Crawford and Bloom think of the assassinations from their different points of view, emphasizing the getaway and the actual stabbings respectively . . . Bloom thinks of it ambivalently in connection with the subject of his ill-fated conversation with the Citizen– 'Force, hatred, history, all that'– admiring a man able to kill on political principle, but abhorring the act itself. To Alf Bergan, one of the barflies in Kiernan's pub, the event provides a titillating anecdote about Brady's hanging. And the Citizen, that embodiment of gusty popular nationalism, sees the Phoenix Park affair as a chapter in the saga of the ancient conflict between England and Ireland. (35-6)

Tymoczko concurs with Fairhall's suggestion that Ulysses presents a multifaceted view of history. She suggests that "Although Ulysses can be read as historicized narrative (history, as it were) it can also be read as an example of pseudohistory" (169).

Pseudohistory is an important medium for Morgan Llywelyn; her novels are formed out of accounts from history, myth, and folklore. In her process of rewriting the stories of the Irish heroes in Finn Mac Cool and Lion, Llywelyn takes into consideration the many different and differing narratives found in sources of myth, folklore, and history. Like Joyce, she suggests that the truth of an event is revealed in a multifaceted

view of the event.

In Lion, Llywelyn notes the importance of the position of legend and myth. The character Brian Boru warns that when myth and folklore are marginalised, part of the truth of the events is lost:

You call it myth and discount it; there are those who would call the Biblical miracles myth and deny them credence. But I believe it's actual history, distorted by centuries of retelling. People are afraid of things they cannot understand, so they call them myth or miracle and feel safer because they have put such incidents into categories which may be disbelieved. (500)

In her notes to Lion, Llywelyn elaborates on Brian's explanation of the importance of myth and legend. She claims:

There is no one truth in history, and no absolute viewpoint. To see Brian as the Norse saw him I read such books as *Njal's Saga* . . . Peter Brent's *The Viking Saga* . . . and many others.

An additional rich source for material proved to be Irish literature, where much of Brian's history is enshrined. . . .

With the help of these sources and countless others . . . it was possible to construct a mosaic from a jumble of brilliantly colored fragments. (521)

F. S. Lyons, a biographer of Parnell, sheds some light on the subject of recording the actions of heroes. He suggests that history is difficult to define, and that myth is not always a category that can be separated from history: "It is the predicament of a student trained to deal with what passes for historical reality who has not only to adjust himself to the existence of something loosely defined as myth, but has to recognise that myth can itself be a kind of historical reality" (Keane 39). Similarly, J. R. R. Tolkien, expert on Norse and Teutonic mythology, suggests: "History often resembles 'Myth', because they

are both ultimately made of the same stuff” (MacKillop xiii).

Llywelyn shares Tolkien’s view of history, and suggests that myth and folklore need to be accounted for when looking at history. She says: “I have continued to explore myth and folklore because of my own belief that such material always contains a seed of truth” (“Celtic” 1). She suggests that there is something in the spirit of legends and myths that contains the truth about past events and people. Myth and folklore are valuable sources to her perception of history; she explains: “my explorations of myth and folklore have always been a way of opening up straight history, of seeking out added dimensions which help to explain it” (“Celtic” 1).

Her presentation of all sides of historical accounts, including myth and folklore, is comparable to Joyce’s inclusion of pseudohistory in his representation of Dublin on June 16, 1904. By taking into consideration the myth and folklore surrounding the history of Brian, Llywelyn captures the spirit of the time. Llywelyn explains her approach to creating Lion out of the history and pseudohistory of Brian Boru: “Lion of Ireland . . . [is a] straight historical [novel] that [employs] the surviving aura of myth which is appropriate to [its era]” (“Celtic” 1).

In Finn Mac Cool, Llywelyn presents Finn as responsible for instigating the process of his mythologised life. He captivates audiences with tales of his past and myths about magical abilities that he possesses, and promotes himself as an extraordinary man who has an ancestry with the gods. Mac Cool’s fictions are taken up by his audiences and expanded on until he becomes renowned for the myths that are built up around him.

Llywelyn describes the myth-making process: “By the time he finished speaking, Finn’s tale had taken on a life of its own. Each tongue had embellished it in the retelling” (96-7). She suggests, through the words of the King of Ireland, that Mac Cool’s embellishments and fabrications are how reputations are made (92). Mac Cool’s suggestion that both fact and fiction have the “ring of truth” to them reflects Llywelyn’s focus on the truth that lies in fact and fiction.

Llywelyn’s narrator comments on the protean shape of truth because of Mac Cool’s alterations to the historical, or true, accounts of battles: “The truth, in the high summer of the Fianna, took on a very strange shape” (347). When Mac Cool travels with the king to earn support from the tribal leaders through battle, the people begin making up stories about Finn and the Fianna: “The legends grew around them, acquiring a life of their own . . . those who had met [Finn and the Fianna] told tales to those who had not, tales that grew in the telling like ripples spreading on a pond” (204).

The king supports Mac Cool’s myth-making, and notes: “‘It does no harm. Indeed, it does a great deal of good. The Fenian stories win battles for me without us even having to fight’” (347). Rumours of the prowess of Finn and his Fianna make the hero and his warriors invaluable to the king. The myths and folklore help the king to gain political power.

Since Mac Cool makes extravagant myths, as does Joyce’s narrator of the “Cyclops” chapter, an examination of the consequences of the myth-making on the myth-maker (Mac Cool) gives insight into the ironic portrayal of Joyce’s narrator. Llywelyn’s

claim regarding Mac Cool's self-delusion can be applied equally to the narrator of the "Cyclops" chapter. The narrator describes Mac Cool's descent into self-delusion: "In that moment, the final line of demarcation between fantasy and reality was for ever destroyed for Finn Mac Cool. There was no going back" (Mac Cool 208).

The narration of the "Cyclops" chapter of Ulysses, though a vehicle of parody, suggests that the narrator sees the Citizen as an Irish hero; the narrator builds up a greater image of the Citizen than is truly there. Similarly, the men in the bar of the "Cyclops" chapter show some of the myth-making involved in remembering the Modern Irish hero Parnell.

Aside from the satiric myth-making of the narrator of the "Cyclops" chapter, the myth-making in Joyce is often centred on Parnell. Joyce's characters in the bar scene of the "Cyclops" chapter of Ulysses, as well as the men in "Ivy Day," make myths about Parnell. They suggest that Parnell was destroyed by a Devouring Female, rather than attributing Parnell's downfall to his promiscuity. In the Christmas dinner scene of Portrait, the men display how a person becomes elevated to a hero, by highlighting positive attributes (Parnell's political success in uniting Ireland) and ignoring or deflecting negative attributes (Parnell's affair with Mrs. O'Shea). Mr. Casey raises the status of the politician to that of royalty; he cries: "'Poor Parnell . . . My dead king'" (40).

Fairhall proposes that "[Joyce's] chief target [in the "Cyclops" chapter] remains Irish nationalism, which he presents as a mirror image of British attitudes" (179).

Explaining his ideas on the ideal future for Ireland, the Citizen proclaims: "'That's how

it's worked. . . Trade follows the flag'" (434). The Citizen's 'cyclops-vision' of Irish nationalism involves taking over the role of the coloniser. Fairhall suggests that, in his limited vision of Irish nationalism, the Citizen reflects the failure of the G. A. A. to unite Ireland. The G. A. A. had a self-destructive tendency that diminished the effects of their struggle as their energy to unite turned to an energy to disassemble (Fairhall 226). The self-destructive tendency of the G. A. A. is emblematic of a problem that has plagued Ireland throughout its history, causing some to suggest that Ireland's inner turmoil has always left it vulnerable to outside control (Kiberd 1069). Fairhall also examines Joyce's contempt for the Irish nationalist group called the Gaelic League. He suggests that Joyce's quarrels with the Gaelic League arose from "a feeling that the nationalistic rhetoric issuing from many Gaelic Leaguers was obnoxious and not to be taken seriously in comparison with the efforts to free Ireland made in the past by Parnell or even by the Fenians" (46). The Citizen reflects Joyce's negative feelings towards the impotent actions of Irish nationalists who failed to provide the independence that they promised. The Citizen is a parody of an Irish hero, a failed Finn Mac Cumhail character, someone who poses as a heroic Irish nationalist and larger-than-life hero, but fails to act heroically.

The job of Finn's Fianna is to "hinder the strangers and robbers from beyond the seas, and every bad thing from coming into Ireland" (Gregory 170). The Citizen blindly follows the idea of keeping Ireland for the Irish, suggesting that all people who are not from an Irish background ought to be removed from Ireland. He speaks out against foreigners, and presents his prejudiced views: "'Swindling the peasants. . . and the poor

of Ireland. We want no more strangers in our house''' (419). But his is a narrow view of Finn's national policy; the Citizen is proven to be unheroic, and indeed despicable, because of his bigotry and prejudice. He follows the precepts of an out-dated policy, distorting the very spirit that the policy promoted – a strong, free Ireland. Finn does not lose sight of the fact that the peace within Ireland must be maintained in order to keep Ireland strong and free. One of his most effective rules is to ban retribution and revenge. He outlaws the avenging of blood for blood, effectually putting a stop to clan disputes while he is in power. As Molly Bloom is a perverted version of Penelope, the Citizen is a perverted version of Finn.

Conclusion

Through some creative parody, Joyce portrays the Citizen (through the eyes of the narrator of the “Cyclops” chapter) as a heroic Finn Mac Cumhail, and at the same time proves the Citizen to be an unheroic cyclops figure. As in his incorporation of Irish and Celtic myth and folklore in his earlier texts, Dubliners, Exiles, and A Portrait, Joyce’s use of myth and folklore in the “Cyclops” chapter is deeply embedded in the text, almost hidden in the structure. However, an intense examination of Joyce’s texts leads to a wealth of myth and folklore that is waiting to be discovered, and to expand the possibilities of his texts.

In the “Cyclops” chapter of Ulysses, Bloom says ““But it’s no use . . . Force, hatred, history, all that. That’s not life for men and women, insult and hatred. And everybody knows that its the very opposite of that that is really life[:]. . . Love”” (432). In Ulysses, Stephen refers to Irish history as a nightmare, as something that needs to be escaped. Fairhall argues that Joyce wanted to re-write history in order to get beyond the limits of the past violence and the hatred (xii). Llywelyn shows what can happen when history is re-written, and she examines how stable history is, how reliable written sources are and what they are lacking. The myth and folklore of Ireland held the place that literature holds today, and valuable insight into the society’s beliefs can be gained by examining them.

Joyce and Llywelyn show the power of myth, and the human attraction to the mythic; they show that people are willing to believe in heroes who can save their country and in monsters who can consume their souls. Joyce shows how myth persists in the present, in the minds of his characters, and how quickly history (past events) becomes pseudo-history (popular stories of past events) where details are lost and embellishments made by each recorder of the event. Llywelyn also shows how myth and folklore can be created out of fact and history, and the effectiveness of myth and folklore in promoting ideas.

There are serious ramifications to the use of the Devouring Female. If myths contain the “seeds of truth” (Llywelyn, “Celtic” 1; Campbell, J. vii), what seeds of truth do we take from the Devouring Female? Joseph Campbell discusses myth in terms of its psychological relevance to humankind: “Dream is the personalized myth, myth the depersonalized dream; both myth and dream are symbolic in the same general way of the dynamics of the psyche. But in the dream the forms are quirked by the peculiar troubles of the dreamer, whereas in myth the problems and solutions shown are directly valid for all mankind” (19). Campbell later continues his discussion:

. . . their understood function is to serve as a powerful picture language for the communication of traditional wisdom . . . The metaphors by which they live, and through which they operate, have been brooded upon, searched, and discussed for centuries—even millennia; they have served whole societies, furthermore, as the mainstays of thought and life. The culture patterns have been shaped to them. The youth have been educated and the aged rendered wise, through the study, experience, and understanding of their effective initiatory forms. For they actually touch and

bring into play the vital energies of the whole human psyche.
(256-7)

The Devouring Female myths suggest that, despite the creative powers of women, the power of women is ultimately to destroy. Perhaps a more advanced vision would recognise the Devouring Female as a part of male fear-fantasies, as Keane suggests (x). However, this understanding of the Devouring Female does not counter the negative effect that it produces in literature; as long as the Devouring Female is used, it will promote a negative concept of women.

Does Joyce's use of the Devouring Female make him a misogynist? I think that the answer is "No". It is useful to ask the same question of Llywelyn, a female author writing some seventy years after Joyce. Why would she choose to portray women as Devouring Females? The strongest argument, and one that I am sure that Llywelyn would make if she were to closely examine her female characters, is that since she is rewriting Irish myths and folklore which consistently present Devouring Females, to portray the women of the stories any differently would alter the stories in an essential way. We are left with the question: Can writers who work with Irish and Celtic myth and folklore avoid the destructive side of the Devouring Female, and present only her positive aspects in the form of a creative, inspiring, and independent woman? Previous alterations of Celtic myth and folklore (such as by O'Grady and Gregory) resulted in what academics (such as Clark and Tymoczko) consider to be diluted, weak versions of the original female characters. However, even the revitalized versions of myths that Llywelyn presents, where the female characters are restored to their original potency,

portray the power of women to be destructive.

How persistent is the myth of the Devouring Female? The answer to that can be found in both Llywelyn and Joyce. Llywelyn's female characters come alive in the revitalized versions of the Devouring Females of myth and folklore, fitting in perfectly with her modernised versions of Irish myth and folklore. Joyce's use of the Devouring Female carries more serious consequences. A closer look at the creation of modern myths of the male hero (Parnell) shows that, to some extent, the promotion of the male comes at the expense of the female. As mentioned earlier, the men of Ulysses and Portrait show how the process of myth-making begins when they highlight Parnell's positive attributes (his political success) and ignore or deflect his negative attributes (his affair with Mrs. O'Shea). What is the significance that the deflection of the hero's faults is directed onto a woman, who in turn is portrayed as the Devouring Female? What is the significance that the male rises to the status of hero at the cost of the female's reputation? Although the rise of the man's reputation at the cost of a woman's reputation is not a direct reflection of Irish mythology or folklore, it is interesting to note that Joyce's men promote the notion that a Devouring Female is the cause of the downfall of their hero. Is the woman the villainous Devouring Female because she is the antithesis or foil of the male hero? Although the Devouring Female has her creative aspects, she is ultimately a destructive villain. In a similar way, the male hero in Irish myth and folklore has his destructive aspects (e.g. Finn is responsible for the death of Diarmait and Goll, and the destruction of the Fianna) but is ultimately a creative hero.

Unfortunately, even writers like Joyce and Llywelyn who are not misogynists promote images of women as Devouring Females. Attempts to avoid the Devouring Female when using Celtic and Irish myth and folklore would limit the author to a small cast of female characters. I think that new myths and folklore that better reflect the cultural position of women have to be made. Clark may be satisfied to see that the myths and folklore of characters such as Maeve, Deirdre, and the Morrigan regain their original power and status which is equal to or greater than that of men, but I do not think that the original position of power is good enough. While archetypes of the Terrible Mother or the Destructive Female are recycled, a negative portrayal of women will persist.

Joyce and Llywelyn have shown how myths can be made, and that history can be rewritten. Indeed, Joyce suggests that history is the nightmare from which one must wake, and that history needs to be re-written in order to escape “‘Force, hatred, history, all that’” (*Ulysses* 432). Fairhall suggests that “Joyce, in his fiction, attempted to subvert history, which he saw as both a chronicle of violence and oppression, and as a fixed past that had ousted other possible pasts and thus delimited the present. He also attempted to subvert those ideologies which underlie the violence and the oppression. Both *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake* attack, or rather destabilize, the very basis of modern history– the idea that historical narratives can somehow tell ‘the truth’ about a complex event, can recount what ‘actually’ happened” (Fairhall, xii). But why did he not rewrite myth, or compose a new Irish myth? The answer is that he did, at least for the physical hero in the character of Leopold Bloom. Bloom is the opposite of the Citizen, and is the true hero of

Ulysses. However, the Devouring Female is not so easily countered.

Perhaps Joyce's Molly Bloom or Anna Liffey come close to being new representatives of the woman in Irish myth and folklore; Molly and Anna at least promote an image of a more creative, inspiring, independent woman. Nonetheless, the collection of Joyce's female characters suggest that women are vehicles of destruction, reflections of the Devouring Female.

Joyce's use of Irish myth in the parody of Finn Mac Cumhail in the character of the Citizen undermines the status of the physical hero, and is used to deflate the idea of using violence to gain Irish independence. Joyce's use of the Devouring Female has equally serious ramifications. Intentionally or not, Joyce's use of the Devouring Female supports an ancient Irish tradition of negative portrayals of women.

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