

Relationships between Fairies and Humans in Irish Folktales

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The origins of fairies in Irish folktales have been variously considered. They can be summarized into the five dominant theories as follows: the theory of the dead or the ancestor's soul, that of mythical and ancient gods/goddesses, memories of a more primitive race, human creation, and fallen angels. The purpose of this research is to review these theories by looking at the relations between fairies and humans in Irish folktales. In order to figure out the relationships between fairies and humans, it is effective to collect concrete examples and analyze their frequencies from the three aspects below: plot patterns relating to the encounter and interaction between fairies and humans, fairy abduction, and marriages between fairies and humans.

Keywords : Irish Folktales, Ireland, oral literature.

1. Introduction

The origins of fairies in Irish folktales have been variously considered. They can be summarized into the five dominant origin theories as follows: the theory of the dead or the ancestor's soul, that of mythical and ancient gods/goddesses, memories of a more primitive race, human creation, and fallen angels. Although Wentz, Briggs, Christiansen, Ó Súilleabháin, and Ó hÓgáin are mentioned for several times in different theories, they point out each theory as a possible one.

1.1 The Dead

The dead is regarded as one of the convincing origins of fairies. Wentz had had field surveys in Scotland, Wales, England, France, and Ireland, in cooperation with the countries' specialists, and published *The Fairy-Faith in the Celtic Countries*. In this book, he points out the strong connection between the fairies and the dead as follows:

The animistic character of the Celtic Legend of the Dead is apparent; and the striking likeness constantly appearing in our evidence between the ordinary apparitional fairies and the ghosts of the dead show that there is often no essential and sometimes no distinguishable difference between these two orders of beings, nor between the world of the dead and fairyland. (280)

Regarding the similarities of them, Ó hÓgáin argues that the lore of the living dead confuses people:

One ultimate source of the Irish tradition of fairies, therefore, was the idea of the community of the dead living on in their burial chambers, and it is noticeable that lore of the dead still tends to become confused with that of the fairies in living oral narrative. (206)

Ó Súilleabháin also states that it is very difficult to draw a clear line of demarcation between the kingdom of the dead and the fairy world in Irish popular belief (*A Handbook of Irish Folklore* 450). Besides, he mentions in the introduction of his book, *Folktales of Ireland*: "Running through all this mass of folk belief was the mingling of the fairies and the dead; both seemed to be part of the same milieu" (xxxviii-xxxix). He seems to speculate that the fairies and the dead are quite close existences to each other. Briggs also supports this theory of the dead.

1.2 Mythical Gods, and Ancient Gods

According to Welch, the early ninth century record, the Book of Armagh, says that the fairies were the pagan gods of the earth over whom Christianity has triumphed (523). This theory, in which the origin of the fairies is the gods/goddesses of pre-Christian times, seems to be very important, and many researchers support this as one of the dominant ones. Wentz also admits the importance of this theory, but states that it is not adequate for the root theory because a belief in gods and goddesses must be explained in psychological approach (xxxiv). Briggs agrees with Wentz at this point (*An Encyclopedia of Fairies* 394). On the other hand, Ó hÓgáin takes a deeper look at this point that the assimilation of the living dead and the gods/goddesses evolved the image of fairies:

In a more basic sense, there are some indications that the concept of the living dead was one of the fountainheads of the ancient Celtic pantheon of mythic beings. These mythic beings were, also understood to be a kind of spiritual community whose nature was on a different plane to that of the human race. [...]. The evidence indicates that at some stage in antiquity, Irish versions of widespread and varied beliefs about otherworld communities were assimilated to lore of the living dead, and that from this evolved the *si* people [fairies] of general Irish tradition. (206)

He points out the connection between the gods/goddesses and the dead, as well as the connection between the fairies and the dead, as previously mentioned.

The designation, *Tuatha Dé Danann* (the people of the goddess

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Danu), was taken by medieval scholars⁽¹⁾. Those who wrote down the tales are the monks, so that it cannot be denied that there might be the intention of removing pre-Christian belief. The direct relation between the fairies and the mythical beings which were created in such circumstances seems to be suspicious, but it is possible to consider that there is the connection between the fairies and the ancient gods/goddesses originally believed by the Irish people.

1.3 The Memories of a More Primitive Race

David MacRitchie and other researchers state that the fairy beliefs were founded on the memories of a more primitive race driven into hiding by the invaders, lurking in caves or fens. Wentz and Briggs suggest this theory as one of the famous ones. Briggs points out, however, that this theory is not enough by itself to explain the origin because archaeological evidence is lacking for the small size of the primitive race⁽²⁾.

1.4 Human Creation

Reidar Christiansen made a comparative study on the fairy belief of Ireland and that of Scandinavian countries. He concludes that the origin of the fairies is common to both Ireland and Scandinavians. He states as follows:

The Irish and Scandinavian legends referred to above offer ample evidence of springing from a common background, the belief in the existence of a hidden race, living close to the human world, perhaps even under our very houses. [...]. This seems to indicate that the belief belongs to a common human heritage, having as its function the explanation of unexpected happenings, such as the death of young people. The explanation that they are not dead but taken away seems more reasonable. (110-11)

In short, they created the fairies for the wish of being released from the anguishes of unhappy incidents. Ó hÓgáin points out the similar situation with Christiansen's in the tales in the medieval manuscripts:

The medieval literature has several instances of young men and young women being enticed away by the Tuatha Dé and, apart from the context of courtship, such abduction would be a natural explanation for sudden death or unexplained deterioration in health. (*The Lore of Ireland* 208-09)

This theory of human creation, however, seems to be only partial solution of the origin because it is one of the interpretations of the abductions or attacks by the fairies. So it seems to lack persuasion to explain the fundamental part of the fairy origin. More careful considerations should be necessary for this theory.

1.5 Fallen Angels

The theory of fallen angels is not the origin of fairy belief but the belief about fairy origin. This theory is made up after Christianity came to Ireland. Briggs states on this:

The beliefs in the fairies as the dead may well come from pre-Christian times, but with the fairies as fallen angels we come into the post-Christian period. (*An Encyclopedia of Fairies* 318-19)

Ó hÓgáin also indicates that this belief of fallen angels influenced greatly to Irish folktales (208). The belief explains that the fairies are the remnants of the fallen angels who had been driven out of heaven by God after the revolt of Lucifer. As God ordered them to stop and stay where they were after a while, the fairies came to inhabit air, land and water.

Five theories of fairy origin are shown above. Among them, it may be difficult for the theory of the human creation to be regarded as the fairy origin strictly, because the element can be added, altered, or created according to their conditions of life. The theory of fallen angels is also not the origin, as the concept of fairies is older than the time when Christianity arrived at Ireland. The theory was created to be believed as the origin after Christianity came into the country.

Accordingly, three theories left can be considered as the origin of fairies. Judging from the fact that the Irish word for fairies, *side* (*sidh, sí*), originally indicates mounds, the origins of fairies in Irish folktales seems to be related with the mound, or the lands. Ó hÓgáin associates the mounds with the burial mounds of the ancestors, and he states the possibility that the fairies are derived from the dead. It can be considered that one of the origins of fairies. Besides, as Ó Súilleabháin and Ó hÓgáin say, it is difficult to draw a clear borderline between the dead, gods/goddesses, and natural spirits in the folktales. So the ancient gods/goddesses can be closely associated with the origins of fairies. Both of these two origins seem to be possible and persuasive, and there may be mutual relationships between them. As Briggs says, it is unwise to commit oneself to any solitary theory⁽³⁾. The last mentioned, the memories of primitive races, is thought to be inadequate for the origin because of the lack of archaeological proof.

On the basis of these theories, the concrete image of the fairies is examined from several viewpoints in the author's previous researches. The images of fairies are analyzed from the following five viewpoints: the term for fairies, the appearance of them, their supernatural powers, habitats, and the plot patterns of the tales including fairies. From the result of these researches, the relationships between fairies and humans can be thought to be deeply related to the origins of fairies. Therefore, by examining the concrete examples of their relations, the origin theories in the former studies can be reconsidered.

2. Objectives and Methods

The purpose of this research is to reconsider these origins of fairies above mentioned by looking at the relationships between fairies and humans in Irish folktales. In order to figure out the relationships between fairies and humans, it is effective to collect concrete examples and analyze their frequencies from the three aspects below: plot patterns relating to the encounter and interaction between fairies and humans(3.1), fairy abduction(3.2), and marriages between fairies and humans(3.3).

The materials used in this research put emphasis on their authenticity and reliability⁽⁴⁾. This study therefore uses chiefly the publications of the collectors who were/are engaged in collecting at University College Dublin and the former institutions. They naturally use many NFC⁽⁵⁾ materials. The texts and the number of tales are shown in table 1.

3. Analysis

The results of collecting materials and analyzing on plot patterns relating to the encounter and interaction between fairies and humans, fairy abduction, and marriages between fairies and humans are shown and discussed respectively in the following sections.

3.1 Plot Patterns

In order to make clear how fairies and humans encounter and what kind of interaction they have, the plots from the fairies' entrance on the tales to their leaving are simplified and classified:

- A: Entrance (Enter as a human form, an animal form, wind/wave/light, sound, or no appearance)
- B: Action (Do something benevolent for humans, malevolent, neutral)
- C: Leaving (Leave for somewhere, go back to their region, remain in their region)

The seven most frequent patters are as the table 2.

Table 1. Texts used for this research

| Title of the book (published Year) | Number of stories (stories involving fairies) |
|--|---|
| (1) <i>Folktales of Ireland</i> (1966) | 55 (13) |
| (2) <i>The Folklore of Ireland</i> (1974) | 24 (8) |
| (3) <i>Legends from Ireland</i> (1977) | 93 (15) |
| (4) <i>Fairy Legends from Donegal</i> (1977) | 135 (106) |
| (5) <i>Folktales from the Irish Countryside</i> (1967) | 40 (17) |
| (6) <i>Stories of Sea and Shore</i> (1983) | 22 (19) |
| (7) <i>Seanchas Annie Bhán: The Lore of Annie Bhán</i> (1997) | 18 (4) |
| (8) <i>Sean Ó Conaill's Book. --Stories and Traditions from Iveragh</i> (1948) | 173 (34) |
| (9) <i>Children of the Salmon and Other Irish Folktales</i> (1965) | 48 (14) |
| Total | 608 (230) |

Table 2. Plot patterns and their frequencies

| Pattern Ranking | Plot patters | Frequency (number of tales) |
|-----------------|---|-----------------------------|
| 1 | A: human form, B: neutral action, C: leave for somewhere. | 41 |
| 2 | A: human form, B: benevolent action, C: leave for somewhere. | 19 |
| 3 | A: human form, B: neutral action, C: remain in their region. | 16 |
| 4 | A: human form, B: malevolent action, C: leave for somewhere. | 15 |
| 4 | A: human form, B: malevolent action, C: remain in their region. | 15 |
| 4 | A: human form, B: neutral action, C: go back to their region. | 15 |
| 7 | A: no appearance, B: malevolent action, (C: no appearance). | 11 |

Examples:

(Type 1) An old woman came across a man on the street. The man was a fairy and he said, "Don't put the dirty water on that stone!" The fairy man walked away and never appeared. (A: human form, B: neutral action, C: leave for somewhere.)⁽⁶⁾

(Type 2) One Sunday at church, a man got sick during the mass. He took some rest for a while and almost recovered. Then he met a gentleman on the street and they started a chat in a friendly way. After that the gentleman handed him a florin (2-shilling coin). The man thanked him, and the stranger went off and was seen no more. (A: human form, B: benevolent action, C: leave for somewhere.)⁽⁷⁾

(Type 3) One night a horseman came to the midwife's house, saying they had need of her. After the childbirth was finished safely, the man sent her home. (A: human form, B: neutral action, C: remain in their region.)⁽⁸⁾

(Type 7) Two little girls got the smell of fish being roasted somewhere. They searched here and there and at last they came on a gridiron where the fish was roasting but there was no fire at all under it. They came back without eating it and asked priest about it. The priest said that if they had tasted the fish they would have forgotten all about home and been taken away by fairies. (A: no appearance, B: malevolent action, C: no appearance.)⁽⁹⁾

According to the result above, in general, fairies come as a human form into the places humans live frequently, do something there, and leave for somewhere. Their destination is often not mentioned but it is natural to think that they go back to their region. Therefore, it can be said that fairy region is very close to humans, and they live their life parallel to the human life. So fairies interact humans frequently. Sometimes they help humans, or do mischievous things. Other times fairies speak to people to tell their request, or give some advices.

In the following two sections, the interaction between fairies and humans will be looked at more concretely.

3.2 Fairy Abduction

Looking at the ending of the plot patters, the total frequency of fairies leaving for somewhere (106 cases) and returning to their region (29 cases) occupies 58.7% of all the tales (135/230 cases). Among them, the most frequent way of interaction is that fairies abduct humans to their region (62 cases) or they try to abduct (11 cases). The total frequency is 31.7% (73/230 cases). After abduction, there are patterns of both abductees' coming back home and not coming back. The frequencies of each pattern, which is also divided into each gender, is shown in the table 3.

As the table above shows, man is abducted more frequently than woman. However, we cannot always judge it straightforward. We should not be blind to the truth that it is mostly men who go out to make their living at that time. Naturally men could have met somebody including supernatural beings more frequently than women. So it cannot say fairies' preference apparently. According to the origin theory of fallen angels, fairies abduct humans to

mingle their tribes' blood with human blood. That is, fairies want their blood to be redder, which enables them to go to heaven after the Judgment Day. In the results above, however, the cases of human abductees marrying fairies or of having child in the fairy region are not found. Thus, the theory of fallen angels cannot be persuasive.

The next point we should consider is that in all the abduction cases including attempts, a fairly number of abductees came back safely to the human world. The frequency is 58.9% (43/73 cases) and if the attempts are included, the frequency goes up to 74.0% (54/73 cases). The high rate of their coming back is often supported by human helpers who live along with fairies. The existence of such people is closely related to the dead.

3.2.1 Fairy Abduction—Human helper

In nine cases of humans' coming back from fairy region and one case of attempt, there are humans who help the abductee to go back to the original world, although they live along with fairies. They are the dead but live similarly to human living in the fairy region, for the truth that they were not fairies but the dead is often revealed after the abductee came back to the human world. The helper always give the abductees advices to go back home because they often seem to be servants of fairies and cannot help them directly. The advices are: "do not eat/drink at all in fairy region"(5 cases), "leave from here as soon as possible"(2 cases), "go to church"(1), "learn how to save abducted wife"(1), and "hand a letter to landlord"(1).

Table 3. Frequencies of abductions caused by fairies

| Gender of Abductee | Coming back | Not coming back | Attempt of abduction | Total Frequency |
|--------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| Man | 19 | 15 | 7 | 41 |
| Woman | 18 | 3 | 4 | 25 |
| Child | 5 | 1 | 0 | 6 |
| Others* | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Total | 43 | 19 | 11 | 73 |

*The example of 'a couple' is included in "others."

Example of human helper:

A boy was led by a dog which ran after his sheep into the cliff. There was a big crowd of people singing and dancing. One of them offered him a glass of drink but before he drank it, another boy came out and told the boy not to drinking it. Then the boy met an old man and an old woman. They taught how to go out from the cliff. The boy came back safely thanks to their advices.

"There was a big crowd of people in it who were dancing, drinking and singing. He was not long there before a man came and held out to him a glass in which there was a drop of whiskey. He took the glass and had raised it to his lips when another young boy came by and struck the glass out of his hand. 'If you eat or drink anything in here you will never get out!' [. . .] With that the crag opened and he was out on the bare mountain again."⁽¹⁰⁾

3.2.2 Fairy Abduction—Fairy Abduction and the Dead

While there are 19 cases of abduction where the abductees did

not come back home, the abductees are regarded that they are dead in 15 cases. Three out of 19 cases say that the abductees are taken away by fairies, and in the last one case the person goes to the fairy region by his own will. Except the last case, the cause of death in the rest of 18 cases are shown in the table 4.

Also in the 11 cases of attempts of abduction, there are five cases that humans once died but came back to life. The causes of death are: child birth (2 cases), sickness (1), and unknown (2).

The total number of cases of humans living with fairies (human helper: 9 cases), the cases that fairy abduction means death (15 cases), and the cases of coming back from attempt of abduction (5 cases) is 29 cases, which occupy 39.7% of all the 73 cases. The reason why drowning is frequent cause of death can be considered that there are many tales collected by the seaside. Sea is the place where people spend daily lives. Drowning and childbirth is closely connected to people's life. It reminds us of the theory of human creation, in which people try to think sad happening such as close people's deaths as the behavior of fairies. It is also related to the theory of the dead, which the images of fairies are based on the ancient belief of the dead.

Example of fairies and the dead:

(Not coming back)

When two men were fishing from the cliffs by the sea, a woman rose above the sea. They were surprised and didn't stop until they got to the top of the cliff. Then they saw three boys going fishing at the same place. They tried to stop the boys but the boys wouldn't listen. One of the boys dropped into the sea and never returned.

"A woman rose in the sea between their lines [Muiris' and his two partners' fishing lines]. [. . .] they were in such a hurry they didn't take any notice of the rockfish, and they didn't stop until they got to the top of the cliff. [. . .] His (one of three boys) rod broke in his hands, and he was tossed head-first into the sea. [. . .] He stayed swimming on the surface until the boat was about to reach him, and then he sank below the water, and was never seen since."⁽¹¹⁾

(Coming back from attempt of abduction)

A shoemaker went to town to call a midwife for his pregnant wife. On his way back home, he came across a big flock of bird and he dropped his shoe nails because of the bird. He was full of anger and said, "May the devil take you with him!" No sooner were the words out of his mouth than he heard the sound of something falling. He looked around found his wife in front of his house!

"It (a flock of birds) came directly in their way and as it was passing overhead he threw the paperful of nails up in the air. He was full of anger and spoke out from his heart: 'May the devil take you with him!' No sooner were the words out of his mouth than he heard the sound of something falling at the horse's feet. He turned around and dismounted, and when he looked at the thing that had fallen what did he find but a woman! [. . .] He went up to the bed and made a swipe at the thing that was lying there, but, well for her, when she saw him drawing at her she rose and went out of the window like a flash of lightning."⁽¹²⁾

3.3 Marriages between fairies and humans

Eleven cases of marriages between fairies and humans are found and the classification are shown in the table 5.

Marriages between fairies and humans can be divided into two types: their marriages are in the human world, or in the fairy region. Also, the combination of each gender is added in the classification. Significant result is that combination of male fairy and female human is not found at all.

Table 4. The cause of death in fairy abduction

| The cause of death | Frequency |
|------------------------------|-----------|
| Drowning | 8 |
| Giving birth to a child | 2 |
| Disease | 1 |
| Weakening from unknown cause | 1 |
| Unknown | 6 |
| Total | 18 |

Table 5. The place of marriage

| The place of marriage Combinations | Human world | Fairy region | Total |
|---------------------------------------|-------------|--------------|-------|
| Female fairy – Male human | 8 | 3 | 11 |
| Male fairy – Female human | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 8 | 3 | 11 |

3.3.1 Marriages in the human world

Fairies come to human world, married humans, and stay there more than at least several years. In such cases, the couples are only female fairy and male humans (8cases). In all of the 8 cases, the marriages break up by the husband’s betraying their promise (4 cases), fairy wife’s finding her tool to go back to fairy region (3 cases; tools are cloak/hood), or the husband’s blaming his wife for using supernatural powers (1 case). Also, all these couples have children but three fairy wives leave children at human world when they go home. Five of them take their children back to their region.

Example of marriage between fairies and humans in human world:

After the fairy woman’s third visit, she entered a man’s house and married him. Soon she gave birth to a child. One day she knew that his relatives were against their marriage. She told her husband to have a new wife after she left and also made him promise to leave a light and some food on the table for her every night. But after a while the promise was broken, his cattle began to die one after another.

“On the third day, he was straining potatoes again when the woman came. ‘Come in,’ said he. ‘Very well, I will go in today,’ said she. She went in and lived there with him. About a year later, she gave birth to a son. [. . .] ‘I’m going to leave you altogether now, and you can go to your uncles, and let them pick a wife for you.’ She left and took the child with her. ‘Now,’ said she, as she was leaving, ‘it won’t be long until you marry again.

Every night when you are going to bed, I want you to leave a light burning and some food on the table for me. The child and myself will come to eat it.”⁽¹³⁾

On the other hand, there is no case that male fairy comes to human world and marries female humans. Thus, Fairy woman requiring no reward comes to marry humans, brings prosperity to the man’s life, but once the marriage breaks up, cattle die out and crop fields are ruined. It is exactly that same image as Irish ancient land goddess. That is, land goddess is a symbol or an incarnation of the land or the country there. The king or the landlord strengthens their reign by marrying the land goddess. When the country prospers, the figure of the goddess is beautiful young woman. When the country declines, however, the goddess became a little old hag. It can be said that the tales concerning marriages between fairies and humans have some influences of the images of the land goddesses.

3.3.2 Marriages in the fairy region

There are three cases that in fairy region female fairy marries male humans. In one of the three cases, fairy woman came to the human world and asked a man to marry her. With his agreement, they went to fairy region and lived their lives there. After a few years, he wanted to see his relatives again and was allowed to go back. Fairy wife made him promise not to step on the land from his horse back, however, he dropped from it when helping people in need. Soon after that he got old and could never go back to fairy world. In other two cases, however, male humans keep staying at fairy region without breaking up until the tale ends.

Example of marriage between fairies and humans in fairy region:

A man tried to pull up an anchor of a boat but it was stuck in something in the bottom of the sea. He dived into the sea and saw a fairy woman. Her brother followed his boat and asked him to marry his sister. He consulted with his relatives and decided to marry her. After he went to the place to meet her again, a wave caught and drowned him. He was thought to go to fairy region.

“Cluasach Ó Fáile saw a wave rising him at a good speed. There was a hollow in it, and he saw a woman in the wave. [. . .] Soon they saw a rider following them over the sea on a slender brown steed. He was not long catching up on them as they were approaching Bólus Head. He told Cluasach Ó Fáile to stop there or he would drown them, and it would have been better for him to marry his sister [. . .]. They appointed a certain day of the week for him to go and meet him on Carraig Í Spláin. [. . .] A wave rose to the west of him in the sea, and it covered the rock, and drowned him, and he has not been since.”⁽¹⁴⁾

There is a similar case in which a man was asked to marry by a fairy woman in fairy region but he declined and came back safe.

4. Conclusion

Judging from the consideration of plot patterns, it can be thought that fairy region is very close to human world, and they

live their life parallel to the human life. Also, looking at some cases of “human helper” in the fairy abduction tales, they are the dead but live similarly to human living in the fairy region. Furthermore, people’s being taken away by fairies equally means the death of them. It is shown by the eighteen cases of fairy abductions and the dead. From these results, the images of fairies are strongly influenced by the ancient belief of the dead.

The consideration of marriages between fairies and humans also shows that the tales concerning such marriages have some influences of the images and features of the land goddesses. Therefore, the theory of gods/goddesses can be said to be also influential.

On the other hand, so many fairy abduction tales are found. If the cases of attempts of abduction are included, the number of abduction is 73 cases, which occupies 31.7% of all the tales including fairies. This fact makes us think about some connection with the theory of fallen angels. This theory cannot be truly basic origin of fairies, but it might be incorporated into the long fairy tradition gradually. Similarly, the theory of human creation can be found to have some influence of fairy images when we consider the relations between fairy abduction and the dead. Regarding the remaining theory, the theory of the memories of more primitive races, no sufficient evidence can be found in this research.

As these considerations above, it can be said that the theories of fairy origins are reconsidered by looking at the relationships between fairies and humans in Irish folktales to some extent.

(Received: Sep. 25, 2019)

(Accepted: Dec. 5, 2019)

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- (1) Ó hÓgáin : *The Lore of Ireland*, p.478 (2006).
- (2) Briggs : *The Vanishing People*, p.35 (1967).
- (3) As for the origin theory of fairies, Briggs states as follows, “On the whole we may say that it is unwise to commit oneself blinded to any solitary theory of the origins of fairy belief, but that it is most probable that these are all strands on a tightly twisted cord,” *An Encyclopedia of Fairies*, p.394 (1976)
- (4) Holbek states about the standard for selecting texts as follows:
 Researchers may have selected texts for analysis because they appeared to be original, or characteristic, or instructive, or simply because they seemed to be well told. There is thus a risk of circular argumentation which must be faced at the outset. Some material may be excluded right away. If we are to interpret folktales, we can under no circumstances consider tales known to have been re-told or tampered with professional writers, whatever their intentions. It goes without saying that our material must be genuine records of traditional oral narratives. (*Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, p.23, 1987)
 Utley also emphasize Holbek’s “authenticity,” saying, “The only trustworthy kind of folk literature is that collected under conditions which give such information about the immediate informant as enables us to check his claim to be a bearer of oral tradition.”(Folk Literature: An Operational Definition,” *Journal of American Folklore*, vol.74, p.197, 1961)
- (5) Irish folktales had become to be collected actively in the early nineteenth century by Thomas C. Croker, William Carleton, and so on. Their publications also include the possibility of being retold by their free will. However, since

the institution for collecting Irish folktales (The Folklore of Ireland Society) were established in 1927, the professional collecting, based on the standard method which was introduced by Ó Súilleabháin, had begun. After the first activities began, the Irish Folklore Commission which was supported by the Irish government was established to collect folktales in 1935, and the activities of collecting have been continued still now, preserving the collection (National Folklore Collection, formerly, Irish Folklore Collection) in University College Dublin.

- (6) Ó hEochaidh: “The complaint about the dirty water,” *Fairy Legends from Donegal*, p.103 (1977).
- (7) Ó Sullivan: “The fairy money,” *Folktales of Ireland*, pp.174-75 (1966)
- (8) Ó hEochaidh: “The midwife who lost an eye,” *Fairy Legends from Donegal*, p.63 (1977).
- (9) Ó hEochaidh: “Roast herring in the hill,” *Fairy Legends from Donegal*, p.43 (1977).
- (10) Ó hEochaidh: “The fairy dog and the shepherd,” *Fairy Legends from Donegal*, p.77 (1977).
- (11) Ó Duillearga: “The woman in the sea,” *Sean Ó Conaill’s Book*, pp.277-78(1981).
- (12) Ó hEochaidh: “How the shoemaker saved his wife” *Fairy Legends from Donegal*, p.59 (1977).
- (13) Ó Sullivan: “The Fairy Wife” *Folktales of Ireland*, pp.171-73 (1966)
- (14) Ó Duillearga: “Cluasach Ó Fáile and the fair-haired merchant” *Sean Ó Conaill’s Book*, pp.224-25 (1981).

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