

The Conquest of The Tuatha De Danann

From the Book of Invasions

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As for Iobath son of Beothach son of Iarbanel son of Nemed, after his leaving Ireland with his people after the conquest before described, they settled in the northern islands of Greece. They were there till numerous were their children and their kindred. They learned druidry and many various arts in the islands where they were, what with fithnaisecht, amaitecht, conblichocht, and every sort of gentilism in general, until they were knowing, learned, and very accomplished in the branches thereof. They were called Tuatha De; that is, they considered their men of learning to be gods, and their husbandmen non-gods, so much was their power in every art and every druidic occultism besides. Thence came the name, which is Tuatha De, to them.

These were the cities where they were being instructed; Falias, Gorias, Findias, and Murias. They had an instructor of learning in each one of these cities. There are their names; Morfesa in Falias, Esras in Gorias, Uscias in Findias, and Semias who was in Murias. From Falias was brought the Stone of Fal {Lia Fail} which Lug had in Tara; that is what used to scream under every king who took the sovereignty of Ireland from the time of Lug Lamfada to the time of the birth of Christ, and it has never screamed thereafter under any king from that out; for it was a demon that had entrance into it, and the powers of every idol ceased in the time of the birth of the Lord, who was born of the Virgin Mary. From that Lia Fail is called Inis Fail {Ireland}, as Cinaeth O'Hartagain {A poet who died a.d. 975} proves, having said:

The stone on which my heels stand,

Between two strands of a mighty flood,
Ireland altogether is called Mag Fail.

From it is na

From Gorias was brought the spear that Lug had; no battle was maintained against him who had it in his hand. From Findias was brought the sword of Nuada; none used to escape who was wounded by it. From Murias was brought the cauldron of the Dagda; no one came from it unsatisfied.

After they completed their learning, they went between the Athenians and the Philistines, so that they dwelt between them. Now there arose battles and conflicts between those races, and they were evil and maliciously disposed one to the other. Many battles were fought between them, and it was against the Athenians the battles used to be won, until all save a little remnant were exhausted. Then the Tuatha De joined in friendship with the Athenians, and they formed through druidry demon-spirits in the bodies of the soldiers of the Athenians who were slain, so that they were fit for battle; thus they used to encounter the Philistines again. The Philistines thought it immensely astonishing to see the men they had slain fighting with them the day after. They told that to their druid. Their elder gave them advice, saying, "Take," said he, "pegs of hazel and of quicken-tree to the battle on the morrow; and if yours be the victory, thrust the pins in the backs of the necks of the men who shall be slain; and if they be demons, heaps of worms will be made of them."

They did so. The Philistines were victorious, and they thrust the pegs in the backs of the necks of the warriors they slew, and they were worms on the morrow. Thence the strength of the Athenians was humbled, and the Philistines were powerful. Then they remembered their hostility and unfriendliness against the Tuatha De in the

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matter of the confederacy they had made with the Athenians against them; so that this is what they resolved, to assemble to attack them to revenge their spite against them.

When the Tuatha De knew that, they went in flight before the Philistines until they received patrimony and land in Dobar and Iardobar in the north of Alba. Seven years were they in that place, Nuada being prince over them. This was the plan decided upon by them by the end of that time, to attack Ireland against the Fir Bolg, as they were populous; for to go there was theirs by right of heredity.

When they arrived at this resolution, they set out on the sea; and their adventures thereon are not related until they took harbor on the coast of Ireland; a Monday on the first of May. They burned their boats and ships, in order that the Fomorians should not be able to use them against them; and further, in order that they themselves should not have them to flee therein from Ireland, if it was against them the Fir Bolg should be victorious. Then they made a great darkness around them until they reached the mountain of Conmaicne Rein in Connacht without the Fir Bolg perceiving it. Then they demanded battle or the kingship of their kinsmen the Fir Bolg.

In consequence was fought the battle of Mag Tured of Cong {known as "The First Battle of Mag Tured"; the second battle was fought against the Fomorians.} in conmaicne Cuile Tolad of Connacht. He who was king of the Fir Bolg then was Eochaid son of Erc. Tailltiu daughter of Magmor king of Spain was wife of that Eochaid; and Nuada son of Eochaid son of Etarlam was king over the Tuatha De. They were a long time fighting that battle. It was won at last against the Fir Bolg, and the rout was pressed northward, and eleven hundred were slaughtered from Mag Tured to the Strand of Ethaile. Edleo son of Alldae is the first man who fell in Ireland of the Tuatha De, by the hand of Nercon grandson of Siomon.

The Tuatha De were pressing upon the Fir Bolg until they came upon king eochaid son of Erc in the place we have mentioned, so that he fell at the hands of the three sons of Nemed son of Badrae; namely, Ceasarb, Luam, and Luachra. Even the Tuatha De were slain and cut off to a great extent, and in the joining of the battle their king, Nuada, had his arm hewn off from his shoulder. Afterwards Diancecht the leech and Credne the brazier made for him a silver arm, with vitality in every finger and every joint of it. But Miach son of Diancecht lopped off the silver arm after a while, and put joint to joint and sinew to sinew, and healed it in thrice nine days; and Diancecht his father was envious of him. For this cause the king used to be called Nuada Silver-Arm.

As for Tailltiu, daughter of Magmor king of Spain, wife of Eochaid son of Erc, queen of the Fir Bolg, she wedded Eochaid the Rough son of Dul the Blind of the Tuatha De; and Tailltiu came after the fighting of the battle of Mag Tured to Coill Chuan {cuan's Wood}; and the wood was cleared at her command, so that it was a clovery plain at the end of a year, and she inhabited it afterwards. And Cian son of Diancecht {Scal the Dumb is another name of that Cian} gave his son, named Lug son of Ethne daughter of Balor, to Tailltiu for fosterage. And she desired of her foster-mother and of her friends that from her should be named that place that was cleared by her, and that she should be buried there after death. Then Tailltiu died in Tailltiu, and was buried; so that is is her grave that is north-westward from the assembly-place of Taillte. Her mourning games used to be performed each year by Lug and by the kings after him; a fortnight before Lugnassad {Mid-summer} and a fortnight after, they used to be held continually. Lugnassad is the nasad of Lug; nasad is an assembly or festival in commemoration or memorial of a death.

Now the Fir Bolg were all slaughtered in that battle, as we have said, save a few; and those of them who survived fled before the Tuatha De into the outermost isles and islets of the sea, so that they dwelt in them after that.