

THE CELTIC ALIEN: FAIRY FAITH IN THE UFO ERA

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*Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from
magic*

- Arthur C. Clarke -

*I cannot tell how the truth may be,
I tell the tale as told to me.*

- A Welsh Story Teller -

UFOs and their occupants have become a part of our emergent reality (Tumminia, 2007). Tumminia asks a key question about their origins. “Did they travel millions of miles to materialize from the starry haze of the universe, or did they sprout organically from the deepest recesses of our imaginations?” (p. xix). Aliens have invaded the world as we know it (Dean, 1998). Is it the case that UFOs are real, or are they evocative symbols, as Flammonde (1976) asserts, steeped in ambiguity and real in the “sky of the beholder?” (p. 62). Is it the case, as Aldiss (2001) asserts, that the universal wish for a redemptive guardian to rescue us from our troubles is so deeply embedded in the human psyche that aliens are merely the latest form of animism? After all, Aldiss (2001) continues, an intimacy with the non-human is a fundamental human trait. Is it the case that all that we think we know about UFOs and their alien occupants is merely a modern-day

iteration of ancient contacts with the other, be that other extraterrestrial, divine, or daemonic? Vallee (1969, 1993) has made a compelling argument that this indeed is the case. He argued that the folklore of every culture has a rich reservoir of stories about humanoid beings that flew in the sky, used devices that seemed in advance of the technology of the time, said strangely beautiful, but often absurd, things to those with whom they came into contact, and abducted humans who uniformly reported alterations in their sense of time when in the beings' company (Vallee, 1969, 1993). How different are these descriptions from the phenomena reported by individuals who claim sightings of space craft, interactions with extraterrestrial entities, or abductions by aliens? Vallee (2007) goes so far as to say that current interpretations of UFO sightings and alien contacts in terms of the extraterrestrial hypothesis are terribly narrow views of a much larger and older tapestry.

A comprehensive review of the history of contact is beyond the scope of this paper. The reader is better served by reading the work of Jacques Vallee, Jenny Randles, Thomas E. Bullard, Brenda Denzler, and others for such a complete picture. Yet, there are startling similarities between Celtic folktales and modern UFO narratives. Whether one is concerned with the underworld or the otherworld, the wee people or the grays, fairy rings or

saucer nests, kidnappings or abductions, changelings or alien-human hybrids, these similarities may be too important to ignore or to debunk. After all, the *Tuatha De Danann*, a race of superior beings that preceded the Celts and druids in Ireland, were said to have come from the sky.

What does one make of the visitors? What, then, do the *Tuatha De Danann* the *Sidhe*, and the fairy of Ireland, the *fadet*, *farfadet*, and *fees* of Brittany, The *Pobel Vean*, pixies, spriggans, and knackers or knockers of Cornwall, the *Mooinjer Veggey*, the *Moddey Doo*, and the Middle World Men of the Isle of Man, the *lutin* of Breton Newfoundland, the 'old hag' of Gaelic Newfoundland, the troll and the *Sleagh Maith* of the Scottish Highlands, the *Y Tylwyth Teg* of Wales have in common? How are the banshee, the leprechaun, the *finn*, the *fion*, the *korrigan*, and the *daimon* related? And, what do all these entities have to do with the alien or the extraterrestrial? Perhaps more than we would like to acknowledge, perhaps less. This manuscript will review a small segment of a literature that relates to the Celtic fairy faith tradition. It is not intended to be comprehensive, nor does it attempt to tie this tradition more fully to a broader, more contemporary understanding of the visitors form above or from below. It will be left to the reader to determine if any relationship exists. Is Vallee right, or is he wrong? Are UFO occupants and fairies one and the same?

Let the reader be aware that most research shows a spectrum of extraterrestrial belief settling into the fabric of Western culture, societal discourse, and even representational art that at this point belies any single explanation (Tumminia, 2007). Read carefully, then, as the journey through ‘the Celtic Twilight,’ the predawn hours when the Druids performed their rituals, and to *the Celtic otherworld* now begins.

The fundamentals of the Celtic Fairy-Faith are set forth by Evans-Wentz (1911, 2007). In his classic text, Evans-Wentz not only provides a comprehensive view of that faith & its variations from the six Celtic peoples, but also presents and critiques the major theories of the faith --- Naturalistic Theory, Pygmy Theory, Druid Theory, and Mythological Theory. In doing so, he argues for a Psychological Theory, but one grounded in psychic experiences and the paranormal. He also provides numerous examples of phenomena that parallel the modern UFO and alien contact reports --- abduction, missing time, time dilation and distortion, forced amnesia, screen memories, strange moving night lights, and even magic buckwheat cakes (similar to the alien pancakes reported by Joe Simonton of Eagle River, Wisconsin).

Narvaez (1991, 1997) has compiled a more current series of essays that cover fairy lore and legend. Among the early settlers of the Bay St.

George/Port-au-Port Peninsula area of Newfoundland were Acadian families from the east coast of Cape Breton Island, Nova Scotia, and single adult males from Brittany and Normandy (Butler, 1991). They brought with them the experience of and belief in *lutins* --- '**du petit monde**' tiny, human-like beings who would enter a stable at night, braid the best horse's mane, and take it for a gallop, using the braided mane to direct the horse. In the main, reports of contact with these 'little people' indicate that the horses were treated well and fed after the gallop. If, however, the owner of a chosen horse untied the braid, the *lutins* would become angry and thereafter treat the horse harshly. First cited around 1830 in La Manche, the tradition of belief continues, albeit among ever decreasing numbers of people, in Breton Newfoundland.

The same fate --- decreasing communities of believers --- seems to have befallen the Newfoundland tales of the 'Blast' (i.e., a sharp pain in the face and eyes) caused by fairies (Rieti, 1991) and 'berry pickers "in the fairies" (i.e., encounters with fairies while harvesting the varieties of Newfoundland berries) (Narvaez, 1991). Not so, the fate of 'the old hag,' the menacing modern-day iteration of incubi and succubae, who enters a bedroom at night and sits on the sleeper's chest, tales of whom seem to be spreading far beyond the Gaelic regions of Newfoundland (Hufford, 1982).

The midlands of Ireland represent a singular area of fairylore (Lysaght, 1991). Banshees, the *puka* --- a supernatural entity that would come for children if they were naughty --- and other types of 'wee folk' are part and parcel of the ballads, legends, stories, and tales of the region. Most, though not all, Irish believers claim that the fairies are the bad angels cast out of heaven by God during the war with Lucifer. Living in 'raths' or mounds, the 'Gentry' are not to be interfered with. Rathes are often covered or surrounded by small trees or the 'underwood,' entrances to the underworld. Irish belief in fairies is often intertwined with beliefs about the dead --- both like to visit houses in the night and both like to find a clean, warm kitchen with a supply of fresh water on arrival; if they do not find these things, both tend to create mischief.

Lysaght (1991) provides a precise description of the social organization of the fairy race and the fate of the fairies on the Day of Judgment. With regard to the former, she states that the 'little people' are social beings, living within the mounds. They are ruled over by a king and queen. They have their own unique trades. Their diet is almost exclusively fruits and vegetables, milk and honey --- but, no meat due to its blood nor salt. They are small in stature, but old in features. Though their clothes are fancy, they are reputed to be fond of dance, music, and sport, particularly

hurling. With regard to the latter, the fairies' fate is linked to their origin. As fallen angels, they have no hope of salvation, nor can they die in order to achieve redemption. This causes fairies to hopelessly quest for reinstatement in Heaven. Fairies have a basic consequential deficiency --- their lack of human nature, their want of blood. Perhaps, Lysaght (1991) says their bloodless state may be behind their hatred of the color red. (Irish children in non-urban areas are still often sent to bed with a piece of red cloth pinned to their jammies.)

Lysaght (1991) offers one interpretation of the almost universal fairy abduction tale and the resulting 'changeling.' She has linked a number of such stories to three possible sources: (1) the parents' reactions to a contrary baby, (2) a bride who has second thoughts and who turns contrary after the wedding, or (3) explanations (excuses) for different or unexpected behaviors and tragic human problems. She also states that there are many folk who think that the changeling legend reflects the fairies' need to obtain healthy humans perhaps to replace sickly fairies. And, she says that, in spite of the pace of modernization in Ireland, the faith remains strong in the rural areas where it is tied to a special landscape feature, the rath, a place that retains its ancient mythic significance.

Moving north and east, the fairy faith takes on distinctive features. 'Reachrai' or Rathlin Island is the only populated island off the coast of County Antrim, Northern Ireland. At one point in its history, it was considered to be one of the Western Isles of Scotland. With a stormy climate, with a maritime heritage, surrounded by the sea, the origin legends of the fairies are closely linked to the legends of the mystical origin of seals, which occupy a very special place in the island's culture (Ballard, 1991). Both are parallel races capable of helping humans, but capricious and best avoided. While the habitats of these two mythical species differ, both have the capacity to shape-shift, can lead humans astray, play tricks, and leave gifts (some of which must not be spoken of). Both like and make music. Ballard (1991) indicates that, among residents of the island, the most dreaded aspect of fairy behavior is their ability to change or 'take' people, especially young children. (This is also the case in seal tales, though more often than not seals take the form of humans for affection and love. This follows from a belief that seals and certain sea birds are the ghosts of drowned fishermen or the spirits of wives who died pining after their husbands' death at sea.) To 'take' humans, fairies and seals must divest them from all aspects of their humanity.

There are common injunctions tied to human contact with the fairies (Ballard, 1991). First, do not look at fairies when they are dancing or playing music, since those two art forms are enchanting. Second, do not seek out fairies nor interfere with them. These all too human acts risk the fairies wrath. Third, do not enquire into their nature or their elemental and fundamental significance. Fourth, do not try to trick fairies, since this act results in 'the fairy curse,' a bewitchment that leaves the cursed 'out of form.'

A number of fairy stories are tied to death. Ballard (1991) focuses on the banshee's cry (a particularly mournful and seductive invitation and warning), sightings of wraiths (the spirits of the dead before a funeral) and ghosts (the spirits of the dead after a funeral), and the period between a death and the funeral when the rules of time are suspended. She links these stories closely with fairies, though she does not go so far as to say that death and fairies are inevitably linked. And, it is the rare tale that tells of fairies as murderous.

In addition to the above stories, the island abounds in other stories of the supernatural --- fishermen lost in heavy seas seen fishing from their boats on stormy days, ghosts piping, headless men wandering, hauntings, ghostly romances, the devil's footprint (i.e., a cloven hoof), black cats and dogs, among others (Ballard, 1991). Yet, there are counters to all of these,

most notably the three-knot string, representative of the Trinity, to be carried or worn, the power of the priest over the 'other' (including Protestants), and the seemingly odd alignment of the Celtic fairy faith with the Catholic church.

It is this last area that serves as the focus for Diarmuid O Giollain's (1991) essay. How is it that in a country where more than ninety percent of the population is Catholic there remains such a strong belief in fairies? While reverence felt for St. Patrick and his long-standing influence, the significant political and social changes of the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, and the Great Famine combined to affect the fairy faith, they certainly did not consign it to the fringes of Irish society. O Giollain (1991) argues that the continuation of the fairy faith is in very large part due to the strong connections of the Irish to the land and its structures. Ancient burial mounds (e.g., Newgrange in County Meath), dolmens, fairy bushes (i.e., elderberry, holly, rowan, and whitethorn), holy wells, oak trees, ring forts, stone circles, and sacred sites, all have supernatural associations --- giants, the 'Gentry,' the 'Fianna' (i.e., a breed of warriors who defended Ireland against supernatural adversaries). Even as Catholicism took hold, the Irish held on to the old beliefs and ways. O Giollain (1991) states that the new church was not as effective as the old religion in identifying and maintaining the

boundary between communities and the unknown spaces beyond, between one's own world and a strange, chaotic outside region with all kinds of outsiders. In a sense, the fairy faith provided the people with a line between order and unbounded disorder, a barrier between the mortal and the supernatural worlds.

The fairy world is ethereal, above and below the world of humans (O Giollain, 1991). Fairies travel through the air and live underground. Perhaps the Irish notion of the 'underworld,' a place where the dead go, is tied to the fairy world. Even though the fairies are an integral part of life, they are also magical. Two days a year --- 'Bealtaine,' May Day, and 'Samhain,' Halloween --- are days on which the barrier between the days of summer and the days of winter, and between humans and fairies is particularly fluid and open (O Giollain, 1991). The 'Good People' provide when humans were in need, but they are also crafty. They lend their cows in times of need. They bestow magical gifts on humans. They also enlist the help of humans, particularly midwives. The fairies steal food, lead people astray, inflict disabilities, and cause sickness and death. They also take humans, replacing them with changelings, and punish humans if humans mention the fairies sacred names, build houses over entries to the fairy world and their pathways, or interfere with the fairies on their travels.

O Giollain (1991) states that pre-Patrick, the Irish worshipped the 'gods of the sidh' (the fairies). Several fairy queens figure prominently in Irish fairylore --- Aina in Donegal and Cliodhna in Munster. Post-Patrick, a new frame of reference emerged. The fairies were the Fallen Angels, neither good enough for heaven nor bad enough for hell. There exists in the lore a migratory legend of the prospect of salvation for the fairies, who will be saved on the Last Day if they have even one drop of Adam's blood in their veins (O Giollain, 1991). Yet, the old gods remain --- the cult of water and holy wells, the festival of spring (Imbole), dedicated to St. Brigid, the harvest festival (Lughnasa), excursions to mountain tops (Croagh Patrick), among others.

Irish Catholicism is a syncretic experience --- pre-Christian phenomena being Christianized and surviving non-Christian phenomena taking on a Christian frame of reference (O Giollain, 1991). For example, consider the holy wells and holy water, the fact that priests can banish fairies, but so too can 'wise women' and 'fairy doctors.' While belief in fairies has declined, it has not vanished; legends can still be heard, a supernatural aura still lingers over bushes and forts, and the statues still move, though perhaps less often, in Ballinspittle, County Cork (O Giollain, 1991).

In addition to the lingering tradition of the Gentry, rural Irish people still talk of witches and witchcraft (Jenkins, 1991). Although incidents of milk or churn 'blinking' figure less prominently in Irish beliefs today, farmers are more than careful during the 'booleying,' the moving of cattle on May eve or May morning. Stories still can be heard in the pubs of rural Ireland about cows being bewitched (i.e., 'elf-struck'). And, one has only to read about the case of Bridget Cleary of Clonmel, County Tipperary, who was burned to death by her husband, father, aunt, four male cousins, and two male neighbors in an attempt to treat her bewitchment after visits by a doctor, an herbalist, and a priest 'diagnosed' her as a changeling (O Giollain, 1991) to see that beliefs in witchcraft and magic are long-standing and quite powerful. Jenkins (1991) gives a number of examples of the contemporary place of magic in Ireland. One will suffice. There remains apprehension, if not anxiety, about 'burying the sheaf' (i.e., murdering) in a bog. (The author often cycled by the Bog of Ardee during his year in Ireland.) If a doll is buried in wet ground, the intended victim will die a swift death; if buried in dry soil, the death will be lingering and painful.

Fairies too bewitch cattle, milk, butter, and people (Jenkins, 1991). They 'take' people, particularly infants and children. However, Jenkins (1991) states that those targeted are not the run-of-the-mill Irish person. Two

groups tend to be particularly target --- those with special skills or talents, who might contribute to the fairy race, and those who are deviant. In the former group, the taken include musicians, pipers, doctors, and wise women. In the latter group, the taken include those who flout convention, particularly the belief in fairies, who interfere with fairies traveling between their dwellings, who disturb a fairy tree, who build a house on a fairy thoroughfare, and who disrupt a rath. In addition to being 'taken away,' fairies, like witches, can lay a curse --- the 'fairy stroke' or the 'fairy wind' --- which typically manifests as a peculiar illness or a touch of paralysis (Jenkins, 1991). If so touched, one can only be cured through the intervention of fairy doctors, wise women, or other specialists who possess the power and skills to conduct oracular and divinatory procedures (Jenkins, 1991).

Fairy beliefs abound in other Celtic cultures. The Scottish Highlands have been a rich source of fairy lore (Bennett, 1991). Trolls, hill folk, finns, and picts play a rich role in the lore of the Orkney and Shetland Islands (Bruford, 1991). The Welsh have detailed stories of the Y Tylwyth Teg and their magical possessions (Gwyndaf, 1991).

The first treatment of the possible relationship of fairies and alien others --- Vallee's *Passport to Magonia* (1969) --- presents a comprehensive

argument against an exclusively extraterrestrial explanation of UFOs and their occupants. While a detailed summary of that argument is beyond the scope of this paper, Vallee does offer two other possibilities --- extra-dimensional and/or extra-temporal. And, he draws heavily on reports by the clergy and on the works of alchemists and philosophers of the past. One manuscript, the Rev. Robert Kirk's *The Secret Commonwealth of Elves, Fauns, and Fairies*, provides a framework for Vallee's **Magonia**. In that document, published in 1691, Kirk, a Protestant minister, gives a scaffold for Vallee's work. Kirk listed 16 findings that he had gleaned about the others (Bennett, 1991; Vallee, 1969).

1. They have a nature that is intermediate between humans and angels.
2. Physically, they have very light and fluid bodies, which are like a condensed cloud, making them particularly visible at dusk. They can appear and vanish at will.
3. Intellectually, they are intelligent and curious.
4. They have the power to carry away anything they like.
5. They live inside the earth in caves, which they access through any crevice or opening where air passes.

6. When humans did not inhabit most of the world, they lived in the uninhabited areas and had their own agriculture. Traces of their civilization have been left on the high mountains and other remote geographic areas.

7. At the beginning of each three-month period, they change quarters because they are unable to stay in one place. They also like to travel. (It is then when people have terrible encounters with them.)

8. Their chameleon-like bodies allow them to swim through the air with their entire household.

9. They are divided into tribes, have marriages, children, nurses, work, burials --- unless these are merely to mock human's own customs.

10. Their houses are said to be wonderfully large and beautiful, but under most circumstances they are invisible to the human eye. The houses are equipped with lamps that burn forever and fires that need no fuel.

11. They speak very little. When they do talk among themselves, their language is a kind of whistling sound.

12. Their habits and their language when they talk to humans are similar to those of local people.

13. Their philosophical system is based on three ideas: nothing dies, all things evolve cyclically in such a way that at every cycle they are renewed and improved, and motion is the universal law.

14. They are said to have a hierarchy of leaders, but they have no visible devotion to God, no religion.

15. They have many pleasant and light books, but also serious and complex books dealing with abstract matters.

16. Magically, they can appear and disappear at will.

With only a few different words or concepts, Kirk's others sound remarkably like the extraterrestrial alien.

Magonia was only the beginning of Vallee's re-interpretation of UFOs and aliens. When Vallee's 1969 edition was published, the focus of ufology was exclusively on the extraterrestrial hypothesis. Vallee and Thompson, *Angels and Aliens* (1991), offered new perspectives on the phenomena. Though those points of view may have seemed too esoteric then, new findings in astronomy, cosmology, and physics make them more tenable now.

In the final essay of the Narvaez book, 'Between One Eye Blink and the Next: Fairies, UFOs, and Problems of Knowledge,' Rojcewicz (1991) acknowledges the work of Hufford --- the 'old hag' and 'haggings' --- and Felicitas D. Goodman --- 'glossolalia' (i.e., speaking in tongues) --- for his interest in the relationship between the historical, mythical other and the extraterrestrial alien. He also credits Andrew Lang's work on the reality

basis of ghost lore and Walter Yeeling Evans-Wentz's exposition of a discarnate consciousness lying behind the fairy faith of the Celts, as well as the writings of Vallee and Bullard. All taken together indicate that there is a common underlying trigger for anomalous or extraordinary encounters, an unknown continuum of folk imagination and reality.

Rojcewicz (1991) notes that tradition argues for the extraterrestrial nature of at least some fairies. For the Irish, the Tuatha De Danann are not earthly, having originated on other planets or in heaven. For the Welsh, Y Tylwyth Teg were visitors to earth. Using a number of ideas generated by a number of writers, he goes on to summarize the central elements of the fairy and the alien.

1. Both possess a 'subtle body.' They are more spirit than flesh, light, changeable, more the nature of mist or a condensed cloud. Both materialize and dematerialize --- blink in and blink out --- in an instant. They are neither purely physical nor mental, but rather exist at the momentary interface between mind and matter. Both are capable of distorting space-time. Both are ontologically ambiguous, neither completely objective nor subjective.

2. Both are shape-shifters. Fairies, aliens, and UFOs manipulate their forms at will --- splitting into two or more, many joining into one, passing

through physical objects. How often have those interested in one or the other or both heard of 'fairies in the mists' or 'UFOs in the clouds' (the latter attributed to J. Allen Hynek). In many ways, fairies and aliens appear to be in transition between a solid and a pure energy state.

3. Both are shining, luminous entities. Fairies are described as glowing; aliens as fluorescent. They represent illumination in the best traditions of Plato and Augustine. They confound, but also enlighten. They present humans with a prophetic vision of the past, the present, and the future.

4. They are protean entities with quasi-physical natures and malleable bodies. They pass effortlessly through material objects and instantly appear and disappear. It is in their nature to be hybrids --- a state between matter and spirit. Both fairies and aliens possess a nature at least partially ethereal and abstract. Both are capable of volitional metamorphoses, they are not things in any absolute sense. Neither wholly flesh nor wholly spirit, they serve as intermediaries between gods and humans.

5. Fairies and aliens are part of the 'daemon' tradition. Having power over human affairs, both operate from a universal system of reciprocity. They provide the opportunity to partake in a process of developing

extraordinary talents or skills --- charming, conjuring, curing, and using extrasensory or psychic abilities.

6. Both can have positive and negative effects on those with whom they interact. Euphemistically called the 'Good People' or the 'Gentle Folk,' encounters can take a bad turn --- destruction of property, ruining health, changing personality. W. B. Yeats --- poet and ceremonial magician in the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn, an esoteric order of Western magical tradition --- stated that some aspects of the fairy faith might be dangerous for mortals to explore. He claimed that the fairies have said, 'Be careful, and do not seek to know too much about us' (Yeats, 1902, 2004, p. 48). In fact, there are many reports in Celtic culture of people being 'fairy blasted' or 'pixie led.' And, the culture is replete with stories or legends of the changeling. Witnesses provide a number of examples of UFO contacts leading to similar difficulties for the UFO and alien contactees --- emotional collapse, mental disorders, and mysterious disappearances.

7. Even though they possess powers superior to mortals, both fairies and aliens need humans. But this need has markedly different effects ranging from other-worldly intercession in seemingly unsolvable problems to the dehumanizing terror of being 'taken' or abducted.

8. Fairies and aliens also show indications of an apparent dislike for and fear of humanity. This dislike and fear may well be due to their need. From midwives to changelings, from fairy-human children to alien-human hybrids, both fairy and alien lore talk of a genetic evolution as partly behind the long-standing contacts.

9. Fairies and aliens have the ability to make us see only what they want us to see (i.e., bewitchment and enchantment v. missing time and screen memories). They can render themselves invisible; they can also render people or animate and inanimate things invisible. They can create illusions and cast spells. They are capable of altering the passage of time --- 'between one eye blink and the next.'

10. Both fairies and aliens dislike being seen or discussed --- forced amnesia, screen memories, and missing time. They prefer privacy, and initiate contact with humans only when they choose.

Without getting into a fruitless debate between true believers and skeptics or debunkers, are there models or theories that help explain the belief in fairies and the seemingly ever-increasing number of reports of UFO and alien contact? Are such models or theories complete? How do the models or theories handle Kirk's scaffold and Rojcewicz's elements? Arguments that fairies and aliens exist only in the mind of the beholder,

whether they take a considered form such as that offered by Jung (1959, 1978) or the less considered forms of Philip Klass or Donald Menzel, and arguments that both merely reflect misperception of natural phenomena are inadequate to the task. Naturalistic theory states that human belief in god, spirits, fairies, or aliens are the direct result of attempts to explain or rationalize natural phenomena (Evans-Wentz, 1911, 2007). While natural phenomena and the environment might have provided a direction to the experiences, Evans-Wentz argued that a germ of an idea of fairies (and aliens) must be present in order that the environment can act on and shape it. Pygmy theory rests on the notion that fairy (and alien) belief has grown up out of a folk-memory of an actual pygmy race (Evans-Wentz, 1911, 2007). Yet, what about those areas of the globe in which a pygmy race never existed? And, how does this theory account for the association of giants with fairies, Nordics with grays? Druid theory argues that the folk-memory of Druids and their magical practices is alone responsible for the fairy faith (Evans-Wentz, 1911, 2007). While this may be a partial explanation for the fairies of Ireland, what about the other Celtic peoples for whom there were no Druid priests and priestesses? And, while this may help account for the tall blonde-haired and fair-complexioned aliens, it does not account for the other alien types --- grays, insectoids, and reptilians. Mythological theory

states that fairies (and aliens) are the diminished figures of the old pagan divinities of the early Celts (Evans-Wentz, 1911, 2007). Again, while this may partially affect the lived fairy-faith and the theosophical schools of thought related to alien contact, it begs the question of the changes that individuals undergo once they have contact either with fairies or with aliens (Ring, 1992). Theories from psychology and neuropsychology seem too narrow. Can personality eccentricities or temporal lobe lability really be behind the experiences of individuals around the world, then and now?

What, then, can one make of all this. At the very least, one can conclude that belief in and interaction with fairies and UFO occupants are part of the extraordinary encounter tradition and part of a continuum of folk imagination and reality. But, are they more? A fairy encounter or an alien encounter is unsettling, confounding, and challenging. Are they reflections of Yeats's '*Spiritus Mundi*,' Jung's '*Unus Mundus*,' or Grosso's 'Mind-at-Large?' Are they mutually constructed realities, the product of the interaction between a person's anticipation and the anomalous nature of what is perceived? Are the encounters composite functions of how humans think and how fairies or aliens think?

Rojcewicz (1991) closes his essay asking the above questions. He offers one interpretation from D. Scott Rogo (a parapsychologist) --- To wit,

fairies and aliens may well constitute a 'cosmic interface between mind and matter; a form of momentary conjunction between hyperdimensions and our world.' And, he offers a tentative interpretation of his own --- That is, with fairies and aliens, the human mind is a mirror of the universe mirroring the human mind. Both interpretations sound so much like Vallee's notions of UFOs as confounding control mechanisms and Kenneth Ring's notion of the UFO as a cosmic Zen koan. Yet, the fact that many human conceptions of the other derive from animism does not necessarily mean that extraterrestrials do. It would be unwise, if not foolhardy to dismiss ideas about the alien other just because they resemble some human myths (Michaud, 2007). Some extraterrestrials might turn out to be real, even if they are detectable only by their actions (Michaud, 2007). Only time will tell. Whatever a fairy or an alien may be, one is left with the sense that "...the fairies who, much like the grey aliens of UFO belief, inhabit a narrative which seems too consistent to be the product of insanity, yet too bizarre for conventional explanation" (www.sacred-texts.com). The truth, pure and simple or profane and complex, is either out there or in us. And, each of us must and will decide on her/his own.

*I took it for a faery vision
Of some gay creatures of the element
That in the colours of the rainbow live
And play i' the plighted clouds. I was awe-struck*

*And as I passed, I worshipped; if those you seek
It were a journey like the path to heaven
To help you find them.*

- Milton -

*The pure and simple truth is rarely pure and
never simple.*

- Oscar Wilde -

*Human kind
Cannot bear very much reality.*

- T. S. Eliot -

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