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### Abstract

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In her book *Folklore of the Disc* Jacqueline Simpson argues persuasively that "Whatever is folklore on Earth finds its mirror in the reality of the disc" (14). Following her, I propose that a study of recurring images, motifs and allusions in the Tiffany books suggests that Tiffany might be considered the Discworld's reflection of Earth's Celtic Sovereignty Goddess. For anyone who has read the Witches books, even a superficial consideration of this statement rings true, given that the Celtic Sovereignty Goddesses were bound to the land and were responsible for everything in their territories, from birth and death and the welfare of livestock to guarding the boundaries against intruders and endorsing the rule of the mortal king. Just so, Pratchett's witches are bound to the land of their steadings and care for everything that lives there. They are midwives and they tend to the dying. They also guard the borders of their homes and have the authority to ratify or rescind the legitimacy of those who rule. In this article, I therefore propose that as a young Tiffany Aching feels out the shape of her power, learning from the older witches and stepping into her responsibilities, Pratchett takes this opportunity to reflect on the mythical and folkloric force that shapes her and, arguably all his witches, and I contend that this force is the Celtic Sovereignty Goddess.

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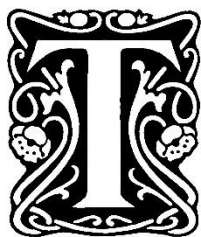
### Additional Keywords

Tiffany Aching; Celtic Sovereignty Goddess; Celtic mythology; Terry Pratchett

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he hag o' the hills:  
TERRY PRATCHETT'S TIFFANY ACHING  
AS SOVEREIGNTY GODDESS

EILEEN DONALDSON

THERE ARE MANY REASONS why Terry Pratchett's books are so widely loved, certainly too many—both subjective and objective—to enumerate them here. When I first started reading the Discworld series, my favourite characters were the witches; I loved the literary and fairy tale allusions in the novels and the way they flouted both social and genre conventions. They continue to be my favourite Discworld characters because of this. Having said that, all the Discworld sub-series (the Death novels, the City Watch novels, the Wizard novels, and the Witches novels) “[borrow] from folklore and mythology, twisting and tangling it on the way” (Pratchett and Simpson x). This makes sense, given that Discworld began as a project to satirise the conventions of twentieth century fantasy which draws liberally from these sources.

One could argue, however, that Pratchett's engagement with fantasy, fairytale and myth is most overt and more deeply considered in his Witches books. These books might parody certain things, but they never disrespect what Pratchett calls the “old magic [...] that is built into the landscape,” that “is deep and dark and breathing and never fades” (*I Shall Wear Midnight* 1.6-7). In this article, I hope to trace one of the ways in which the “old magic” breathes through the Tiffany Aching novels, a subset of the Witches books. My contention is that as a young Tiffany feels out the shape of her power, learning from the older witches and stepping into her responsibilities, Pratchett takes this opportunity to reflect on the mythical and folkloric roots that shape her and, arguably, all his witches.

In her book *Folklore of the Disc* Jacqueline Simpson argues persuasively that “Whatever is folklore on Earth finds its mirror in the reality of the Disc” (xii). Following her, I propose that a study of recurring images, motifs and allusions in the Tiffany books suggests that Tiffany might be considered the Discworld's reflection of Earth's Celtic Sovereignty Goddess. For anyone who has read the Witches books, even a superficial consideration of this statement rings true. After all, the Celtic Sovereignty Goddesses were bound to the land and were responsible for everything in their territories, from birth and death and the welfare of livestock to guarding the boundaries against intruders and endorsing the rule of the mortal king. Just so, Pratchett's witches are bound to

the land of their steadings and care for everything that lives there. They are midwives and they tend to the dying. They also guard the borders of their homes and have the authority to ratify or rescind the legitimacy of those who rule.

This study therefore contributes to the larger scholarly project to map echoes of Earth's folklore, fairy tale and myth in Terry Pratchett's Discworld, supplementing the work done by scholars such as Jacqueline Simpson, as well as contributing more broadly to the work done on Pratchett's Witches novels. While scholars have discussed the witches from various perspectives, no one has yet drawn the parallel to the Celtic Sovereignty Goddess as I do here. Jacqueline Bent and Helen Gavin come the closest, focusing as they do on how Pratchett's witches reflect the archetypes of the Maiden, Mother and Crone—themselves amalgamated “types” that reflect the characteristics of various goddesses in world mythology. More relevant to my perspective are the studies of Jacqueline Simpson, who draws parallels between aspects of the novels and old Scottish folklore—something I pick up on in this paper—and Aleksandra Dmowska, who reflects on the sense of sacred, living myth that permeates this series of novels. More generally, Karen Sayer, Janet Brennan Croft, Lian Sinclair, Rebecca-Ann Do Rozario, M. Isabel Santaulària i Capdevila, and Siddarth Pandey have discussed the ethics of Pratchett's witches, arguing that the everyday tasks of the witches within their communities foster an unwavering sense of duty and a particular perspective on justice. In his recent book on Pratchett, Daniel Lüthi too considers this aspect of the witches' lives and argues that the witches' “very sense of self—is derived from the dynamics between personal space and other space, between individuality and community” (171)—effectively, a witch's identity is indelibly shaped by the landscape in which she lives and the communities in which she serves. Curiously, from my perspective, the positions and perspectives outlined in each of these arguments can be read as tangential to the central symbol, or connotative nexus, of the Celtic Sovereignty Goddess, given that she herself is embedded in a particular landscape and champions an ethic of duty to community.

Because I am not a specialist in Celtic Studies, my research on the Sovereignty Goddess is very much that of a lay academic and the contribution of this paper lies more in teasing out references to the Sovereignty Goddess and discussing their implications through a close literary reading of the novels. I therefore first offer a brief introduction to the Celtic Sovereignty Goddess and then turn to a broad analysis of Terry Pratchett's Tiffany novels, exploring how Tiffany functions much like a Sovereignty Goddess across *The Wee Free Men* (hereafter referred to as TWFM), *A Hat Full of Sky* (HFS), *Wintersmith* (WS), *I Shall Wear Midnight* (ISWM) and *The Shepherd's Crown* (SC). While my purpose is not to extrapolate a connection to the Sovereignty Goddess across Pratchett's other witches, if Tiffany is to replace Granny Weatherwax as Discworld's “hag o’

hags," the fact that she seems to be an echo of Earth's Sovereignty Goddess certainly implies that this folkloric force might well shape all of Pratchett's witches.

Generally, the term "Celtic" is applied to a group of historical Indo-European languages and the peoples and traditions associated with those languages (McKillop xv; Ellis 1). Archaeological evidence dates Celtic civilisation to 1000BC and stretches from modern day Turkey through the Balkans and Germany to Gallic France, Spain, Portugal and into Britain (McKillop xv; Moffat 3; Ellis 4; Hutton 2). Of this, Miranda Green writes that

Although the growth of Celtic tradition across Europe was due partly to actual folk-movement, many regions probably became Celtic rather by the adoption of material culture (through trade or gift-exchange) and customs. For example, there is very little evidence for any kind of migration into Britain; yet by the time the Romans arrived in the first century AD, the Britons were thoroughly celticised, with a material culture which was broadly similar to that of their Gaulish neighbours. (10)

This is an important point because, while there would have been linguistic and cultural differences among the various peoples considered to be Celts (Anwyl 27; Ellis 4), they seem to have shared a broadly similar world view that was expressed through their myths and traditions (MacLeod 9). Thus, even though none of these Celtic languages and cultures would survive Roman rule and barbarian invasions (Markale 14) except for those beyond reach in places like Scotland, Ireland, Wales, the Isle of Man and Northern England (Moffat 3; Ellis 5; MacLeod 5), we can use the evidence left us in those places together with archaeological evidence from central Europe to extrapolate, however tentatively, a common set of religious and cultural symbols (Sjoestedt xiv; Green 70). In fact, Alistair Moffat cautions against "artificial distinctions [...] that blur the bigger picture" of a common Celtic culture in Britain (2) and across Europe.

As with any ancient culture, the information we have today on the Celts comes from three sources—archaeological evidence, the testimony of classical authors and the stories and myths recorded in the vernacular Celtic languages (Green 11; MacLeod 19). One does, however, need to approach these sources with caution for various reasons. For example, the classical authors would have been documenting a culture that was very different from their own and their writing may thus misrepresent at least some of the Celtic practices (Hutton 4-5). A similar problem exists with "Celtic mythology [which] was not recorded until the Christian era; and then only in the insular languages, mainly Irish and Welsh" (Ellis 5). Certainly, while the Irish texts seem to remain true to the spirit of pagan Ireland, some Welsh tales have clearly euhemerised elements.

Finally, even archaeological evidence is not “fool-proof” and must be contextualised for history to be reconstructed. What this means is that only material—whether epigraphical or iconographical—that is recurring and corroborated across these various sources, may be treated as offering a valid glimpse into the lost culture of the Celts (Bevill iii). The figure of the Sovereignty Goddess occurs throughout Europe, Britain, Ireland and Wales, and is corroborated across all three sources of information. She is, in fact, such a prevalent figure that she is recognised as “an intrinsic part of the Celtic world” (Matthews 20).

The most detailed sources we have on this figure are the medieval Irish and Welsh texts (Green 13) because “Celtic paganism survived long enough [in Ireland] to be committed to writing” (Markale 254; Sjoestedt xiv). The Celtic Sovereignty Goddess is a significant player in these texts when compared to other figures (Ní Brolcháin 12), and Sjoestedt argues that because of the number of them:

We must dismiss the notion of one deity who is titular, as it were, of a particular function, in favour of the notion of diverse realisations of a single religious idea, groups of deities, probably local—at least in origin—who are not identical but equivalent, having evolved among different peoples, perhaps at different times, from the same generative impulse. (25-26)

What this means is that in Ireland, the Sovereignty Goddess was the Morrigan, Macha, Medb, Badb and Brigid, while in Wales she was Rhiannon and, in England and Europe, she was Brigantia and Epona and yet in each case she performed much the same duties (MacLeod 10). She guarded and protected the land (Green 203; Herbert 149) often becoming identified with a particular place (Ní Brolcháin 15,18; Matthews xv). She oversaw the fertility of the land and its people and was responsible for healing, the care of animals, war and death, and choosing the correct co-sovereign for her kingdom (Matthews xv; MacLeod 10).

Given this list of functions, one might be forgiven for thinking that these goddesses performed somewhat conflicting roles and question how we have come to attribute such diverse functions to a single amalgamated Goddess type. As Wood suggests, we should certainly practise caution when reconstructing “complex religious ideas from archaeological sources” (Wood 19) but, when these are taken in conjunction with the early Irish and Welsh epigraphical sources, what appears might not be a systematic documentation of the Celtic mythic universe, but rather “glimpses of the manner in which the supernatural was represented in story” (Herbert 141). In this case, because these various goddesses are associated with specific symbols and functions, the

symbolic role they play in “the story” is that of sovereignty; if a sovereign is a caretaker, responsible for the defence and well-being of the people and land under their protection, then the functions that these goddesses fulfil are not disparate but form one cohesive, sacred whole. Thus, while there is some contention among scholars as to whether or not every goddess I've mentioned should be treated as a Sovereignty Goddess (Sessle 9), the general rule is that if she plays a part in the story of sovereignty, she is a Sovereignty Goddess.

A fascinating adjunct to this point is the conversation around the etymological roots of some of the goddesses' names. For example, Mary Condren posits that the name “Brigit” “was possibly [...] given to all Irish goddesses and, in the European context, the name of the collective ‘Goddess’” (56). Her argument rests on the fact that the name has an international ancestry and the Irish form of it “simply means ‘high’ or ‘exalted’” (Condren 57). Of course, its Latinized form, Brigantia, occurs throughout Britain and Europe. Miranda Green, too discusses this, focussing on the root “riga”—which we see in Rhiannon, Brigantia, Brigit, Arianhrod and the Morrigan—and which comes from the Indo-European title Rigantona, “great queen” (Monaghan 196) and the “Old Irish *rige* meaning ‘kingship’” (MacLeod 18). If this is so, and the names of these goddesses are effectively variations on the title “Great Queen,” then reading them as embodying sovereignty across cultures and stories is that much more valid.

What the figure of the mythical Sovereignty Goddess offers is therefore a glimpse into what the Celts considered to be the duties and responsibilities of sovereignty—what they believed a powerful sovereign owed his or her people in return for their fealty. There is an honor code here in which power is intimately connected to a duty of care—precisely the duty of care championed by Pratchett's witches, and one that Tiffany Aching learns over the course of the five novels I discuss. Sjoestedt summarises this duty of care as occurring across three major functions: the maternal, reproductive element; the agrarian element; and the warlike element (30). As I have mentioned before, the maternal, reproductive element extends to care during childbirth, general healing of the infirm, aged and hurt, and overseeing the rites of death. The agrarian element has to do with ensuring the fertility and health of the land and the fauna and flora that live upon it. The warlike element has to do with protecting the land, its people and all that live on it from attack, whether spiritual or physical. This includes protecting troops and animals involved in warfare, as well as appearing on the battlefield oneself and fighting alongside one's soldiers. Terry Pratchett's Tiffany Aching performs all these functions across the five novels in which she is the protagonist, as I show in the following discussion.

To begin with, however, I discuss two characteristics that are not on the list above. These two things set Tiffany apart both from other people and witches



of the Disc, and both may be considered signifiers of the Celtic Sovereignty Goddess. The first is her association with the Nac Mac Feegle, and the second is that she is good with cheese.

The Nac Mac Feegle, also known as the Wee Free Men, are picties who live in clans of hundreds of male brothers, each of which is presided over by a single, female kelda. Keldas look just like Earth's Palaeolithic goddess statues, fat and fertile, and "their word is law, as truly as if they were indeed goddesses" (Pratchett and Simpson 82). Of the title, "kelda", Jacqueline Simpson writes that "It comes from Cailleach Dubh, 'the Black Hag', a supernatural figure in Scottish and Irish tradition who shapes the landscape, rules the seasons, [and] protects wild animals" (82). This connection between the Disc's keldas and Earth's Cailleach is thus significant because, for a brief period during the first novel, Tiffany becomes the kelda of the Downland Chalk Feegles. Through this, she therefore becomes overtly linked with the ancient Cailleach, who is "witch," "hag," and Sovereignty Goddess (Jones 88). Tiffany's becoming the kelda of a clan of Nac Mac Feegle is unprecedented in Discworld and indicates the rarity of the respect the Feegles have for her.

In fact, even Tiffany's friendship with the Feegles is unheard of. No other witch has ever seen a Feegle and one comments that, if Tiffany has "*them* on her side, who knows what she can do!" (*TWFM* 3.55). They are notoriously unruly and violent; "the most feared of all fairy races [...] Even trolls run away from [them]" (*TWFM* 1.15) and yet here they are, doing chores for a nine-year-old girl (*TWFM* 3.70). The relationship between Tiffany and the Feegles is clearly significant. And, while there might be no precedent for it on the Disc, there is one on Earth. Both Miranda Green and Hilda Ellis Davidson have drawn attention to groups of small, "hooded, dwarf-like" male figures carved alongside various reliefs of Sovereignty Goddesses in Britain (Green 36; Davidson 103). These "*cucullati*" (Davidson 103) or "*genii cucullati*" (Green 36) are subservient to the throned goddess figure and are sometimes pictured with weapons, either defending her or representing a martial aspect of the Goddess. If, as Davidson suggests, these little men are forerunners of brownies and other house spirits in British fairy tradition (103), it is not so great a stretch to argue that they are also forerunners of the real picties of Discworld. If so, the fact that the Wee Free Men accompany and defend Tiffany throughout the five novels suggests that she may be the Sovereignty Goddess to their cucullah.

The second thing that sets Tiffany apart from most folk on the Disc is her gift with cheese, a fact that is mentioned repeatedly through all five novels. Tiffany is a "dairymaid, and good at it" (*TWFM* 1.16) and Granny Weatherwax, the hag o' hags of the Disc, names her "Tiffany Aching, the cheese-maker" (*ISWM* 11.337), a clear indication that this gift is significant given the importance of names in this series (something I return to later). Her "prowess with cheese"

(HFS 1.24; ISWM I.17) finds its most glorious culmination in Horace, a sentient blue cheese that ups and joins the clan of Downland Feegles. More importantly, however, working with cheese grounds Tiffany during times of fear and self-doubt. Twice her identity comes under attack: in *The Wee Free Men*, she realises that to remain herself, "[She] must always remember what's real. (...) She was real. Cheese was real" (10.230); and later, when she is possessed by the hiver in *A Hat Full of Sky*, Granny Weatherwax appeals to the part of Tiffany still inside her body, calling out "'Milk the goats now, Tiffany! [...] Get into the dairy, Tiffany! [...] You *know* how to make cheese the right way, don't you, Tiffany?'" (9.238-239). These moments suggest that cheese is not a secondary aspect of Tiffany's life but is a central, grounding aspect of her identity—a trait that can be read as an echo of the Celtic Sovereignty Goddess.

Because dairy products were crucial to the survival of various Celtic peoples across Scandinavia and the British Isles (Davidson 92; MacLeod 59), the dairy and all animals associated with milk required protection and therefore fell under the care of various Sovereignty Goddesses (Lysaght 31). In Ireland, the fearsome battle-goddess, the Morrigan, was associated with cattle (Green 180; Herbert 145), as were the Goddesses Brigid and Boanne. Brigid was associated with sheep, cattle (MacLeod 59) and with healing sick animals (Davidson 98) as was the Gaulish Damona, whose name means "Divine Cow" (Green 182). Reliefs in Bath, Gloucester and Cambridge show female figures with churns used to make cream and butter. There is also a small wooden figurine in Winchester "of a standing woman, wearing a cloak and torc [holding] a napkin in one hand and a large key in the other" that Hilda Ellis Davidson argues may be a "divine guardian of the dairy," holding the key to her domain and a cheesecloth (cited in Green 182). Given that a torc always signifies royalty in Celtic iconography, this is certainly plausible.

The importance of the dairy in Tiffany's life is thus tantalisingly evocative of the various Celtic Sovereignty Goddesses who were charged with the protection and care of the dairy. This is a very specific detail for Pratchett to have included in the novels. Of course, the fact that Tiffany is also responsible for the care of sheep and cows throughout the novels clearly falls under the agrarian aspect of the Sovereignty Goddesses' "portfolio."

Like the Sovereignty Goddess, then, Tiffany is both guardian of the dairy and accompanied by the cucullah, or the pictsies. She also, however, performs the more well-known functions of the Sovereignty Goddess. The most significant of these is that the Sovereignty Goddess is equated with her territory; she is the land personified and a symbiotic relationship exists between the two (Green 71,107; Lysaght 158; Herbert 149; Matthews xv). Just so, Tiffany is identified with the Chalk hills of her home and like many Sovereignty Goddesses, she shares the name of her land. In *The Wee Free Men*, the kelda tells

Tiffany that her name is “Tir-far-thóinn, Land Under Wave” in the language of the Feegles (7.138). Given that “names shape people” (Pratchett and Simpson 180) on the Disc, Tiffany’s name therefore shapes her in the image of the Chalk — a land formed under waves. Though she might not understand the depth of this connection at the start of the novels, Tiffany does know that the Chalk is “her place” (*TWFM* 9.194) and this bond is central to the narrative in each of the novels.

In *TWFM*, the reader is told that “as far as the *land* knew, it was owned by the Achings” who have the “hills in their bones” (1.17) and Granny Aching, Tiffany’s grandmother and the previous hag o’ the hills, is described as *being* “the silence of the hills” (2.39). As the novel progresses, Tiffany discovers just how powerful this connection between the Achings and the Chalk is. At the climax of the novel, she seems to have been killed by the Fairy Queen who has invaded the Chalk hills. However, as she lies prone on the ground, the Chalk reaches for her, and we are told that it is “as if she was falling through the ground.” She feels a “gentle warmth,” hears “the sound of waves,” and feels the “land is in [her] bones,” that she is “land under wave” (13.281). This experience shifts her perception of herself: she “[hears] the grass growing and the sound of worms beneath the turf” and, as the “wheels of stars and years, of space and time, locked into place,” “she knew exactly [...] who she was” (13.291). In this moment, the Chalk claims Tiffany, filling her with eons of its being, so that the Queen “might as well [try] to stop a wheel of years” (13.291) as beat Tiffany. This is a powerful image: as Tiffany becomes the life eternal of the Chalk, indefatigable and constant, so the Chalk becomes Tiffany, able to act in the present moment to defeat the Fairy Queen.

Curiously, the image of the “wheel of stars and years,” which describes Tiffany’s experience of the always-living Chalk, is evocative of the Welsh Sovereignty Goddess, Arianhrod. An ancient figure, she is both a sky goddess and a land goddess. Her name means “Silver Wheel” (Monaghan 203) and she is often pictured holding a wheel representing the movement of stars and time (MacLeod 145-147). She is associated with sovereignty over time and, in this moment, Tiffany is symbolically aligned with her through the timelessness of the Chalk.

In the second novel, *A Hat Full of Sky*, Tiffany fights off possession by a hiver, an ancient, body-snatching creature that is drawn to powerful individuals. Significantly, she is vulnerable to possession primarily because she has left the Chalk for a period to train with a senior witch in Lancre. This distance renders her literally ungrounded, and she knows it: “She belonged to the Chalk. Every day she’d told the hills what they were. Every day they’d told her who she was. But now she couldn’t hear them” (5.150). The fact that Tiffany is the hag o’ the hills and that her identity relies on communion with them is a

constant refrain throughout the novels. In fact, when one of the witches is surprised at the hiver's interest in Tiffany, the Feegles' rejoinder is that "She has the power o' the land in her" (6.172) which makes her powerful indeed.

There are two major battles between Tiffany and the hiver in this book. In the first, it has possessed her and she is fighting it from inside her mind. The Feegles, who have snuck into her mind, look around and see "downland underfoot, rolling and green" and, in awe, recognise that, "'She really does hold the soul o' the land in her heid'" (8.212). They also reflect that this "place where she's always felt safe" is "the soul and centre o' her" (8.215). These comments are richly revealing: at the centre of Tiffany's sense of self she is indistinguishable from the landscape of the Chalk hills. And, like the Fairy Queen, the hiver cannot stand against Tiffany when she and the Chalk are united: the land in her mind rises, becoming "a head, shoulders, a chest" as though "Someone who had been lying down, growing turf, their arms and legs the hills and valleys of the downland, was sitting up" (8.234), and it kicks the hiver out of Tiffany's body.

Later, when the hiver comes back for Tiffany, she is no longer as vulnerable because she understands that she can "be a witch away from [her] hills" because she carries the Land Under Wave within her (11.298). Thus, when the hiver attacks her, even though she is all the way over in Lancre, the Chalk responds to her need: the ancient carving of the White Horse bursts from the hillside "like a wave as high as the sky, with a mane like a wave of the sea and a coat as white as chalk" (11.299), speeds its way to Lancre and drives the hiver off.

It is significant that the White Horse of the Chalk is clearly the Discworld version of the White Horse of Uffington in England, the carving of which dates back to the Celts. Because the horse was so central to defence for the Celts, it came to be associated with interrelated concepts such as "prestige and sovereignty, war and guardianship, prosperity and plenty" (Green 187). This makes sense, given that only when territory had been successfully defended could it enjoy the peace necessary for growth. The horse thus naturally came to be associated with—and symbolic of—various Sovereignty Goddesses such as the Welsh Rhiannon, the Irish Macha, and the European Epona (Monaghan 202; Matthews 15-16), whose name means "The Great Mare" (Sjoestedt 18). When the Chalk therefore "comes alive" in the form of a horse and rides to Tiffany's defence, it not only evokes a connection to the Celtic Sovereignty Goddess but reveals the symbiosis of witch and land—the land defends its witch, just as the witch cares for and defends her land. It is also noteworthy that, throughout the entire series, Tiffany owns only two pieces of jewellery. In this novel and the next one, *Wintersmith*, she has a necklace that

features the White Horse of the Chalk, an outward sign of her identification with the Chalk.

In the fourth book, *I Shall Wear Midnight*, Tiffany's bond with the Chalk continues to be crucial. She battles a spirit called the Cunning Man that spreads prejudice like a disease; his presence incites a hatred of witches so great that the Baron commands Tiffany to leave the Chalk. This brings up an interesting point because, on paper, the Baron owns the Chalk. When Tiffany refuses to leave because she "has rights," he responds: "regrettably, you have no rights at all. You are not a leaseholder, you are not a tenant and you own no land. In short, you have nothing on which rights are based" (10.255). Effectively, in this novel the law of the land is pitted against the lore of the land, and the bond between Tiffany and the Chalk is once again shown to be sovereign. She holds her ground because she is "the hag o' the hills" (12.331) with the flint of the Chalk at her centre (14.391). When she faces the Cunning Man in the final battle of the novel, her anger is driven primarily by the fact that the spirit has "[dared to] trespass on what is mine!" (14.392). She grounds herself "right now, on this bleeding piece of earth," channels the strength of the Chalk and exorcises the Cunning Man proving that, while the Baron might think he owns the land, the Chalk and Tiffany belong to each other. As Granny Weatherwax says to Tiffany, "we looks for witches [...] at the centre of things" and "you is so central that this steading *spins* on you" (15.407-408; italics in the original).

This remains the case in the final book of the Tiffany series, *The Shepherd's Crown*. As Tiffany gets older, her responsibilities weigh her down and she finds that she must carry a piece of the Chalk with her for strength; she chooses to carry a piece of flint with five points—a shepherd's crown. She earns that Shepherd's Crown in the novel, becoming the hag o' hags after Granny Weatherwax dies. As is the case throughout the series, Tiffany is strongest when she acts in tandem with the Chalk. The Chalk is again invaded by Elves and "[i]n the carnage and the shouting, it seemed to Tiffany that she wasn't in charge anymore. She was just a conduit for the wrath of the Chalk" (18.255). She channels this wrath and, with a cry of "I am Tiffany Aching and my bones are in the Chalk. Let the Chalk be cleansed!" (18.256), she and the Chalk blow the elves to ash. This moment, like so many others throughout the series, leaves no doubt that Tiffany and the Chalk are one interconnected organism—whole, healthy and powerful when they are united. The connection between Tiffany and the Chalk can therefore most certainly be read as echoing the mystical connection of the Sovereignty Goddess and her territory, particularly because "Much more so than most of the Discworld witches, Tiffany derives her sense of self and individuality from her knowledge and symbiosis with the land" (Lüthi 180).

Of course, although the discussion above focuses on the living connection between Tiffany and the Chalk, it also leaves no doubt that, like the Celtic Sovereignty Goddess, she will go to war to defend her territory. The duality of the Sovereignty Goddesses, who were charged both with peace and war, is well documented. Both Brigantia and Epona were specifically linked with war and the safety of soldiers and their mounts, and the British "*Dea Regina*" (the Queen Goddess) often appears in iconography with warriors or holding a spear (Green 36). In Ireland, the Morrigna-Badb ("battle-crow"), Macha ("field" or "plain") and the Morrigan ("Phantom Queen")—caused terror and incited violence on the battlefield while, at the same time, being charged with the health of their domain (Green 41-42; Monaghan 196). It is therefore important that from the first page of *The Wee Free Men*, Tiffany steps up to defend her home. She might be nine, but when the Feegles tell her that monsters are returning to the world because there's no one to stop them, her response is "There's me" (TWFM 3.79). Tiffany knows that "witches deal with things" (TWFM 2.43) and that what happens on the Chalk is her responsibility. The battles that I discussed above prove that Tiffany is a capable warrior who defends the borders of her home from elves, hivers and evil spirits.

However, and perhaps more importantly, Tiffany also defends the needy within her borders. As Tiffany's Granny Aching was the hag o' the hills before her and saw that justice was done on the Chalk (TWFM 4.99, 10.239), so Tiffany must do the same. In TWFM and HFS, Pratchett establishes the fact that Granny Aching is a central figure in Tiffany's early life, so much so that Tiffany's world view and sense of morality is shaped almost exclusively by the things her grandmother does and says, and particularly by her constant mantra that "We have a duty" (TWFM 3.69) because "Them as can do has to do for them as can't. And someone has to speak up for them as have no voices" (TWFM 8.169). As the novels progress, Tiffany recalls episodes from her grandmother's life and the reader sees these memories continue to shape her actions and beliefs, forging the same sense of duty and justice common to all Pratchett's witches, and championed by the Sovereignty Goddess. In one of these, Granny steps in to protect an exhausted donkey from being beaten to death (TWFM 8.196). In another, she refuses to let the Baron use his status to avoid the penalty when his dog kills a lamb, saying to the bailiff "'Ye speak for your master, and he speaks for his dog. But who speaks for the hills?'" (TWFM 4.96). And in a third, she sees that compassion is coupled with justice for a mentally ill woman who has taken a baby (TWFM 10.239). Effectively, Granny Aching watches and makes sure that true justice is done on the hills. Shortly after her death, however, an awful thing happens: with no one to prevent them from doing so, the people of the village burn an elderly outcast, Mrs Snapperly's, house to the ground, killing her cat in the process. When winter comes, a homeless Mrs Snapperly then dies. She dies

because the people of the village are prejudiced and cruel and it is this event that impresses upon Tiffany the importance of having a witch to see that the vulnerable are protected. She knows that Granny “never lost a lamb” (*TWFM* 3.62), and she wants to become a witch for just that reason, to protect those who have no voices.

Like Granny Aching, then, Tiffany’s sense of justice informs her choices and actions, and it means that she will not allow unjust rule on the Chalk. This trait ties in with the next function of the Sovereignty Goddess that I discuss: she endorses the rule of the mortal who cares for her territory. This is a perennial motif in Irish and Welsh myth, and often the mortal king’s rule is not valid until he has enacted a ritual marriage with the land-goddess (Ní Brolcháin 12; Matthews 13-15). On the Chalk, the Baron is the equivalent of the king in this situation, the mortal ruler whose political authority complements the witch’s magical authority. While Pratchett does not require Tiffany, or Granny Aching before her, to marry the Baron, he does make it very clear that sovereignty lies with them and that their word carries more weight than that of the Baron (Clute 62). In Granny Aching’s time, she held the old Baron to account. In fact, the old Baron tells Tiffany that “A man of power and responsibility [...] needs somebody to tell him when he is being a bloody fool. Granny Aching fulfilled that task with commendable enthusiasm” (*ISWM* 4.77). Just so, when Tiffany steps into her Granny’s place, it becomes her job to ensure that Roland, the boy who becomes her Baron, does right by the Chalk and the people of the Chalk. Early on in the series she says to him:

“When you’re Baron you’ll be good at it, I expect?” said Tiffany [...]. “Fair and generous and decent? You’ll pay good wages and look after the old people? [...] Because *I*’ll be there, you see. You’ll look up and see my eye on you. [...] All the time. [...] But you can be the Baron for us and I hope you’re a good one. If you are not . . . there will be a reckoning.” (*TWFM* 14.314)

Just as the Sovereignty Goddess has the power to instate a king, and a duty to remove him if he proves unworthy, so Tiffany will ensure Roland’s rule is ethical and compassionate, or else.

I have said that Pratchett doesn’t expect either Granny Aching or Tiffany to marry the Baron, as the rightful king enacts a symbolic marriage to his Sovereignty Goddess, but he does offer an interesting take on this motif in *I Shall Wear Midnight*, in that Tiffany does marry the Baron—to his new wife. This happens towards the end of the novel, during the climactic battle with the Cunning Man. Tiffany, Roland and Letitia—his fiancée—face the Cunning Man across a burning field; Tiffany takes their hands and, as they jump over the moving flames, she is moved to call out “*Leap, knave! Jump, whore! [...] Be married*

*forever more!*” (14.389). The reader is told that marriage, birth and death “are strange times, times of beginnings and endings. Dangerous and powerful” (13.370) and this ancient marriage rite, which is a “fresh start,” imbues the moment with powerful magic that Tiffany harnesses to destroy the Cunning Man. Tiffany thus does marry the Baron in a rite that is redolent of myth and magic, and his “reign” as Baron feels like its legitimacy is rooted in this moment. Tiffany, together with the Chalk, endorses Roland’s authority here, and she will continue to see to it that his rule remains honourable and just in the future.

This discussion of marriage brings us to the next function of the Sovereignty Goddess who is also responsible for ensuring the fertility and prosperity of her territory. In the third novel of the series, *Wintersmith*, Tiffany steps into the “Dance of the Seasons,” displacing the mythical figure of the Summer Lady and capturing the romantic interest of the Wintersmith. Granny Weatherwax says this happens because Tiffany “calls to the strength of her hills [...] An’ they calls to her! [...] They feels the rhythm of the dance, an’ so in her bones does she” (4.132). The result of this is that, like Macha, Epona, Rhiannon, Morrigan, Danu and Brigid, Tiffany becomes responsible for the life and fertility of her territory. This connection of the Celtic Sovereignty Goddess with plenty as well as guardianship is not unusual and occurs in iconography throughout Britain. In these images she appears with “emblems of abundance as cornucopias, offering-dishes and bread or fruit” but also seated on a throne and accompanied by a warrior (Green 36, 38). In this novel, Tiffany is paired with a cornucopia that shoots out tuna sandwiches and she comes down with a case of “*Ped Fecundis*” (W6.211) i.e., where she walks, greenery sprouts. And, like other goddesses of the land, she must end winter before everything dies.

In Ireland, the feast day associated with the end of Winter and the beginning of Spring is called Imbolc—literally “ewe’s milk,” due to the birth of new lambs. It was presided over by the Sovereignty Goddess Brigid, who is often pictured with sheep and lambs and is associated with an eternally burning flame (via a-possibly-euhemerised Saint Brigid). Of this, Mary Condren writes that “January was considered to be a ‘dead month’, and so on *Imbolc*, the first day of the Celtic Spring, Brigit was said to ‘breathe life into the mouth of dead winter’” (58). These associations are significant because Tiffany reads like Brigid in the final moments of the novel. When she finally accepts the commission of the Summer Lady, it is because the Wintersmith is “killing the lambs” (1.18) and she “must see to the flock” (12.350). In order to defeat him, she opens herself to Summer’s heat and, aflame, kisses him, melting the Wintersmith and the ice in which he has encased the Disc. As he melts, so Tiffany enables life to return to the Chalk, and the wider Disc beyond it.

Given that this is Pratchett, however, the serious matters of the novel are lightened by parallel humorous references to the same issue: this is Tiffany’s



first experience of romance and the Feegles, who are worried that she might not know what to “do” in the situation, plunder a mobile library for bodice rippers in the interests of educating her. Because Tiffany has grown up on a farm and knows what “goes on” however, she is struck more by the heroine’s ignorance and uselessness than by her romantic appeal. Tiffany knows that sexuality and fertility, birth and birthing are not romantic—that “Standing around with lips like cherries wouldn’t get the cows milked or the sheep sheared” (7.234). In this, she is certainly more Sovereignty Goddess than romantic lead.

This too is appropriate, given that the Celtic Sovereignty Goddesses were positioned in liminal spaces, overseeing birth and death, and helping souls find their way to and from the Otherworld (Ní Brolcháin 16,18; Green 186), a serious commission and one that Tiffany undertakes throughout this series of novels. In *A Hat Full of Sky*, Tiffany opens a door into Death’s realm, ushering the hiver home (303) and in *Wintersmith* and *The Shepherd’s Crown* she sees to the bodies and burials of the old Baron, Miss Treason, and Granny Weatherwax. In the last two novels, *I Shall Wear Midnight* and *The Shepherd’s Crown* she is midwife to a number of young women in Lancre and on the Chalk and throughout the series she is called to help with sick animals and the birthing of new lambs. Pratchett thus positions Tiffany on “the edges [...]. Between life and death, this world and the next, night and day, right and wrong” (TWFM 14.291) and he asks her to watch them, to “guard the sum of things” (*ibid*) as Granny Weatherwax and other witches have done before her, and precisely as the Celtic Sovereignty Goddesses were expected to on Earth.

And so, given everything she does throughout the five novels, Tiffany Aching fulfils all the functions of the Celtic Sovereignty Goddess: she heals the sick; she takes care of the dying; she ensures the fertility of the land; and she protects it with everything she has. Even limited by the brevity of an academic article, the textual evidence of this connection is persuasive—reading Tiffany as the Disc’s reflection of Earth’s Celtic Sovereignty Goddess is a viable project. But to what end, you might ask. On the one hand, tracing these echoes of Earth’s folklore and myth in the Discworld novels is satisfying purely as a way of paying homage to the symbols and stories we have loved in the past and relishing Pratchett’s revision of them. As Jacqueline Simpson writes, because “nothing ever seems to be discarded and forgotten [on the Disc]. This makes the Discworld a wonderful place in which to rediscover the solidity, the *depth* which tradition brings to a society, and learn to cherish it” (Pratchett and Simpson xiv).

For Terry Pratchett, however, old stories are also important because they remind us of “things we shouldn’t forget” (Pratchett and Simpson x). In this light, the figure of the Celtic Sovereignty Goddess is a crucial reminder that there should be no separation of power and authority from responsibility to the land and its inhabitants, that sovereignty and duty are inextricably linked. As

Granny Aching tells Tiffany in *The Wee Free Men*, because “[w]e are as gods to the beasts o’ the field, my jiggit, [ordering] the time o’ their birth and the time o’ their death,” it follows that “[b]etween] times, we ha’ a duty” (3.69). If we read her as an echo of the Celtic Sovereignty Goddess, perhaps Pratchett’s Tiffany Aching asks us to remember, privileged as most of us are and sovereign in our modern individuality, that we too have a duty to each other and to the lands upon which we live.

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