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TÍR NA NÓG

>>>> BEGIN FACTS AND DEMOGRAPHIC BOX

Pronunciation Guide: shir nə 'nōg

Population: 4,050,000

Primary Languages: English, Irish, Éireann-Sperethiel

Provinces: Connaught, Leinster, Meath, Munster, Ulster

Government Type: Parliamentary Democracy

Bordering Countries: United Kingdom, Thule Protectorate (Trans-Polar Aleut)

Geography: Tír na nÓg consists mainly of a low central plane surrounded by coastal mountains, with a rugged coastline. Numerous rivers cross the nation, the longest of which is the River Shannon, which develops into three lakes and separates the boggy eastern lowlands from the drier western plains. Large stretches of land degraded into soil only suitable for subsistence farming in an event called the “Plantation Shifts.”

Notable Features: The Great Cairn Ley, The Veil

>>>> END FACTS AND DEMOGRAPHICS BOX

A BRIEF GEOPOLITICAL HISTORY

The decline of the Republic of Ireland and its transformation into Tír na nÓg began with the Awakening. In 2011, VITAS killed an estimated twenty-two percent of the country’s population; severe storms, seismic shocks, and floods wracked the eastern coastline, and throughout the country the land underwent dramatic changes as magic returned to the world. Amidst these environmental changes came a profound change to the Irish people themselves: from 2010 to 2020, Ireland experienced the highest rate of UGE in the world, with elves accounting for nearly forty-one percent of all births, including a large number of “Spike Babies,” metahumans born before Awakening Day 2011.

Liam O’Connor, an elf Spike baby and magician, unified the various Irish Republican Army factions and renewed an armed terrorist campaign in Northern Ireland. Unable to cope with such a conflict and with popular support, in 2014 the British House of Commons passed the Act of Dissolution, acceding sovereignty of Northern Ireland from Great Britain. One week later, the British and Irish governments signed the Treaty of Galway that incorporated Northern Ireland into the United Free Republic of Ireland. The IRA, having achieved its stated purpose of a unified Ireland, again splintered into separate factions.

From 2015-2034, O’Connor’s Tír Republican Corps began a political campaign that further compromised the Catholic Church and Irish government through a revealing series of scandals that exposed high-level government officials guilty of corruption and bishops and other ministers of sexual and financial impropriety. The political tumult came to a head in 2034, when the President of Ireland was impeached and the acting president declared a state of emergency. Supported by the Tír Republican Corps, Ireland was renamed Tír na nÓg, and Liam O’Connor pushed through extensive constitutional changes. When O’Connor was elected President in 2035, he passed a series of Constitution Acts that cemented his vision of Tír na nÓg, dominated by a handful of predominantly elven Danaan families.

The Seelie Court, a magical body established by O’Connor as an embassy to Tír na nÓg’s faerie population, erected a magical barrier known as the Veil around the island in 2040. Liam O’Connor disappeared in 2043, reportedly on a spiritual journey, and his wife Lady Brane Deigh became Queen of the Seelie Court, an unofficial third high executive to balance the state President and the High Steward.

In 2061 the *Doineann Draoidheil* corrupted the Veil, disrupting it and causing widespread magical destruction that galvanized discontent at the pro-elven, myth-drenched regime and their economic and political policies. Riots and civil disobedience, supported by the Official IRA and the Unseelie Court, made the people’s opposition to the elven Danaan families known and widespread.

Lady Brane Deigh was elected President in 2062, amid calls of election fraud. An economic crisis brought on by Crash 2.0 forced the removal of restrictions on the Business Recognition Accords, opening the nation to foreign trade and immigration, and dropping the national currency to embrace the nuyen. She has also appointed a non-Danaan family human as High Steward to placate her opposition, but unrest continues.

Tír cities preserve a great deal of traditional architecture from various eras, with the most historic and famous structures protected from replacement by cultural laws, though for the most part this protects only the appearance and general layout of the building. Modern amenities may be quietly added. Buildings constructed after 2035 generally contain at least a token NeoCeltic architectural twist, characterized by faux-knotwork or Tír Tairngire-esque spires. Vandalism is punished very harshly, and though many cultural law restrictions have been repealed (as the annual James

Joyce Book Burning in Belfast clearly shows), they are still reflected in local laws, and individuals still face steep fines and imprisonment if convicted.

The bulk of the nation's population, nearly 3 million metahumans, live in the Dublin-Belfast Corridor, an unofficial designation for the moderate urban area between Greater Dublin and Greater Belfast along the M1/N1 motorways/Slighe Mhíduachra, which links the Tír's two largest cities. The Cork-Limerick-Galway Corridor is a secondary network of small cities to the south and west that have benefited substantially from the Tír's new economic and immigration policies, and are connected by two new multilane motorways, the N18 (Galway/Limerick) and the N20 (Limerick/Cork) and a maglev rail line. These two corridors contain nearly all of the nation's population and industry.

Tír na nÓg works hard to be a trilingual nation, and though English remains the dominant language, Irish and the local version of Speredhiel are well-represented in signage, maps, and government publications.

MAJOR CITIES

Dublin (*Baile Átha Cliath*) is the capital and largest city in Tír na nÓg, its symbolic power as the center of the nation, reinforced by its position as the nexus of four slighe roads. The educational center of the Tír, Dublin contains three universities and more than twenty third-level educational institutes in the city. While it is an industrial center, tourism counts for a large part of Dublin's economy, and is part of the reason it goes to such lengths to maintain its historic architecture. Heritage industries like brewing were subsidized by the government until recent reforms, and holding company giant Hilderbert-Kleinfört-Bernal stepped in to purchase and maintain several historic breweries, particularly the St. James Gate Brewery, the historic home of Guinness stout.

Dublin houses the Senate and the Dáil, among other bodies of government, and often the Danaan families' House of Stewards meet in the city as well. The wealthier residences in town inevitably belong to the Danaan families, and their positions as landlords and real estate developers give them significant influence on the city council.

Major megacorporate employers are Renraku Éireann-Tír and Gaeatronics Éireann-Tír, both of which are holdovers from the old restrictions requiring partial government ownership of megacorporations; their parent corporations have since repurchased the government's shares and assumed their full extraterritorial rights. RÉT has several production plants in Dublin that are competitive with NeoNET's Silicon Glen facilities across the Irish Sea, and recently finished buying out the failing O'Toole Trancom national company.

Relative newcomers to Dublin are Wuxing and Mitsuhaman, both of whom are establishing regional offices, and the Atlantean Foundation, which is lobbying for the right to conduct archeological expeditions on various islands around the Tír. Evo has been the long-standing silent partner of Fir Bolg Press, the publishers of the *Fomoríán Times* metazine, devoted to non-elven metahumans, particularly dwarfs, Fomori, giants, and Fomóraig, and has expanded their holdings with Balor's Bastards Media, a record label that focuses on Irish-influenced Goblin Rock and the anti-Tír underground music scene.

Belfast (*Béal Feirste*) is the second-largest city in the Tír and a major port on the northern Atlantic. Dominating the economy of Ulster, the city is the center for political activism against the Tír government, led by the Official IRA, and is subject to occasional street violence. Political leadership of Belfast has always been difficult and split between multiple levels of interest; President Deigh recently pushed through legislation which would restrict city government to the elected City Corporation, independent of interference from the Senate or the Ulster Provisional Assembly.

The city is partially comprised of seven quarters that reflect its historical development, and Tír government efforts to beautify and align the metropolis's culture with government dogma focused on a program of restoration in these areas, which frequently faced vandalism. With the severe punishments for these crimes, many vandals ended up in the new Sersakhan Prison in Belfast. Sersakhan is sometimes known as "the Art House," owing both to the nature of the crime and the prison's progressive art rehabilitation program. The rest of the city generally consists of towns and villages absorbed over the years into the growing urban area.

Ironically, a major local employer is Armaments Éireann-Tír, an A-rated corporation native to the Tír that produces high-quality firearms, munitions, and targeting systems to the Tír Republican Corps and various national and corporate military, paramilitary, and security forces worldwide. Saeder-Krupp and Andalusian Light Industries are also important employers in Belfast.

Galway (*Cathar na Gaillimhe*) in Connacht is the major port on the Tír's western coast, and is known for its community of Tír Tairngire expatriates, centered around the Tír embassy, and for a small but vocal political movement to unify the two Tírs. A small city, Galway still features many brick roads and a walking-only shopping district that conceal the fact that it is home to significant magical assets. The Seelie Court is believed to have its physical location in or near Galway, as does the Order of Ogma, and the former Tír Tairngire prince Hugh Laverty maintains a residence here where he meets with Celtic druids.

Galway is the trilingual capital of Tír na nÓg, and is called the island's cultural heart for its many festivals, archives of Celtic materials, and association with the Tír's languages, music, dance and craft traditions. Government support of Irish and Éireann-Speredhiel in schools and signs have made Galway one of the most important and prevalent Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking regions). The Ant Sligh Mhór connects Galway to Dublin, and a new motorway that will follow the Sligh road more closely is due to begin construction in 2074.

SPECIAL LOCATIONS

Tír na nÓg has an extremely high density of Awakened locations, manalines, mana storms, and associated astral phenomena, almost of all of which is connected or prevalent to its many pre-Awakening cultural heritage sites. The most notable example of this is the **Great Cairn Ley**, a massive manaline at least equal in magnitude to the great leys of the United Kingdom, which passes through several Paleolithic burial mounds and sites, such as the passage tomb at Newgrange. The various Orders of the Path of the Wheel meet for ceremonies at these sights on certain sacred dates; access is otherwise restricted by the government.

The **Slighe Roads**, named after the roads discovered in the ancient Irish history *Annals of the Four Masters*, are weak manalines fanning out from Dublin that are aspected to improve travel; a corresponding astral shallow effect allows these routes to be seen very clearly at night. While they have no magical effect on mundane transportation, many citizens of the Tír claim travel on a Slighe road is easier or less stressful, and the government is carefully attempting to build roads along the manalines without disrupting the delicate geomantic balance. The Slighe roads consist of the Slighe Asail, Slighe Midhluachra, Slighe Cualann, Slighe Mhór, and Slighe Dala, after the traditional road system, though their paths differ somewhat.

The **Veil** was quietly touted as one of the great accomplishments of the Tír, and consisted of two parts: an advanced and efficient perimeter network and one of the largest and most powerful artificial magical effects in the Sixth World, comparable to the Maya Cloud surrounding Tibet. Together, the two systems made any approach of Tír na nÓg from air or water a difficult proposition.

Unfortunately, both systems were severely damaged when the *Doineann Draoidheil*, mana storms that periodically afflict parts of the Tír coastline, disrupted the Veil effect. Now the Veil is sporadic and unpredictable, moving erratically from its traces and with varying potency. Major shipping lanes are generally clear of the Veil, and air traffic can fly over it, but many migratory animal patterns have been disturbed by its unstable effects.

A relatively recent international dispute involves Tír na nÓg claiming exclusive territorial rights to a stretch of ocean extending 150 miles north of the country, which some government officials claim contains the **Sunken Islands**, the original homeland of the Tuatha de Danaan. This claim comes despite an absence of geological or archeological evidence of islands, though there is evidence of some structures that might indicate metahuman inhabitation on the sea floor. The United Kingdom currently disputes this claim.

Tír na nÓg has a large population of non-metahuman sapients, particularly pixies and free spirits, both of which are considered resident aliens or foreign nationals of allied countries, and may be issued SINS. This understanding is the province of **The Seelie Court**, a Danaan family tradition dedicated to spiritual pursuits and as embassy to the “faerie races.” The Court does have physical facilities, but apparently the bulk of its proceedings occur at some metaplanar location.

> Tír na nÓg, where once again people thought that *just because elves are running the show*, everything is magical and cool and perfect.

> Clockwork

> Be fair, the Tír is one of the most Awakened places on the planet. It also has a national population smaller than some metroplexes I can name. It’s not an exaggeration to say that there are more elves in Neo-Tokyo than there are people in Tír na nÓg; the only reason everybody assumes “Elven Culture” automatically equals Irish/Gaelic is because the Tír is better at advertising.

> Baka Debaka

> Back on topic, let’s go over a few things that they missed. The Tír government proscribes to an elf-friendly vision of mythic Ireland based heavily on the *Book of Invasions*, and they teach it in school right next to the theory of evolution and basic Sperethiel—no wonder the kids there are so screwed up. There are twenty-two Danaan families believed to be descended from the Tuathe de Danaan, and during the thirty years or so since the name change they’ve been consolidating economic and political power and refusing to let anybody leave the country. Play nice if you see them, because they have money and might hire you. The Danaan families send representatives to the Council of Stewards, who are political big shots.

To try and sell the rank-and-file on this vision of a mythic past, the government supports a kind of neo-Celtic religious movement called the Paths of the Wheel; individuals (in particular: elves) walk one of the Paths (Warrior, Bard, Druid, Steward, Rígh) and belong to an associated order. For example, someone on the Path of the Bard is a member of the Order of Brigid. Orders are generally there for spiritual development, but since the Paths of the Wheel equates spiritual development with magical ability, there are also internal initiate groups nested within each order, where promotion is due to a combination of spiritual development, which family you belong to, how good a lay you are, and magical proficiency. Needless to say,

the Danaan families are all deeply involved with the Orders, and the Orders can muster some significant clout to get what they want.

On the other side of things, if you throw enough nuyen and magical resources at even the dullest group of people, they'll eventually get frighteningly good with it, and the Orders are no exception. The Order of Cú Chulainn can field combat adepts just as good as Azzie Eagle warriors, and the druids of the Order of Ogma are aspected to the ley lines of the British isles and Brittany.

> Frosty

> Of course, not all of the metahumans in the Tír are elves. You have the Fomori troll metavariant (c'est moi!) and plenty of regular dwarfs, orks, and trolls that just can't get a break—the more stuck-up elves call us firbolgs. Out in the peat bogs are the Fomóraig, and those Infected trolls are things you *should* be on the lookout for if you ever go chasing leprechauns or something.

> Mihoshi Oni

> The Two Tírs (gah, shades of Tolkein) had a falling out at some point in the past, but with the recent government turnover and economic troubles, citizens of each country have been finding a lot of common ground, especially online—it isn't unusual for elves on separate sides of the Atlantic gabbing in Sperethiel about how uptight their parents are.

> dev/grrl/

> Sweety, you don't pronounce Tír with a hard T. Nice try on the literary reference, though.

> Pistons

> Well, depends on where you're at. Different dialects, different pronunciations.

> Mihoshi Oni

> Back on topic, the Tír has been off-limits for so long because of the bloody paranoid government. It was too dangerous to go there with little reason to do so in the first place—but that's changed. The Irish Mob is gaining ground in the ports and eager to feed old vices, and the Boston mafia will pay well for people to make sure its shipments get through one of the gaping holes left in the Veil.

> 2XL

> And inside the country, the invasion of the megacorps has the national corporations—and their Danaan shareholders—pissing in their pointy-toed boots. Long protected from competition, the Tír corps are playing dirty hardball right off the bat to maintain control, and they don't mind hiring a bunch of humans to do some of their dirtier work.

> Mr. Bonds

> Ulster's a madhouse, always has been. The last of the Brits might have left, but they're still killing each other over which flag is flying. The IRA is nothing but a group of criminals by this point, and has far too many Humanis Policlub supporters overseas for my liking.

> Winterhawk

> Now now, Belfast is my kind of town. Dirty enough to work in and a bit worn around the edges. It's the one place in the Tír where carrying a firearm or wearing a flak vest isn't considered unduly suspicious, because there's just enough violence to make the Garda (that's the police) look the other way. Try that in Glasgow and you'll be arrested on general suspicion. Of course, in Glasgow you can throw on a kilt and a saber, and no one will even look at you sideways.

> Sticks

> Y'know Sticks, I've always wondered what you'd look like in Ren-faire garb ...

> Mihoshi Oni

> The Unseelie Court is the more serious of the rebellious groups; the Official IRA benefits too much from a continuous state of dispute, but the UC works directly against the most intrusive

elements: the Danaan families and their institutions. To this end, the UC's actions mainly involve direct attacks on the Tír Republican Corps, disrupting the ceremonies of the various Orders, and assassinations of Danaan family members. The Seelie Court is too ephemeral—or perhaps magically puissant—a target to tackle directly, but I believe the Unseelie Court may have successfully infiltrated it using pixies.

> Fianchetto