

The thesis deals primarily with the influence of mythology in the work of William Butler Yeats and particularly focuses on his depiction of the ancient Celtic warrior Cuchulainn. The work briefly introduces the background of Irish mythology and its recordings; however the main interest lies in the interpretation of the myth by the Irish literary movement represented by W.B. Yeats and its contribution to the constitution of Ireland's national identity. The literary portrayal is contrasted with the way the hero Cuchulainn was recalled by the political leaders of the Irish revolution to illustrate the process of national symbols' formation. The challenge of the resulting establishment exemplified by the work of Mary T. Condren in the final part of the thesis points out to the opportunity of intentional selection of such symbols and opens the discussion of art's authority and influence.