Fionnuala's Journey: Stories of Belonging and Gas in the West of Ireland

By

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For my Parents

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The Corrib Project: An Introduction

In 1996, the Corrib natural gas field was discovered off the western coast of Ireland. In 2002, control over the area was acquired by Royal Dutch Shell as part of a plan to bring the gas onshore for refining. Directly onshore from the gas field, the community of Erris was skeptical of the environmental and health implications. The original plans were unclear and had not been vetted by the appropriate safety review boards, and Shell's claims that the refinery would bring jobs and wealth to Ireland were soon proven to be empty promises. In reality, the Irish government had signed away the rights to all profits and royalties associated with the soon-to-be refined gas, and instead the majority of the profits would end up in Norway or with other affiliated institutions. The pipeline would also be one the longest onshore pipelines for unrefined gas attempted in Europe. Some community members felt as if they had no choice but to protest, speaking out against the proposed pipeline route, which many felt came dangerously near their homes. The community kicked off a battle against Shell, in the streets and in court, which has lasted until this year when in January the refinery officially opened for business.

The protest began primarily in courtrooms, as community members who lived nearest to the proposed refinery site began asking questions regarding details of the plans' approval process. Shell, meanwhile, began their communication with the community through the Church. They first met with priests to get their approval, and the priests then used the pulpit to promote the new project, espousing the wealth and jobs it would bring to the community. Then Shell began having community meetings in the pub, ostensibly to get input and feedback from community members. Instead, people remember those meetings as being confusing, less than informative at best and misleading at worst. People often came away more confused, with questions unanswered, and concerns diverted. Significant concerns included: the amount of bog that would be displaced during the construction of a refinery building; the potential water pollution of the nearby lake and source of drinking water; the potential danger of a pipeline transporting unrefined gas running within meters of homes; the destruction of natural areas. With frustration, people began doing research on their own, traveling to the nearest government offices to request planning permissions, paperwork, and titles. They were averted and denied at every corner, causing immense stress among the many locals who were some of the first activists against the project. They lamented time lost away from work and family as they would make the hour trip each way to the government offices in Castlebar for a piece of paperwork just to be told to come back another day, the paper had been misplaced.

Since the Corrib project's early stages, opinions about it varied amongst locals. However, some community members who lived nearest to the proposed refinery site, Bellnaboy, began investigating details of the planning permission as early as 2000. Within a few years, the small group of concerned locals had formed a group called Shell to Sea. The organization's primary concern began as a push not to stop the project completely, but to send the refinery and the pipeline out to sea to reduce the risk to health and safety perceived by these early activists.

In 2003, the plans for the refinery went to An Bord Planneala, the planning permissions board. For the first, and only, time, community members were allowed to speak to the government to represent themselves. For hours and hours community members went back and forth with Shell representatives and authorities over who knew more about the land and the fit of the project. Local farmers spoke at length about their knowledge about the turf, boggy ground they had been working their whole lives, while Shell representatives brought in soil specialists to prove the project was not likely to cause extensive flooding and ground instability. In addition to

the formal complaints and testimonies, the importance of cultural heritage was also represented. A local school teacher gave a speech on the impact on the cultural heritage of the community should this project be permitted. In the end, the commission ruled that the refinery was in absolutely the wrong place and denied the request. The report said that "much of the landscape is of natural heritage value," and that "many of the elements making up the natural and man-made environment of Mayo are of national and international importance and form a most important part of Ireland's heritage" (Moore, 2003). The Irish government quickly encouraged Shell to reapply for permission and that the next time would go in their favor. At the end of the next hearing, An Bord Pleannala awarded Shell the planning permission to begin construction.

In 2005, the Irish government passed a law that would prohibit locals from protesting on their private land if it interfered with Shell's work. Shell was working at the time on drilling posts to prepare for setting the gas pipeline in the backyards of local farmers along the neighboring bay. In response, when the police and developers came to enter onto private land, the farmers stood their ground. They were all arrested and jailed for contempt of court. This was the catalyst the outside world needed. Rather than crushing their momentum, the jailing of what would come to be known as "The Rossport 5" ignited the rest of Ireland and concerned activists all over the world. Support came flooding in, and every day new people arrived to stand in solidarity with the jailed men and their cause. The men were eventually released, but the fire had been lit. A solidarity camp was erected on the banks of the bay and young people, anarchists, activists, and concerned citizens flooded in to support the community in every way they could. Local community members took to the streets in protest, set up a permanent trailer outside the refinery building site, and made themselves a general nuisance to the police and to Shell.

In response, the Irish government sent in more police, and more police. The protests became violent as the police were given a "no arrest" policy, resulting in highly circulated photos and videos of battered elderly people and young protesters in skirmishes with the police. The protests continued on in the streets as more locals continued to fight in the courtroom as well. Hit for hit, the community would not be beaten. They got the pipeline moved from people's backyards to beneath Sruwaddacon Bay, which runs between many villages. When the government sent a military battleship to intimidate the community, a local woman went on hunger strike. The movement against Shell refused to back down.

After fifteen years, however, the fight is all but over. On January 1, 2016, Shell rang in the New Year with the first flares to be seen over the terminal, located in Bellanaboy. Since then, the community keeps watch. They record when flaring occurs without notification. But mostly, they try and return to their lives before the protests, before Corrib. They can't. Many of their children have never known anything but Corrib, and the community is fractured between those who supported the pipeline and those who fought the hardest to keep it out.. They are left with a legacy of pain and intrusion that must now be grappled with and incorporated into the story of their lives.

Chlann Lir

According to myth, Aoife, the second wife of Lir, was jealous of Lir's children from his first marriage. In a rage of envy, she transformed the children into swans and cursed them to roam the waters of Ireland for 900 years. However, in a strike of pity, she left them with their human voices. Lir, realizing that his children were gone, rushed out to find them, but he was too late. He lamented for his lost children and cursed his wife. But there was nothing to be done. The Children of Lir flew off. Unable to touch land except for once every 300 years, Lir's daughter

Fionnuala and her 3 brothers, floated among the waters of Ireland. For the last 300 years of the curse the swans remained on the west coast of Ireland, just offshore from Erris.

In local legends in Erris, during this last 300 years, the swans would often seek shelter during rough weather in Sruwaddacon Bay, a place of refuge, since they could not seek help on land. The name Sruwaddacon even means ‘the stream of Conn,’ named after one of the swan children.

When their sentence was finally completed, they returned to their homeland to find that their father and all their family had died. Distraught, they returned in the west coast and wept. They sought solace at a monastery on Inis Glora, singing in their human voices along with the monks. One day, a monk heard the children and called out to them. He baptized them, and they transformed back into their natural state, and instantly died due to their old age. They are rumored to be buried on Inis Glora, a few miles offshore from Rossport. To this day there are people who visit and tend to their graves.

Fionnuala and the Tunnel-Boring Machine

At a site of global “friction” (Tsing, 2005), two narratives emerge surrounding a tunnel-boring machine (TBM) named Fionnuala. In 2012, a tunnel boring machine (TBM) rolled its way into the Erris peninsula. Lumbering and enormous, it had made the journey all the way from Germany, then to Dublin, and then finally to the place where it would make the way for a new pipeline through Sruwaddacon Bay. Although originally the pipeline was planned to run through the backyards of local families, the route was moved to underneath the Bay. For such a concession, to Shell and the government, there should be no complaint against such a generous move into the water. It is one of the only victories the Shell to Sea campaign enjoyed, and it was a double-sided one.

One of the narratives that emerges about the TBM was via Shell promotional materials. According to a promotional video put out by Shell, it is customary in mining and tunneling to give TBM’s a female name (Shell, 2013). In need of name for the TBM in Erris, and aware of their now well established local unpopularity, Shell chose Fionnuala. That promotional video shows the TBM gracefully rolling into town, briefly getting stuck in the bog, but triumphantly rolling on to its place at the drilling platform. The music swells as the video attempts to induce pride within the viewer that Fionnuala, the great TBM and local legend, acts as a symbol of progress and success.

An alternate narrative of events was also communicated to me. This story, one that informants told me in fragmented pieces of superstition, legendary events, and anecdotal aside, communicates a very different image of the TBM. Amongst all of my informants, whom we have established as being homogenously against the Corrib project, there was agreement that “it was an insult.” Yes, it was an insult, but beyond that came a variety of formulations, trying to articulate what exactly was insulting about it.

Perhaps it was “the arrogance” of Shell, that they “thought it would be a good idea to commandeer the local mythology.” It was described to me most succinctly by an informant especially active in the opposition to Shell, as “an insult to the country, to tradition, with folklore and all the rest.” Across the board, informants conveyed a sense that something was not appropriate about connecting the local folklore with the machine, with Shell, with the project. These interviews began to reveal that something about the sense of place, and its relationship to

the folklore, was in hard juxtaposition with the idea of Fionnuala as a machine. And yet, any idea that localized relationships to the land could be simplistic and idyllic would have been impossible among these formations. It was left to ask, what was the larger narrative function of folklore in the Corrib project? And, could Fionnuala provide a space for understanding these narratives as they negotiate performances of imagined traditionalities and modernities?

The Field: Literature

I rely heavily on the research of those who have come before me in the field in Erris; those who have written on the project, the protests, and its implications. In particular, I draw on Mark Garavan, a sociologist who has studied Corrib since 2000. His analysis of cultural misunderstanding between Erris locals and Shell was crucial as a way of locating my own research within his larger body of fieldwork on the protest movement. I am grateful for Garavan's foresight in also conducting and transcribing interviews of *The Rossport Five* in 2005, which has been invaluable source material. The Corrib project has not been written about, except for the aforementioned article, in cultural terms.

Extensive, legitimate concerns regarding health, safety, and human rights arose during the Corrib protests, these have been analyzed and covered at large (Garavan, 2003, 2008, 2007; Slevin, 2016.; Siggins, 2010; Storey, 2009, etc.). From primarily journalists reviews of the Corrib movement (Siggins, 2010), to incisive expositions on the treatment of Ireland's natural resources (Slevin, 2016), the resources regarding Corrib has focused on the legal parameters of the project or the protesting. I am grateful for the library of community-produced resources I encountered during my field-work, many prescriptive texts meant to empower other similarly situated communities. These endeavors are worthwhile and have proved useful to my own positioning, but they present a gap as well. The folklore, and sense of place, as it is framed within industrial globalization, remains missing in representations of Erris specifically in relation to Corrib, and are thus the emphasis of this thesis.

In this project, I am instead interested in understanding the politics of cultural and state power by investigating theoretical notions of community and belonging. Jake Kosek (2006) provides a scaffolding for a frame of belonging, which he breaks into attachment, possession, and appendage. Beginning with these three categories, I take my departure to explore not only how belonging is constructed in Erris, but its production within localized considerations of the global, industrial stakes to understand these politics of belonging in the face of globalization, between the imagined "local" and "global."

If we are to understand globalization, anthropologist Anna Tsing (2000) insists we tackle globalization in a way that avoids the homogenizing tendencies of modernity. Then, we must determine the particular histories that already exist in the "local" histories which we come to as they supposedly intersect suddenly with global market economies. Tsing suggests that this will "require that we study folk understandings of the global, and the practices with which they are intertwined, rather than representing globalization as a transcultural historical process" (2000: 19). Further, these conceptions of local and global may directly contribute to the construction and enforcement of community boundaries.

To investigate not only folk understandings of the global, but the strategic ways in which politics of belonging are positioned within these frameworks, we can create a model for locating ecological and environmental discourses seen in communities all over the world. Homogenous, and often harmful, academic representations of the imagined local are persistent across academic inquiries into indigenous environmental politics. Watts understands that this image of

community is a strawman, saying "the forms of community regulations and access to resources are invariably wrapped up with questions of identity…. These forms of identity (articulated in the name of custom and tradition) are not stable (their histories are often shallow) and may be put to use (they are interpreted and contested) by particular constituencies with particular interests" (2000: 38). While scholars have pushed back on this essentializing image (Ó Giolláin, 2000; Slater, 1994; Tsing, 2005; Watts, 2000), there is more work to be done at the precise intersection of what Watts calls "the business of articulating an identity that [is] at once cultural and political" and the necessary exploration of folklore's use in articulating that identity through environmental movements (2000: 37). The strategic use of folklore, and articulations of community identity, are crucial for analysis for precisely the fact that they exist in the face of often very heterogeneous communities, culturally and politically.

I wish to open this project up even further to investigate the ways in which folkloric knowledge, as visible in terms of subaltern knowledges, mythological place making, and memory mapping, are indeed essential to the very structures of globalization the Shell to Sea movement seeks to criticize. I wish to expand this idea in order to frame his theory of belonging in the larger context of globalization and environmental conflicts, as well as larger literature on narratives of history.

There is also a significant body of literature that draws on the importance of place (e.g. Basso, 1996; Chamerberlin, 2003; Glassie, 1982) but fails to engage increasingly relevant issues of globalization and mobility. Place-naming in particular, although written on widely in literature from folklore (Nicholaisen, 1991; Tangherlini, 1999), to anthropology (Basso, 1996; Cruickshank, 2005), to geography (Gupta and Ferguson, 1992, 1997), offers us perhaps the best place for beginning analyses of the politics of belonging within larger contexts of identity politics, social movements, belonging and the spaces in which these act amid global practices. If this is the case, the TBM Fionnuala offers a particular example of contested "local" histories and performances of belonging, "a theater of resistance and struggle" (Watts, 2000).

I am further interested in intervening in the work of geographers, folklorists, and anthropologists on belonging by using theoretical notions of contextualization, decontextualization, and recontextualization (Bauman and Briggs, 1990). These concepts, which shape the way we look at the movement of narrative and discourse, open a departure for folkloristics beyond a "local" and "global" binary, instead conducting an analysis of how these very binaries are themselves the spaces of such contextualization processes.

The Field: Erris

It is important to acknowledge the role of my fieldwork over the summer of 2016, and the included challenges. Because of a short fieldwork term, my informants were limited to those who opposed the Corrib project in some way or another. These informants had almost all at one time been affiliated with the Shell to Sea movement, but represented a number of splinter groups that were created over the course of the Corrib protests. It is not in the breadth of this thesis that I distinguish between the groups and how they came to have different primary concerns regarding the Corrib project. Rather, I wish to be clear that the informants I have interviewed all come from one side of the Corrib debate, that is, anti-Corrib project. This sample was not in any way predetermined by a personal political commitment. I invited current Shell representatives as well as PR and marketing persona previously employed by Shell in Erris, but all parties declined to be interviewed. My intention was to interview a wide range of people, representing a variety of opinions about and engagement with the project. However, within this smaller folk group, my

purpose is now to represent the protestors of the project and the narrative terms in which they frame their dissent.

This is an important distinction, because I do not wish to make the assertion that all members of the community were participants in the protests or that members of the community is homogenous in their feelings or stories. The many villages that make up the Barony of Erris are filled with diverse people with diverse opinions on this and many other political issues. The reactions to the Corrib project were always contentious among those that lived in the immediately affected area and continued to change throughout the course of the fifteen years the project was underway. However, by speaking to locals who have specifically, and publicly, engaged with the anti-Corrib movement, I have approached my analysis as one which asks how belonging gets communicated when the boundaries of a movement become inclusive to parties exterior to the geographic community. Within this smaller folk group, my purpose here is to represent the protestors of the project and the narrative terms in which they frame their dissent.

Outside of the Erris area, I conducted interviews with protestors, community officials, academics, and artists.. I engaged in active participant observation as I lived in the community for that short time, trying to understand the lengthy history and dissent.

My purpose is also not to diminish the complexity of the issue at hand. It is my intent to not be redundant in my scholarship to the voices that have explored the legal ramifications of the project and the resulting implications on the environment and natural resources (e.g. Amanda Slevin, 2016; Siggins, 2010). My intention is to expand the conversation beyond the legitimate concerns of the planning permissions and police brutality into the realm of narrative, belonging, and folklore. I believe these conversations open doors to furthering the discourse around similar sites around the world, such as in New Mexico (Kossek, 2006), Nigeria (Watts, 2000) and the Amazon (Slater, 1994). By understanding belonging as constructed through claims to land, we can forge a new path of departure for folklore and globalization studies amidst the expansion of fossil fuels and the communities they inevitable affect.

In the first chapter, "The "Collective Experience" of Erris," I will begin with Kosek's tenet of belonging, attachment. I will explore how attachment, which I will call narratives of "collective experience" in Erris, are formed and then recontextualized in political framing. In chapter two, "Stewardship and Superstitions," I begin with belonging as conceived through possession, grounded in particular labored and mythological histories. Lastly, chapter 3, "Embodied Belonging," begins with metaphoric expressions of experience as a way of challenging the boundaries of the bodies that claim belonging and how this is complicated by and negotiated within the presence of industrial development.

Some key names and terms

Moving forward, I will refer to the geographic area where the Corrib project development took place, as well as the site for the majority of on the ground protesting, as "Erris." This term is unusual because the community it marks is an old baronial distinction. However, it is how the area is distinguished by local community members, and it is the most useful way for referring to that particular region of the West of Ireland.

TBM: I will continue to use the acronym TBM to refer to the tunnel-boring machine that Shell named Fionnuala.

The terms "local" and "global" will remain in quotation marks throughout the text as a way of demarcating a use of the term as a constructed space of understanding one's relationship to the world, not a reification this problematic binary.

Chapter 1: The "Collective Experience" of Erris

As we begin in the West of Ireland, it is important to locate the study of folklore within that geographic area. Folklore studies in the West of Ireland can be situated among the breadth of nationalist projects that emerged with Romanticism, a move that Ireland marked as a model for ideas of an idyllic, peasant inhabited countryside (Ó Giolláin, 2000).

Diarmuid Ó Giolláin (2000), a specialist in Irish studies and Irish folklore, explores the complexity of folklore studies in the West in the face of a false tradition/modernity binary which arose in the wake of these Romantic interests. He explains that the image of the West of Ireland in particular has represented the epitome of a traditional folk culture, saying folklore is often associated "with the countryside, in Ireland particularly with the West and even more so with the Irish-speaking West" (Ó Giolláin, 2000: 22).

Jamie Saris, an Irish scholar of asylums, points to this history of folklorists and anthropologists as "the classic problem of ethnography in the West of Ireland… the waning of tradition under the rising star of modernity and the slow but inevitable destruction of the past by the present" (1996: 12). In the face of a project like Corrib, a scholar might be tempted to fall into this "classic problem." Anna Tsing tells us that "capitalism, science, and politics all depend on global connections" (2005: 1), and that "friction" is what happens in that space of global connection. Much like Saris, Tsing, does not intend to convey a picture of traditional demise in the face of modern innovation, but rather the complex capacity of cultures to shift, intersect, and change in the space of such interactions.

Tsing's argument is one that provides a model for confronting a history of reductionist literature in the history of the West of Ireland, suggesting that scholars shouldn't "assume [they] know exactly what global capitalism is, even before it arrives," but rather to "find out how it operates in friction" (2000: 12). Michael Watts emphasizes that much literature characterizing " local environmental struggles" suffers from a "constant uncritical approach to the local, to place, and to the cultural (where cultural is synonymous with a self-consciously local sense of place…they often forget that the "local" is never purely local but is created in part by extra-local influences and practices over time" (2000: 32).

This space for friction is opened up through the narratives of Erris informants as they negotiate a history of Irish tradition, constructed both locally and globally, in the midst of rhetorics composed of capitalist terminologies. Instead of a lament of the destruction of traditional tales, the Shell to Sea's criticism of the Corrib project comes from a sophisticated understanding of this project of modernity and its effect on the development of the West of Ireland.

Ó Giolláin (2000) asks about the diverse practices of performing tradition, and his questions mark a point of departure for folkloristics into the realm of the global. He asks, "Are these the uncomfortable compromises with modernity that an ancient folk culture has to make in order to survive in an unsentimental world? Or are they part and parcel of the unavoidable and necessary engagement that every living tradition makes with change?" (2000: 4). Or perhaps, when thought together with Tsing, they are the instances of ways in which Ireland has already begun to think about the "local" and the "global," integrated into the challenges each custom presents to any binary to which it might be subjected? This introduction to the history of folklore studies in the West is crucial to understanding the pressures exerted on communities in Erris to perform tradition and modernity within that history, as well as to understanding the strategic negotiations made around those boundaries.

The Barony of Erris easily fits within the image of a traditional Ireland imagined even by others on the island, the west of the west. I recently met a Mayo resident in a bar in California and when I told him where I spent my summer of fieldwork, hoping to show a kindred spirit, he looked at me in disbelief. "I've never even been there!" he exclaimed, calling over his friend to explain where I had been to have a good laugh. "Why the hell were you out there?"

Erris is seen as remote and reclusive even within County Mayo, and holds an even more remote reputation within Ireland. At least partially a Gaeltacht area, or an area that receives funding for being primarily Irish speaking, the dialect and accent differs from the rest of Mayo. It is seen as an isolated, traditional community to the rest of Co. Mayo, unknown in its ways of thinking, speaking, or behaving. Even the term barony, used by most locals to refer to the area, is a word that refers to older land divisions from the time of tenant farming; it is a term used rarely to refer to any other place in Ireland, and is used by local residents to distinguish an area consisting of a number of small villages as culturally distinct from the surrounding townlands.

From this understanding of the history of the representation of the West of Ireland, we can begin to explore the role such imaginings played in the local and global narratives of locals, and how such narratives work within these frameworks while re-negotiating their context. Here we can begin with Kosek's (2006) first tenet of belonging, attachment as a way of framing a relationship to place and a key framework for important identity narratives. Kosek describes attachment as "a sense of accompaniment," a collective identity that emerges through collective territory (2006: 107). He says in his research on Hispanos in Northern New Mexico,

> to be Hispano is to have a special relationship with the forest, one that relies on the attachments of bodies to landscapes through idioms of nature. There is a rooting of people in place, a sense that to be Hispano is to be understood in relationship to that place. [Kosek, 2006: 107]

In Erris, in order to claim what little rights they may have through fulfilling the expectations of outsiders, locals may engage in a performance of attachment, leading to reproductions of curated narratives of tradition and "remote antiquity" (Kosek, 2006: 107).

Kosek posits that "people have come to understand themselves and to be understood by others in relationship to particular notions and histories of the landscape" (2006: 112), and this idea is certainly not new in the history of folkloristics and anthropology (Basso, 1996; Cruikshank, 2007; Nicolaisen, 1991). Mark Garavan, a sociologist working extensively in Erris throughout the Corrib project, confirms this, saying that "as far as the community's social culture is concerned, there is a very strong relationship between identity and place" (2003: 3). However, Kosek points out how these attachments are then framed to be a threat to capitalist progress and modernity. This is often true in the rhetoric of the opposing bodies, but it fails to take into consideration the ways in which narratives of attachment are often used strategically by these communities, not only to achieve governmental recognition (Povinelli, 2002) but to work alongside the needs of capitalism and globalization.

These narratives of attachment show signs of an awareness of these needs prior to and separate from the specific development project of Shell, and then continue to be shaped as they are recontextualized (Bauman and Briggs, 1990) into narratives which suit political goals. Here, theories of detexualization and re-entextualization (Bauman and Briggs, 1990) offer a way of understanding the negotiations made within communities resistant to Shell in narratives which

frame Erris within situated claims to belonging as well as larger conversations regarding globalization and fossil fuel development. If "to decontextualize and recontexualize a text is thus an act of control" (1990: 76), then the recognition of local narratives as involved in such a process recognizes the agency and reflexivity of activists. In this chapter we will explore how attachment, as a tenant of belonging, is recontextualized into a rhetoric of the "local" and the "global" in a way that legitimizes localized claims to belonging, operating within recognized discourses of the global.

The analysis of Irish attachment will be explored in a few key ways; via a history of colonization and exploitation, a sense of grounded heritage, and as expressed through place-naming projects. However, I will frame my discussion of belonging not in terms of "attachment" as Kosek (2006) does, although it presents a starting place. Instead, I depart from this term to discuss what I will call "collective experience," a term used by an informant to describe the ways that folklore, local histories, and other forms of attachment were recalled to "remind people" of who they were. Padraig was involved in the earliest stages of opposing Shell, and has always been concerned with health and safety. However, as a local school teacher who teaches local folklore to young people in Erris, he is also deeply invested in the cultural implications of Corrib. As we sat around his kitchen table, he told me,

> Since the conflict with Shell began, more and more people have got [familiar with the folklore], because…I made sure to make use of it from the start, and reminding people, and as soon as people are reminded, then, they begin to remember. And they begin to not so much remember, remember is an odd kind of word, but they begin to find the story, the myth, the saga, as being relevant again to their collective experience.

Therefore I will continue to use "collective experience" to frame ways of understanding belonging, place, and Erris in terms of an imagined community formed from and through attachment.

Colonization and Exploitation

If "nature and threats to nature…[can] be understood through terms of human relations such as exploitation, conquest, and domination" (Kosek, 2006:113), Ireland's history of colonization acts as a window through which to view current conflicts around nature and development. Colonialism, as well as other embittered histories regarding this "exploitation," weaves itself through narratives of attachment from my informants. Ó Giolláin (2000) suggests that to understand Ireland is to engage with Irish history as a kind of post-colonial space, an exploration of the role colonization has played in creating and sustaining images of a rural, traditional Ireland, held in juxtaposition to an enlightened England. He explores the categories of ethnicity and the subaltern, saying "the characteristic feature of groups whose culture is subaltern within the modern state can be compared to the bilingualism of the dialect ('low, informal)/ national language ('high', formal), a sort of biculturalism, where the individual is encultured into his or her native community, and acculturated through having to participate in the dominant culture" (2000: 68).

This is perhaps why most of my informants, if their families have lived in Erris, or their specific village, for generations, call themselves "native" or "indigenous." It is not my place in

the scope of this paper to explore and problematize these terms and their uses in these contexts. However, I recall their use as a means of reinforcing Ó Giolláin's definition as a way of considering Erris a subaltern community, if by no other consideration than their own, forged by a binary that is itself a product of the colonial encounter. In the case of Ireland, histories of "exploitation, conquest, and domination" cannot exist outside the local and the global, as colonization and even mythic histories tell of these interactions.

A CD called Glór na Haoise: Songs of Solidarity and Resistance, was produced as a compilation of protest music written for chronicling the plight of Shell to Sea. There are songs sung and written by a combination of local residents and famous Irish musicians. A famous Irish song called "Colony" by Damien Dempsey (2015), that laments an Ireland under British rule, is included in this CD project. The song "Colony" is included alongside songs critiquing the government and the police: "Battle Hymn," "Garda, Garda, Garda," and "The Public Order Song."

"Colony" sings:

> I sing the song of the colony
> How many years and you're still not free
> And your mother cries and you ask God why
> Greed is the knife and the scars run deep
> How many races with much reason to weep
> And your children cry
> And you ask God why"

And later on:

> "I look to the east, I look to the west
> To the north and the south, and I'm not too impressed
> Time after time
> After crime after crime
> They raped, robbed, pillaged, enslaved and murdered
> Jesus Christ was their God and they done it in his name
> So he could take the blame if it's not all a game
> With bible in one hand and a sword in the other
> They came to purify my land of my Gaelic Irish mothers
> And fathers, and sisters and brothers
> With our own ancient customs, laws, music, art
> Way of life and culture
> Tribal in structure
> We had a civilisation
> When they were still neanderthal nations
> We suffer with the Native American, the Indian in Asia
> Aboriginal Australia
> The African people with their history so deep
> And our children still weep and our lives are still cheap
> You came from Germany, from France, from England
> And from Spain
> From Belgium and from Portugal
> You all done much the same. [Dempsey, 2015]

Although I do not have the space in this project to explore in detail the ethnomusicological implications of such a work of song, it is important to note that the use of songs as protest and critique falls within a widely studied tradition in Ireland. The CD project itself, a document which includes along a continuum of traditionally practiced Sean-nós[1] singing and Irish rock music, illustrates how "Irish music … became centrally involved in power relations and in the construction and reconstruction of identities of both colonizer and colonized to preserve, revive, or appropriate aspects of Irish culture, including musical culture" (McCann, 1995: 3).

This tradition of protest music, as well as a construction of identity in relation to a colonial history, is reflected in the poetry of "Colony." Further, it's inclusion on Songs of Solidarity, a project explicitly to commemorate the efforts of the Shell to Sea movement, must reflect some colonial awareness in Erris as well. When "the scars run deep," histories of colonialism become contextualized within narratives of persecution and exploitation as they become part of the "collective experience." However, in this song we begin to see the process of entextualization that allows Shell's opposition to reinforce localized claims to "collective experience" within a broader, globalized discursive framework.

In "Colony," the singer claims that the plight of the Irish people (more generally, as a post-colonial people) is one that is shared by many disenfranchised, displaced people. The singer says, ""we suffer with the Native American, the Indian in Asia, Aboriginal Australia, The African people" (Dempsey, 2015), equating the suffering of the Irish people under their British colonizers with the suffering of other colonized people. This claim invokes the claims that others make and their struggle, but does so in a way that further legitimizes the Irish people's own claim to suffering. Bauman and Briggs posit that "traditionalizing discourse by creating links with traditional genres is often the most powerful strategy for creating textual authority" (2000: 18). If this is true, then the use of "Colony" is especially powerful in its recalling of traditional forms, despite its lack of "local" grounding through song writer or singer, and thus claims authority in its own narrative of belonging, suffering, and "collective experience."

A grounded heritage

In Ireland, a Gaeltacht is an Irish-only speaking community, and receives funding for the government for the promotion of the continuation of the language. While the Gaeltacht distinction designates the Irish-speaking village Carrowteige, a village within the larger Erris area, the majority of nearby village residents speak with a range of Irish fluency from fluent first language speakers to non-Irish speakers. Nevertheless, the Irish language has remained a significant part of the identity of many people in Erris. Whether they speak it on a daily basis or whether it has influenced their ideas about place and identity that have been passed down through generations and from neighbor to neighbor, the Irish language provides a key entry into contextualizing any "collective experience."

The word *dúchas* in Irish means nature, heritage, home place, and is used when saying that you are from a place originally. The entry in the Irish dictionary is often a page or two long. It encompasses more than simply heritage, simply land or home; there is no English equivalent. When you use *dúchas* you invoke everything that is implied by your home place; it is the very ground that keeps your stories. J. Edward Chamberlin illustrates a similar concept in his research

[1] a style of singing associated with Irish folk music, usually done by a designated person who knows many traditional Irish songs

with indigenous groups in British Colombia when an elder asked the government, "If this is your land… where are your stories?" (2004: 2).

A local informant, Liam, said someone told him once, "they came drilling for gas, and they found you guys…that's very interesting how he put that, beneath the surface not just the oil and the gas, but beneath the surface there was the community." This connection between the people and the land is explicitly present in the identification of the community with their landscape. I do not introduce this *dúchas* as a way of repeating conclusions already drawn in earlier literature regarding the relationship between the land and stories, as in the works of Basso, Cruikshank, and Tangherlini. Rather, my intention is to point to the Irish language as a place of locating these conclusions within the West of Ireland and within the context of "collective experience." The Irish language "had been a predominantly peasant language for two centuries" (Ó Giolláin, 2000: 123), and therefore English can often not offer a satisfactory translation. Heritage is nature, it is where you are from. These things are not separate and show the commitment to the deep, rooted attachment many informants expressed to me.

There is even an official designation for this connection. Some of the land for the proposed pipeline and refinery were designated Natural Heritage Areas. Their importance was outlined in the initial report from An Bord Pleanala, the board overseeing the project's planning permissions.

> Much of the landscape is of natural heritage value. Designated areas of value in the vicinity include Carrowmore Lake Complex to the south (a candidate Special Area of Conservation/Special Protection Area), Pollatomish Bog to the west (a proposed Natural Heritage Area), Glenamoy Bog Complex to the east and north (a proposed candidate Special Area of Conservation), and Broadhaven Bay (a proposed Natural Heritage Area/Special Protection Area)…. It is noted that many of the elements making up the natural and man-made environment of Mayo are of national and international importance and form a most important part of Ireland's heritage. As the environment is seen to form the basis for a substantial part of the tourist industry in the county, it is regarded as making an important contribution to the economy of the county…. The beauty and culture of the area will be under serious threat by the development. [Moore, 2003]

Not only were these sites outline by the Planning Permissions Board spaces of ecological importance, but of specifically designated heritage value, of "national and international importance," in this passage framing the inherently local heritage value of the sites in the implied context of global discourse on world heritage.

These official statements were presented alongside a reading by a local sean-nós singer, Micheal Ó Seighin, at an oral hearing for the planning permissions, who presented the court with a statement he titled the "cultural heritage context." His statement opened:

> Culture is not merely some stone remains or even oaken posts or deer traps over or under the bog, tho' these kinds of artifacts are indeed part of culture and we have traditionally given some of them semi-mythical status, for a time of years or maybe centuries. Culture, however, is how we live, what we do, how we mould our

> environment to cope with the struggle of living and rearing a family; how we and our sometimes harsh environment come to a compromise that enables both to thrive in a modified spatial and attitudinal context. Culture is not a suburban luxury: it is the "dluth agus inneach" (waff and woof) of our existence, allowing for all the elements, good and bad, of our existence, presently, historically, and even evolutionary elements. [Ó Seighin, 2003]

There is another word which perhaps brings us even closer to the essence of belonging. The word *dinnsenchas* "fuses together our relatively separate English senses of localities (topography, if you will) and historical consciousness…one that connects locality, history, and purpose" (Saris, 1996: 543). Saris analyzes place naming in Ireland, emphasizing the crucial importance of this practice to understanding how histories become imbedded in the names of places. This in itself, he argues, is a highly strategic, reflective practice, emphasizing "etymologies at once stake a claim to a particular place and a particular history" (1996: 543).

Examples of *dinnsenchas* are easily located within place names around Ireland, and particularly in the West. A recent publication from Erris locals called "Dordán Dúlra: An Introduction to the Natural Landscape of Cill Chomáin in the Barrony of Erris, County Mayo," details the geography, flora, fauna, and place-names of the area. Place-names such as Carraig a' Ghliomaigh, meaning "the point of the mussels," or Bearnaí an Leathaigh, meaning "the gap of the seaweed," are included in a list of "Local place-name lore" (Ó Mongáin and Ní Ghearraigh, 2015: 120). These names capture *dinnsenchas*, the topography of the place, as well as a sense of historical consciousness. It is best described by the authors who explain one particular place-name, saying: "The placename Slis Bhean a' tSaighdiúra commemorates the tragic death of a soldier's wife who slipped and fell into the sea while collecting limpets from a particularly steep rock face in Port a' Chlóidh" (Ó Mongáin and Ní Ghearraigh, 2015: 120.

"The Celts wrote their novels on the landscape:" A look at place-naming projects

Several informants explained a relationship to the landscape saying, the Celts wrote their novels on the landscape," to denote that their ancestors left their histories, their stories, in the very ground as a memoir for future generations. As one informant, Bridget, described, like folklore, place names "ground you, they bring you to the ground." They bring you to the stories.

A well-known scholar of place-names, Keith Basso describes place-names as "commemorative in character and linked to traditional stories" (1996: 23), and thus history is "extremely personal, consistently subjective, and highly variable among those that produce it" (1996: 32). He reminds us that "geographical landscapes are never culturally vacant,", and like the Irish, the Apache have stories embedded in the land which contain messages of events historical, mythical, and legendary (1996: 75).

As a departure from Basso's work, we come to the use of place-names in Ireland as situated within this field of scholarship but not analogous to it. The use of place-names in Erris is not narratively connected to moral lessons, or as social leverage, as the Apache names often are (Basso, 1996). Instead, what is useful for our study of place-names is their place within colonial histories and thus histories that play out in the space of globalization.

The process of naming, as Saris (1996) points out, claims that this is my land *because* these are my stories; because there is an identification of people to place through these stories. An example of such place-name importance in the construction of the local and the global comes

from histories of map making. A few locals who live in the nearby community of Carrowteige published a book with all of the local, Irish placenames of the Kilcommon parish, the larger area surrounding Sruwaddacon Bay. It is the first of its kind for the area, and everything from large townlands to small streams and creeks are named in Irish. The names were painstakingly collected by the project heads from people all over the parish, as much as people could remember. These names have lived in local memory for years, but were never recorded or used in official documentation.

The project evolved into many forms. Maps can be found all over the Erris area, in people's homes and local businesses. The Landscape book mentioned earlier is part of the same project, including a less detailed version of the map, as well as information about local flora and fauna, weather, and beautiful pictures. To accompany the map, the project also published a separate dual-lingual guide to the meanings of the place-names, "A Guide to the Place-Name Map of Cill Chomain (the Irish for Kilcommon) in North West County Mayo." It's introduction pronounces, "The community of Cill Chomain can easily identify with their environment because they live in a landscape that is dotted with Irish place-names, which gives meaning to features on that landscape and which gives them a place in the lives of the people" (McGraith, 2014: 1). Some explanations of particular names are simple, like "Tobar Tony- Tony's well" (McGraith, 2014), where perhaps there is no noteworthy story, or it has been forgotten. Others include a more expanded history, like this one:

> Dun Chiortain/ An Caislean (G nan G): Dun Chiortain is named after the mythical giant Chiortain who resided on a cliff-top fort at Glenn na nGas, the remains of which are still evident. According to folklore, Carton was a contemporary of Caochain (from Dun Chaochain) who lived on the other side of Broadhaven Bay. Occupied over a long period of time, this site was evidently a residence of some importance down to the seventeenth century. It contained several stone and mortar buildings including a fortified house in later times but are all reduced to a few feet in height by road and fence makers. [McGraith, 2014]

This description locates certain histories within the landscape through local folklore, and illustrates how these myths and legends become inescapably imbedded into stone. It also marks a "collective experience" through the act of labeling the place, and contextualizing that place within this particular story. Although the landmark's history does not stop in mythological time, but includes more recent histories of farming and infrastructural development, the place-name's mythical connection makes a particular claim to what the "collective experience" of that space can be.

A local woman told me of these two giants, and how her parents used to point out how she could see the giants lying down on their backs, their legs, heads, and other distinctive features outlined by the hills and valleys. Liam once told me dismissively, in a conversation about the history of the area's topography, "history and mythology, it's the same thing you know." This may remind us of Basso's point about Apache place-names, that "what matters most to Apaches is where events occurred, not when…temporal considerations…are secondary importance" (1996: 31). This demonstrates Saris' (1996) claim that each landmark, and thus the landscape as a whole, is unequivocally for the locals who know to call them by their names, and

thus can claim “collective experience.” They have shown, “In our culture, local is real” (Garavan, 2003: 25).

Even in this deliberate staking out of the local, its existence necessitates an understanding of the “global”, and national, factors at work which make such a project meaningful; something that the local is not. This place-name project is reminiscent of 19th century British Ordnance Survey projects, which have until now been the only official versions of Irish maps, complete with Anglicized place-names (O’Donovan, 1830). These Ordnance Surveys are still widely used as the primary means of place-naming and their history is well documented in sources such as John O’Donovan’s Ordnance Survey Letters. This case of naming is clearly illustrated in Brian Friel’s (1980) play “Translations” and addressed critically in Angele Smith’s (2003) article on “Landscape Representation: Place and Identity in Nineteenth-century Ordnance Survey Maps of Ireland.” Friel’s play fictionalizes the very real events of British map-making in Ireland and the subsequent renaming of any places with Irish names.

In the play “Translations,” for instance, Baile Beag could become Ballybeg or translated into “Smallville”, a real practice that is reflected in many Irish place names today. Smith too addresses this process, pointing out that “by controlling the images of places, people, and their past, colonial administrations [were] able to control the knowledge of these” (2003). What power comes, however, in making the decision to disregard local names and Anglicizing them, to make it intelligible for the colonizer? One character in the play laments, while translating for an English surveyor, “I will provide you with the available words and the available grammar. But will that help you to interpret…I have no idea” (Friel, 1980).

Saris claims that “the naming of places is a crucial issue of understanding how space has been traditionally produced” (1996: 6), and in Ireland this means consideration of the histories of colonization as well as the “global.” Saris points out that this British map-making was the product of the ability to think a landscape into being, grounded in the power players’ particular epistemologies. He points to “colonial understandings of disordered persons…disordered landscapes” (7), and how this could only be re-ordered through the very orderly re-imagining of the landscape, through map-making. It hinges on who has the “freedom to name” (O Cathain and O’Flanagan, 1975: 275), and who has the right to *dinnsenchas*.

<u>Fionnuala’s Context</u>

Through place-name projects we begin to see imaginations of the “local” and the “global” playing out within “collective experience,” and the specific way this is rooted to identity through stories. Through this exploration of colonial map-making projects, we can understand place-naming practices as not simply a product of the “local” and subaltern knowledge, but a particular response to “global” histories, and a formation of the local with these counter-constructions in mind. Stories, whatever their temporal or geographic significance, can be contextualized within the landscape because the purpose is primarily one of “collective experience,” not one of rigorous historical cataloguing. Cruickshank points out that “the aftermaths of colonialism are always local” (2005: 9), but I would suggest that they are only able to be thought of as such because of localized ideas of the “global” in comparison.

While colonial projects give us some sense of earlier conceptions of belonging within the “global” and the “local,” the Corrib project was a direct confrontation of the two. Thus, we may analyze how “collective experience” became negotiated and recontexualized through this encounter with the global, given the area’s particular histories already circulated. In particular, the naming of the TBM Fionnuala can be analyzed with the same models of investigating place-

name projects as it involves particular claims to stories and land through the perceived attachment of local people.

Smith says that "maps are political tools that attempt to control knowledge," and the same remapping that Shell accomplished through renaming the land and what lies below the soil's surface, demonstrates Shell's manipulative attempt to control knowledge in that space (2003). If indeed "maps are representative of the 'imagined' landscape of the map-maker" (Smith, 2003), the Ireland on the British maps was one of British utopian imagination of Ireland; the map allowed these imaginations to be realized. In the British vision "the organization of space is intimately connected to the organization of life" (Saris, 1996: 8), and thus Britain's utopian Ireland, one of rural submission, was drawn into existence. Did the Irish landscape exist before the British maps? Of course it did. However, once British imaginaries were depicted on paper, and therefore reproducible, Ireland as place and as idea became a privileged form of knowledge as is relevant to the land.

In the case of naming the TBM Fionnuala, Shell had a clear imagination of rural Ireland, much as early anthropologists have; as a place that is traditional, out of time. Consistent with place-naming practices within the colonial tradition as well as localized ones, Shell attempted to claim Sruwaddacon Bay through the naming of the TBM. The "collective experience" of the local people, bound by place, histories, and names, was dislocated from its watery home and re-contextualized (Bauman and Briggs, 1990) onto a new landmark, one without its own narrative past. Shell intended to simply adhere the story of Fionnuala onto another space, thereby presumably infusing the space of the TBM with Fionnuala's own history.

In the protest CD Songs of Solidarity, there is a track called "Ros Dumach," which is the Irish name for Rossport, a village on the banks of Sruwaddacon (Fox, 2015). The track is not sung and there is no music. Instead, it is a woman reading a story, or a poem, about the area, positioning the struggle with Corrib firmly within Erris as well as within the multinational framework. The track begins, "They said there was nothing of value along the pipeline's way. We would have told them if they'd asked, that every inch of Ros Dumhach has a name…" (Fox, 2015). She goes on to name a litany of places along the bay, all in Irish. The rest of the track continues bilingually with no offer for translation, an inclusion in her plight only as much as you can understand it. With the inclusion of this track in Songs of Solidarity, a claim is made to firmly contextualize the names of Ros Dumhach within that landscape, resisting the recontextualization process of Shell.

Shell did succeed in permeating the TBM's steely flesh with a local narrative, but it was not the one they intended. The process of recontextualization left Fionnala's history available for adjustment, for further recontextualizaton by community members. "Age old marginalization of Erris by outside forces" allowed locals to "…draw on a rich discursive history of complaint" (Garavan, 2003: 15), and it is within this history, that Shell and the TBM became contextualized.

Colin characterized his feelings about the Corrib project saying, "we're just occupied." He expressed a narrative of exploitation, of marginalization, saying "this is a ruling class here…you can have the poor life, and we won't bother ya, but as soon as there's something of value, we're gonna come and take whatever you have away from ya." During this narrative, he interwove how Britain had "done this to us and they done that to us…and caused the famine," articulating a sense of Ireland's place in the global stage, or at least the United Kingdom's, as a station of oppression and abuse. The history of Ireland's relationship with Britain and colonization played a critical role in the articulation of the problems with the Corrib project, a strategic reference to traditional relationships between the local and the global.

He then continues this narrative thread with his discussion of the TBM naming in particular. I asked him pointedly, “Were people upset at all about the naming of Fionnuala?” He told me,

> Yeah, people thought that it was mockery, and that it was a…you’re down and then they kick ya, and they we’re gonna kick ya, if we’re gonna call the tunnel boring machine that’s gonna destroy your place, we’re gonna name it after one of the Children of Lir, and we’re just mocking you…and that was bad enough, but you had your own police service and government protecting them, and putting down you…our country or state or whatever seemed to be fierce, they will not be challenged, their authority will not be challenged. It’s a thing that seems to come from the War of Independence that our authority will not be challenged, and they just don’t seem to be able to deal with anybody challenging their authority. [Colin, 2017]

This response is an important one, as it resists any inclination to characterize the local resistors as people who were resistant solely because of such an attachment to place. Ó Giolláin explains this in terms of Timothy Luke’s argument, saying “We escape the dichotomies of tradition and modernity by looking at spatial rather than temporal transformations, Luke argues, since the understanding of traditional practices has conventionally been tied to the notion of tradition being anchored in place” (2000: 173). Instead, it frames the insult of the place-naming in terms of “collective experiences” that encompass both particular histories of resistance and colonization as well as local landscape relationships.

Fionnuala’s name, on the physical space of the TBM, elicited responses about the Children of Lir as well as the resulting bad luck from cultural appropriation which I will discuss more in Chapter 2, but also something more. Via the recontextualization of “collective experiences” tied to place, informants were able to structure an effective critique of the project as a whole, framed within histories of oppression and mythological significance. One informant, not a native to Erris, described it saying, “Shell … thought it would be a good idea to commandeer the local mythology … if you take its name for theirs, they own, not only the land that the government has given them too without proper accountability, but also the mythology connected to the land.”

Another informant, Clare, spoke about the public relations campaign behind the Fionnuala name. She told me, “they tried to create a sense of pride for the project by using the Mayo [football] colors and using the name Fionnuala … and they tried to make it something that belongs to all of us, and to be so proud and celebrate the first kilometer of the tunnel- it has been achieved!” Clare’s disapproval of the project does not stem from a misunderstanding of progress, or even a resistance to it; certainly not from a misunderstanding of globalization. Rather, Clare is communicating the recontextualization of a name, of a “collective experience,” that was inappropriate and offensive.

Candace Slater, in a study of dolphin transformation legends in the Amazon, points out that the “composite vision [of the Amazon] is less proof of the staying power of the past than of present day Amazonian’s ability to recuperate and continually reconfigure traditional forms for their own, distinctly contemporary ends” (1994: 2). This analysis provides an entry into thinking

about Ireland's own history with such folkloric reconfigurations (Ó Giolláin 2000), as well as the traditional forms that might be contextualized in the Corrib project for "contemporary ends."

Thinking in this way allows for informants who expressed a previously indifferent approach to the local folklore to be included within a frame of globalization. An extremely active Shell to Sea community member, Aoife, revealed to me, "I think it has only been recently that I've really been thinking about the significance of the Children of Lir and all the rest." And yet this same women told me later that the TBM was "sort of downgrading to the story or the legend of the area you know…of course everybody was very angry about that." Later on, she remembered to tell me that on its way to Erris, the TBM got stuck in the bog, a story repeated by almost all of my informants. Then, when it was about to regain motion, "the day turned into thunder and lightning and it hasn't been seen by no one before and it hasn't been since, it was the strangest thing, and it literally just poured rain…I never saw like it…like it was a rebellion."

This relevance to the "collective experience" requires a larger, more significant historical and cultural narrative within which the folklore, and the story of Fionnuala in particular, is contextualized. The fact that Aoife became familiar with the Children of Lir after the conflict began only serves to confirm, through her continued reference to it, that it was a relevant connection to this "collective experience." Aoife can frame Fionnuala the TBM as a "downgrading to the story…of the area" because it fits within a larger narrative of exploitation and abuse. She knows that Shell does not have the right to name.

Garavan points out, "the group that [came] to oppose the proposed refinery confronted a special cultural problem in outlining the reasons for their opposition: the absence of available discursive frames…that could adequately capture their concerns" (2003: 12). In the space of Fionnuala, Shell supplied these frames. Since attachment to place involves a "rootedness" (Kosek, 2006) in the Bay and the folklore, by moving claims to place onto the space of the TBM, community members take the very discursive tools they lacked on the purely "local" scale. Instead, it creates a space for the invocation of material histories of the "local" and the "global," histories that were then strategically used to claim land with stories and frame these claims within historical narratives.

Chapter 2: Stewardship and Superstitions

In addition to attachment, Kosek, proposes possession as a key tenant of belonging; defined as the "convictions about ownership, access, and control"(2006: 113). Kosek seeks to demonstrate how "acts of labor…linked forest histories with social histories in the memories of many of the people [he] interviewed" (2006: 113), and continues to center his argument for belonging around this relationship between nature and labor. These convictions about ownership develop in particular ways, connected to ideas of culture, history, and the memory of these major players. Yet Kosek remains uninterested in what exactly the "folk culture" of nature-labor relations might be. How can we talk about folk-culture, which he uses to refer to local land practices, without employing the tools which folklore and anthropology give scholars for understanding the circulation and variation of those very practices? In this way, the paradigm of possession offers us a framework for understanding belonging as an "imagined community" (Anderson 2006 [1983]) produced through material histories of labor.

As I have pointed out in the previous chapter, the value of Kosek's attention to belonging is useful primarily as a structure upon which to shape arguments of attachment, possession, and appendage as they have been developed by many folklorists and anthropologists. These scholars provide the attention to the powerful role of narrative in shaping and shifting the notions of place and space he neglects to pursue. Instead, I will rely on those cultural scholars who have thought critically about the role of possession, vis-à-vis, as it considers the poetics and particular contextualization processes of narrative.

In this chapter I will pursue how possession shaped narratives of culture, folklore, government, and globalism in narratives in the West of Ireland. I will develop how localized histories of possession are created, negotiated, and performed, specifically through the key components of labor, mythology and superstition. Once we understand how possession involves these processes I will demonstrate how these conceptions provide a way of entering into localized negotiations of the "local" and the "global," a means of engaging with a multinational development company on the global scale while retaining subaltern knowledge and authority. This chapter will demonstrate how residents were actually able to articulate localized means of belonging through a "global" lens, creating a narrative where their movement existed as one among many, though no less legitimate.

In many places and cultures, the stories that lie in cultural memory and in the land itself serve an important strategic purpose for the active construction of ideas of belonging as well as who is included in rhetoric which relies on those relationships. A solitary peat farmer may understand belonging through the possession of his own land through the material histories that he can access buried in the ground. That farmer, however, has no case against a multinational development company, as in the case of Erris, unless those structures of possession are agreed upon collectively by the community whose land is at stake. Also incumbent on these narratives is that the boundaries of the community itself are agreed upon.

Labored Histories

Many scholars have looked to labor as a means of understanding relationships between people and land. For this, we need only look to folklore scholars and anthropologists invested in understanding indigenous land claims and a complex sense of place (Basso, 1996; Chamberlin, 2004; Cruikshank, 2005; Glassie, 1982; Povinelli, 2002; Slater 1994; 2002). By looking not only at a "history of the regional political economy" (Kosek 2006) but the folkloric histories which

negotiate claims to possession, we can begin to acquire a fuller picture of the place of narratives of resistance in the space of the "global."

This sense of belonging, vis-à-vis labor, is present in Erris, but it is not the whole story. It is not only the labor practices in and of themselves which create a lasting sense of possession and thus belonging, but rather the ways in which labor practices are developed communally, communicated folklorically, and then reinterpreted, then performed rhetorically. Henry Glassie (1982), an anthropologist deeply invested in place based field work in Ireland, structures his ethnographic study of a rural community on the Northern Irish border in terms of the history of Christianity, histories of war, and crucially for our purposes, along histories of labor and "The Topography of Past Time." Although I resist a reductionist parallel between a rural community along the Northern Irish border and another on the West coast of Ireland that might erase specifically localized historical differences, Glassie's approach to taking labor seriously as a way of understanding local culture provides a model for how I might explore similar histories.

Glassie says that for the farmers of Ballymenone, "the environment is inherently useful, and the human task is to discover through work the logic of its construction" (1982: 435). Candace Slater (1994) too, invested in the narratives that tell of a changing Amazon and a shape-shifting dolphin, contends with histories of labor. For Slater, rubber tapping is a crucial intersection of the imagined "global," that force of "modernity," and indigenous peoples. But of course, as she points out, this intersection is not a binary one, nor are any groups homogenous. She instead encounters the "symbolic transformation and resistance and the present-day significance of a hybrid, and uniquely Amazonian, expressive form" (1994: 4) through the dolphin narratives. By relying on the models used by Glassie and Slater, we can approach labored histories in Erris with a perspective that represents both the localized Irish (Glassie) and the imagined "global" (Slater) in these spaces of "global friction" (Tsing, 2005).

Many of the concerns my informants articulated dealt with these labor-centric notions of possession, or rather dispossession. A local farmer, James, said he really couldn't explain why he first got involved, but that he thought it was because people were coming onto his land without asking, "just say[ing] that's mine now." Later, when asked if he knew any local folklore, he responded that he only knew the folklore that he learned from his father, his skills as a farmer.

In *Our Story- The Rossport Five* (Garavan, 2005), a book with transcripts from interviews done in the early stages of the project, a local farmer, Willie Corduff, reflected growing up in Erris:

> I was born and reared on this farm. Its memories that are making us do what we are doing. My father came in here in 1947. The place was pure bog with a fallen-down house. The memories we have are of the way we were brought up. Hard times. They're the memories you have and the memories you have to keep. To see someone coming in now and trying to destroy it, as Shell is doing, it kills you. Our footsteps are all around the place since we were able to walk….This was all bog land. It all had to be reclaimed by hand. Doing corners by spade and shaking a bit of their own seed that the cows had left after them in the shed….It's all memories. You cannot let them die. [Garavan, 2005]

In the same chapter, his wife Mary makes a clear connection between possession, belonging, and labor:

> As hard and all as the life sounds, there was one thing that came out above all- they were very happy. They were very contented people. They survived off the land and the sea and they didn't need to go elsewhere. The community spirit was there and they lived with each other and for each other. That's something that is changing today. That's the kind of thing people grew up with, that spirit. They were very happy even though they had nothing in material things but they were very happy people. [Garavan, 2005]

Here, Mary explicitly connects not only labor and belonging, but the idea that the community at large, the "community spirit," is conditioned by a shared experience of this connection. As we will see later on, this assumption is challenged and renegotiated in the wake of the Corrib Conflict, but particularly in the early stages of the campaign, this connection between labor and land was crucial to understanding possession and belonging.

The articulation of possession through labor is particularly clear in discussion regarding the harvesting of turf. Peat, or turf, is the boggy material that makes up the majority of the Irish landscape. It is cut and dried all over the country for fuel. Although the practice once took place at a commercial level through Bord na Mona (Laffey and Loftus, 2015), which boasted a large peat plant near Erris, the turf cutting now takes place most commonly as a subsistence farming practice, providing cheap fuel and energy to communities who exist far off the state power grid. It is understood in Erris, by those I talked to, to be a sustainable practice, and one that allows the community to use less fossil fuels, cuts costs, and encourages local crop sharing. Most farmers in the area do not cut turf full time now, but many families boast a long history of turf cutting.

This practice was mentioned by such farmers as a way of explaining how their connection to the land is complicated by not only local folklore and mythology, but the more immediate farming practices passed down by fathers and grandfathers, on the land that those same men and women have tilled themselves. The view, however, of turf cutting as a sustainable source of energy is on the defense in recent years of the environmental movement. In the long run, turf cutting is not sustainable as it will not continue to renew once harvested, and burning peat pollutes the air. I asked a farmer friend of mine, Liam, during fieldwork, one day as we talked about Erris over a cup of tea, and he laughed off my view of turf-cutting as a short term solution. "Sure it will grow back!" he exclaimed, which caused me to laugh in turn. I countered that perhaps it would, but not for many thousands of years. He laughed me off again, joking that I had a very American sense of time, telling me that "in American, 100 miles is a short distance and 100 years is a long time. In Ireland, 100 miles is a long distance and a 100 years is a short time."

Turf cutters in Erris are not cut off from the pressures of industrialization and the environmental movement and demonstrated a keen sensibility of these processes, facilitated by their experiences in the Corrib conflict. Glassie, when speaking of the labor of turf cutting in Ballymenone, says "and you look to the past to learn that you are a minute part of history, obliged to adapt to its evolutionary power" (1982: 477). This does not, however, mean that adaptation necessarily means abandonment of folkloric farming practices any more than it implies a pure overhaul to industrial mechanisms. Instead, turf cutters adapt to the mechanical age; farmers use tractors and other large machinery to facilitate the cutting and drying of turf, and technological means of distributing the products.

When asked about the role of labor in terms of larger environmental movements, however, we might see two parallel narratives. Both of these narratives are illustrated in the answer of a local farmer, Colin, regarding labor practices, increasing environmental pressures, and the pain of the Corrib project. The first narrative is one that locates farming practices, and conceptions of possession, squarely within the localized histories of ownership and labor. The second is one that responds to environmental protection critiques by positioning labor practices within those very same movements.

> **Colin**: This is just nonsense and told to poor people because this is a ruling class here. And they're not gonna give up power for anybody. That's kinda where, I wasn't aware of it I suppose as much until we went through this process, but em, yeah you just figure out where you fit in. You can the poor man and you can have the poor life, and we won't bother ya, but as soon as there's something of value, we're gonna come and take whatever you have away from ya, and when we have it done, we're gonna go back again and mind our own business. And I've seen it with the seaweed along the shore, like poor man's fertilizer, you cut it and you put it on the land to make the grass grow, that type of thing. And I think they have us all the rights along the western seaboard sold to a Canadian company. They can come in, you can go down here now, and they can harvest it, and there's nothing you can do about it, although you'd have a patch on the shore marked with rocks, and each household would have, and that is yours, where your potatoes or whatever the story is. And they can come now and they can cut it and all they do is bring the police out and nothing you can do about it.
> **Gilbert**: Seawood? Do they come through with a big sweeper?
> **Colin**: "Well they haven't done that yet with the sweeper, but they're planning to do that. Even 2 summers ago now, this other guy came and he got a license from the government, it's kind of a test job. And he come along and he cut your seaweed and he take it and you'd say well, what are you doing? And he'd say there's my license, and while he was showing it to ya he'd be ringing the cops and the cops show up and say he's a license he can do what he likes. You know? Arrest ya. So I dunno. Well I do know, and I know how I deal with it, but you won't be around if you do that. You know? But I don't know was it George Washington says, you know you put enough powder in you shot to maintain your freedom. And there's a power in that, and I've thought about that a lot, and what freedom means. You know freedom is an individual thing you can defend your home and your family without question and, it seems the only way you can do that is with powder in the shot. And if that's what freedom is, well everybody understands what it is. You know, I don't agree with killin people but it's just what he said. And you know there's something in it, whatever it is, there's something in it, but it's the best way I heard of defining freedom…"

> **Gilbert**: Has there been any threat to turf cutting by environmentalists?
> **Collin**: I didn't experience that now myself, but I know just, well some are now. People yeah, I know people, who are getting their turf cut and, see, all the land here now, we'd all be, I suppose 90% of the people here would be environmental schemes. They'd be introduced by Europe and you'd join them to farm a certain way, and have the words to read. You'd put maybe a ton of sand for bees for a while, I'd never heard of it before, I didn't know it existed, but we have to take their word on that now, but we put up bird boxes and all that now, and you farm in an environmentally friendly way if you could, no pesticides, and we all did courses now on how to use them correctly, and generally I'd be kind of go back to learn about that sort of farming and that. But we ourselves would only know what we were taught by our own parents, we'd have never gone to college or anything like that. But, turf cutting thing yeah, this land is called commonage, it's where everybody's have a share, you have 1000 acres and people cut turf on it. And people cut turf on it with a machine, so Europe decided no you can't do that anywhere, its blanket bog and you're destroying it. Now I would see their point, and it does destroy it and you couldn't say what I suppose is the rate, you know, you could cut a coupla hundred square meters over maybe 10 years and you know, there's still gonna be bog, and it's still gonna grow back in time, but they decided no, that's it, no you can't do that. And I don't know, sometimes you feel that when you're living in a rural place like that, are they just trying to close it down because its, it costs too much? And you're too out of the way and they want, you see they want everybody to move to town and live in town. But you can't do that. Because you know, people should have the right to live where they want, and the whole social things, they get you know people like living in the middle of nowhere. You know if you're used to that that's what you're used to. You know there's a whole load of questions, there's more questions than answers in this thing you know? And you go along and you're thinking you know, you could drive yourself mad because, I don't think there is an answer, maybe there is but small people or poor people, you've a hell of a fight.

There are many things we could consider from this interview excerpt, and we do not have here the space to explore it fully. However, let's consider those two perspectives on labor, one which is intended to position labor firmly within the local, and another which clearly situates labor practices within larger narratives of environmental movements, globalization, and capitalism. Beginning with the practice of harvesting seaweed, Colin tries to convey his perspective of the Corrib land rights battle. To Colin, a system that made perfect sense to locals and had been working fairly for their whole lives, was now a criminal offense. He couldn't understand how they could do that. The labor of harvesting seaweed had imbued the space with a sense of

possession, and therefore belonging. But further, the labor of communally harvesting the seaweed gave the locality the right to claim possession, even with no legal claims to the seashore or the seaweed upon it. While performed within the narrative as a way of communicating particular local beliefs about commonage land and shared labor practices, Colin also demonstrates that this "local" is constructed, in terms of possession, in opposition to the "global" forces that might think of possession differently.

Conversely, a narrative meant to position labored knowledge within the discursive space of the "global," is necessarily embedded with particular conceptions of the "local." Colin negotiates within the narrative between identifying with the environmental movement, "we'd all be, I suppose 90% of the people here would be environmental schemes[2]," and positioning those movements within recognizable ideas of possession and labor; "Now I would see their point, and it does destroy it and you couldn't say what I suppose is the rate, you know, you could cut a coupla hundred square meters over maybe 10 years and you know, there's still gonna be bog, and it's still gonna grow back in time, but they decided no, that's it, no you can't do that."

Thus, peat production and other labored histories provide a useful place of entry to begin thinking about the development of the landscape and the complicated ways in which it is used as a tool for both claims to possession and claims against. In Bellacorick, an area in North Mayo, the Bord na Mona power station operated for many years before closing down in 2005 (Loftus and Laffey, 2015). Not only a substantial source of jobs in the area, the plant legitimized the turf cutting, already a local traditional practice, and monetized it; "below the surface lies millions" (Loftus and Laffey, 2015). Many parallels between the Bellacorick plant and the current Shell refinery can be drawn, particularly in its portrayal in the book "A History of Bord na Mona and ESB in North Mayo" (Loftus and Laffey, 2015), an ode to the great work of the plant for the history of Mayo. One reviewer wrote, "Electricity generation at Bellacorick ceased in 2005. On October 14, 2007 over 3,000 people turned up to see the gigantic tower, seen as a safety hazard, come crashing to the ground. The demolition brought to an end the tallest structure in Mayo, an iconic feature on the Erris landscape, a structure that stood for progress and prosperity and a feature that welcomed home many returning Erris emigrants and migrants. The structure is gone but the memories live on and are vividly captured within the covers of this splendid book" (Mayo Advertiser, 2015: 1).

This description calls to mind an image the book itself offers its readers, that the plant served as "a beacon on a rural skyline," as if a visual of modernity come to save the rural people from themselves (2015). The idea that there is a "strange blending of myth and magic and modernity in the windswept bogs of North Mayo" (Loftus and Laffey, 2015) is one that should sound familiar with those versed in the rhetoric of Shell and the Irish government's promotion of the new Shell refinery. This new development project, to commodify the natural landscape, this time not from peat but from gas, should offer the rural area of Erris a beacon of hope that modernity had come to call.

> The economic rejuvenation of a remote bog in the heart of the West of Ireland was a bold and ambitious statement of political and economic independence. They took up arms for the right to deliver projects like these to the Irish people. The bogs of Ireland had remained idle under centuries of British rule, yet they had been

[2] Scheme is used in Ireland most often, and here, to mean some kind of organized plan and does not include the negative connotations often associated with the word in the United States.

> brought to life in the first five decades of native governance. Loftus and Laffey, 2015]

While this description was given to explain the saving grace of the Bellacorick power plant, it could easily have been taken from Shell's promotional materials. The idea that the land is wasted of its potential unless harnessed by the appropriate authorities is touted by the Irish government and Shell alike in the years after Shell's acquisition of the Corrib gas site. This should come as no surprise, however, given that the co-author of "A history of Bord na Mona", Christy Loftus, was currently employed as a Shell PR executive at the time of the book's publication.

In stark contrast is the description from a 2016 news article detailing the flares seen over the newly minted refinery on Jan 1, 2016. The author poignantly says, "…Corrib gas? That leviathan of metal pipes, rising from the ocean near Belmullet that grips the land with its silvery claw and breathes out great flares of fire over Mayo at night, dwarfing the bungalows on the coastline, imagining that far away in west Mayo a flare of methane gas at the Corrib plant continued to blaze in the night sky" (Harding, 2016: 1). The difference in these descriptions of the signs of development are not the results of a vacillating Irish public, but rather clear indications that the relationship of the West of Ireland to development and modernity is not a new one, but rather has been and continues to be one of integration.

Ó Giolláin (2000) points out that the industrialization of agricultural practices has led to another tempting, but false binary. The temptation to contrast agrarian culture and subaltern knowledge as part of a mythical, idealized landscape against industrial production without problematizing the assumptions that those categories are distinct and homogenous will certainly lead to over simplified conclusions of little use to the scholar. Glassie too cautions against such a binary, instead asserting that "socio-economic development is complex, open to differing, contradicting evaluation…some see it as good, some see it as bad, but none is unaware" (1986: 621).

Local farmers, whose families had been tilling the land long before the presence of Bord na Mona, found themselves utilizing a labor informed land-nature relationship in arguments regarding land usage under Shell's development. In 2003, An Bord Pleanala, the Irish planning permission board, heard testimony from Erris locals as well as Shell officials over the building of the refinery in Bellnaboy. Shell produced environmental experts to explain that the major project of peat distribution, required for the refinery building, would not be harmful or dangerous to the site or the surrounding area. This oral hearing marked one of the only instances where Erris locals were allowed to speak for themselves on behalf of their property and the community. Local farmers offered testimony regarding their localized knowledge of peat farming, the same kind of folkloric knowledge pointed out to me many years later as crucial for understanding belonging in the area.

A local schoolteacher, Maura Harrington, further illustrated subaltern knowledge, and attempted to wield it as a tool to ensure local sovereignty. Throughout the campaign, fame would find Maura as she continued to be outspoken about the Corrib project, even once going on hunger strike. One of the many songs in the Songs of Solidarity project is called "The No TAB Song" (Harrington, 2000). Originally written by Maura and her daughter for some of the first town hall meetings with Enterprise Oil, the song was performed by the pair during the oral hearing as a submission of testimony. The song claims,

> [For Enterprise Oil] it's handy for them to make millions,

for us it's a cynical ploy.
There's been farming and fishing in Erris,
For 5,000 years now or more,
Are we now to let the free market
To dirty and damage our shores.
Oh, here's to the people of Erris!
We've clean water, clean air, and clean soil.
We've known hard times and forced emigration,
We'll get by without Enterprise Oil. [Harrington, 2015]

Some of the considerations of An Bord Pleannala in their final decision are listed in the report as the amount and pattern of rainfall in the area, the characteristics of the disaggregated peat, and the method proposed for the moving of material to and within the repositories, acknowledging "the proposed development would include the excavation and removal of approximately 557,000 cubic metres approximately of peat" (Moore, 2003). In turn, representatives from the Erris region voiced their own concerns and experiences regarding this process:

> -The development does not adequately provide for the disposal of the peat.
> -Failure of EIS to satisfactorily address air emissions, effluent, safe removal and storage of peat, eutrophication of Carrowmore Lake, destruction of the road system and the impact on the livelihood and rural way of life.
> -The excavation and storage of peat will have adverse impacts on the environment due to the release of phosphates and the release of carbon to the atmosphere. This would be contrary to the principle of sustainable development. [Moore, 2003]

Local fisherman, of the Erris Inshore Fisherman's Association, submitted this telling statement:

> Discharges of impurities such as mercury, heavy metals or harmful chemicals to Broadhaven Bay will inevitably cause damage to marine life and, in particular, to filter feeders. Gaseous waste will be emitted to the atmosphere. Ideally the discharge should return to source. There is concern about impacts on residents, fresh water systems and wild life [sic]. It is not reasonable to assume that the dispersal qualities of Broadhaven Bay is sufficient for the treatment of impurities. Any discharge into Broadhaven Bay would be returned into Sruwaddacon Bay. A comprehensive study of the tides and their dispersal qualities needs to be undertaken in addition to a baseline study. The planning authority has granted permission when heavy metals will occur and their specific characteristics are not known and when specific treatment systems are not installed for. [Moore, 2003]

It is clear from this statement that those who have worked the land, and the sea, have a set of skills and a broad knowledge about the way the environment might react to different pressures. One local told me that she couldn't believe that they would think of putting a pipeline in the bay,

because the tides there were some of the strongest she had ever experienced. Once, when driving around with an informant, I joked that I would take advantage of the receding tides and walk straight across the bay from one bank to another. My friend became suddenly very grave and warned me to never step a foot in the bay because beneath the deceptively calm waters churned a dangerous current sure to take me clean out into the ocean.

One statement from the report in particular goes a long way to summarizing the concerns of the Shell to Sea project, and how this is impacted by material histories:

> The observation also refers to considered inaccuracies and inadequacies notably in relation to the proposed peat removal and specifically the Peat Management Plan, the potential significant fire hazard, concerns relating to the visual impact, reference to calculations based on a previous proposal on a different site, inaccuracies on the hydrological impact, lack of baseline studies, possibility of pollution of Natural Heritage Areas, the adverse effects on the public water supply of Carrowmore Lake, contradictions on manning, adverse impact on tourism, fishing and farming, questions over the need for the gas supply and who is benefiting…concerns about the sale of the land by Coillte, inadequacy of studies undertaken and lack of baseline studies, the proposed site not being the 'preferred site' and a claim that it was a second choice site. [Moore, 2003]

There is much that can be taken from this statement as an excellent example of the ways in which labor knowledge about peat, fishing, water supply, and other very material knowledges, can be carefully combined with concerns around tourism and visual impact, as well as the project-centric concerns about whether the gas is needed in the first place.

An Bord Pleannala's (original) final decision is famous in the folklore of the Shell to Sea project. Kevin Moore, the planning board director, refused the project, saying it was "the wrong project, in the wrong place." The inspectors report elaborated that "The proposed development involves the excavation of approximately 650,000 cubic metres of peat and other unsuitable materials from the site of the gas processing terminal" was untenable and rejected the proposal unanimously (Moore, 2003).

> Consequently, the Board considers that both of the proposed repositories have a high probability of failure and that the proposed development would constitute an unacceptable risk to the health and safety of the local community and of the general public on the public road in the vicinity of the site, would constitute an unacceptable risk of pollution of salmonid waters in Glenamoy River, Sruwaddacon Bay and Carrowmore Lake and would seriously injure the amenities of property in the vicinity. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and development of the area. [Moore, 2003]

In the end, this favorable decision to the community of Erris would not stand, and the Irish government would request the planning board reevaluate Shell's proposal, and this time it would pass. However, this decision was significant. It marked a historical moment when the campaign against Shell achieved a victory, and has since become a major narrative point in stories about

the history of the protest. Most importantly, it marked a time when Erris locals were given a platform to articulate the connection between labor and nature and how it impacts their conceptions of belonging to that landscape.

Many informants I spoke to made it clear to me that they were not originally against the project in general, and that this characterization of Erris circulated by the media was constructed from unfair assumptions about rural ways of life in West Mayo. Seen in Dublin as a site of “tradition” instead of Irish and global “modernity,” the media, government, and Shell constructed a narrative that the backwards, underdeveloped west coast’s opposition must stem from a lack of understanding of necessary infrastructure. On the contrary, the West of Ireland, and Mayo in particular, has a long history of development, as evidenced in part by Bord na Mona and individual farming practices. In the early stages, even the refining of fossil fuels more generally was not a primary concern of the movement, and the campaign Shell to Sea was concerned with doing just that: sending the Shell refinery out to sea. Their opposition was primarily a health and safety concern, not yet framed in the larger rhetoric of the environmental movement and climate change (Siggins, 2010). Locals knew that Ireland had sponsored previous fossil fuel development at the Kinsale site, in the waters between Ireland and Scotland, and had hoped that the promise of the gas refinery would result in similar benefits to the community. Jobs, cheaper fuel, and perhaps better infrastructure.

As we have seen, it is not simply traditional, antiquated ideas of possession that inform contemporary discourses surrounding land rights. In so far as those ideas work actively in historical memory to construct and reconstruct possession in environmental discourses, I can concede that point. Only, however, when they are acknowledged to be working in conjunction with all of the socially relevant ways possession has been conceived of over time. Ideas of possession do indeed include folkloric farming practices, such as those about turf cutting, but they also include histories of development in the area, land conflict, migration, and other systems that do not strictly adhere to the tradition/modernity opposition.

Mythological Conceptions of Stewardship

Mythologically founded ideas about possession are often rooted in the earlier Celtic canon of stories that explains Ireland’s earliest dwellers, and are less about particular labor practices than the relationship with the land entrusted to native Irish people Although these stories came up in only a few interviews, in sometimes fragmented or distorted ways, it is important that I briefly detail this mythological history so as to contextualize these fragmented narratives when they are employed, and to model locating possession within narratives of myth and legend

Leabhar Gabháala, “The Book of the Conquest of Ireland” (11th-12th century), is commonly referred to as the Book of Invasions. It is understood to be pseudo-historical, combining invasions that have direct historical counterparts, as far as there is documentation of such, and others that are understood by scholars to mythological creations. Glassie (1982) says that “Ireland’s has been a history of invasion” (641).

The book traces a number of invasions and subsequent defeats over the mythological history of Ireland. The first three invasions “were conceived of as imparting to the land of Ireland its geographical definition and identity” (Mac Cana, 1968: 54). In the absence of a definitive creation myth, the invasions take on that role, and “by creating its physical features and assigning names to them they may be said, in a mythological sense, to have brought it into existence” (Mac Cana, 1968: 54). In this book is introduced the most fundamental concept to

Celtic mythology, that of the characteristics of a true king (*fir flaithemon*), the bond "that exists between the righteousness of the ruler and the propensity of his kingdom," that is, the bounty of his land and his generosity with his subjects (Mac Cana,, 1968: 57).

The most important invading group for formulating possession was the Tuatha Dé Dannan, "The People of the Goddess Danu." The Children of Lir are said to have been Tuatha Dé, and they are the protagonists in many of the well-known stories of Irish mythology and legend. The most famous and epic battle in Celtic mythology is the 2nd Battle of Magh Tuiredh, in which the Tuatha Dé are challenged by the new invaders to the land. It is in this battle we meet the famous Balor the one-eyed, from which the one-eyed character can be traced through much of Celtic traditions since that time. The Tuatha Dé are a great people, and although they defeated both the current inhabitants of Ireland as well as an army of would be invaders, their reign could not last forever. The next and final invasion was by the Sons of Mil, now thought to be invaders from Spain, and it is their descendants "the Gaels, [who] were henceforth to be the dominant people of Ireland" (Mac Cana, 1968: 61). It is important here to note that with the first step onto Irish soil, one of the Sons of Mil, a poet, uses metaphor and embodiment to claim possession to that land. He sings:

> I am estuary into the sea.
> I am a wave of the ocean.
> I am the sound of the sea.
> I am a powerful ox….
> I am a boar for valour
> I am a salmon in a pool.
> I am a lake in a plain. [McCana, 1968: 62]

Mac Cana emphasizes the importance of this moment, saying that "it is he who ensure their landing by appeasing the divinity of Ireland and who symbolizes the beginnings of their settlement by proclaiming himself the embodiment of all creation. And in his invocation of Ireland…we find eloquent expression of one of the dominant themes of Irish tradition: the personification of the land as a goddess who is joined in marriage to her rightful king" (1968: 63). This invokes not only an irrevocable tie between a king and the Irish island, but a binding relationship between justice and generosity and the land. The most important characteristics a king in Celtic mythology could have were his firm justice, and extravagant generosity to his subjects. Anything less than this would lead without failure to war and disruption, and indeed was both the impetus and downfall in the 2nd Battle of Magh Turidh. Here we can see the early beginnings of how inhabiting the land became inseparable from stewardship. It was only when the land existed in harmony with a just, generous tenant and ruler, that the island and her people were protected from chaos and destruction.

Although the Tuatha Dé were defeated militarily, they retained the full use of their magical prowess, and insisted on a treaty with the Sons of Mil. The territory of Ireland was divided into two, the upper half assigned to the Gaels (Sons of Mil), and the lower half allocated to the Tuatha Dé. Each former chief was assigned to a fairy mount, or a *sidh*, a term commonly now used to refer to the fairy folk. They are said to live there still, "securely established in the Irish landscape, living in close proximity to its human inhabitants who are ever and always conscious of their presence" (Mac Cana, 1968: 63).

Through this exploration of the Book of Invasions, and the ultimate fate of the Tuatha Dé, we can begin to understand not only a necessary relationship to stewardship, but a more complicated approach to possession more generally. The native people, or most native that are still around, have not vacated their land, nor their rights to it. The fairy forts even today are revered and guarded with superstition, legend, and rumor. Woe to the person who would be so foolish as to disturb a fairy fort, or ring, or any place known to have been in touch with the *sidh*. All native Irish people, no matter the claims of indigeneity they might make, are understood to be mythologically speaking, the descendants of the Sons of Mil. If that is true, or believed to be true, then it is clear that even the current inhabitants of Ireland cannot actually possess the land which they occupy. It actually belongs to those who live underneath, the Tuatha Dé. The people, the "fairy folk," who influence the weather and local events, and should be respected even when they are doing nothing at all. This framing then put the notion of possession into terms of stewardship and shared space rather than the capitalist conception of ownership so common in the West.

Who Owns Fionnuala?

Once we have established the relationship to possession via stewardship, narratives regarding troubling natural disasters can be related to failed stewardship. To the community, however, there was evidence for how Shell's claims to the landscape were invalidated. Several informants told me a local superstition, that if "a swan came into Sruwaddacon, then someone in the locality would die," with one gentleman, Liam, explaining that some people believe this strongly. Liam recalled one year in the 70's when 2 swans came into the bay, and stayed for a whole year, and "13 people in the small little village…died that year." He clarified that they "know there's no connection," but that "we cannot dismiss those things." More swan stories were relayed to me in relation to the TBM specifically. Another informant, Colin, told me this story:

> I remember one evening, when the whole Shell thing was going on, a fog came in, which was strange. And myself and my son looked down at the seashore and we hear it, a noise, a stranger noise, and there was about 20, when the fog lifted, there was about 20 swans, which I never, I never seen before…I didn't know what was happening in the community that this turned up or whatever, but I didn't think it was normal, you know, I never seen it before I never seen it since, it was just strange. It was like the natural balance of the place had been upset or put out or something.

Another informant, James, recalled that when the pipe was being laid, there were 4 swans out in the bay, saying, "it makes you wonder," almost as if they were themselves the Children of Lir he mused.

Almost every informant I talk to relayed the story of the TBM trying to get into the Erris locality, and the subsequent storm. When "the skies opened and there was thunder," and the likes of it "hasn't been seen by no one before and it hasn't been since." The same informant, Aoife, remarked it was "like a rebellion," and Liam commented that the business with the TBM would "probably will come to a bad end you see, mess too much with nature." Stories like this of the earthy rebellions had come up in other stories, particularly in regard to a large landslide that

devastated an old graveyard, and the original pipeline route. It made many people in the area uneasy. They pointed to it as a sign of some kind of wrongness of the project, proof that the site was unfit.

These kinds of reactions and stories came from a variety of informants, representing a variety of interests in the story of the Children of Lir itself. Aoife told me that it had only been recently, in the midst of the protesting and struggles, that she had really begun to think about the significance of the Children of Lir "and all the rest." When asked to retell me the story, she politely deferred to another community member, whom she felt could tell me more accurately the local tale. However, when I asked about the TBM getting stuck in the bog, she told me the entire story; about how it could not make the turn and thus got stuck, about everyone thought that might be the end of it all, and then finally, about the storm. Her characterization of the weather as "like a rebellion" of some kind, though unable to articulate how exactly she meant it, demonstrates a connection to the story, and Fionnuala, that does not depend on invested interest in the Children of Lir. Glassie found a similar relationship in Ballymenone to weather, reflecting that "weather is not mere climate…it is the revelation of God's power in rain and sun, his warning echoes through prophecy" (1982: 325). Although weather only represents one dimension of these tales, Glassie's observation helps to locate beliefs of stewardship in a large narrative of Irish superstition.

The Children of Lir, and Fionnuala in particular, instead represents a relationship to the land, and their role on it. Dr. Mark Garavan, a sociologist who has studied the conflict extensively, commented that it is less about the pure, unquestioned belief in the superstitions or the myths, but rather how those beliefs represent the feelings and concerns people have about the limits of humans when meddling with the environment. If we accept the premises laid out earlier regarding possession, and its shared properties, than this also demands an understanding of mutual, shared caretaking of that land. This can be applied to a number of concerns that were articulated both in the Erris community, and elsewhere in Ireland.

The character, and thus the name, Fionnuala, also represents more than simply the Children of Lir. Words like "protector" were often used to describe Fionnuala, and her value as a guardian of her three brothers was emphasized. Thomas, when speaking about the Children of Lir, told me that Fionnuala represents "the caring one, she was protecting the others." So how much more disturbing when, as Colin put it, Shell "[called] the tunnel boring machine that's gonna destroy your place, [they named] it after one of the Children of Lir, and we're just mocking you." Invested in the legend or not, many people in Erris understand the responsibilities they accept in their relationship to the land and to their homes. It is what makes the word *dúchas* so essential to understanding what Shell did not. The stories, the land, and home are not only connected, but tied up into the same word. It implies not just a relationship with place, but necessitates a custodial, sovereign relationship for the people who consider themselves indigenous caretakers.

Possession on the Global Scale

Once we understand how possession works as a way of belonging in the community, we must then seek to understand how this is then framed and reframed in the midst of globalization and expanded community boundaries. When considering the narratives from my informants, and looking through official documents such as An Bord Pleannla reports, it is clear that the rhetoric of possession is very limiting. If "for someone to claim possession of something, there implicitly exists the communication of a bond of belonging, which is a product of this mix of labor and

nature" (Kosek, 2006: 118), then the specific labor based forms of belonging that community members may experience is not easily expanded to outsiders.

In the case of Erris, however, it is only particular outsiders that they wanted to exclude, because others were essential to the success of the community's mission. The Solidarity camp provides a space to look critically at this boundary making. The camp consisted of exclusively those who had traveled from outside of Erris, and often outside of Ireland; this included activists, anarchists, environmentalists, and other enthusiasts from around the world. To include these eager activists in the necessarily "global" discourses happening at the national and international level, Shell to Sea welcomed the flood and of people in a strategic way.

The camp remained for its entire existence on the banks of the Glengad beach where the pipeline was to come onshore. A hand drawn comic book, created by a Solidarity Camp leader, has circulated in activist circles and provides an amicable relationship with community members. Still, the roles of the camp dwellers and the locals remained distinct. In order to do this and still maintain claims to possession that depended on localized histories and subaltern knowledges, community members did not abandon notions of possession as a legitimate space of belonging. Rather, they found ways to align themselves narratively with other dispossessed groups and nations. By doing this, protestors were able to continue to rely on the same feelings of belonging, built on material histories of possession, while legitimizing those very claims through the claims for others.

A significant example of this comes from the alignment of the Corrib project with the plights of the Ogoni people in Nigeria. From early on in the project, the Shell to Sea project enjoyed a special relationship with the Ogoni people, specifically with the brother of Ken Saro-Wiwa (Siggins, 2010). Ken Saro-Wiwa was an Ogoni man hanged along with eight others by the Nigerian government. Just as the jailed men of Erris were dubbed the Rossport 5, the group was called "the Ogoni 9" (Watts, 2001). Their death has long been attributed to protest against Shell's development in that region of Nigeria, as well as the long history of colonization and development that had affected the region up to that point. Watts who has studied oil in Nigeria as well as the Ogoni people extensively, characterizes Saro-Wiwa as "in the business of articulating an identity that was at once cultural and political- as a precondition for making claims about local environmental and resource management, compensation, and control" (2000, 37).

Saro-Wiwa's claims were enmeshed in his own politics of belonging and particular localized histories, specifically as they concerned possession. If "territory, community, and environment were the building blocks upon which ethnic difference and indigenous rights were constructed" (Watts, 2000: 27), the Ogoni movement "employ[ed]…local or subaltern reservoirs of knowledge" (2000: 30). In this case then, to abandon particular claims to possession would perhaps strip community members of their claims to belonging.

Instead, the protestors of Erris used the claims to territory used by the Ogoni as a means of bolstering their own territorial claims by aligning their causes. During my field-work I heard this connection drawn again and again, by local people as well as scholars and outsider interests. By drawing this parallel, residents were actually able to articulate localized means of belonging through the international network Shell operates in, positioning their plight as among similar situations among the companies "global" sites.

We can understand the way in which this happens discursively through the functions of extextualization and recontextualization. "For if a text has a despatialized and detemporalized meaning…then that meaning can be clearly transmitted across social boundaries such as

generations, without regard for the kinds of recontextualizations it might undergo" (Silverstein and Urban, 1996: 1), and thus be freed of the specific contextualizations, like localized spaces of belonging, that would keep it inaccessible. Bauman and Briggs speak on the process of such movements in performance, claiming that "these recenterings are part of the symbolic construction of discursive continuity with a meaningful past…at another level, the tracing of chains of decentering and recentering offers a united frame of reference for the analysis of control over discourse that extends from the small-scale and local to the global" (1990: 19). The very ability to engage in recontextualiation processes demonstrates the authority of those with the power to do so (Silverstein and Urban, 1996) and thus legitimizes the authority of the discursive process itself.

A clear example where this appeal to global contexts occurs is through the Songs of Solidarity CD. Several of the songs included on the CD make explicit connections to Nigeria and the Ogoni, though most obviously "The Ogoni Anthem" (The People of Ogoniland, 1995), and "Ogoni, Ogoni" (Saro Wiwa, 2015). The track "Ogoni, Ogoni" is not a song, but rather a short speech of sorts, recited by Ken Saro-Wiwa's brother. It speaks of the fight of the Ogoni people:

> Ogoni is the land, the people, Ogoni.
> The agony of trees dying in ancestor farmlands.
> Streams polluted…
> It is a poison air…
> Ogoni's dream, is to break the chain
> Around the…neck
> Of a Shell-shocked land. [Saro Wiwa, 2015]

The imagery is powerful, and the speech is short. Elizabeth Povinelli, in her analysis of the role of recordings in the performance of Australian indignity, says that "a sound recording [can be] a method for demonstrating that the places where the public rhetoric of national support meets the local production of social communities" (2002: 189). This conception of the possibilities of recording technology, is conveyed also by Ó Giolláin (2000). "From the mid-twentieth century on, telecommunications, rapid international transportation and computerization have undermined the spatial basis of tradition-and of community- in an absolute way. Community toady may not be tied to a specific place, the population of which may be constituted by members of a variety of different communities, public if you will" (Ó Giolláin, 2000:171).

Through these frameworks, we can position a way of communicating localized formations of possession through the process of reproduction and recontextualization. Ó Giolláin in turn theorizes with Benjamin's notions technological reproduction, positing new media as a possibility of "a new form of belonging, which comes from belonging to a mass audience" (2000: 170).

The track, "The Ogoni Anthem" (The People of Ogoniland, 1995) appears to be a folk song, sung entirely in Ogoni, catchy, and elusive to the listener. These two songs speak directly to the plight of the Ogoni; they make no connection implied or explicit to the Shell to Sea movement. And yet, their inclusion of a CD that has both an English and an Irish title, and *is* explicitly about the Corrib project, serves to draw those parallels without robbing the Ogoni of their own place-based claims to possession, and thus belonging. Bauman and Briggs posit that "traditionalizing discourse by creating links with traditional genres is often the most powerful strategy for creating textual authority" (1990: 18). If this is true, then the use of these songs

within an Irish context, is especially powerful in its recalling of traditional forms, despite its lack of "local" grounding, and thus claims authority in its own narrative of belonging, suffering, and possession.

This breaks down the false dichotomy that Tsing (2000) criticizes as the trap of the study of globalization. Watts contends that "[community] is usually assumed to be the natural embodiment of 'the local'…which has some territorial control over resources that are historically and culturally constructed is distinctively local ways. A community, then, typically involves a territorialization of history…" (2000: 36). However, when the community can skillfully recontextualize "local" claims to territory and resources in larger narratives of global production, their claims to possession are actually bolstered, and thus allowed to remain local, creating what Watts proposes we call "globalized local sites" (2000: 21).

In fact, the way in which these narratives accomplish this task is by employing the very terms of discourse that those who operate on the "global" scale do. This process of recontextualization as a means of authenticating claims to territory requires a sophisticated understanding of the kinds of discourses that are expected when dealing in the "global," and a strategic sensibility of ways to invert that expectation and make the "local" claims appear "global." When Tsing asks, "Where shall we draw the boundaries of regions? How are local communities composed?...What is this thing we call the globe?" (2000: 2) I believe we can find our answer in the discursive practices of communities where the local and the global are actively constructed. Globalization is typically associated with sophisticated networking and linkages (Tsing, 2000), but this analysis shows how the politics of belonging, traditionally localized, can utilize the same system of networks without sacrificing their particular local claims to authority, thus resisting the homogeneity of globalization that Tsing insists we acknowledge.

Chapter 3: Embodied Belonging

In her "Cyborg Manifesto", Donna Haraway says that in "our time, a mythic time," we are all "theorized and fabricated hybrids of machine and organism" (1991:118). A story that involves ancient, certainly not fully human, children, turned to swans, turned back to humans, turned to machine calls for nothing less than a post-human analysis of embodied experiences. One of the strengths of conversations regarding environmental development is the potential to approach solutions from this post-humanist perspective. By decentering the human from our conversations, the door is opened to consider the agency of other involved parties as well as future human culpability of their behalf. Many readings from post-humanist theory engage with globalization as a necessary tool in thinking through a new theoretical path towards a multi-species analysis of enviromentality. Indeed, Kosek's final tenant of belonging is attachment, sometimes called "embodiment," defined as "an internal part of, or appendage to, a social body such as a family, community, or nation" (2000: 120).

In the case of Corrib Gas, an analysis of the protest movement would be incomplete, a disservice to the local community, were we to only consider the human actors. Kapchan says "culture is always embodied" (2014, 6), the question then follows, within whose bodies? If the landscape can be a bodied actor in our analysis, then it stands to reason that it too has the ability to hold culture in its grasp. I am surely not the first to come to this conclusion, and the embodiment of culture in landscape is a concept many indigenous communities are familiar with (Basso, 1996; Cruikshank, 2007).

An argument for the consideration of post-humanist perspectives that might elucidate the metaphorical connection to the land, it that it communicates human experiences through the treatment of the landscape. In Erris, the landscape can provide a metaphoric way of understanding how community members experience the Corrib project. To fully analyze the poetics of these metaphors, however, employing certain post-human ontologies allows us to avoid assuming a one way connection between bodies and land, one in which land can only be used to understand human experience and not the other way around.

In this chapter I will explore how the use of metaphor functions as a means of communicating a relationship between community members and the landscape. To do this I will first outline the role of categories in mediating action between human and landscape. Then, we will look to the use of metaphor to understand the benefit of communicating embodiment, specifically through the examples of local narratives. Finally, I use the incident of Fionnuala, the TBM, and the many reactions to the event, as an example of the complicated and strategic use of metaphor during the Corrib project.

Categories of Being:

To understand the question of how embodiment is represented in the Corrib Project, we must first look closely at what have been called the human and non-human actors; that is in our case the landscape, the local residents, and perhaps evens the swans. Can we rely on those categories to tell us something about metaphor? Reading Foucault's (1970) work on *The Order of Things* brings us to the larger question: how does the classification of objects change our relationship to them?

George Lakoff contends that "categorization [is] the main way we make sense of experience," whether these be our own experiences or that of others (1987, xi). Categories, however, also help to draw distinctions between experiences. If I were to say that I was as lazy as

a sloth, I convey a way of making sense of my fatigue by drawing a parallel between categorically distinct experiences: that of a human being lazy, and that of a sloth being a sloth. The juxtaposition of categories allows this metaphor to take place without conflating our actual experiences. I have no intention of communicating that I have actually become a sloth, or that our experiences are not only metaphorically comparable, but exactly so.

To understand a metaphor used to compare the experience of people to the landscape, the distinction between those categories should be clear. What does the category of landscape mean to those who employ such metaphors? Some informants referred me to a book called, *Ireland: the Living Landscape* (Somerville-Large and Heaney, 1992). The book is a tribute to the story of Ireland through the land, with chapters with names like "Sky," "Plants," and "Sea." An important passage from the introduction to this book illustrates the relationship between land and people:

> The brimstone of the rape[3] harvest is a recent addition to summer's yellow. In late summer, the poisonous ragweed, the farmer's peril, whose stiff stalks provided a mount for witches to ride through the skies, will dominate neglected pastures. The festival passage can also be marked by the progress of the white flower--rowan, hawthorn, and elder, all associated with magic. Rowan, which will grow at a higher altitude than any other tree, is the tree for protection. Planted in a graveyard, it will keep the dead from rising. Lone hawthorn trees where fairies meet are still left to themselves; cut the lone thorn and it may bleed or scream. It is believed that Judas Iscariot hanged himself on an elder. The timber of elder may not be burned lest you see the devil in the fire or used in the making of boats, which will capsize. Nor is it safe to make elder into a cradle because the child will be stolen by fairies. [1992: 20]

It is clear to me in this passage, that the use of land as metaphor is certainly a way to communicate belonging, but not simply as a metaphoric relationship. I was told time and time again, "the Celts wrote their novels on the landscape." If the people of Ireland are the descendants of the Celts, than their relationship to the landscape cannot be merely metaphoric. It is instead an extension of the experiences of people and communities, indeed embodied, but by more bodies than one.

If landscape is a social construction (Gailing and Leibenath, 2015), in Erris it is a categorical construction as well. For instance, the name of Sruwaddacon Bay matters as it labels the landscape and establishes to whom that body of water belongs. "Sruwaddacon" marks the water for its mythological inhabitants, a story which connects it to Erris. Its category as "bay" or "landscape" also matters in different ways to Shell and to community members. As landscape, the bay should be accessible to those who own, or are given rights to, the land. In the case of the Corrib project, the government's gift of the bay to Shell should have given it full ownership and sovereignty over that space.

Fionnuala, the TBM, in some ways resisted categorization. Fionnuala simultaneously represented the category of myth, of story, and the tangible, mechanical category of machine. The categories of "machine," "drill," and "myth," juxtaposed through the TBM, incited the

[3] Refers to rapeseed, also known as rape, oilseed rape, rapa, rappi, rapaseed

community's reaction to Fionnuala, creating a conflict of relationships in the space of the machine. Locals accustomed to speaking in metaphor about their embodied experiences and the experiences of the landscape were confronted by an assault to their own bodies with the penetrative, yet mythological machine.

Ireland: The Living Landscape tells us that in the case of the boggy land, "bogs are preservatives; 'a bog acts as a passive receiver and storer [sic] of information'" (1992: 22). A swift cut through the peat would unearth ancient insects, pollen, crops, people, and clothing. It also stores the histories of its development and tending by generations of local farmers. This transfer of information and personhood works within acknowledged relationships between the land and people. Rather, it is a clear example of the "living landscape," a land that is assigned personhood through its very material histories, mythological and labored. We can recall the Book of Invasions from Chapter 2 where we learn that the ancestors to the Irish ancestors live beneath the surface of the bog, themselves somewhere between persons and nature. We can recall also the farmer who said, "they dug into the ground…and they found us."

These different epistemological relationships to nature and landscape, that of the Erris community and that of Shell, created a disjuncture. Neither could be translated to the other without an understanding of the opposition's idea and a strategic ability to bridge those differences. Shell could not do this. The Shell to Sea campaign, however, tried to employ metaphor in ways that strengthened their claims to outsiders while maintaining the rhetoric of embodiment they were accustomed to using. This was achieved with only some success, which we will discuss further.

A Song of Ireland

Ar Éirinn ní 'Neosfainn Cé hÍ **Ireland is not who she is**

According to the CDs producer, this song, entirely in Irish, is a contemporary version of the traditional "*aisling*" or vision song. In *aisling* songs or poetry, popular in the 18th and 19th centuries, Ireland is presented as a beautiful young woman, sometimes alongside an antagonistic force, "a willing, defenseless speirbhean or "skywoman," who would only recover her happiness when a young liberator would come to her defense" (Kiberd, 1995:18). In this song, however, we know from the title that the Ireland they sing of is not the Ireland we know.

The *aisling* was meant to be "an allegorical expression of political discontent," spread around the country orally by "purveyors of subversion" (McCann, 1995: 55). The Irish song Ar Éirinn ní 'Neosfainn Cé hÍ falls into a ballad tradition where "bilingual ballads existed in which Irish and English verses alternated, the English verses expressing impeccably loyal statements, while the Irish verses expressed satirical or subversive political opinion" (McCann, 1995: 55). In this version of an, there are no English verses. The song is entirely in Irish because it has no intentions of being loyal, but rather to be unapologetically critical and subversive.

We can locate Ar Éirinn ní 'Neosfainn Cé hÍ, as well as the Songs of Solidarity project, in a larger tradition of using music to metaphorically connect the experiences of Irish people with Ireland herself. Irish music was "involved in maintaining boundaries as well as in a battle for legitimacy" (McCann, 1995: 65). In an *aisling* song, it is Ireland, the young maiden, who is at risk, who is being persecuted. In Ar Éirinn ní 'Neosfainn Cé hÍ, it is Erris which is persecuted, a metaphor for aligning the Corrib project's effects on the land and on Ireland with the experiences of local activists.

Basso asks the key question at the heart of understanding metaphors: "On what grounds is one kind of thing understood in terms of another? In other words, what must individuals

believe about themselves and their surroundings for their metaphors to 'work,'" making a case for an ethnographic study of metaphor as much as a linguistic one (1996: 68).

This relationship is illustrated in part of the "Cultural Heritage Context" statement from the An Bord Pleanala hearings:

> Carrying on with cultural elements we note that the Celts, which is largely in our evolved enriched present, that the Celts wrote their novels on the landscape. The "Dindseanchas" is a highly imaginative early Irish verse glorification of the placenames of Ireland, personalysing [sic] and deifying much of the landscape…To illustrate:- Scruth Mhada Conn is widely slaughtered- as massacred as poor Mozart bocht [sic] is reputed to be. It is "the stream of the dog of the hound" which is quite off, until one realizes that it is merely an expression of the totemism that is an element of our basic Animism. Further, the "Conn" part is that Conn, one of the children of Lir and to go a step further, when the swans lie (Sruth) instead of overflying to the bog lakes, they are herald a death in the communities along the shore. Do we believe this? Probably no. Do we live as if we believe it? This is a different question. [Ó Seighin, 2003]

Embodiment of Man, Myth, Machine

With Fionnuala the TBM we find an encounter of metaphor that certainly necessitates an ethnographic analysis. In an earlier chapter, we considered the question of the right to name. Now however, we may turn to asking who has the "right to invasion" (Kapchan, 2014: 4). With such a storied history of invasion, colonially and mythologically, the rhetoric of invasion is one that firmly aligns the cultural and political pain of colonization with current injustices. All of these are thus metaphor for acts of war. In the "Cultural Heritage Context" statement from the An Bord Pleanala hearings, Michael explains how "piracy" has ravaged the shore of Erris, from English scuffles to "ship raiding during the famine," but now he says "Pirates continued to turn up: nowadays they tend to be in suits" (Ó Seighin, 2016).

Fionnuala may remind us of Haraway's cyborg, "a hybrid of machine and organism (1991: 117), and thus its actions remind us of something at least partially anthropomorphic. Kosek points out that when informants claim that "'this land has been raped and it has left us partly conquered and very angry,' they are all invoking metaphors that merge the personal and collective body with the land and forest" (2000: 124). I would be remiss to neglect the physicality of the TBM and the role it plays in this "rape" metaphor. The "rape of Ireland" is sometimes used to refer to not only to the multiple invasions of Ireland since the country's mythic origins, but also to invoke that pain when talking about new abuses. The metaphor of rape was also used in at least one of the accounts I heard years ago about the TBM, personifying both the TBM and Sruwaddacon Bay. It establishes clearly, for those that use such a metaphor, that Shell's "invasion" fits alongside a larger narrative of colonial injustice and abuse of Irish people and resources.

Donal O'Kelley, a prominent Irish playwright, wrote a play in the aftermath of the TBM naming, also called Fionnuala. The play brings an imaginary Shell PR executive into

conversation with the mythological Fionnuala, in all her swan glory, and holds him on trial in a fairy fort. The description for the play reads:

> Ambrose Keogh works for Shell. When the Tunnel Boring Machine he named Fionnuala sinks into the bog in Erris Co. Mayo, he is magically confronted by Fionnuala of the Children of Lir. Fionnuala puts a geas [a kind of curse] on him – he's bound to tell the truth about Shell's operations, such as the attack on Willie Corduff in the Shell site at Glengad. During his ordeal, Ambrose meets his primary school classmate, Malachy Downes, an anti-pipeline activist, and echoes from the past resound. [O'Kelley, 2012]

O'Kelley imagines what it would be like for Shell to answer for its misdeeds by confronting the source of transgression, to able to converse with the mythical character from which it derives its very name. This play captures a cross-species consideration to think holistically about Shell and Erris. In a place where land and myth are related in important ways, the logical next step is to include the machine in that same conversation.

For O'Kelley, the category also is important. The PR executive's name is Keogh, which is a homonym for fog; according to Fionnuala's *geas*, if Ambrose lies three times he will be turned into fog, his very element. In this play, it is clear that there is no escaping who, and what, you really are. This play on words is also achieved through the use of *geas*. *Geas*, normally pronounced geh-shh, is pronounced "gas" during the performance. A *geas* is a curse of sorts common is ancient Celtic myths and legends. Much like the *geas* of old, the gas is also a curse on the community. However, in this play, it is Fionnuala who places the *geas* on Shell, and requires their representative to admit to the harm he has caused. A natural gas and a mythical curse are not only represented metaphorically, but conflated. The gas is the *geas*, the *geas* is the gas. Fionnuala experiences both.

The category of "machine" did not absolve the TBM immunity for its actions. O'Kelley held the machine culpable for its invasion by transforming it into an active agent with the power of narrative, removing it from anonymity and blamelessness. In this process of animacy, O'Kelly also delineated the myth from the machine. Fionnuala holds court as a swan, the Shell man as a human; the machine, an inappropriate conflation of the two, is absent. The narrative within the play gives agency to the TBM by crossing the boundaries of personhood to give humanity back to Fionnuala, and thus the landscape. This action says, if you are to bear the name of our people, then we will hold you accountable as one.

One of my informants described a moving memory of when O'Kelley performed his play at the gates of the Shell refinery, and I later obtained video footage of this performance. A sizable crowd was present, reveling in the symbolic goodness of such a play performed at the mouth of the giant. And yet, what would Shell take from such a show? It is possible, and probable, that many of the security officers and Garda surrounding the gates would have understood the metaphorical implications and importance of the play. But as we have shown, Shell's corporate policy did not share the rhetoric of embodied experience. The symbolic punch of the *geas*/gas would not have been frightening to corporate interests, and it is difficult to translate even to some people in other parts of Ireland.

Global Humans

It would be wrong, however, to say that Shell, as a global actor did not employ embodiment as a means of connecting to a narrative of modernity and globalism. In a promotional video, Shell tells its own story of Fionnuala (Shell, 2013). The video informs the viewer that the name Fionnuala comes from a long tradition of giving TBM's female names, and shows sweeping images of the machine's grandeur. We are taken along her journey across Ireland, glossing over her brief boggy demise, and bringing us to her final positioning at the start of the drilling process. Amid swelling music, a Shell engineer narrates Fionnuala's progress as we watch the machine moving into the ground. The name Fionnuala begins to disappear into the ground, and the engineer tells us that this disappearance is how we know progress is happening. The less of Fionnuala we can see, the closer we are to success. This, too, is an act of metaphor. While it does not equate the experience of the machine with the experience of any one body, it insists that the machine's movement is the equivalent of the movement of modernity and progress. The video's metaphoric sentiment asserts that the global itself exists in Fionnuala, and her success means not only the success of the project at large, but the success of global enterprises everywhere. As one informant told me, it is intended to instill a sense of pride, "It has been achieved!" This claim to belonging is an effective one because it relies on ways of understanding progress that it assumes, rightly, that many of its Western viewers share. The video claims that Shell's claim to belonging supersedes the local, placing the story of Fionnuala within a larger narrative of progress and development.

To once again remain secure in localized claims of belonging, in this case claims of embodied experiences, the Shell to Sea movement located their struggle within arguments for embodied knowledge globally. While attachment and possession are ways of articulating belonging that Shell to Sea found at least partially useful in creating a global persona of plight, this was a difficult move for the use of appendage. The primary problem was that the bodies for whom the landscape is appended are Irish bodies, bodies of Erris natives. Embodied experience cannot be extended to those whose bodies are not connected to the same stories and histories.

A retired school teacher, Thomas, and I were talking about the Children of Lir, and I asked how people would have learned the story. He told me that it was taught in schools, that children would learn it from a young age. From there, he walked me through what Fionnuala meant, "the caring one," that "she was protecting the others," and naturally led us to a discussion of the TBM. He told me,

> The insult it was to the country and the history of the country and everything else about it. I mean it's a huge story, it's not just, the story of the Children of Lir is a world story really, you know. You have Cinderella…they go into other cultures, variations of the ideas in the story…and all these links are very real for a young child. And the wonderful thing was that the Kerry man that did the play, you know? And then be brought, like he was using the mythology…the geis, you know the geis is, and that way a very important moment…he composed that work and linked it in a way.

O'Kelley's play provided an accessible way for local people to express belonging through metaphor to non-local parties. O'Kelley told me a story about performing the play in South Dakota to a number of American Indian tribes. Afterwards, he was approached by a local

American Indian woman. She thanked him for his play, because his story was her story also, the story of her people. This language of knowing, of extended personhood, was understood by those outside of Erris who shared similar ontologies of humanness. The play's power lies in the particular importance of the land as a metaphor for the experiences of tragedy and disempowerment of local people.

If we are to ask "Where shall we draw the boundaries of regions" (Tsing, 2000: 2) we much first ask where we draw the boundaries of the human. To truly understand the "local," we must understand both the human and non-human actors who are understood to live within it. Tsing asks, "Does the newness and globality of movement mean that once-immobile "local" places have recently been transcended by "global" flow?" (2000: 19). She asks this rhetorically, for she knows that this cannot be the case in a truly heterogeneous understanding of globalization. We can see through challenging assumptions of human ontologies, even the "immobile local" includes movement across the boundaries of humanity.

Conclusion: Fionnuala's Swansong

A local woman, Bridget, told me as we chatted in an old school house,

> on the one hand you have Shell and their PR machine that never stops, but it's great that there is an alternative side, that gives another side of the story…[people say] this happened here, this happened in Nigeria or some other country and it gives the community a sense that you're not alone, that others have gone through something similar. And at the end of the day the local community will have to get together and decide what the future looks like.

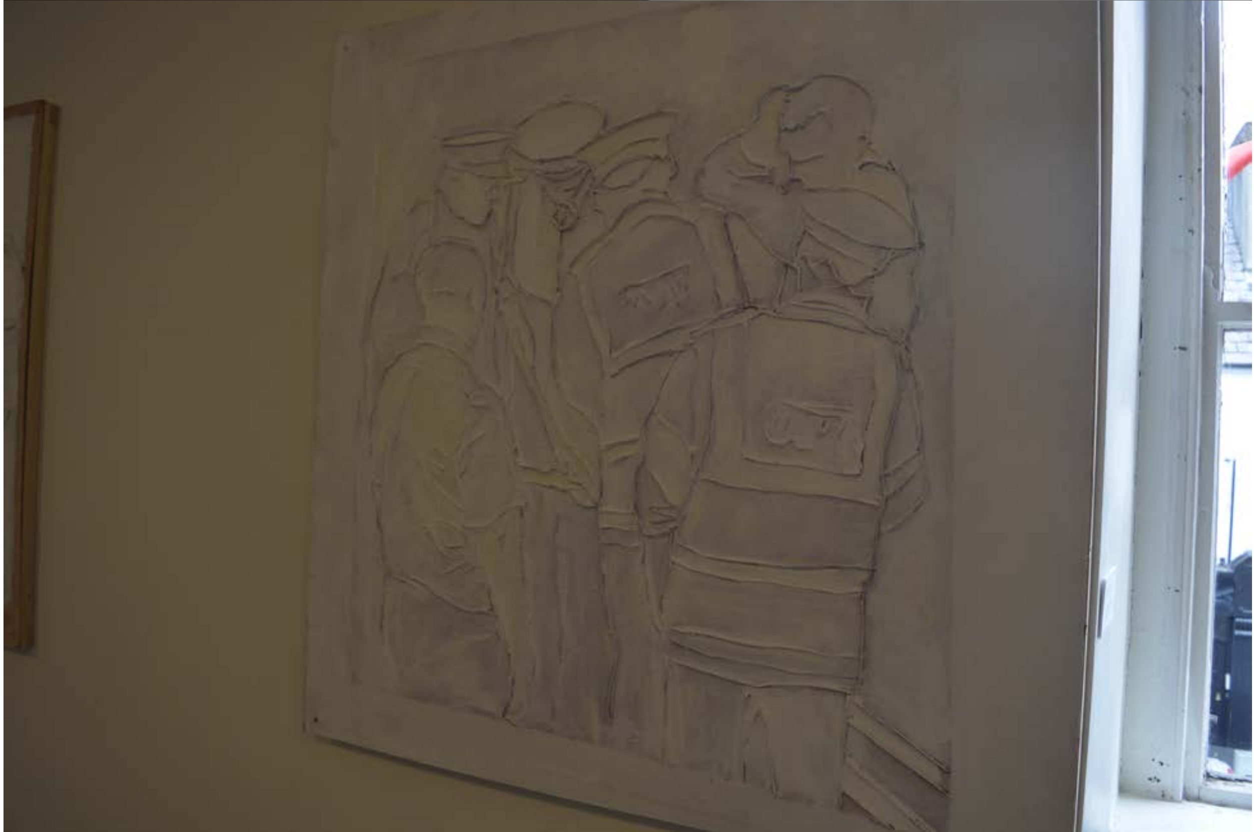
The sense of hope that comes from contextualizing narratives within what the community sees as "global" schemes are a large part of what remains now in Erris. A locally produced pamphlet called *No Consent: Experiences of Challenging the Corrib Gas Project* is presented as a "resource for community campaigns." Its purpose is to frame the Corrib project and its opposition within a larger frame of international activism. Yet, the pamphlet explicitly cites "Local knowledge…has been used to challenge Shell's plans in the area," the guide reads, going on to note that "Residents identify that local knowledge about the place and the people is at the heart of organizing to prevent health and safety risk to the community" (Sullivan: 18). In this statement we can see the ways in which "local" forms of belonging are being directly communicated within narratives of "health and safety," globalization, and industrialization. The experience of those involved in the Corrib protests can then be reframed as a source for guidance and inspiration for similar movements globally.

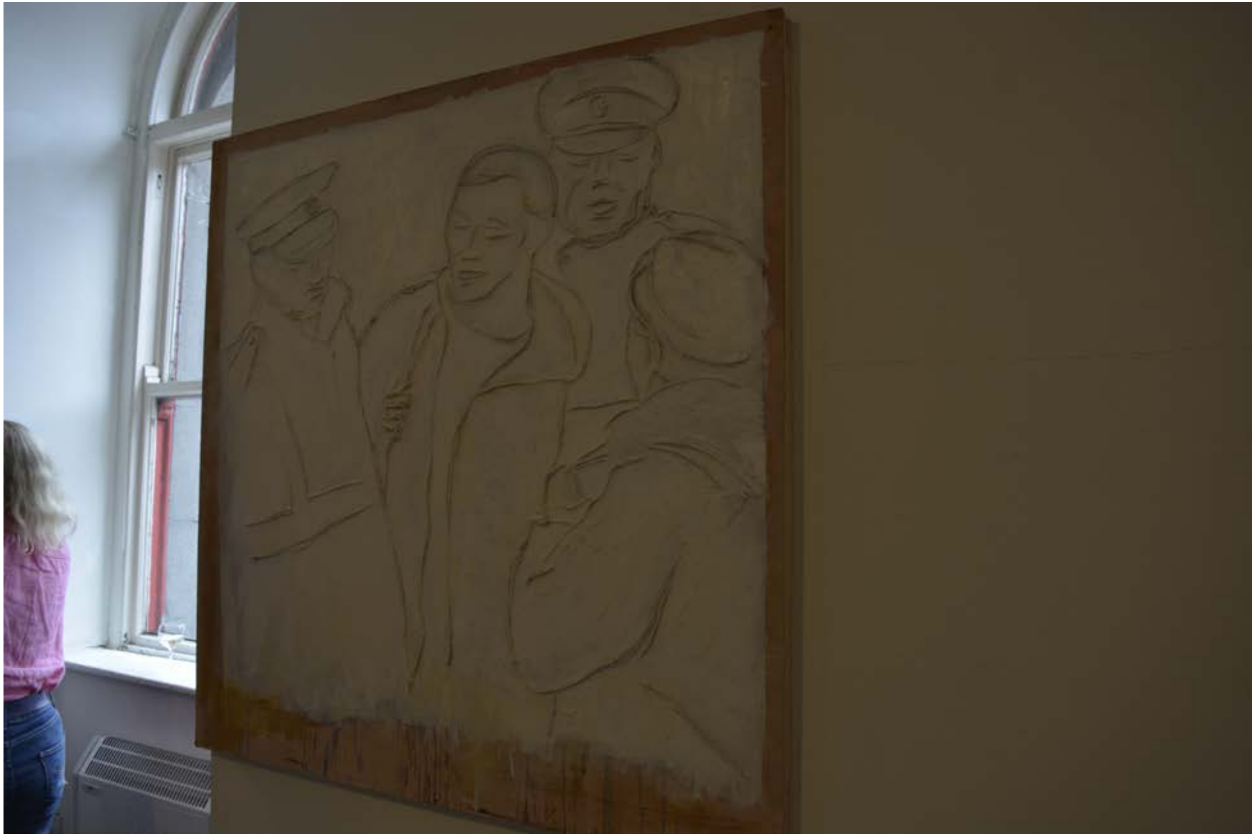
By understanding the way that these recontextualizations happen within narratives of Corrib protestors, we can determine how similar movements may situate themselves in future encounters of "friction" with fossil fuel development. Similar texts to *No Consent* have come out in the past five to ten years, such as *The Price of Our Souls: Gas, Shell, and Ireland* (McCaughan, 2008) and *The Very Hungry Pipeline: Stories from Rossport Solidarity Camp* (Walker), a reflection on how outsider activists can best serve a community's interests and needs. All of these texts serve to position Corrib within the conversation around larger environmental debates, as well as dialogue around indigenous land rights, the economic responsibilities of investing corporations, and the role of a good ally. By looking at how belonging is expressed as a localized experience, as we have done in this project through narratives of "collective experience," possession, and embodiment, we can understand how those experiences are positioned within the terms necessary to communicate globally.

A Memory of Corrib

> You know when you look at something for a long time, until it blurs in front of you, and then you look onto a white background? That image imprints there, just for a moment. That is what I wanted to capture in these pieces.

An Irish artist, Tadhg McGrath, who also acted as an active protestor during the height of the Corrib Gas conflict was explaining to me his new art project. His artistic interpretation of the last 15 years of protesting uses photographs and stills from videos. He then recreated these photos in wire on a white canvas. Then, the entire image is covered in plaster, and painted monochromatically with vibrant reds or sickly yellows.





The result is a striking series of images representing oppression and conflict in symbolic tones, and yet recognizable to those who were present at the depicted events. Some scenes are actually iconic and unmistakable to community members. But for the rest of us, the series speaks of recovering from a life-changing encounter. When you look at something for so long, and so hard, when it impacts you and sometimes traumatizes you, you see it even when you look away.

However, the image is monochromatic and skeletal, understood only as a still in the narrative of images running through the observer's head. But, talking to Tadhg, that's what he thinks makes the project so impactful. It is entirely situated in a local situation; events and people instantly recognizable to community members and activists. I arrived at the art show with an activist from Erris, and he immediately pointed to his outline in one of the plaster paintings, explaining to me what had happened on that day. And yet, the decontextualization of these images from their narrative of localized experience allows their meanings to be recontextualized as critiques of power, of government, of fossil fuels, or something altogether new. This, Tadhg says, is what he hopes will come from the project. A means of communicating the hardship of Erris to people everywhere who can relate to being oppressed, or beaten down. He wants to even show it in America someday to Native American tribes, hoping they will connect with such a narrative.

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Appendix A:

Informant List (2017):

Liam
James
Aoife
Bridget
Cillain
Clare
Colin
John
Padraig
Saoirse
James
Thomas

Appendix B: Reference Photos

Sruwaddacon Bay (Gilbert, 2016)

Sruwaddacon Bay (Gilbert, 2016)

Sruwaddacon Bay (Gilbert, 2016)

TBM Fionnuala (*Tunnel Boring Machine*, 2012)

TMB Fionnuala (Corrib Gas Update Autumn 2011 – Shell, 2011)

The team involved in overseeing the construction of the TBM pictured with it at the factory in Schwanau.

Shell to Sea [Photography of Shell-Hell].

Corrib Gas Pipeline Proposed Routes (RTE, 2010)

Crosses for hung Ogoni men in Erris, Mayo (Ogoni Crosses, 2009)

Rossport Solidarity Camp (Gathering 09, 2009)

Turf/Peat Cutting in Erris, Co. Mayo (Gilbert, 2013)