

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

TRANSFORMING THE IRISH SPIRIT:  
COLONIALISM THROUGH THE COMMODIFICATION OF 'DRINKWAYS'  
IN EARLY MODERN IRELAND, C.1540-1660

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*Dedicated to my long suffering parents, Betsy & Serpell.*

*Can you believe it? It's finally over!*

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## ABSTRACT

Association between the Irish and *aqua vitæ*, and references to a mysterious ‘usquebaugh’ (or phonetic approximation thereof)—which was the Anglicization used to refer to Ireland’s famed spirit *uisce beatha* (Irish for ‘water of life’)—were subtle but pervasive on the London stage and in the printer’s stalls that encircled St. Paul’s Cathedral around the year 1600. The regularity with which Ireland came up in contemporary English writing and performance is not that surprising. The neighbor island would have been at the forefront of English thought at the dawn of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Officers and soldiers serving the crown were, at the time, still fighting the Nine Years War—the latest rebellion to engulf England’s ‘sister’ kingdom-cum-colony. By 1603 a treaty of surrender had been signed by the leading rebel Irish lord, ensuring that the English colonial project in Ireland could continue apace, and even expand in geographic scope. Why, though, of all things, was it usquebaugh that English playwrights, poets, and chroniclers called on to conjure Ireland in the minds of those consuming their works.

For reasons that will be explored in this dissertation, Ireland’s choice distillate played an important role in the hospitable politics that ensured the survival of English men and women in colonial Ireland. Meanwhile, the promotion of its flow through specific economic forms—the commodification of Irish ‘drinkways’—was seen as essential to the colonial project of effecting a lasting re(-)formation of the troublingly intertwined politics, economy, religion, and social forms of Gaelic(ized) Irish life. The aim of this dissertation is to explore how these larger-scale and longer-term motives interacted with the more immediate bodily needs and social worlds involved in colonization. How did the colonial ideology of those discursively engaged in the

(re)conquest and colonization of Ireland interact with the material reality that those same individuals encountered, lived with, and sought to re(-)form in the emergent colonial world of early modern Ireland. As a study focused on the transformation of an indigenized alcoholic substance into a colonial commodity, this dissertation will also be an exploration of the loaded process by which social worlds ripe with conflicting identities and structural tensions are created and negotiated through the flow of consumables.

The real substance of this study—where primary research is presented to the reader—starts where colonial commentaries often began their discourses on usquebaugh, with the imbibing of a specific beverage and its perceived effects on human physiology. From a more narrow focus on the body, the dissertation expands outward to address that body as a social being within polities of differing sizes and with differing ambitions for external growth and internal consolidation. The resulting analytical model—rather than being an arrow-of-time—is more a spiral that circles back again and again to the same thematic loci, tackling them each time from a different perspective. Each of the three main argumentative chapters takes up the same three subjects—guesting, feasting, and military hosting—each time deepening or expanding our understanding of how these forms of hospitality—and usquebaugh's role within them—played into the colonial world of early modern Ireland.

To accomplish this, the overall dissertation begins, in Chapter 1, with the laying out of a theoretical foundation for approaching the intersection of colonialism and capitalism in early modern Ireland—highlighting the interpretive value of using usquebaugh as a lens for focusing such research. Chapter 2 provides enough of a historical background to contextualize the colonial

actions and interactions examined more closely in the chapters that follow. The chapter goes on to establish the actual material composition of the early modern substance, to clarify what exactly people at the time were consuming under the labels of *uisce beatha* and usquebaugh. Resituating this substance in the world of early modern consumables draws this chapter to a close, helping today's reader better understand how those in the Early Modern understood Ireland's choice spirit.

With Chapter 3, the dissertation descends into a close examination of the innermost workings of the enculturated body in early modern Ireland—focusing on the unwanted bodily intimacies, and effluence, that colonial consumption entailed. In Chapter 4, analysis turns upward and outward to explore the social-self engaged in acts of entangling cross-cultural consumption, revealing how encounter turned to othering as colonial communities expressed their identities and a desire to shield their members from the draw of sociocultural accommodation and change. Chapter 5 takes one last analytical step up and away—from the immediacy of bodily intimacy and directness of social entanglement—rising to the level of “colonialisms” and the systemic abstractions of legislative intervention. This, the final substantive chapter of the dissertation, reveals colonial powers grappling with local practice, trying to bend people and things into ideal forms, while being met with all of the constraints—material, social, cultural—of the worlds they wished to reshape, but of which they themselves were a part.

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## CHAPTER 1 | Introduction

### HISTORY IN (OR RATHER ON) A BOTTLE

Cracking open a bottle of Bushmills Irish Whiskey pulls Ireland’s colonial past into the however unwitting present—revealing just how subtly this past continues to play into that present, while raising enough questions that the curious scholar of the colonial feels bound to take a closer look at the history of Ireland through the lens of this distillate. Most 21<sup>st</sup>-century consumers of this golden-hued liquor—imbibing a mass-marketed brand owned and distributed globally by successive multinational corporations—have no idea of the significance of the year 1608. Nevertheless, their fingertips register the date in prominent embossing on the bottle’s squared sides as they pour themselves a dram. The year comes up again on the bottle’s paper label, this time as part of the logo and trademark of The Old Bushmills Distillery Company Ltd., where the words “Original Grant to Distil” appear beneath a pot still wrapped in the numbers “16” and “08.” A lengthier narrative on the back of the bottle’s tube packaging refers to “official records [that] stretch back to 1608, when the area was granted its license to distil.” Bushmills, it seems, is not shy in laying claim to such an early date of inception, one that predates even the next oldest<sup>1</sup> known distillery in Ireland by nearly a century. How is this possible, and is there more to the history that this corporate narrative invokes than a brand’s claim to antiquity?

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<sup>1</sup> There was a distillery in Dundalk as early as 1708, although records are scant (Townsend 1997). The other major Irish whiskey brands—all produced today at Middleton Distillery in County Cork—only claim on their labels to date to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century: Powers to 1791, Jameson to 1780, Paddy to 1779.

A little investigation verifies the existence of such a grant or license—applicable (albeit only for seven years in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century) within the region of Northern Ireland that is today home to The Old Bushmills Distillery. That document, formally enrolled in the Patent Rolls of Chancery of James I, King of England, reads as follows:

To sir THOMAS PHILLIPPS, knt., and such his assignes, as shalbe allowed by the chiefe governor of Ireland, was graunted on 20th of Apriell, in the sixt yere,<sup>2</sup> lisenche, for the next seaven yeres, within the countie of Colrane, otherwise called O Cahanes countrey, or within the territories called the Rowte, in co. Antrim, by himselfe or his servauntes, to make, drawe, and distill such and soe great quantities of aquavite, usquabagh and aqua composita as he or his assignes shall thinke fitt; and the same to sell, vent, and dispose of to any persons, yeeldinge yerelie the somme of 13s. 4d., etc.; with power to sue, arrest and impleade all persons as shall make any aquavite therein, for such paines, penalties and forfeitures, as are limited in the statute of 3rd and 4th Phillip and Marie, Ch.7, and the same to receive and convert to his or their use, without rendering any account—prohibiting all persons, etc., other than the said sir Thomas, and his assignes, to make, distill, sell or vent same, upon payne of imprisonment, and such fynes as by the chief governor and counsell of Ireland shalbe thought meete; provided this graunt be not prejudiciall to any peers, gentlemen, burgesses, or other persons by said acte excepted; nor to any inhabitant, residinge within the liberties of the countie of Derrie; nor to any license graunted to any persons, to make aquavite within the places before mentioned; and that this lisenche do cease and determine, after the expiration of one yere from the date hereof, upon notice given by the chiefe governor, yf it appeare by any cause that same may prove hurtfull to the commonwealth. (Erck [1608] 1852:477-478)

Reading the 17<sup>th</sup>-century record that Bushmills references in its labeling, a 21<sup>st</sup>-century consumer would be remiss if—having decoded the archaic spelling and legalese—they didn't wonder at some key points of this “patent of monopoly.” Who was this Sir Thomas Phillips,<sup>3</sup> and what was his connection to a region literally named for someone else, “O Cahanes countrey”?

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<sup>2</sup> Sixth year of the reign of James I as King of England, which the edited volume containing this patent interprets as A.D. 1608 (Erck 1852:477-478).

<sup>3</sup> The modern spelling of the name Phillips, which appears in the above license (Horning 2013).

What exactly was he being licensed to distill and sell—“aquavite, usquabagh and aqua composita” not being the most common of spirits available even in today’s most up-market liquor stores? And what is the relation between either this man or the substance he was distilling and Bushmills Irish Whiskey?

The last question is the easiest to address, with hints coming from the Bushmills narrative itself. The company associates itself with this grant and its early date through the shared act of distilling and common geography. The much later Bushmills distillery<sup>4</sup> is situated on the river Bush, in what the grant refers to as “the territories called the Rowte, in co. Antrim.” There is no corporate genealogy to tie The Old Bushmills Distillery Company Ltd. to any operation actually established by Sir Thomas Phillips. This English soldier-turned-servitor<sup>5</sup> actively undertook a number of colonially minded entrepreneurial schemes in this part of Ulster during the first quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, including fishing on the river Bann, redeveloping the town of Coleraine, establishing a brand new plantation<sup>6</sup> town at Newtown Limavady, and possibly brewing beer and ale on those plantation lands. There is, however, no record, archaeological or documentary, of him establishing anything where Bushmills stands today, or of any distilling activities he might have attempted in Coleraine or on his Limavady lands in “O Cahanes cuntry” (Horning 2013:207-208).

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<sup>4</sup> Bottles of Bushmills actually bore the founding date 1784 through the early 1960s (Mulryan 2009).

<sup>5</sup> An individual who, having served the Crown in wartime, became part of subsequent colonization efforts by being granted land confiscated from traitors; particularly in relation to the Nine Years War and the plantation of Ulster in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century (“servitor, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 3 May 2019, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/176711](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/176711)).

<sup>6</sup> In early modern Ireland, “plantation” referred to the colonial model of confiscating Irish lands, dividing them into units administered by English (and Scottish) elites, then settling these into “properly” ordered landscapes populated by colonists drawn from England (and Scotland) who would lead the Irish to civility by the example of their daily lives (Brigden 2000:157; Horning 2013:5).

While the grant betrays just how tangential Bushmills' claim to antiquity is, it also reveals a discernible colonial interest in distilling in Ireland, with special attention paid to something called "usquabagh." This interest was strong enough to lead one persistent agent of colonization—who repeatedly put his own person and wealth on the line to bolster England's colonial project in Ireland—to seek a monopoly over this distillate's production and sale within his colonial domain. At the same time, such interest extended to requiring the "chiefe governor of Ireland"—acting as representative of a London-based Crown—to grant the requested privilege.

The timing of the grant is telling of its deeply colonial origins, as well. Much like Phillips himself, the year 1608 stands at the crossroads of (re)conquest<sup>7</sup> and colonization in Ireland. A year earlier, in the autumn of 1607, the major figures who had risen up against that London-based Crown in the Nine Years War (1593–1603) left Ireland for the Catholic Continent in search of the freedom and support to further their cause. Over time, their temporary move grew into permanent exile and came to be known as the "Flight of the Earls"—historiographically marking the end of an ostensibly independent Gaelic Ireland (Brigden 2001:358; Canny 2001:172-175). The year directly following this grant, 1609, marked the official implementation of the Ulster Plantation. This simultaneously profit-driven and reform-minded undertaking saw men like Sir Thomas Phillips, and the corporate craft guilds of London, attempt—at the behest of the London-based Crown and its representative in Dublin—the ordered settlement and material

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<sup>7</sup> This hybrid construction has been chosen to refer to English colonial military activity in Ireland in the Early Modern to highlight that these activities were simultaneously novel undertakings occurring within their own historical moment, and the actions of colonial agents who were all-too-aware of the medieval precedents shaping their early modern world.

exploitation of designated tracts in six of the nine counties of Ulster, using colonists drawn from across the Irish Sea. Their colonization scheme was aimed at bringing to order peoples and places previously ruled by Gaelic lords who, like the O’Cahan mentioned in the grant, had had their lands “escheated,” or confiscated, as traitors to the London-based Crown (Horning 2013:183-194).

Aspects of both the content of Phillips’s grant—demonstrating a desire to intervene in and control the production and sale of a commodity<sup>8</sup>—and the context of its granting—given Phillips’s other Irish entrepreneurial endeavors within a colonial scheme featuring corporations as colonizing agents—paint early modern Ireland as a textbook example of the intertwining of capitalism and colonialism in the expansion of European states. Phillips was not alone among agents of colonization in engaging with the commodity form of Ireland’s choice distillate. In 1602, a letter passed between the colonial president of Munster and the English secretary of state that accused a different soldier-turned-servitor in Ireland, Moyses Hill, of being involved in a scheme to sell “usquebaff” that he himself was counterfeiting (Mahaffy [1602] 1912:507; Bigger 1907:99-100; Horning 2013:208). These (however dishonest) entrepreneurial endeavors among colonizers stood in contrast to the purported practice, among “the rebellious part of the population” in the Ireland of 1632, of “mak[ing] usquebagh or strong *aqua vit*” that was then “distributed to rebels and outlaws” (Mahaffy [1632] 1903:169). The latter usquebaugh took a decidedly noncommodity form, as it was distributed, rather than being sold. It would be easy to

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<sup>8</sup> Here meaning a substance or object produced in order to be directly exchanged, and whose exchange garners quantifiable and immediate material (often monetary) capital, rather than more abstract social capital (Appadurai 1986:19; Kopytoff 1986:68).

interpret all of this as evidence of little more than the colonial imposition of a profit-driven capitalist economic form on a subject land, a process seen as inherent to the growth of the “modern world-system” (Delle 1999b). What the current study aims to do—rather than cataloguing the spread of a capitalist “world-economy”—is to anthropologically interrogate the historical process of usquebaugh’s colonial commodification (or attempted commodification), of which only a small part is captured in the 1608 grant.

Usquebaugh—as the English transliterated *uisce beatha*<sup>9</sup>—was a substance that permeated the early modern English imaginary of a land they strove to conquer and colonize throughout the 16th and 17th centuries. It was referenced, and associated specifically with Ireland, in everything from geographies of empire (Speed 1612), to antiquarian and natural histories of Ireland (Hartlib [1652] 1659; Ware [1654] 1705), epic poems of (re)conquest (Derricke 1581), courtly satires written for the London stage (Marston 1604a, 1604b), home health manuals (Plat 1602), even a pharmacopeia published by the Royal College of Physicians of London (1618). As this study will demonstrate, usquebaugh was equally a part of the lived colonial experience in early modern Ireland—a substance that became indispensable to the physical (re)conquest and colonization of the kingdom.

The substance became, as will be shown, a commodity produced for sale in its own right, and part of an emerging world of commodified hospitality that was promoted to serve the needs of those colonizing Ireland (although such establishments served everyone in this colonial

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<sup>9</sup> A direct Irish translation of the Latin term *aqua vitae* [“water of life”], which was applied broadly to potable distillates in the Early Modern (“usquebaugh, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 17 April 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/220682](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/220682), Wilson 2006).

world). The goal of this study is to explore *why* usquebaugh in particular was targeted for this commodification. The study's assertion is that this economic change, rather than being a simple manifestation of capitalism's rational colonial profit motive, resulted from the bodily anxieties, political desires, and social worlds that those engaged in the (re)conquest and colonization of Ireland encountered, lived with, and sought to reform in England's "sister" kingdom. Exploring the early modern history of Ireland's choice distillate will, thus, deepen our understanding of the historical intersection of colonialism and emerging capitalism in early modern Ireland in particular, and more broadly as a world historical process.

#### **RELEVANCE: HISTORICAL ANTHROPOLOGY AS ANTHROPOLOGY OF THE PAST**

This study is undertaken as a historical anthropology of the early modern world. As such, its primary analytical focus is on the peoples, places, acts, and substances that populated the world in question—the British Isles from about AD 1540 to around AD 1660. This is not to say that a study so conceived has no relevance for the present. The historical turn in anthropology started from problems observed in the present day, as a quest "to search out the causes of the present in the past" (Wolf [1982] 1997:xv). In so doing, it sought to redress a tendency within ethnographic writing to obscure signs of modernity and change in an effort to portray "allegedly pristine primitivity" (Mintz 1986:xxvii). As a genre within the field, historical anthropology has striven to identify the roots and clarify the historical processes that have given rise to social structures, cultural meanings, and modern world-system evident in the author's anthropological

present (Wolf [1982] 1997:xv; Mintz 1986:xxx; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:45; Stoler 2002:9).

Ireland has not escaped the notice of this anthropological genre, although work in the style just described has typically been undertaken by American historical archaeologists working there (Horning 2006:188). James Delle, in his comparison of “Colonial Spatial Processes in Ireland and Jamaica,” argued that the most appropriate disciplinary agenda for historical archaeologists, as anthropologists, was tracing the development of inequitable social phenomena in the world today. This could be accomplished, as he demonstrated in his own work on 16<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland, by linking the archaeologist’s site-based material culture research to the colonial expansion of global capitalism (Delle 1999a, 1999b). Charles Orser’s work on race in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland fits well into the mode of inquiry Delle advocated. Orser (2004:200-202) traced the origins of more recent racializations back to colonial efforts begun in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, and showed how concepts of community difference were structured around a clear idea of “race” as early as the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

These earlier studies of Ireland did not question the direct connection between “modern” social forms and systems of understanding and those at play in the early modern world. More recent historical anthropologies of the colonial have taken a more measured approach. Some caution the researcher to be open to having his or her assumptions about the colonial—both as it happened and as it is remembered or imagined to connect with the present—called into question (Stoler 2002:20). The Bushmills narrative presented at the beginning of this chapter makes it clear that an open mind is needed to explore the role alcohol played in the early modern

(re)conquest and colonization of Ireland. The same can be said of approaching the oft-paired historical processes of colonialism and capitalism; it is necessary to question whether and to what extent either is evident in the historical record, and how their respective developments are related in the case of early modern Ireland (Horning 2006:187).

Other recent work calls on scholars of the colonial to be conscious of just how heavily imaginaries built up around past colonizations have played and continue to play into later consciousnesses (Horning 2006; Dietler 2010:22-23). This has occurred in multiple layers in the case of Ireland. Scholar and failed Ulster colonist Sir Thomas Smith called directly upon what was then being rediscovered about the Roman Empire by Renaissance humanists to theorize and implement a reform-minded colonization of Ireland (Jardine 1993:65). Fast-forwarding to the present day, early modern colonial events and individuals—including those touched on in the current study—continue to be called on in the construction and expression of conflictual identities in Northern Ireland (Horning 2007:111). Within this historical imaginary the years 1170,<sup>10</sup> 1541,<sup>11</sup> and 1607 are read as moments that ever more sharply divided the Gaelic (read Catholic) Irish past that preceded them from subsequent British (read Protestant) colonial history (Horning 2006:183). Ongoing sectarian conflict in Northern Ireland is thus portrayed as rooted in this early modern colonial experience (Horning 2007:110). Not surprisingly, the (sectarian) classificatory schemes that engage this early modern Irish history extend to modern liquor

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<sup>10</sup> The year marking the advent of the Norman ‘conquest’ of Ireland, with the arrival of Richard “Strongbow” FitzGilbert de Clare and his Cambro-Norman forces from Wales, and the subsequent subjugation of Strongbow and a number of local Irish chiefs to Henry II (king of England) as lord of Ireland (Smith 2000:36).

<sup>11</sup> The year marking the elevation, by Henry VIII, of the lordship of Ireland to a kingship, held by himself and his heirs in addition to the Crown of England (Lennon and Gillespie 2000:50).

brands. Bushmills—both because of its location in Northern Ireland, and by dint of the colonial implications of the year 1608—is labeled a Protestant whiskey. All those distilled in the Republic of Ireland—Jameson, Powers, Paddy—are safely Catholic in persuasion. Such associations persist into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, no matter the arguments made against them (Liquor.com 2014).

Given just how profoundly and inescapably the Early Modern, and how it is imagined, plays into current identities and associations—even patterns of alcohol consumption—in and related to Ireland, care must be taken in approaching this period and questions of the colonial in Irish history. A historical anthropology of usquebaugh is well poised to accomplish this, but must take care to find an approach that attends to the shortcomings and potentials of analytical models used by those who, writing in this anthropological genre, have similarly sought to explore the historical intersection of colonialism and capitalism.

#### **ANTHROPOLOGY’S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE HISTORICAL INTERSECTION OF COLONIALISM AND CAPITALISM**

This intersection of colonialism and capitalism was initially portrayed—by historians and historical sociologists establishing their respective fields’ interest in the subject—as the development and global spread of capitalism by means of European colonialism (Wallerstein 1974; Braudel [1979] 1992a, [1979] 1992b). Anthropology’s disciplinary origins in the study of “primitive” societies—those seen to be vanishing in the face of contact with and conquest by a capitalist “modernity”—meant earlier ethnographers, who were sometimes supported by colonial governments, de-emphasized evidence of colonialism and capitalism in their classic portrayals of

“traditional” communities (Mintz 1986:xxvii). This did not, however, preclude their interest in the economic as it manifested itself within the non-Western societies they studied. Taking their cues from Bronislaw Malinowski’s *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922) and Marcel Mauss’s *The Gift* (1925), European anthropologists have demonstrated a deep interest in explaining how things move through society and how this movement both reflects and forms the essential interpersonal ties that constitute social worlds (Graeber 2001).

Mauss’s ([1925] 2000) classic work of ethnology, *The Gift*, downplays colonial impacts while focusing on what Mauss presents as the current practices of non-Western societies. The “Old World” was where Mauss took a historical turn, looking at gifting in the legal systems of ancient Rome, South Asia, and the Germanic peoples. His “Moral Conclusions” are addressed to capitalist societies, but as distinct from those where the gift dominates as an economic form, and colonialism is again absent from the discussion (Mauss [1925] 2000). Even when the work of such disciplinary founders as Malinowski began to address colonialism at play in their subject societies, British social anthropologists eschewed a historical perspective on European colonialism. They favored a tight focus on the present, distancing themselves disciplinarily from the more established fields of archaeology and folklore studies that obsessed over evolution and diffusion (Lewis 2014:84).

In 1972, an article appeared in *Current Anthropology* that sought to define colonialism for anthropology, in an effort to promote its explicit theorization and expand interest in its study in a comparable way across human time and space. Yet in its push for universal applicability, “A Definition of Colonialism” did not specifically address the relationship between capitalism and

colonialism in the modern world (Horvath 1972). The intersection of these phenomena would, however, become a major theme of the Americanist historical anthropologies that emerged in the 1980s, responding as they were to Wallerstein and his “modern world-system.” These anthropological works specifically set out to explore what other historically minded social scientists had glossed over in their studies of this global historical process: how the intersection of colonialism and capitalism impacted local peoples and cultures pulled into this modern world-system (Wolf [1982] 1997; Mintz 1986). This has remained a popular theme—even with the profound differences in theoretical orientation discussed below—among anthropologists taking up the call to explore the historical roots of phenomena they witness firsthand in the field or know of from the historical record (Sahlins 1987, 1993; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992; Stoler 2002).

## **APPROACHES TO COLONIALISM**

In their seminal global-historical works of the 1970s, Fernand Braudel<sup>12</sup> and Immanuel Wallerstein both approached modern European colonialism, which encompasses English activity in Ireland from the 16th through 18th centuries, as fundamentally an economic phenomenon serving the Europe-centered capitalist world-economy—Wallerstein’s modern world-system—which was the focus of each of their analyses (Wallerstein 1974; Braudel [1979] 1992a, [1979] 1992b). When Braudel broke away from his discussion of developments in the European

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<sup>12</sup> While the version of Braudel’s *Civilization and Capitalism* series cited here was based on heavy revisions that resulted in a new French edition of all three volumes in 1979, the first volume of this series was originally published in French in 1967, with the first English translation in 1973 (Reynolds 1992).

heartland—the “core” of his world-economy—to attend to the colonial “periphery,” he portrayed a world in which Europe spread and the various “‘cultures’ and primitive peoples” receded. While some “semi-civilizations” persisted, the ideal was reached when natives simply made way for Europe—by choice, force, or open conflict—leaving behind “unoccupied territory” (Braudel [1979] 1992a:98-102).

Within this model, the first order of colonial business was that the “land was brought under control”; all else, from industry to trade, followed on from this. Such a pattern could be maintained because European powers were “firmly controlling overseas development and making all the rules” for “colonies [that] only existed to serve the wealth, prestige and strength of their mother-countries.” To accomplish this, a European “mother country” made sure that her colonies’ “trade and indeed their entire life was under constant surveillance” (Braudel [1979] 1992b:390-412). Wallerstein summed up the three-part historical process that established this capitalist world-economy in similar, if more abstracted, terms. It all began with successful territorial expansion, after which European powers could turn their attention to labor control for the sake of production, which required and resulted in a strong state apparatus in the European core capable of extending control over its colonial periphery (Wallerstein 1974:38).

The historical anthropology that initially developed in the wake of this work was very much a response to it. Eric Wolf’s project in *Europe and the People Without History* was to reassert the continued presence and economic reactions of native peoples to the world-economy (Wolf [1982] 1997:xii-xiii,79). In *Sweetness and Power*, Sidney Mintz takes both Braudel and Wallerstein explicitly to task for their “cavalier...disregard” of Spain’s role in the history of

Caribbean sugar production (Mintz 1986:33). While critical of how Braudel and Wallerstein portrayed the peoples and history of the periphery (the traditional haunt of anthropologists), both anthropologists still drew heavily on the model of a modern world-system developed in the earlier works. Wolf ([1982] 1997:76-79) followed them in characterizing the era of expanding European presence and influence around the globe as dominated by the “rise and spread of capitalism,” although his work focused on how “one mode, capitalism, interacted with other [economic] modes to achieve its present dominance”. Sticking even more closely to the world-systems model, Mintz (1986:xxix) examined the role that colonial sugar production, and its subsequent consumption, played in capitalism’s global growth.

Thus even in their critiques, both of these historical anthropologies—and others that followed in a similar vein—perpetuated the earlier portrayal of colonialism-in-the-periphery as one preformed, omnipotent force engaged in service to another, namely capitalism (Trouillot 2003). For Wolf, capitalism was comparable to a living creature, or disease, “incubated” in Europe, from whence it spread its influence globally as an already fully formed historical agent, a colonizer in its own right (Wolf [1982] 1997:x-xi). Mintz (1986:xv-xvi) similarly wrote of the “skeins of imperial control,” as having been “spun in...European and North American centers of world power,” before being deployed to dictate the conditions of life in the colonies. James Delle’s work on early modern Ireland, while acknowledging that capitalism is itself a changing phenomenon, tended toward a monolithic reading of that phenomenon and the “capitalist elites” that drove it. He made explicit his economic approach by asserting that colonial endeavors were best understood as “a process of capitalist expansion.” Within such a framework, state

efforts to pacify local populations and control exchange systems were simply the natural moves of capitalists driven by economic imperatives to create the ideal social and material conditions for commodity production in colonies. Colonialism is no more, in this reading, than a tool of the global march of capitalism and the modern world-system (Delle 1999a).

Audrey Horning has taken this sort of historical anthropology-archaeology—with its “totalizing narratives” of material inequality and socioeconomic domination-and-resistance—to task for its tendency to muffle individual and local negotiations of life at the, however inequitable, intersection of colonialism and capitalism. The problem, as she sees it, is that such approaches do little more than describe a globally repeated schema of colonized social structures meeting with the inevitable spread of colonizing capitalist structures. “Humanity”—the interpretive space where human agency and lived experience can be perceived in the midst of vast historical processes—has been lost in this analytical turn. What is more, this mode of inquiry has not led to the rigorous interrogation of the “messiness” of either colonialism or capitalism as entangled sociocultural processes unfolding in and through the lives and actions of actual people (Horning 2011).

Ann Laura Stoler (2002:22-23) has leveled a similar critique at anthropologies of colonialism written in the world-systems vein. For her, the problem originates in these works’ single-minded drive to document the impacts of colonial capitalism on trajectories of change among subject peoples in the periphery—“anthropology’s ethnographic subject.” Their tidy delineation of the “colonized” has led such studies to paint colonialism more as an abstract structure than as the historically unfolding sum of human concerns and actions, while colonial

agents (“colonizers”) all but disappear under the gloss of “state.” Anthropologists who unquestioningly use categories like “colonizer” and “colonized” to define their subject matter “have bought in to colonial scripts themselves” (Stoler 2002:216). In not better interrogating how something as seemingly basic as these categories was actually deployed by living people in everyday life—in other words, by glossing over the lived humanity of every aspect of the colonial situation—scholars have reinforced exactly the image of colonial society that colonial powers sought to project. As Marshall Sahlins (1993:15) put it, what the world-systems avante garde failed to deconstruct—however much they shifted the focus of study toward inequity in the periphery—is the culture that is “Western imperialism”.

What research like Stoler’s (2002:10,23-24,213) has demonstrated, by casting an ethnographic eye at documentary traces of lived colonial experience, is how far projected imperial images have diverged from reality. Just as there was nothing “natural” about the divided social order that colonialists strove (and generally failed) to establish and maintain, so there was nothing approaching omnipotence, or the omniscience it would have required, on the part of colonial powers—themselves the sum of diverse agentive parts—that, nevertheless, benefited from the intergroup inequity that defines situations as colonial to begin with (Horvath 1972:46). This may seem like academic nitpicking, a matter of interpretation. It is, however, an interpretive stance with real consequences for heritage, identity making, and modern politics in a place like Northern Ireland. Here, as Horning has pointed out again and again, individuals and communities descended from both “colonizer” and “colonized”—as overseas academics may uncritically label

them for the sake of their own politics—search for a way beyond the sectarianism and violence that is, at least discursively, tied to this early modern past (Horning 2006, 2007, 2011).

Such historical ethnographies of the colonial past do not deny the existence of global historical phenomena marked by unbalanced intergroup power dynamics. Nor do they seek to downplay the changes that characterize the history of the people and places that were part of colonial worlds. They do differ markedly from the world-systems approach in that, rather than seeking to reaffirm an expected model through case studies, they assume colonial consequences that both challenged the desires of colonial powers and diverge from the expectations of world-systems scholars (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:130; Dietler 2010:18-19). Those who work in this vein strive for an honesty toward the messiness of the past (Horning 2011).

To capture this messiness, such studies expand their sights beyond the resistive agency of peoples disenfranchised by colonial projects. They interrogate the vulnerabilities and limits of colonial regimes themselves by considering the often conflicting policies and situational concerns and abilities of the individuals and groups promoting and attempting to implement the same (Fabian 2000:4,8-9; Stoler 2002:10; Dietler 2010:59). They demonstrate just how “situated” the “agency” of even those in positions of colonial power was (Dietler 2010:56). This move is not meant to ignore the experiences of groups disempowered by colonial projects, but to better understand the complexity of those inequitable colonial worlds that they collectively inhabited with the relatively more empowered agents of colonialism (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:12). Such “symmetrical analysis”—looking at how colonizers and colonized co-constituted each other, and just as often transgressed such boundaries within colonial worlds—is meant to

demonstrate the interconnectedness and ambivalence inherent to these worlds (Stoler 2002:40; Dietler 2010:10,64-65).

#### **APPROACHES TO CAPITALISM (AND ECONOMY MORE BROADLY CONSTRUED)**

As mentioned, the economism of the world-systems turn in the historical social sciences was not anthropology's first foray into studying economies. Such research has a deep history within the field, and was a focus of publication and source of intradisciplinary debate throughout the 1950s and 1960s (Graeber 2001:9-12). World-systems anthropology, of the type pursued by Wolf and Mintz, differed from the economic anthropology that had developed in the wake of Karl Polanyi in that it shifted focus from types of distribution to modes of production (Wolf [1982] 1997; Mintz 1986; Graeber 2001:11). This was fitting, as Wallerstein's inspiration in conceiving of a modern (capitalist) world-system was Karl Marx's discussion of "a world-embracing commerce and a world-embracing market" in *Capital* (Wallerstein 1974:77). For all this talk of commerce and markets, an analysis of the capitalist mode of production and the labor relations it entailed lay at the heart of Marx's ([1867] 1978) extended critique of capitalism. This world-systems approach, in anthropology as elsewhere, did not simply focus on production within economies, but insisted on the causal primacy of production (Mintz 1986:194-195; Wolf 1997:77-79).

Even before Wolf had begun writing *Europe and the People Without History* (1974), Marshall Sahlins delivered a series of lectures (1973), eventually published as *Culture and Practical Reason* (1976), that pointedly criticized the use of Marx's historical materialism as a

basis for anthropological inquiry (Sahlins 1976:xi; Wolf [1982] 1997:xvi). Sahlins argued that Marx's rejection of the primacy of culture, in favor of a model that deemed bare-bones economic production to be the foundation of all social order, naturalized and universalized what was actually just the cultural code and structure of capitalism itself. This was especially true of Marx's treatment of consumption, which drove this portion of the economic process beyond analysis by boiling "use-value" down to "natural needs" (Sahlins 1976:151,213-216). This critique bears a striking similarity to Stoler's (2002:216) insights into how world-systems analyses reinforce the images that empires themselves wanted to project to the world.

The divergent foci of prior economic anthropologies, concerned with exchange, and Marxist scholars, attending to production, have given the impression of two distinct types of society in world history. If scholars set out to explore the local impacts of "incorporation into a global [capitalist] order," they have tended to focus their analysis on the labor of production to understand the changes that result from colonial forces inexorably pulling communities into market economics (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:6,127-154). If, on the other hand, they sought to demonstrate alternative systems lying beyond the geographic or historical edges of the capitalist world-system, or buried deep within the private spheres of the modern world-system itself, they have typically focused on exchange (Malinowski [1922] 1984; Mauss [1925] 2000; Appadurai 1986; Kopytoff 1986).

How, with such a bifurcation in the anthropology of economy, can a study interpretively overcome the problematic division of colonial worlds into mutually exclusive communities of colonizer:colonized when exploring the intersection of capitalism and colonialism as historical

processes? Overcoming these dueling false dichotomies is particularly important when thinking about a place and time—such as the British Isles in the 16th and 17th centuries—where a long history of colonial entanglement blurred the lines of colonizer:colonized, and when both the geographic scope and sociocultural form of the modern (capitalist) world-system was only just emerging (Johnson 1996; Duffy 2000; Smith 2000).

### **COMBATING THE “SUBDUING TENDENCIES” OF THE WORLD-SYSTEMS APPROACH: ANTHROPOLOGIES OF INTIMATE AND ENTANGLED CONSUMPTION**

One way out of the dilemma of the dueling economic anthropologies of “the West” and “the rest” is to recenter analysis around consumption—that culturally steeped aspect of human economic activity that Marx reduced to a naturalized need whose form and content resulted from nothing more than the “techno-logic” of human labor. A focus on consumption—that does not lose sight of the flow of things through production and exchange—has the added potential of reasserting the “humanity” of lived experience within colonial situations. In rejecting historical materialism’s insistence on the primacy of production, such a research model insists on the recovery of culture as a causal factor in, rather than superficial consequence of, historical change (Sahlins 1976:155-158; Dietler 2010:55-58).

Using consumption as an entry-point into analyses of colonial worlds in no way implies the simple cataloguing of native engagement in new economic forms to prove how mutually beneficial, and seemingly non-colonial, these worlds could be (Gillespie 2009). Colonial projects of social reform among subject peoples inevitably included a desire to change how subject people related to objects. Civilization was, for reform-minded colonizers at least, built on the

properly ordered consumption of the right things. This included “freeing” the colonized from “tribal entanglements” by inducing a shift to the consumption of commodities within a cash economy. But subject people were not without a certain amount of situated agency—albeit an agency highly dependent on how and to what extent colonial control or social reforms had penetrated everyday life—in deciding how “civilizing goods” were brought into local worlds of consumption (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:41,144; Dietler 2005, 2010:21,26,56,62-63,189-190). Even the agents of colonial schemes, who were themselves expected to uphold “civilizing” models of properly ordered consumption, improperly related to the wrong things in ways that drew the corrective imperial gaze of the powers they were ostensibly serving (Stoler 2002:10).

When consumption is viewed as an engine of material entanglement, its analysis can certainly demonstrate how the integration of “civilizing goods” into local worlds draws local consumers and communities into larger political-economic worlds and, in the case of the last five hundred years, into global-historical processes. Close consideration of consumption and its effects also reveals the messiness and unintended consequences resulting from individuals and groups living in colonial worlds, breaking through the predictability of presentist approaches that reduce studies of local pasts to yet more confirmation of the inevitable impacts of global historical processes. This turn is not meant to deny the impacts, but to challenge the agentive force given to global historical processes in such interpretations (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:5-6,41; Dietler 2010:26,18,74,189-190).

When social phenomena, like consumption, are analyzed as the material actions of individuals and groups, rather than expressions of abstract entities like “cultures” or “peoples,”

consumption is revealed as one of those concrete, local “micropractices” that are sedimented over time into the potentially global “macrohistorical processes” that the historical social sciences so love to study. Even as a sedimentation taking on a definite form, this long-term change need not be uniform in time or space in terms of its constituent layers and the historical particularities that define them. Understanding the whole unique form requires an analysis of these constituent particularities, if the whole is to be compared meaningfully to other similar historical forms (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:33,38; Dietler 2010:19,65).

Consumption, as understood here, is a materially grounded practice that involves bodies, in groups or alone, engaging sensorily with a physical world of things. This means that the material groundedness of consumption is not limited to the physical qualities of the things being consumed, although these should be considered in any study (Dietler 2010:13,21,53), but extends to the bodies doing the consuming. Control of how physical bodies consumed material things was of as much concern to colonial officials as was the introduction of “civilizing goods” into subject societies. This re(-)forming<sup>13</sup> of bodily engagements with the material world—altering the outward form that consumption took in terms of “dress, comportment, and table manners”—was as much a part of the emergence of modernity in Europe itself as it was a colonial concern (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:231; Johnson 1996).

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<sup>13</sup> The verb choice here would depend on one’s position in respect to the action in question. The reformer would see their action as one of ‘reforming,’ a verbiage with abstractly positive connotations. Meanwhile, the object of reformation might well experience this same action as one of ‘re-forming,’ entailing an impactful material change in their immediate self or world (“reform, v.1.,” *OED Online*, accessed 21 April 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/160988](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/160988); “re-form, v.2.,” *OED Online*, accessed 21 April 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/160989](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/160989)). To highlight the dual nature of this action—as both ideational and material, and varying based on positionality—the word is written as re(-)form from this point forward in the following study.

More than just a target of colonial control, the body was the epicenter of lived colonial experience for every individual physically inhabiting or moving through colonial worlds, wherever they were situated in that inequitable sociopolitical landscape (Dietler 2010:13). While the body has long served as a metaphor<sup>14</sup> for understanding the social, and been studied as such, it is also the site of visceral mediations between the self and the world of people and things beyond the body's physical boundaries (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:72,90). The crossing of boundaries-of-the-self can include anything from physical ingestion and evacuation (eating, defecating, sexual intercourse) to the forming of strong emotional attachments. Anthropologies that have focused on the physicality of colonial bodies have revealed just how concerned colonial powers were with precisely these visceral mediations, especially those involving sexual contact and the affective bonds of the domestic sphere. What these studies have demonstrated is that control over boundaries-of-the-self was seen, by colonial powers, as fundamental to the maintenance of the clear community boundaries they so desired in the colonial worlds they oversaw. Intimacy across the desired colonizer:colonized divide was so persistent and difficult an issue to control that it became a touchstone of anxiety and the object of policy-making that came to characterize modern colonialism (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:71-78,216-229; Stoler 2002).

In the more recent (19<sup>th</sup>- to 20<sup>th</sup>-century) historical contexts that have been the typical setting for these anthropological studies of colonial bodies and intimate experiences, the sexual boundary-crossing of physical/social boundaries has been a favorite focus. The documentary

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<sup>14</sup> The term "body politic," likening a nation to the human body, has been in use in the English language since at least the 15<sup>th</sup> century ("body politic, *n.*," *OED Online*, accessed 22 May 2019, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/273303](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/273303)).

records of these times and places themselves point to how worrisome colonial regimes found such boundary-blurring acts of intimacy. Law and biomedicine, and even advice literature, combined to reinforce a negative view of sexual boundary-crossing in colonial contexts, highlighting its perceived impact on the ideal (i.e., racially differentiated) colonial population makeup, and emphasizing the purported risk it posed to community health from the transmission of diseases associated with colonized races (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:216,226-229; Stoler 2002:2,17).

Colonial regimes desired their agents on the ground in colonies, and on colonial fringes, to be the rational individuals—self-contained and self-controlled—that Europeans have imagined themselves to be since at least the Enlightenment (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:188-190; Fabian 2000:3-4). Excessive sexual and emotional intimacies—meaning any that extended beyond the bounds of the intraracial, procreative family—were indicative of a loss of control, and had to be curtailed or concealed (Stoler 2002). This imperial fixation on bodily control was not limited to the sexual, although the weight given to this aspect from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century developed hand-in-hand with emerging biomedical definitions of race (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:215-218).

Bodies are highly penetrable and unstable things. Even the most chaste individual must typically take in food and drink and excrete feces and urine on a regular basis for continued survival. It was problematic enough that living in a colony, or exploring its fringes, inevitably left colonizers reliant to some extent on local foods, either acquired and prepared by their own hands, or provided through entangling relationships with the locally colonized (Fabian

2000:47,71-72; Stoler 2002:198-199). The dependence that this reality revealed on the part of supposedly self-possessed and bounded colonizing communities was matched by the vulnerability of individual bodies engaged in alimentation in colonial worlds. The intimate boundary-crossings involved in physically ingesting food and drink could themselves disturb the human body, resulting in discomfort, illness, and even death (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:79).

An inability to physically contain ingestion or excretion, or control their proper flow, left a person in an “infrasocial state.” Such a person was suddenly a “less than fully realized” human being, given how autonomous control of these bodily functions marks off infancy from physical prime from dotage, especially in the West (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:73). It comes as no surprise, then, that individuals writing about the “heroic” exploration of Africa took care to cast debilitating illnesses like dysentery (severe diarrhea) as setbacks that, however inevitable, could be overcome with personal fortitude and hygiene, which included eating the right thing. Certain illnesses held immense potential as a source of embodied anxiety in colonial contexts. When cures involved the consumption of psychoactive (mind-altering) substances—as in the taking of opium to counteract uncontrollable bowels—the further loss of sensorial control became a problem ((Fabian 2000:64-67).

#### CONSUMING ALCOHOL

Another psychoactive consumable that featured prominently in colonial projects—and which the present study uses to better understand the colonial world of Ireland—is alcohol. As a psychoactive substance, alcohol is assigned by scholarly tradition to the medicinal category of

“drug.”<sup>15</sup> There is debate about whether this is a useful categorization, whether alcohol is better understood as a special class of food, and even whether “alcohol” as a collective noun applying to all ethanol-based drinks can be considered a meaningful analytical category (Hunt and Baker 2001:175; Dietler 2006:231). What is certain is that alcoholic beverages are and have been among the most widely used psychoactive substances across the globe and throughout human history. Why specific types of alcohol are consumed to varying degrees in given times and places, and the consequences of this consumption, are questions that deserve attention. Answering them requires careful consideration of the substance being consumed, as well as the social contexts of consumption (Heath 1987).

Alcohol is a slippery substance, and if there are universal physiological processes that link observed “drunken” behavior to the act of drinking ethanol, they have been hard to pin down. Not only are the biological and behavioral effects of consuming alcohol judged differently between cultures—and within a given culture, depending on the social context—they are subject to cultural interpretations as to whether and how they are even linked to the act of drinking (Mandelbaum 1965). To make matters worse for those interested in cultural patterning, the effect that alcohol consumption has on an individual appears to vary not only from culture to culture, but from person to person, and even from drinking episode to drinking episode in the experience of a given individual (Heath 1987). The potential psychoactive effects also encompass polar ends of the emotional spectrum: from relaxation, charitable sociability, and increased courage to heightened anxiety, aggression, and depression (Steele and Josephs 1990).

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<sup>15</sup> Anthropologists studying it participate in the Alcohol and Drug Study Group under the professional aegis of the Society for Medical Anthropology (Hunt and Barker 2001; Marshall et al. 2001).

More nuanced anthropological approaches to drinking do not deny the biochemical effects of alcohol consumption; they simply assert the unavoidable mediation of these effects by the culturally embedded and socially reproduced expectations involved in translating altered cognitive and motor abilities into comprehensible “drunken” behaviors (Critchlow 1986; Heath 1987). To classify alcohol as “embodied material culture” is to acknowledge that the body, with its feelings and movements, exists at the intersection of biology and culture (Hunt and Barker 2001; Dietler 2006). This makes a Material Engagement approach to alcohol potentially fruitful as a theoretical perspective that aims to encompass the co-creative and mutually impactful, as Malafouris and Renfrew (2010:9) put it, “relationships between brains, bodies, and things.” The approach these authors advocate acknowledges the permeability of boundaries, and the mutually constitutive bondings that occur when they are crossed, between what are typically differentiated as the component parts of the “symbiotic triad” of brain-body-thing (Malafouris and Renfrew 2010). This Material Engagement approach nicely parallels the scholarly desire, already discussed, to challenge narratives of neatly bounded colonial communities.

An analytical shift in focus—toward the intimate entanglements surrounding embodied ethanol consumption—holds a profound potential for historical studies of alcohol, especially one interested in interrogating (rather than assuming) the intersection of early modern colonialism and capitalism as emerging historical processes. The essential problem in dealing with alcohol is the same that Sahlins (1976) noted for historical materialism in general. The whole act of consumption, and the economic demand it manifests as, is assumed to be predicated on naturalized, and therefore unquestioned, needs. In alcohol studies, this translates to the inherently

addictive qualities of ethanol, and the biological imperative of alcoholism (i.e., addiction to ethanol) latent in the human animal (Mandelbaum 1965). According to this model, if alcohol of any type is made more available, consumption will go up; people have a predilection for it, no matter the form it takes.

Even when this model is interrogated, if a Marxist (sometimes Engels-ist) approach is substituted, the demand for alcohol is always a matter of production. The answer to increased consumption within the modern world-system is found in supply, possibly driven by the machinations of revenue-seeking governments. Demand has rarely been attributed to shifting fields of consumption that are not really about imposed labor control (or the social release valves necessary to sustain it), or the nutritional needs of industrial production—especially when the focus of analysis has been on Europe, or the European diaspora in the periphery (Thompson 1967; Braudel [1979] 1992a:231-249; Schivelbusch [1980] 1992:152-153; Singer 1986; Smith 2005).

In modern world-system readings of alcohol in colonial settings, the impending alcohol dependency of colonized peoples not only profited Europeans, but drew nonwhites into a colonial trade dependency in order to fill their latent-but-newly realized need for hard liquor (Braudel [1979] 1992a:248-249, [1979] 1992b:118). When colonized people inevitably demonstrated a lack of appropriate control over their consumption of introduced alcohol, colonial powers argued they lacked the basic independence of will required of liberal political subjects. Thus, in imperial contexts, the presence of “heavy drinking” by the colonized served as a justification for colonization—a bitter twist on classic Wallersteinian dependency theory

(Chichester's Ghost 1890; Morgan 1972; Wallerstein 1974:349; Sedgwick 1993; Fraser and Gordon 1997:128-129,136). Such studies of alcohol within the modern world-system are burdened with the same "subduing tendencies" discussed for colonial studies more generally, which lead them to downplay the messiness of lived colonial experience and overwrite the contingency of emerging historical processes for the sake of a grand narrative. There is an analytical way out, though—with the theory just discussed, and a choice of subject and methodology to be laid out presently.

## **HOW TO STUDY THE INTIMACIES AND ENTANGLEMENTS OF COLONIAL CONSUMPTION, AND THUS THE RELATIONSHIP OF COLONIALISM TO CAPITALISM IN EARLY MODERN IRELAND**

### DEVELOPING AN ANALYTICAL FOCUS

Having sketched a potential objective focus (usquebaugh) and the "self-conscious theoretical position"<sup>16</sup> from which the current study is being undertaken, the next step is to outline how this project—a historical anthropology attending to the intersection of colonialism and capitalism—will be accomplished methodologically. Questions of where, when, who, and what specifically to research will be considered in light of the studies discussed at length in the last section. The where and when are Ireland and England, circa 1540–1660. An abbreviated historical background of this colonial world will be provided in Chapter 2, to familiarize the reader with the deeply entangled (and interpretively contested) history of these neighboring islands.

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<sup>16</sup> To borrow a phrase from Dietler's 2010 *Archaeologies of Colonialism* (10).

Exactly who is being studied, in terms of group identity, will also be dealt with in this background section. Early modern Ireland presents the researcher with exactly that colonial “messiness” that is of interpretive interest in colonial studies of the type undertaken here (Stoler 2002; Horning 2011). It was a world that defied the tidy organization of populations into mutually exclusive categories of colonizer:colonized. This is not to say that othering was not a part of the colonial project there, or that community boundaries were not a concern for the colonial power, just that this process invoked longer histories of face-to-face entanglement and boundary-making than did many colonial projects bordering the early modern Atlantic (Lennon and Gillespie 2000:50). In this way, the colonial situation in early modern Ireland was not unlike that being studied by Dietler (2010:23) in Mediterranean France.

In choosing such subject matter, the current project represents a deliberate response to the oft-repeated call for historical anthropologies that cast their gaze toward Europe and consider metropolises alongside colonial peripheries (Mintz 1986:xvi; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:30; Stoler 2002:10; Dietler 2010:60). In this case, the core and periphery were so geographically close and historically intertwined that many have argued against the applicability of a colonial model, a debate that will be returned to shortly. While not ignoring the communities that inhabited Ireland before the Elizabethan (re)conquest, this study is most interested in the culturally imbued motivations and socially situated actions of those engaged, discursively and physically, in England’s early modern colonial project to subjugate Ireland and its peoples. It will attend most closely to a group that, while not underrepresented in histories of the period, “have been less often the subjects of colonial ethnographies” (Stoler 2002:23). Its goal is to

interrogate the lived experiences of soldiers and settlers engaged in colonization, to understand how their intimate worlds were entangled with those that they were meant to be re(-)forming, how colonial powers responded to this reality, and what unintended consequences resulted (Dietler 2010:189-190).

Deciding what aspect of that messy colonial world to focus on is an equally important matter. The approach taken must address the problem of scale involved in analyzing the local experiences of individuals negotiating lives (as colonizers, colonized, and everything in between) within complex sociopolitical structures that relate to global historical processes (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:35,39; Stoler 2002:7; Dietler 2010:10,26). This problem in colonial studies is a specific manifestation of a tension that has plagued anthropology: how to balance an analysis of the actions and understandings of individuals with analyses that stress social structure and larger-scale processes (Sahlins 1976; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:14). Resolving this tension requires that the agency of individuals, acting relationally and consequentially as events unfold, be considered in light of their cultural backgrounds and social situations (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:27; Dietler 2010:56). Material culture has always been an important aspect of this situatedness. It is within, through, and against a world of objects and things that individuals and groups act and interact, materially and symbolically (Mintz 1986:xxiv–xxv; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:35,130,139; Sahlins 1993:11-12).

Relationships to things were central to how colonial powers defined themselves in opposition to those they sought to subjugate. Yet in particular colonial contexts certain things crossed community boundaries. Global objects—coming from elsewhere in the empire or world

of trade—were consumed locally, and local objects came to be consumed globally—moving from periphery to metropole and beyond. The question is why certain “foreign” goods were chosen for such cross-cultural consumption, while others were rejected, and even demonized, for their colonial associations (Dietler 2010:53-55).

Answering this question requires that attention be paid to the specific materials in question—their physical properties—as well as how these materials were understood by those engaging with them—their materialities (Dietler and Herbich 1998; Knappett 2007; Tilley 2007; Dietler 2010:68; Olsen 2010). Tacking back and forth between the physical and the ideational of things, rather than overemphasizing one while denying the other, enables the colonial scholar to better understand the dynamic and fluctuating relationship between people and things. This analytical move is absolutely critical to, as Webb Keane (2009) put it, “get at the historicity of people and their things,” in the sense of understanding how people imagined and carved out new possibilities for their futures—and the futures of those they dominated in colonial contexts—by engaging with and shaping materials.

Food—meaning anything, including drink and drugs, that passes through the alimentary canal after being taken into the mouth—is an immensely fruitful category of material culture to study, particularly in colonial contexts. It is, in its essential form, a necessity of life. But in terms of the particular form it takes in any given act of consumption, it holds great meaning and serves powerful social purposes. The food (and drink and drugs) one consumes, as opposed to what one avoids, defines shared identity within social boundaries—even what it means to be human—on what can become an unconscious, visceral level. Within and between groups sharing patterns of

visceral disgust, the form that acts of consumption take serve to define, reproduce, and contest social relations and power dynamics (Mintz 1986:3; Dietler 2010:183-185). Food is thus both a deeply embodied part of the experience and a powerful tool for negotiating the power dynamics of cultural encounters in colonial worlds.

Accessing the materiality of food, as deeply embodied material culture—as in how the ingestion of specific materials was understood to affect individuals and groups engaged in their consumption—involves a bit of medical anthropology. This study’s brief foray into this field is not meant to reinforce artificial divisions between food, drink, and drugs, but to emphasize the importance of contextualizing alimentary consumption within whatever theory of the body predominated in a given time and place, or whatever theories of the body may have been clashing in colonial contexts. Within medical anthropology can be found the “cultural interpretive approach,” which looks for explanatory models that make the body knowable within what it describes as “cultures of medicine.” These frames of meaning—or theories of the body—tie behavioral expressions back to the ways that enculturated individuals perceive and understand causality within the human body (Good 1994:53-55; Baer et al. 2003:36-37).

Such theories of the body are drawn upon in social arenas that are not the traditional domain of medical anthropology. They play out in expressions of “drunken comportment,” where cultural expectations about what it means to consume alcohol in certain ways work in tandem with alcohol’s material ability to impact an individual’s motor skills and cognition to co-constitute the culturally specific, socially situated, embodied form that being drunk takes (Dietler 2006; Dietler and Herbich 2006; Malafouris and Renfrew 2010:5,8). They also inform and

reflect the “gut reactions” of alimentary disgust discussed above. Understandings and experiences of the intimate alimentary world, tied to theories of the body, involve feelings; the embodied self is an affective self. No matter how impersonal an imperial system may have seemed, it was composed of individuals with bodies, bodies whose perceived vulnerabilities engendered anxieties that shaped policy and action within colonies. Sex and, as will be argued here, food have a way of “pushing the affective up against the political” by way of embodied intimacies (Stoler 2002:11-12,216).

The embodied intimacies that the current study deals with—relating to landscape, climate, food, and drink—recall the oldest usages of the adjective intimate, which referred in the 17<sup>th</sup> century simply to that which was “connected with the inmost nature or fundamental character of a thing.”<sup>17</sup> The term is not known to have been used as a euphemism for sexual intercourse before the 1880s. That these nonsexual aspects of the material and social worlds of early modern Ireland were understood by colonizers to play an important part in embodied intimacies there—that is, they were thought to profoundly affect the innermost nature of a person—will be argued through a close reading of colonial writings and contemporary medical texts. This is a necessary step in understanding early modern alimentary consumption, as the nonbiomedical theories of the body that prevailed at the time—humoral and alchemical as they were—contribute to the “foreignness of early modern flesh” (Gomez 2017:13; see also Arikha 2008). Discourses on and practices surrounding food and drink at this time remain unintelligible, or risk being read anachronistically, unless considered in their proper context. Knowledge of the

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<sup>17</sup> “Intimate, *adj.* and *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 27 May 2019, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/98506](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/98506).

theory of the body to which those colonizing Ireland were enculturated is essential to understanding what constituted embodied intimacy at the time, because it can explain why particular objects and actions were such a touchstone of affective anxiety among colonizers.

#### CONCEIVING OF THE PROJECT, LOCATING DATA, MODELING ANALYSIS

How the current study was conceived influenced how the data were gathered and analyzed in making an argument about the intersection of colonialism and capitalism in the specific time and place of the study. The work undertaken here—trying to understand the role that the consumption and control of an identifiably Irish distillate played in the early modern colonization of Ireland—is a historical ethnography of Ireland, circa 1540–1660. As such, it endeavors to “ground [the] subjective, culturally configured action[s]” of people living in the past “in [the] society and history” of their day (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:11). This orientation toward the “unfolding of encounters” is designed to avoid the trap of “extrapolat[ing] backward from...better-known historical sequel[s],” which risks anachronism and generates presentist teleologies of change in the past (Dietler 2010:12-13,18,24). Accomplishing such historical ethnography requires the marrying of “ethnography in the archives”—where specific instances of discourse, action, and interaction are recovered from primary texts and gathered together for comparison—to broader contextualizations based on relevant secondary histories (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:11).

What is meant here by “archive” requires some explanation. For a historical ethnography being conducted in the vein of Jean and John Comaroff, the “archive” is the collection of primary materials that the historical ethnographer gathers relating to the questions driving their

research. This “archive,” which is being actively construed as part of research, includes “textual traces”<sup>18</sup>—of relevant thoughts and perceptions, as well as actions and events—drawn from a variety of literary and documentary genres. It can pull together everything from widely circulated print material to personal correspondence, from state legislation to business accounts, poetry, paintings, and beyond.<sup>19</sup> The “archive” may include primary materials that are standard fodder for scholars of the period and place. It should not, however, constitute an uncritical reproduction of what the Comaroffs (1992:34) describe as the “established canons of documentary evidence,” limited as such to those oft-cited sources on which previous works have largely been based. Even if a researcher starts with such “conventional chronicles,” the archive becomes a unique collection as the researcher follows relevant “textual traces” down interpretive rabbit holes that situate the agency of individuals and groups within the rabbit warrens of culture and society constituting the historical world under investigation (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:33).

The “archive” for the current project was compiled through on-site visits to libraries and archives in the United Kingdom, as well as the use of online repositories of digitized early modern texts. Major libraries and archives consulted include: the British Library, London’s Guildhall Library, the National Library of Ireland, the Linen Hall Library<sup>20</sup> in Belfast, the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI), and what was then the Northern Ireland Environment and Heritage Service’s Built Heritage headquarters in Belfast. Online databases used include: Early English Books Online, Internet Archive, the Corpus of Electronic Texts

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<sup>18</sup> A term the Comaroffs (1992:33) themselves borrowed from Stephen Jay Greenblatt’s 1990 *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture*.

<sup>19</sup> In the case of the current study, this ‘archive’ also includes archaeology.

<sup>20</sup> An 18<sup>th</sup>-century institution that is Belfast’s oldest library and the last subscribing library in Ireland.

(CELT) maintained by University College Cork, State Papers Online: Early Modern Government in Britain and Europe, and the PRONI eCatalogue. No matter how they were consulted, relevant portions of texts were transcribed for inclusion in the study's own virtual "archive" of textual fragments.<sup>21</sup>

A wide variety of 16<sup>th</sup>- and 17<sup>th</sup>-century texts have been drawn on in this study:

- digitized versions of the original printings of early modern books (illustrated poems, geographies, natural histories, social commentaries, political treatises, a play, cookery books, distillers' manuals, health manuals, an herbal, a broadside pamphlet);
- works written in the period of study but only published in English by others a half century later (histories);
- works originally written in the period of study but edited and published by antiquarians and historians in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (political treatises, personal travel accounts, discourses, poems);
- personal letters, official correspondence, and state documents held in private manuscript collections and among state papers, which were calendared<sup>22</sup> and printed in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries;
- collections of 16<sup>th</sup>-century bardic poetry, transcribed and translated into English from the early modern Irish early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century;

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<sup>21</sup> This is not a physical archive, and only exists on the author's computer. It can, however, be reconstructed through in-text citations and the Primary Sources portion of the Works Cited, which appears at the end of this dissertation.

<sup>22</sup> Transcribed, organized by date, and indexed.

- a transcription and translation of an early modern Irish medical textbook, also done in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century;
- a collection of *Verse in English from Tudor and Stuart Ireland* published in the early 2000s;
- transcribed collections of the official business of local governing bodies, made in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; and
- Irish parliamentary statutes from between 1310 and 1612, transcribed and published by the Irish Parliament in 1765.

These whole texts and their authors<sup>23</sup> have been given cursory contextualization within the body of this study. Further details of historical events surrounding the production of particular texts, along with the involvement of their authors in the colonial project in Ireland, have been included in Appendix A. The contextualization of relevant early modern texts in terms of the lives of their authors and the individuals named within them was accomplished with the help of online versions of the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and the Royal Irish Academy's *Dictionary of Irish Biography*, supplemented by the occasional scholarly article. Recent scholarship—on everything from medieval physicians, to ancient Scythians, the “churching” of women, Circe, Dido, Renaissance theater, and medieval markets—has been brought to bear where relevant to further contextualize and understand the cultural origins of patterns observed in English reactions to usquebaugh. Clarification of the early modern language used in the texts was achieved with the aid of the *Oxford English Dictionary* online. To maintain

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<sup>23</sup> Every attempt has been made to be consistent in the use of a single spelling of each early modern author's name throughout this study. The multiple spellings of each author's name have been included in Appendix A, should confusion arise from any lapse in usage.

the temporal provenience of textual fragments as they are discussed in the chapters that follow, their original production dates—date of composition for manuscripts and first publication for printed works—have been included in square brackets within in-text citations.

As discourse, the contemporary texts gathered together in this archive will have participated in discursive traditions that will become more obvious as textual fragments are compared. Understanding these traditions—who was borrowing from whom, what they were writing in response to, and to whom they were writing—is crucial to understanding the arguments different authors were making, and for parsing what these arguments reveal about contemporary understandings of the material and social worlds of early modern Ireland (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:33-35). The purpose of reassembling these contemporary textual fragments, drawn from disparate genres, is not only to document past practices, but to facilitate recognition of thematic repetitions that speak to the emotions and “prevailing metaphors” that structured those “particular practices” in the past (Stoler 2002:7,211).

The goal in identifying these practical and discursive patterns is to recover the “latent correspondences in the cultural order” that gave a sense of consistency to experience in the chaotic world (Sahlins 1976:217; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:33). Exactly when and where such thematic repetition recurred across texts, in terms of both literary context and the historical moment of textual production, must be considered in order to understand the experiential sources of stress and anxiety they represent. The repetitive nature of discursive traditions identified within colonial texts in no way implies the coherence of that discourse as a whole. Identifying the logical inconsistencies and practical impossibilities that inevitably cropped up in attempts to

control the unruly people and things that populated colonies is essential to revealing the messiness of lived colonial worlds (Stoler 2002:208-213).

Data drawn from primary written sources will be balanced with a consideration of archaeological material and interpretations, where available and relevant. A wealth of historical archaeology has been undertaken in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland over the last thirty to forty years—everything from small-scale excavations inside historic inns, to urban salvage archaeology, to open-area research-driven excavations of greenfield plantation sites. Much of this work has been incorporated into book-length treatments or edited volumes published by academic presses and (what was) the Northern Ireland Environment Agency. The insights generated by these projects and included in these publications have been used in the current study, as well.

Unlike traditional ethnography of living people, which typically captures a particular “ethnographic moment” in the history of a community, historical ethnography aims to account specifically for “time and transformation” by tracking global historical processes through everyday activities (Sahlins 1993:1). A major impediment to really interrogating the nature of change captured in historical ethnographies of colonial material worlds is the use of commodity chain analysis, an outgrowth of the world-systems approach (Mintz 1986). As conceived by Terence Hopkins and Immanuel Wallerstein (1986:157)—then coordinators of the Research Working Group on Cyclical Rhythms and Secular Trends of the World-Economy at the Fernand Braudel Center for the Study of Economies, Historical Systems, and Civilizations—commodity chain analysis within a world-systems approach amounts to “the documentation of the patterns of

the capitalist world-economy.” While the analytic leaves room to investigate changes in the specific constitution of a given commodity chain (Hopkins and Wallerstein 1986:162), the chain’s existence and linear form is assumed, and its emergence is taken for granted—a problem when the process of commodification is itself of interest. Commodity chain analysis represents one of those problematic “interpretive orthodoxies,” the flaws of which arise from “certain theoretical limitations and a resulting failure to pose some fundamental questions” (Dietler 2010:13). It discourages those who employ it from asking what the consumption of commodities itself means for materially constituted political economies. Why would it be encouraged over other forms, especially in colonial contexts? And what are the intentional and unforeseen consequences of this encouragement?

This model of analysis, while acknowledging the consumption of specific products, and querying how and where raw materials are acquired, foregrounds the production of commodities in order to detail the inequitable global division of labor inhering in the modern world-system (Hopkins and Wallerstein [1986] 2000). In doing so, it falls into the trap of attributing historical causality almost exclusively to processes of material production—as opposed to consumption or exchange—as is common in Marxist historical paradigms (Sahlins 1976:153; Wolf [1982] 1997; Mintz 1986:xv,xxiv-xxv). The presentation of research favored in commodity chain studies emphasizes, even if unintentionally, the causal preeminence of production, as production is always discussed before consumption, following the “natural” order of events. The same can be said of other linear analytical models—both “the cultural biography of things” and *chaîne opératoire*—as they present their arguments in a naturalized chronological order that places

production before consumption (Kopytoff 1986; Sellet 1993; Dietler and Herbich 1998, 2006; LaMotta and Schiffer 2001:20-21). But an argument can be made that consumption is just as determinate of production, and should precede it analytically (Dietler 2010:185). It follows that an analysis of consumption should be presented prior to that of production, as a matter of interpretive coherence.

A further problem of commodity chain analysis is that said chain is assumed to tie together spatially and temporally distinct nodes of material acquisition, production, and consumption (Hopkins and Wallerstein [1986] 2000). The use of the chain imagery is a powerful metaphor for an oppressive system, conveying at once the alienation of distant nodes and seemingly unshakable bonds of inequitable interdependence that shackle peoples to the modern world-system (Mintz 1986:xvi,xxiv). But as an analytical model, it shackles colonial studies to a pattern of interpretive repetition that raises the question of why colonial worlds should be studied any further if all that is ever accomplished is confirmation of the expected and inevitable (Horning 2011:67). The patterns of consumption within the modern world-system that commodity chain analyses best account for are: the consumption of goods in the core that are made from materials acquired or produced in distant peripheries (Mintz 1986), and the consumption of “Western commodities,” produced in the cores, by colonized peoples in the peripheries (Wolf [1982] 1997:307). There is no real place in this analytic for those consumables that colonizers first encounter in colonies, which they commodify and come to rely on locally, but which are not primarily produced for high-volume long-distance trade—like *yerba maté* in South America (Jamieson 2001:277-279), or usquebaugh in Ireland.

The acts of cross-cultural consumption that brought Ireland's choice distillate to the attention, and into the bodies, of would-be English colonizers saw the substance "traverse different 'regimes of value' . . . , transformed" from one object, *uisce beatha*, into another, usquebaugh (Dietler 2010:190). The current project is an attempt to better understand what those competing "regimes of value" were, and how this substance was situated within them. Why did this particular distillate play such a noteworthy role in acts of consumption on either side, and across, the colonizer:colonized divide in early modern Ireland? What do colonial attempts to intervene in its flow, to commodify it, reveal about the relationship between lived experience and the larger political-economic project in Ireland?

## **STRUCTURE OF THIS STUDY**

### CHAPTER 2    DEFINING THE WORLD AND OBJECT OF STUDY

Before jumping into the main analysis of colonial intimacies, entanglements, and political-economic forms involving Ireland's choice distillate, a brief introduction to Ireland's colonial history before and during the Early Modern will be provided. This will make clear what England's early modern colonial project in Ireland was, and why it was pursued so forcefully from circa 1540–1660. More detailed contextualization of specific authors and texts can be found in Appendix A following the main text. With this historical background established, the next step will be to document the material constitution of the object (really a substance) at the heart of this study. Establishing the material qualities of early modern *uisce beatha*-cum-usquebaugh is essential to comprehending the substance's materiality, which is, in turn, foundational to

understanding the embodied intimacies tied to the consumption of this particular substance in 16<sup>th</sup>- and 17<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland.

### CHAPTER 3 CONSUMPTION AND THE BODY: UNWANTED INTIMACIES

Having established what the substance was that went by the names of *uisce beatha* and usquebaugh, the question becomes why everyone in Ireland was so keen to consume it, in particular. To answer this requires an analysis of where, exactly, references to this distillate appear within the study's archive in relation to detailed descriptions of the distillate's sensorial qualities and composition. Consideration must also be given to how colonizers were encountering the substance, in terms of the more material constituents of hospitality in early modern Ireland. Tracking the patterns in descriptions of these encounters points toward the materiality within which the substance operated. This materiality revolved around early modern conceptualizations of the human body, as articulated in various health treatises and household manuals in print at the time. A deeper knowledge of the subtly shifting theories of health and the body popular in the Early Modern, when considered in light of the discursive patterns surrounding usquebaugh-as-substance in colonial texts, reveals how Ireland's choice distillate was understood to combat bodily intimacies thought to pose an existential threat to colonial life. The nature of these intimacies, and the role usquebaugh played as a corrective, is revealed in the interactive nexus of body, landscape-climate, and food that early modern colonials perceived in the world. Colonial texts, medical treatises, and household manuals also reveal how the consumption of this particular substance—as both a whole and the sum of its parts—was understood at the time, explaining why it was adopted and promoted as a corrective to embodied

anxieties stemming from bodily intimacies that colonizers struggled to control in early modern Ireland.

#### CHAPTER 4 CONSUMPTION AND THE SOCIAL-SELF: DANGEROUS ENTANGLEMENTS

What thematic patterns in the archive also reveal is that the early modern (re)conquest and colonization of Ireland placed people in worlds where they were strangers who relied, at some point, on local hospitality. Both the initial opportunities that agents of colonization had to consume usquebaugh, and the perceived bodily need they felt to ingest it, would thus have been generated and reinforced by the role hospitality played in Irish life, and the form that hospitality took. This chapter will begin with a discussion of the general social power of hospitality. It will move on to consider how the Gaelic(ized)<sup>24</sup> political economy had evolved, up to the time of the Elizabethan (re)conquest, around various forms of hospitality—which by the 16<sup>th</sup> century included the regular consumption of *uisce beatha*. This will lead into an examination of how the English became entangled within this web of hospitality, what their affective reaction was to such entanglement, and why they reacted as they did to this colonial situation.

#### CHAPTER 5 RESITUATING CONSUMPTION TO RE(-)FORM POLITICAL ECONOMIES

This chapter is a continuation of the discussion introduced in the previous chapter—presenting the systemic response that the English, as a colonial power, had toward what they

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<sup>24</sup> The hybrid term Gaelic(ized) is used, from here on, to refer to the population and cultural practices of Ireland that English colonials especially targeted for re(-)formation in the Early Modern. This way of presenting the terms has been chosen to highlight ambiguities of identity in early modern Ireland—where local practice and colonial perception regularly grouped together the assimilated descendants of Anglo-Norman settlers with the wider population of indigenous Irish.

perceived to be the threat such hospitable entanglement posed. This will include looking at the evolution of official restrictions that the colonial administration placed on practices constituting Gaelic(ized) hospitality. The chapter will then examine colonial efforts to promote alternative—commodified—forms of hospitality, as well as the commodification of the substance itself through the promotion of markets associated with colonial ventures. Clarifying the connection between this promotion and the desire to disentangle colonizers from local social webs will require careful consideration of the social work that the consumption of commodities does. This will involve comparing the political economy of noncommodities, typified by *uisce beatha*'s flow through Gaelic(ized) society, to the political economy of commodities, made manifest in how the English administration wanted usquebaugh to flow through colonial society. The key question here will be how practically the same substance could be consumed, in different social settings, to promote what were considered, at least by the colonial power, to be distinct political economies, only one of which that power judged right and just. The last step in this analysis will be to consider how reality lived up to colonial desires, given the practical limitations and unexpected consequences encountered in attempting to impose a colonial will on local actions surrounding such an entrenched and intimate substance.

## CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSIONS

This study will conclude with a return to the proposition that the colonial history of *uisce beatha*-cum-usquebaugh reveals something of the intersection of colonialism and capitalism as historical processes. The problem is not that the two were not interrelated, either in the Irish case or more broadly, but that cumulative effects have often been posited as causal forces drawing the

past toward the present. England had, in some form and to varying extent, maintained a colonial relationship with Ireland from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, which makes the temporal primacy of colonialism as historical process obvious. The question becomes how and why the early modern colonial project in Ireland differed from what had come before. Was the difference simply that a capitalist modern world-system now existed, into which the relationship between England and Ireland needed to slot as core-to-periphery? This explanation would seem to put the cart-of-effect before the causal horse. What will be reiterated here is how the preceding study has revealed lived experience interacting with historical memory to generate colonial anxieties of intimacy and entanglement that, in turn, generated responses promoting the commodification of locally produced alcohol. What this means for the relationship of capitalism to colonialism will be parsed out.

## CHAPTER 2 | Defining the World and Object of Study

### THE CASE OF EARLY MODERN IRELAND

#### A COLONIAL WORLD OR NOT?

Within the body of scholarship devoted to Ireland—among historians, archaeologists, literary critics, and historical anthropologists dealing with the cultures, events, and social processes that marked life here from the 16th through 17th centuries—simmering a debate over the classificatory status of this island in the Early Modern. Was Ireland an Atlantic colony or just the frontier region of an early modern centralizing state (Murphy 1999:164; Howe 2002)? A closer examination of early modern state formation provides a way forward that bridges this classificatory gap and enriches research into this era. As scholars of the Early Modern, Barbara Fuchs (2003) and Mark Netzloff (2003) have each pointed out that from ancient to modern times the earliest stages of nation building have often included imperial consolidations that involved colonizations. The deciding factor in a region’s designation as “kingdom” or “colony” has often been the eventual acceptance, by co-opted local elites, of a conquering state as legitimate overlord, highlighting the seeming interpretive futility of distinguishing too rigidly between colony and imperial state periphery (Howe 2002).

Colonialism, as historical phenomenon, is commonly defined as a “set of political systems involving conquest and rule by one state over other, previously independent and usually distant territories” (Horvath 1972; Bayly 1998; Howe 2002; McDonough 2005). Problems are myriad in such a tidy definition of a global-historical process, especially when colonial policies

and practices were deployed at home in the course of events traditionally thought to mark the emergence of modern state forms. The whole periodization of Western history into the Medieval and Early Modern hinges on the idea that the form and actions of early modern European states challenged—or faced rivals seeking to challenge—prior political structures and notions of nationhood (Brigden 2001; Fuchs 2003). Such unsettling and attempted resettling of a status quo—often revolving around deeply intertwined political and religious ideologies in post-Reformation Europe—invited state and private acts of domination against local peoples and material culture that matched anything seen in overseas colonies (MacCulloch 2005).

Early modern Ireland stood at the confluence of such historical processes. Conquest in the 12<sup>th</sup> century had, to varying degrees, incorporated portions of Ireland into the medieval Norman world of knights, lords, and Continental Catholicism. While the English Crown did perceive and attempt to reinforce a frontier (the English Pale, or simply Pale) within Ireland, between what the Irish themselves termed *na Gaeil* (the Irish) and *gall* (foreigners), this confrontation occurred within a nominal royal “realm.” Colonies, some scholars of the Atlantic world have argued, cannot logically cohabit with realms, commonwealths, or civil societies. Ireland, in this reading, is most accurately understood to have been a periphery of the English polity from the medieval period through 20<sup>th</sup>-century independence (Pocock 2005). In accounting for Ireland’s seemingly colonial early modern history, Weberian models of Western state formation are invoked that posit the homogenization of space and power structures as the necessary administrative moves required of a capitalistically oriented, centralizing state (Voekel 2004; Conolly 2007).

This conceptualization of modern state formation as the integration of habituated parochial cultural forms—political, economic, religious, aesthetic, social—into a centralized and standardized whole brings the model of early modern state periphery ever closer to that of imperial colony (Gillespie 1993; Johnson 1996). The classificatory ambiguity of colony versus peripheral kingdom becomes reconciled in “internal colonialism.” Conceived as such, the politically expedient entrepreneurialism of European colonial ventures—which would entrench reified ethnic hierarchies through the bigoted institutions and habits of mind its ideology and practices fostered—was first conceived and enacted within the margins of Europe itself (Bottingheimer 1979:60). For the British Isles, this attention was focused on the “Celtic” fringe of Cornwall, Wales, the Isle of Man, Highland and Island Scotland, and Ireland (Bailyn and Morgan 1991). These national incorporations, particularly in western Scotland and Ireland-beyond-the-Pale, involved the encouragement of migration—settler colonialism by any other name—as an integrative tool. Historical processes unfolding in early modern Ireland thus represent an encounter between older European social forms and an expanding colonial world of migration, economic exploitation, social reorganization, and religious difference that would transform life in Ireland from AD 1540 to 1800 (Gillespie 2006; Johnson 2006).

While greater physical and cultural distance may have marked the more familiar intercontinental colonialisms of the early modern Atlantic, the apparent absence of distance did not spare Ireland the ethnic othering that would grow into a colonial hierarchy over time. Notions of similarity and difference that lent a particularly colonial air to early modern Ireland were of an order that is not necessarily intuitive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Would-be Elizabethan conquerors did

not simply arrive in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century with the racial ideology and racialized social structure that would come to define life in 19<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland (Orser 2004). Just as modern, imperially informed scientific racism developed in tandem with a biomedical understanding of human bodies (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:215-218), so the form that bigotry and bias took in these earlier centuries was premised on theories of the body prevalent at the time. The foreignness of these theories also contributed to the very different materiality of early modern usquebaugh consumption, when compared to how the drinking of whiskey is understood to affect the body today. The question of how group difference was registered, and how that difference was acted upon—especially in relation to hospitality—is central to understanding the shape that colonialism took in early modern Ireland, and how this impacted the flow of *uisce beatha*-cum-usquebaugh.

That said, the historically situated nature of othering can make writing about early modern colonial Ireland particularly difficult in terms of what one chooses to call the different groups whose interests competed and coalesced in this colonial world from the 16th through 17th centuries. The difficulty can be chalked up to the long-entangled histories of the peoples and lands of this “Atlantic Archipelago,”<sup>1</sup> which will be discussed shortly. Some have distinguished the early modern groups as simply “natives” and “newcomers” (Brady and Gillespie 1986). Others assign individuals in the Early Modern to the categories of “[Gaelic] Irish,” “Old English,” and “[New] English”—a move that highlights ancestry and when those ancestors came to Ireland (Canny 2001; Lennon and Gillespie 2000; Gillespie 2006). For the purposes of the

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<sup>1</sup> To borrow Pocock’s (2005:77) use of a more historically neutral term for describing what is otherwise called the British Isles.

current study, the individuals who wrote and appeared in the textual record are categorized by their choice of cultural identity and political leanings. These are gleaned from what is known of them historically; that is, from the material and literary practices they engaged with in life.

What language they wrote in and the content of that writing provide clues. Terms like “Anglophone” have been used to describe individuals from Ireland whom contemporaries might identify as “English-Irish,” otherwise called “Anglo-Norman descended” here, but who were proponents of the early modern colonial project in Ireland. The term is also applied when these authors are discussed together with those who were more straightforwardly English.

“Gaelic(ized)” is used to describe both those who descended from peoples already in Ireland before the 12<sup>th</sup>-century arrival of the first Anglo-Norman settlers, and the descendants of those medieval colonists who adapted to and adopted—or as some early modern writers put it, “degenerated” into—local lifestyles and cultural practices, rather than maintain a strong sense of identity as a diasporic population within a geographically defined Pale. Whatever confusion might arise from this hybrid word “Gaelic(ized),” it is a faithful reflection of the complex web of identities that individuals both applied to “others” and manipulated to their own advantage if and when politics necessitated in early modern Ireland. The following broad-brush history of Anglo-Irish relations paints a picture of the world that generated these fluctuating identities, providing a historical framework on which the analytical work of the current study will be hung.

#### THE ENTANGLED HISTORY OF AN ARCHIPELAGO

The formal institution of Ireland as a distinct kingdom of the English Crown in 1541 was the first move in a centuries-long attempt to centralize power and homogenize political structures

throughout the British Isles, a project paralleled in the neighboring polity of Scotland (Roberts 1999). Early modern Ireland posed a particular challenge to would-be Elizabethan conquerors in that, at the time of the Tudor (re)conquest in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, it presented a patchwork of social, economic, and political structures that English colonists had been enmeshed in since the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The two major social fabrics historically at odds in this quilt were: the Old English, descended from Anglo-Norman knights and settlers who had made fitful inroads into Ireland since 1170; and the Gaelic Irish, whose social structure stood just enough outside the mainstream of feudal European culture to mark them as distinct from their Anglo-Norman neighbors (Gillespie 2006, Conolly 2007).

The problem that both these groups, Old English and Gaelic Irish alike, presented to a centralizing and pacifying Crown was the autonomous military strength that lay at the heart of each culture. Feudal society, which had been evolving in Ireland since first being introduced there in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, was a social system designed to maintain warrior knights. In political borderlands across the British Isles—a territorial type that proliferated in medieval Ireland—feudal magnates took great license in maintaining private armies, using these soldiers to uphold their own and the nebulous interests of a distant English Crown. The structure and form of the opposing Gaelic society only reinforced and perpetuated the autonomous martial prowess of Old English lords, even as these same leadership qualities became distasteful to Renaissance monarchs. These heads of state were keen on avoiding future dynastic contests on the scale of either the 12<sup>th</sup>-century succession crisis that had driven dispossessed Anglo-Norman noblemen to Ireland in the first place, or the 15<sup>th</sup>-century Wars of the Roses (Conolly 2007).

The Gaelic society that Anglo-Normans faced off against, and eventually came to live in tandem with, was similarly organized for war—small-scale, internecine warfare characterized by raiding and guerrilla skirmishes that strove to maintain and expand *clann*<sup>2</sup> resources and territory. Lordly dominion over these lands was established and maintained through cycles of feasting and mobile hospitality that won *clann* chiefs social prestige, gained them allies, and fed their armies of private retainer-soldiers. The territory that they ruled was, in fact, the corporate patrimony of the kin-based *clann*, not a fief handed out to a nobleman by the Crown to whom he swore allegiance (Duffy et al. 2001:48; Gillespie 2006:26; Conolly 2007). Such a system was, as early modern commentators noted, anathema to the Norman-derived, primogeniture-based system of land tenure that organized society in England and lowland Scotland (Moryson [1626]1904a:274-275, [1626]1904b:311). While the autonomy that it promoted among Gaelic lords unsettled would-be overseas overlords of Ireland (i.e., the English Crown), the levels of autonomy that Anglo-Norman lords began exercising as they grew accustomed to operating in opposition to and within the cultural and social world of Gaelic Ireland demanded action on the part of numerous English monarchs even before the Tudor (re)conquest of the late 16<sup>th</sup> century.

Plantagenet kings personally intervened on a number of occasions to curtail the power that their own medieval colonial agents were amassing in Ireland, lest these Anglo-Norman knights come to rival their own liege lord as the heads of autonomous states. Henry II grew suspicious and removed Richard “Strongbow” FitzGilbert de Clare—the unseated Anglo-

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<sup>2</sup> Also referred to as a *derbfine*, these essential structural units of political life in Medieval Ireland comprised (sometimes fictive) kin networks reckoned back to common (mythico-)historical ancestors (Duffy 2000:18; Richter 2014:18;). The term *clann* directly translates from the Irish as “children” or “progeny” (Dinneen 1904).

Norman earl who had been among the first to gain a political foothold in Ireland—from power in Dublin (Smith 2000:36; Clarke et al. 2008:13). Henry’s son, King John, pitted the knight Hugh de Lacy against the conqueror of Ulster, John de Courcy, for the earldom of that province, only to remove de Lacy in turn, once he too began acting with overmuch regional autonomy (Ó Baoill 2008:5-8). Richard II grew similarly suspicious of the popular Roger de Mortimer, who held the earldom of Ulster at the close of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The king’s plan to remove Mortimer from power came to naught, however, as the lord was killed in combat before he could be forcibly deposed (Davies 2008).

Tudor monarchs fared little better in Ireland. Two years after the Lancastrian Henry Tudor defeated the Yorkist Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth Field—ostensibly ending the Wars of the Roses and ushering in the early modern period in England—the Anglo-Norman-descended Earl of Kildare backed a pretender’s claim to the English throne. In 1487 he convinced those in the Irish Parliament not pleased with the outcome of Bosworth Field to crown ten-year-old Lambert Simnel as King Edward VI of England, claiming he was the escaped Yorkist heir to the throne. Supporters of the child-pretender were defeated and Simnel himself was made a houseboy to King Henry VII. A second pretender to the English throne, Perkin Warbeck, arrived in Ireland in 1491 and gained support from the Anglo-Norman Earl of Desmond and various Gaelic lords. The most lasting effect of these episodes was the enactment, in 1494, of Poyning’s Law. This legislation, which remained largely unchanged until 1782, required that all proposed Irish legislation, even the convening of Irish parliaments themselves, be preapproved by the English Privy Council, a body composed of the reigning English

monarch's closest advisers. The provision effectively relegated Ireland to a subordinate position in relation to the kingdom of England, a power imbalance that would continue even after Ireland had been declared a co-kingdom (Brigden 2000; Smith 2000:46; Gillespie 2006:58; Clarke et al. 2008:17).

The potential for disloyalty to the English Crown on the part of both Gaelic and Anglo-Norman lords in Ireland, whether real or simply suspected, was a theme that would recur throughout the early modern period. Ireland, it was increasingly realized, posed an existential threat to English sovereignty. The political jockeying and martial needs of Irish magnates, Gaelic and Anglo-Norman descended alike, left Ireland open to the intrigues of England's Continental enemies, who saw the smaller island as a staging ground for the invasion of England itself. These political intrigues and military forays—once driven by the territorial claims and dynastic disputes of royal rivals—took on a different flavor from the 1530s onward (Brigden 2000; Lennon and Gillespie 2000:50).

With Henry VIII moving ever further from Rome after 1532—eventually establishing the ruling English monarch as head of a newly independent Church of England—the Protestant Reformation officially took root in the British Isles. By the reign of his daughter Elizabeth I, the missionary Calvinists of Scotland and the Netherlands stood by the English in defiant opposition to the increasingly militant Catholicism of Spain and France. In the midst of these European struggles for sovereignty and souls, Ireland came to be thought of as the soft Catholic underbelly of the British Isles. It was an unruly kingdom whose popish persuasions left it—and through it the neighboring kingdoms of England and Scotland, each a bastion of Protestant re(-)form—

vulnerable to coordinated military assault by whichever zealous Continental monarch had the current “heretical” British ruler in his or her sights (Brigden 2000; Lennon and Gillespie 2000:50). Paranoia over the threat that Spain posed to England, lingering even after the failure of the armada launched by Philip II in 1588, continued to justify English colonial actions in Ireland into the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Horning 2013:79-81).

#### A PRIMER IN EARLY MODERN IRISH HISTORY

The early modern project of (re)conquest and imperial incorporation explored in this dissertation was set in motion in 1541, when the Irish Parliament voted to elevate the English monarch—at that time Henry VIII—from lord to king of Ireland (Lennon and Gillespie 2000:50). 1660 has been chosen as a cut-off as it saw the Restoration of an exiled monarchy to the joint Crown of England-Scotland-Ireland—marking the end of a decade-long experiment in radical republicanism headed by Oliver Cromwell as lord protector of the “Atlantic Archipelago.” The Baroque social and cultural changes ushered in by the return of elites from Continental Europe, where they had endured exile with their monarch, are better studied in relation to the “long 18<sup>th</sup> century” (Baines 2004). In the century and a quarter encompassed by these historic bookends, Ireland was subject to a number of wars, imperial ventures, and legislative acts that sought to definitively subjugate the people of Ireland by altering everything from sociopolitical structures to daily life on the land (Conolly 2007).

Spurred on by what they deemed to be Henry VIII’s overreaching imperium—in both breaking with Rome and attempting re(-)formatory interference in local Irish politics—certain powerful descendants of the conquering medieval knights turned against their liege lord, hoping

for aid from then-emperor of both the Holy Roman and Spanish Empires, Charles V. The defeat of “Silken” Thomas Fitzgerald’s revolt in 1535, which resulted in the confiscation of rebel lands, coincided with the first round of monastic closures in Ireland. While nothing explicitly colonial was actually done with these lands, a scheme for planting Englishmen on the more contentious of them was proposed. The dissolution of religious houses picked up pace where the English Crown held sway in Ireland, following on the heels of acts of iconoclasm bent on destroying the material culture of popular Catholic devotion in these parts of Ireland in 1538/9 (Brigden 2000:156-157).

In 1539, as Irish monasteries were being shuttered, a league of Gaelic lords mounted, in the name of the papacy and Catholic religion, a short-lived resistance that meant to inaugurate the O’Neill<sup>3</sup> as high king of Ireland at Tara. In the wake of their defeat, Henry VIII was declared—not acclaimed, anointed, or ritually crowned—king of Ireland by a parliament called in Dublin, under the aegis of Poynings’ Law, in 1541. Rather than granting sovereignty to Ireland, this act expanded the Crown’s purview beyond the medieval footholds of the English Pale and Anglo-Norman lordships. “Surrender and regrant” became the official policy of a Dublin administration attempting to universally convert Gaelic lordships into feudal estates based in private property ownership and the English common law. Thus were born, in the colonial negotiations of Gaelic chief-lords seeking survival and advantage, those very Irish earldoms that would trouble the Dublin administration and Crown for the remainder of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. This also marked the point at which the entire population of Ireland was subjected,

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<sup>3</sup> Head of the O’Neill lordship, chief of one of the most powerful Gaelic *clanns* in Ulster (Brigden 2000:158,324).

at least aspirationally, to the colonial jurisdiction of Dublin—from whence the king’s Lord Deputy, his councils, and the occasional Irish Parliament attempted to make manifest English desires in Irish affairs (Brigden 2000:159-161,171).

From the death of Henry VIII in 1547 to the ascension of Elizabeth I in 1558, Ireland was left largely to its own devices. The Crown had more pressing concerns, as England itself suffered through economic turmoil, outbreaks of disease, and outright famine, exacerbated by dramatic swings between Edward VI’s evangelical Protestant zealotry and the diehard Catholic reversals of Mary I. In Ireland, power seesawed back and forth between the two most powerful Anglo-Norman lordships and their Gaelic networks. Whether the Ormond Butlers or Desmond FitzGerald came out on top depended on how a given Lord Deputy—itsself a position filled by whatever faction held sway in the English court—distributed royal patronage in Ireland. By 1565 tensions spilled over into open warfare between followers of Ormond and Desmond (Brigden 2000:179-212,227-229).

Meanwhile, the Gaelic chief-lord Shane O’Neill had become a thorn in the English side, having asserted himself as Earl of Tyrone in a claim that highlighted the tensions between Gaelic “tanistry”—or the election of local chief-lords from among elite lineages within a *clann*—and the system of primogeniture<sup>4</sup> that was the backbone of entitlement within English common law. It was official colonial policy in Ireland to convert tanistry into primogeniture through surrender-and-regrant. It was hoped that someone like a chief of the O’Neill *clann* would give up his Gaelic title and customary dues in favor of something like the earldom of Tyrone. This would

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<sup>4</sup> A system whereby property and title descend through the first-born male heir within a family.

formally infeudate a former chief and his lineal descendants as feudal noblemen who received their land back, and were entitled to sit in Irish parliaments, in exchange for rent and perpetual loyalty to their liege monarch. Shane's political machinations, from communications with Desmond to attempts to draw Scotland and France into the expulsion of England from Ireland, earned him an English-backed assassination in 1567. Undeterred by these developments—and with its own magnate imprisoned and English settlement looming in its territory—the Desmond earldom called upon old allies in Munster to rise in rebellion. As with Shane O'Neill before, these rebels sought aid from Catholic Europe and justified their resistance as a holy war against a heretic queen. By 1573 the Desmond leadership had submitted, only to flee to allies on the European Continent (Brigden 2000:227-231,254; Brady 2009).

England's penny-pinching colonial policy of encouraging private plantation schemes—extending English civility and the rule of the common law with minimal expense to the Crown—meant dispossession for Irish chief-lords. In eastern Ulster Sir Thomas Smith and the first Earl of Essex drew up plans for the confiscated lands of Shane O'Neill, making Gaelic Ulster nervous in the early 1570s. Meanwhile, the Lord Deputy instituted presidencies and councils, headed by military men and backed by armed forces, which would disseminate law and order from Dublin to the provinces. These institutions, designed to undermine the autonomous power of Anglo-Norman magnates and their Gaelic allies, were financed by local “compositions” (rents) that garnered resentment toward what was more often a martial than a civil administration (Brigden 2000:260-261; Canny 2001:106).

In 1579 the leader of the Desmond Fitzgeralds returned from European exile with a Catholic army in tow, waging a Counter-Reformation war on behalf of the pope, who had excommunicated Elizabeth I by papal bull. They were joined in rebellion by the lordship's former armed retainers, whom Dublin was trying to convert to a life of farming, and a few Anglo-Norman noblemen in the Pale, whose Catholicism aligned them with the cause. By 1583 the Second Desmond Rebellion had played out—with the massacre of the papal garrison at Smerwick in 1580 and the utter ruin of Munster in the wake of a scorched earth campaign. The plantation of Munster—where confiscated rebel lands were divided up among English soldier—"undertakers" for colonization and improvement—was already in the works by 1585. Alongside this, Ireland was officially enshired, or divided up into counties (Brigden 2000:262–263,321-322; Canny 2001:5,63,124).

As the 1580s drew to a close there were more challenges to the English policy of surrender-and-regrant—as Irish *clanns* asserted their right to elect their own chief-lords, rather than submit to the rule of the previous lord's first-born male heir. On the heels of Hugh Roe MacMahon's execution for such an offense, Sir Brian O'Rourke rose in rebellion. Executed at Tyburn in 1591 as a traitor to the English Crown, O'Rourke presaged the all-out war that was to come as Hugh O'Neill—recently made Earl of Tyrone—asserted his autonomy from English rule in Ulster. An elaborate network of kinship<sup>5</sup> and court alliances tied Tyrone to powerful individuals on both sides of the colonial fence in the Irish periphery and London metropole. As

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<sup>5</sup> These included both real, consanguineal (by blood) and affinal (by marriage), kinship ties and fictive ones established through fosterage, the raising of children in a household wishing to maintain political (if not real kinship) ties with the biological family of the child (Fitzsimons 2001:141).

the 1590s progressed, more of O'Neill's dependent Ulster chief-lords fell into rebellion. What began as individual assertions of local Gaelic power developed into a religiously fueled war to sever ties with the English Crown. O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, and O'Donnell, Lord of Tyrconnell,<sup>6</sup> went so far as to promise Ireland to Philip II of Spain if he could help win the kingdom back to the Catholic religion. By the time Tyrone was declared a traitor in 1595 he had already rejected his infeudation to the Crown, having himself inaugurated as "the O'Neill", supreme Gaelic ruler of Ulster, in traditional fashion (Brigden 2000:149,323-326,342) (Figure 1).

While rebellious Gaelic chief-lords fought to preserve and restore their power within a Gaelic(ized) social system, their English opponents styled themselves as liberators. English commentators argued that their (re)conquest was meant to throw off the yoke of Gaelic(ized) tyranny in Ireland—manifest in the customary exactions of hospitality that will be discussed in greater detail later—for the benefit of common Irish men and women (Brigden 2000:343). Meanwhile, settlers in the Munster Plantation suffered the brunt of the violence directed against the English colonial project in Ireland (Brigden 2000:344). These colonizers—settled on lands confiscated in the wake of the Desmond Rebellion—had prioritized, it has been argued, the economic potential of Irish plantation over the social and political re(-)formations they were meant to be encouraging, if not imposing, among their Gaelic- and Anglo-Norman-descended neighbors. And they paid the ultimate price for it (Canny 2001:162).

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<sup>6</sup> While Brigden (2001) favors Tírconnell as the anglicized spelling of this Irish toponym [Tír Conaill], the Tyrconnell Anglicization (Lennon and Gillespie 2000; Canny 2001) has been used throughout this dissertation.



**Figure 1** The inauguration of Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone, as “their O-Neale” [the O'Neill] on a traditional stone chair at Tullahogue Fort, Co. Tyrone. Detail cropped from map known as “East Part of Ulster,” probably Richard Bartlett, 1601. Dartmouth Collection of Maps of Ireland, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London. Object ID: P/49 (25); Repro ID: f2016. Reproduced here under CC BY-NC-ND license.

It would take a series of military campaigns, headed by the era’s great soldier-courtiers, to bring Ireland back under actual English control. The second Earl of Essex—whose father had put Ulster to the sword in his abortive attempt to colonize a portion of it in the 1570s—led a spectacularly unsuccessful attempt in 1599, engaging in minor actions elsewhere in Ireland, but failing to ever enter Ulster. Instead, Essex struck a truce with Tyrone. The English leader’s

exhausted troops filled sick beds instead of fighting ranks, while those healthy enough for war switched allegiance and joined the rebel cause. Elizabeth I quickly grew suspicious of the younger Essex, and recalled him from Irish service before he could assert greater autonomy from a position of colonial authority in this “sister” kingdom. Essex would never return to Ireland, as he died a traitor at Tower Hill following his abortive coup against his queen in 1601 (Brigden 2000:345-349).

With rebel forces spurred on in 1600 by the crusading indulgence that the pope granted to those who supported Tyrone, the English establishment in Dublin stood on the brink of collapse as Lord Deputy Mountjoy took over from Essex. Mountjoy’s decisive actions secured the Pale and brought the fight to Ulster. The rebellion lost steam as English military victory was followed by plunder and scorched-earth induced famine. Meanwhile, as the autumn of 1601 passed into winter, Spanish forces landed in Kinsale and took up a fortified position there, in anticipation of meeting up with Tyrone’s forces. By that following winter, English forces had Tyrone on the run in Ulster, having routed his allies at Kinsale. The Spanish set sail as soon as the weather permitted, while Tyrone held out at his strongholds in Ulster. Tyrone finally surrendered in 1603 to a war-weary colonial administration that was only one week into the reign of the new King of England, James VI of Scotland and I of England.<sup>7</sup> Full pardons returned all titles and estates to those who had rebelled (Brigden 2000:350-355; Canny 2001:163,169).

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<sup>7</sup> James Charles Stuart (or Stewart) ascended the Scottish throne as James VI in 1567, at just over one year of age, following the abdication of his mother, Mary, Queen of Scots. Some 36 years later, in 1603, he also took on the mantle of King of England as James I, upon the death of Elizabeth I, who died without heir. He was thereafter styled James VI of Scotland and I of England, sometimes shortened to James VI and I (Wormald 2002).

As before, the 1603 submission of the lords Tyrone (O'Neill) and Tyrconnell (O'Donnell), which had ended the Nine Years War (Tyrone's Rebellion), was, for them, a temporary political strategy, rather than a permanent declaration of allegiance to the English Crown. Gaelic chief-lords and Anglo-Norman descended Old English gentry who still held to Catholicism chafed under the re(-)formation policies of a Dublin administration that, as of 1605, was run by a Lord Deputy, Sir Arthur Chichester, who had fought in the recent war and resented the settlement that had ended it so favorably for Tyrone. In 1607 the major figures behind Tyrone's Rebellion, with their families and retainers, sailed for the Catholic Continent, seeking freedom and support that would let them return to the fight. As this temporary move grew into permanent exile, it came to be known as the Flight of the Earls—historiographically marking the end of an independent Gaelic Ireland (Brigden 2000:358; Canny 2001:172-175).

As early as his *View of the Present State of Ireland* (Spencer [1596] 1809), poet and colonial administrator Edmund Spenser had advocated taking a firmer and more formal line in planting Ireland with military-cum-civil settlers who would answer to a colonial administration bent on pacifying the natives through a re(-)forming of their laws and customs. The Munster Plantation, in which Spenser himself had participated, had been thrown into utter disarray by Tyrone and would need to be re-established. Surrender-and-regrant was used to siphon further plantable land in the midlands off the estates of lesser Gaelic chief-lords who were deemed to not be in possession of "good title" to those lands. These parcels were granted, as payment for service in the war, to English soldiers-turned-servitors who were charged with recruiting English settlers and building defensible structures (Canny 2001:51,160,162,169,177-185).

When the interests of England and Scotland became joined in the person of the Stuart monarch James VI and I, the northern province of Ireland came to the fore as a region of particular colonial interest for both (as yet independent) British nations. As King of Scotland, James VI had been officially striving since the late 1590s to pacify and “civilize” the highlands and islands of Scotland—using plantation to impose a more centralized, lowland governance in these Gaelic peripheries (Perceval-Maxwell 1999:2,12; Cathcart 2009). In Ulster, the initial settlement with Tyrone and Tyrconnell left little room for renewed plantation, but their estates were gradually eroded by the Dublin administration until their treasonous flight in 1607 left the entirety of their lands forfeit to the Crown, and ripe for colonization. One final rebellion in Ulster in 1608—brought on by the double-dealings of crown officers turning against their former Gaelic allies from the Nine Years War—gave the colonial powers the excuse, after executing the main rebel Sir Cahir O’Doherty, to imprison the remaining lesser Ulster chief-lords for life in the Tower of London, “on suspicion of complicity” (Canny 2001:177-185).

There was already a smattering of English garrison captains who were acting as servitors in Ulster. Private Scottish and English gentlemen had likewise established plantations along Ulster’s eastern coast. In 1609, as O’Doherty’s revolt fizzled, the Dublin administration sent a commission out to determine exactly what lands in central and western Ulster the Crown stood in possession of, and where best to settle permanent towns and garrisons. James VI and I took a more direct interest in Ireland than Elizabeth I ever had, hoping to use the plantation of Ulster to better knit together the three kingdoms of the British Isles whose crowns he bore. What made the planting of Ulster unique among Irish plantation schemes was the involvement, as of 1610, of

London companies as undertakers charged with settling and building up towns on designated allotments in the newly created County Londonderry. James had decided to draw on the deeper pockets of these corporate bodies—institutional descendants of the metropole’s medieval guilds—to colonize those confiscated lands that the Crown controlled in Ulster (Canny 2001:180,187-189,192,201,230).

From 1608 to 1622 the Ulster Plantation was overseen by a council in London and an Ireland-based standing commission that made regular reports on the progress of planting. The Irish Commission of 1622 was the last comprehensive survey of the Ulster Plantation, and demonstrated the metropole’s continued concern with the re(-)form of manners and customs, as well as the establishment of a reliable revenue stream, in its colonial periphery. The metropole was particularly attentive to the failure of the undertakers, including the London companies, to draw adequate numbers of English settlers to their lands. Instead, they found an alarming number of native Irish tenants scattered throughout Ulster. Desperate Ulster undertakers went so far as to pass off ex-mercenary highland Scots as more docile lowland Scottish settlers to fill out the ranks of their requisite “British” tenantry. These men blended in with the mass of Scottish undertakers and tenants who sought economic opportunities across the sea, with the support of their home government. Ulster was, as a result, distinguished by the volume of Scottish immigration it absorbed (Canny 2001:206-215,222,230-232,240-241).

There was a national enthusiasm for colonization unmatched in neighboring England. Many English interests, investing their resources in planting Ulster from the distance of London, were more concerned with seeing some return-on-investment from the unexploited resources of

the land—especially its fishing and timber—than in building up infrastructure to attract “civilizing” tenants. Other more diligent and well-positioned English undertakers, particularly those involved in the Dublin government, did establish viable British communities in Ulster that boasted artisans and merchants clustered in nascent trading centers. Whatever the origin of settlers, the colonial government—in Dublin and in London—remained solidly English in character and control. It was an administration, however, that was increasingly engaged—at a bureaucratic level—beyond the Pale. Still, a relative peace prevailed in Ireland through the 1630s, instilled by the brutality of war with which the century had dawned, and ensured by the steady outflow of Catholic soldiery to Continental armies. Even Rome conceded defeat in its fight against the Protestant Crown that ruled Ireland. Public allegiance to the Stuart monarchy would be encouraged by a clergy allowed, in exchange, to serve the Catholic community in Ireland in private worship (Canny 2001:214,232-239,389,455-457).

As the 17<sup>th</sup> century progressed, the upper echelons of that colonial administration were increasingly filled with senior courtiers more concerned with their own royal advancement than re(-)forming Ireland. The colonial kingdom was, for them, a resource to be tapped for landed prestige and valuable natural resources through enriching “improvement.” This situation culminated in the 1639 recall of all London Company lands in Ulster into Crown hands, citing their failure to fully achieve the vaunted goals of plantation. This action voided the leases of all tenants and amounted to an incredible loss of capital on the part of former corporate undertakers. Plantation would continue, but to the benefit of a new generation of elites in the metropole who

would be granted the recalled lands in acts of royal patronage designed to fill the royal coffers of Charles I (Canny 2001:297-300,401).

Meanwhile, religious tensions were mounting throughout the archipelago. James VI and I—head of the Church of England from his ascension to the English throne in 1603 up until his death in 1625—had to balance mutually exclusive religious interests. Religious traditionalists, dubbed “high church,” wanted to retain Catholic-style ritual while maintaining autonomy from the Catholic hierarchy in Rome. More hard-line Calvinist re(-)formers, who also rejected ties to Rome, sought to purge all such “Popish” practice from their religious worship. James’s son and successor Charles I, however, pushed forward the contentious agenda of religious uniformity throughout the British Isles. This uniformity, promoted under the strong “high church” arm of Archbishop William Laud, stood in firm opposition to Calvinist doctrine and practices. While Laud only had official authority over the Church of England, his influence over Thomas Wentworth, Lord Deputy of Ireland from 1632 to 1640, managed to bring the Church of Ireland in greater conformity with that of England by the mid-1630s. In Scotland, which was free from the colonial apparatus that had given England such sway in Ireland, Laud attempted to use the pull of Charles I to introduce a more English-style prayer book. The Presbyterian backlash was immediate, and led to the 1638 National Covenant against all such “English” incursions into Scottish religion. Charles I declared the Scottish Covenanters in rebellion and moved an ineffectually small army against them in the following year (Sturdy 2002:158-160).

While Scotland was increasingly occupying the attention of the Crown and its courtiers, events there had a noticeable impact on the ground in Ireland. Nonconforming Protestant<sup>8</sup> settlers, especially the Scottish concentrated in Ulster, were already chafing under Wentworth's Laudian policies. They were then made to suffer the billeting of soldiers—including Catholic officers and enlisted men—from the Irish army that Wentworth was amassing around Carrickfergus for eventual deployment against the Covenanting Scots. Irish Catholics were experiencing some degree of advantage from this militarism, and promises of protection from Charles I. Meanwhile, a tide was rising against them, and their British co-religionists, in the English House of Commons. The Catholic members of an Irish parliamentary delegation in London in the spring of 1641 quickly realized how hated Catholics were in England. They also saw how little authority the king—the closest they had to a protector in Ireland—actually wielded within his own country. Their reports back to Ireland put the Catholic community there in such fear for their persons and property, lest the more radical elements in English and Irish politics win control, that insurrection began brewing (Canny 2001:290,296,458-460).

Insurrection in Ireland was kicked off in the fall of 1641 by the rising up of a small group of fearful Catholic gentry—including the London-trained lawyer, local justice of the peace, and member of Parliament Sir Phelim O'Neill. These individuals planned to take key fortified positions in Ulster, through ruse rather than open conflict, as a prompt for negotiating better

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<sup>8</sup> Nonconforming Protestants included all non-Catholic sects (Presbyterian, Anabaptist, Quaker, etc.) whose beliefs, practices, and church hierarchies (or lack thereof) did not align with those of the national ("established") Churches of England and Ireland, headed by the Crown and Archbishops of Canterbury and Armagh respectively ("nonconformist, *n.* and *adj.*," *OED Online*, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/127875](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/127875), accessed 24 April 2020; MacCulloch 2005).

protections for their property and the free practice of their religion. Those leading this Rising of 1641 intended no violence against the persons or property of ordinary British settlers in Ulster. They could, however, do little to control the popular movement that their actions sparked. The tense social powder keg that was Ulster erupted into violence as dispossessed Catholics turned on English Protestant settlers. Indebted farmers robbed their neighbors of wealth, raiding their homes and torturing them till they divulged the whereabouts of money and papers that proved the aggressors' indebtedness. The latter were burned, alongside settler homes. The final indignity was the stripping of Protestant settlers, both for the value of their clothing and the symbolic violence of the act. Armed, unpaid, and leaderless soldiers—cast adrift throughout Ulster after the English Parliament disbanded Wentworth's Irish army in May 1641—took advantage of this chaos to further despoil the province. Scottish settlers largely closed ranks, defending themselves and their own property as they bore witness to the degradations of their fellow Britons (Canny 2001:469-483).

Dublin never fell, and Protestant settlers did exact some measure of revenge against insurgents when afforded the chance. While at least two verifiable mass-killings were committed against Protestant civilians in Ulster in the latter stages of this Rising, the majority of deaths were due to open battle and siege warfare. Anti-Englishness was still a driving impulse—with moves being made among Irish insurgents to expunge the English language, English fashion, and the monuments and records of English rule from places rechristened with their Irish-language names. Meanwhile, in a reversal of the iconoclasm that had ushered in the Reformation throughout the British Isles, Catholic clergy directed violence against the places and objects of

Protestant worship in order to purge a perceived heresy from their midst. Theft and physical violence, intended to degrade and dehumanize the victim, were still an everyday part of Protestant life in Ulster as Owen Roe O'Neill returned from the Continent to restore order and take up the reins of rebellion as an authoritative military leader adhering to 17<sup>th</sup>-century rules of warfare (Canny 2001:484-492,535-548).

The Adventurers' Act of 1642 was the London Parliament's attempt to raise money to quash the unrest that continued at a simmer throughout Ireland. Its promises of Irish lands at war's end in exchange for immediate loans to the government would have a lasting impact on Irish society in the 1650s. Meanwhile, Catholic gentry of both Gaelic and Anglo-Norman background formed a general assembly and elected a supreme council that would restore order and govern Ireland in parallel with the Dublin administration through 1649 as the Confederation of Kilkenny. A Scottish force made inroads into Ulster in 1642, establishing a Parliamentary (as opposed to Crown) presence in Ireland that was keen on bolstering local Presbyterian (as opposed to "established" Church of Ireland) community structures in the region. Under the influence of fervent Papal Nuncio<sup>9</sup> Giovanni Battista Rinuccini, the Confederation became more of a Counter-Reformation body asserting major social and political re(-)forms as its terms for peace (Gillespie 2006:154-167).

Both sides in the war were forced into peace talks by their dwindling resources, including a diminished ability to feed troops, as of 1643. By this time, however, nonconforming Protestants

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<sup>9</sup> Ambassador of the Holy See of Rome, the seat of the Bishop of Rome, as the Pope is formally titled ("nuncio, *n.*," *OED Online*, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/129187](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/129187), accessed 24 April 2020; "see, *n. l.*," *OED Online*, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/174747](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/174747), accessed 24 April 2020).

in Ireland stood polarized against their Catholic neighbors, having sworn to the order-restoring Solemn League and Covenant that had, at least temporarily, united the English Parliament and Scottish Covenanters in common cause against King Charles I of England. As Charles I lost ground to Parliamentary forces in England, he became increasingly aware of his need for Irish Catholic allies. However conciliatory he might wish to be, the English king could not concede the more radical religious points demanded by either the Catholic Confederates or the Ulster Covenanters. Between 1646 and 1650 interludes of peace broke up a war that engulfed all three kingdoms of the British Isles. By 1649, however, King Charles I had been tried and executed by the English Parliament (Gillespie 2006:161-176).

His son, Charles II, was proclaimed king in a royalist Ireland where Catholic and Protestant land was held by Crown grant. In reaction to this continued opposition, Oliver Cromwell—leader of the Parliamentary army and lord protector of the new English Commonwealth—brought modern siege warfare to the urban strongholds of Ireland that remained in Confederate hands. By 1650 Irish Protestants had broken with the Catholics in the royalist coalition, the latter joining the exiled Stuart court of Charles II in France. Ireland, now part of the English republic, was subjected to a new round of survey and land settlement. Its urban centers were left to rebuild after the destruction wrought by both Cromwellian cannon and the destructive acts of quartered soldiers (Gillespie 2006:177-178,183-184).

By 1653 those who had funded Cromwell's (re)(re)conquest through the Adventurers' Act were drawing lots for the Irish lands that would be their repayment. They were joined in the new Irish social order by soldiers from the same campaigns, who received lands in Ireland as

payment for their service. Meanwhile, Irish royalists had the bulk of their lands confiscated, while Anglo-Norman descended Catholic merchants had already fled Irish cities for abroad. More prime land was freed up for settlement by new arrivals through the transplantation of potentially resistant Irish proprietors to the west of Ireland. Disputes over land were almost inevitable from these diverse and conflicting claims to a limited resource. This settlement was also less controlled than the previous plantations in Ireland, leading to a much patchier colonization where old and new worlds met in transitional zones. As always, native Irish laborers had to be kept on for practical reasons, whatever the political concerns, in these newer colonial settlements (Gillespie 2006:185-194).

Ireland was now an ambiguously positioned member of the single political entity that was the Commonwealth, overseen briefly by a commission and then by the resurrected office of Lord Deputy. The Commonwealth's main concern was with rebuilding law, education, and state revenue in Ireland after the years of war. Power over Irish affairs—including the setting and collection of its customs—remained in England. As before, political appointment in Ireland was a reward for loyalty in England, meaning that those ruling in the 1650s were complete outsiders to local power networks and preexisting power structures, even the colonial ones that had gone before. The army played an important role in this local administration, with revenue commissioners drawn from the army ranks replacing justices of the peace. This subtle substitution reflected the more religiously and socially radical elements of this new English establishment, which were particularly active in the army. They believed in a society built on mutual covenant (agreement) rather than ordained hierarchy. Practical considerations, however,

meant turning away from this radicalism. As always seemed to be the case, politics in England preempted any concerted effort on the part of the Dublin administration to effect such idealized re(-)form in Ireland (Gillespie 2006:195-201,209).

The ideology behind 17<sup>th</sup>-century radical republicanism, nurtured by Anabaptists and Quakers who rejected the hierarchy that had traditionally shaped social interaction, hinged on virtuous and moral action as the basis for society. Social cohesion became a matter of living a pious public life, rather than currying patronage and honors from one's presumed social superiors. For those living within such a republic, a society's lack of virtue and piety could not help but be met with divine retribution on a mass scale. In such a world, faith and morals became causally linked to national prosperity, and therefore a matter of public concern. Within this context there emerged a school of thought that came to view outward improvements—the ordering of landscape and promotion of the economy—as the visible reflections of society's moral progress (Gillespie 2006:202-203,208).

Religion in Ireland under the Cromwellian Protectorate was anything but uniform and unitary, while it remained fervently anti-Catholic. While more socially radical sects were popular with the occupying military, more conservative Christian denominations remained active among the civilian population. This diversity, united in the prominence of place each sect afforded the Bible in its form of worship, was encouraged by the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland as a compulsory state religion. Such toleration aside, Catholicism was still deemed an idolatrous practice—condemned in scripture and warranting divine punishment—that further constituted a threat to national security from the potential for the pope to ally with the exiled Stuart court. As

such, Catholics of all ancestry lost their standing in Irish public life, especially in the urban centers they had once dominated (Gillespie 2006:202-206).

## WHAT WAS IRELAND'S CHOICE DISTILLATE?

### THE SUBSTANCE OF *UISCE BEATHA*

Clarifying the physical constitution of *uisce beatha* is a necessary first step in understanding its material role in the early modern colonization of Ireland. What the substance actually was that the Gaelic(ized) inhabitants of Ireland distilled and consumed beginning in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and that Englishmen would encounter during the Elizabethan (re)conquest, is a bit of a mystery (G.B. 1858:284-285). Its nature is hinted at in one particular poem mistakenly attributed to the Gaelic bard Tadhg Dall Uí Uiginn, who wrote for chiefs flourishing from 1560 to 1590. The encomium—whose subject matter points to a much earlier date of composition, circa 1530<sup>10</sup>—praises the hospitable outlays of a chief Ó Cearbhaill (O'Carroll). Whoever the bard was, he recounts how one Ó Grádaigh (O'Grady) sent a boy of his own retinue to town for

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<sup>10</sup> These Gaelic Irish sources from before the Elizabethan (re)conquest and colonization have come down to us as either fragments, in the case of the poetry of Tadhg Dall Uí Uiginn, or translations of lost Irish-language originals, as with the *Annals of Clonmacnoise*. Even the fairly complete poems that survive into the present, like the encomium to Ó Cearbhaill (O'Carroll) that features so heavily in this study, are later transcriptions (ca. 1684) of what was a predominantly oral tradition. Bardic elegies and encomiums were composed to be memorized and recited, in time to accompanying harp music, as Irish nobles and their retinues relaxed in the wake of heavy feasting. Noble families kept written transcriptions of the poems that these itinerant bards composed in celebration of their host family's most noteworthy forebears, bound into a *duanaire* (poem-book). The content and form of what each family's *duanaire* held, while referencing particular historical ancestors, conformed to strict rules of language and composition that bards learned through professional training at hereditary schools. These stylized pieces—with their references to ancient Irish mythic cycles, real flora, imagined fauna, and everyday tasks—are loaded with imagery that is not immediately clear to the 21<sup>st</sup>-century reader (Knott 1922:xxxiii-lv,xc).

*piupar* (pepper) and *ainís* (aniseed) to spice the “*t-uisge beatha*”<sup>11</sup> that Ó Grádaigh was to make for the Ó Cearnaigh (O’Kearney) chief (Knott 1922:1,249-250, 1926:164). The flavoring of a perennially popular distillate with aniseed would explain the outsized importation of this spice into Ireland, via the English port of Bristol, throughout the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It was brought over in quantities exponentially greater than any other spice, except salt, in almost every year for which there are records (Flavin 2014:150-151).

#### THE SUBSTANCE OF USQUEBAUGH

While other Anglophone writers made reference to the heat and drying potential of Ireland’s *aqua vitæ*, the Englishman Fynes Moryson was the first to reference in writing the ingredients in what he termed “usquebath”—fennel seed and raisins (Stanihurst [1586] 1808; Camden 1610; Speed 1612; Moryson [1617] 1904:227). Moryson’s knowledge of usquebath stemmed from his having been employed, in 1600–1603, as resident personal secretary to the English’s army’s commander-in-chief in Ireland (Thompson 2004). A slightly later colonial compatriot of Moryson’s, Luke Gernon ([1620] 1904:361), similarly noted that the “aquavitæ or usquebath of Ireland” was spiced with licorice. The most consistent distinguishing feature of this Irish distillate was, then, a licorice flavor. It was a quality derived from the addition of the appropriate spice—aniseed, fennel, licorice—to a liquor most likely distilled from wine (G.B. 1858:285-286).

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<sup>11</sup> Translated in 1926 as “whiskey” (Knott 1926:164).

Licorice-scented spices, like fennel seed, and raisins are among the ingredients commonly added to usquebaugh in 17<sup>th</sup>-century English receipts<sup>12</sup> for Ireland’s *aqua vitæ*. A number of aromatic or “dulcifying” (sweetening, soothing) ingredients could be added to a distilled base alcohol to produce something collectively identified with Ireland and referred to as usquebaugh (Table 1; Appendix B). Aromatics were always added, and the one that most consistently defined usquebaugh up through the 17<sup>th</sup> century was licorice root, which appears in all six English receipts dating to this period. The licorice flavor could be boosted with aniseed (four receipts) and caraway seed (two receipts). Nutmeg or mace (the membrane surrounding nutmeg) and ginger were popular additions (five and four receipts respectively), followed by clove (three receipts) and cinnamon (two receipts). In one particularly opulent version of usquebaugh—made “the best way,” according to the receipt—musk, a strongly scented mammalian secretion, and ambergris, an odiferous secretion of the sperm whale, rounded out the ingredients. Raisins were always added to “dulcify” the substance and impart a warm golden color to the drink (six receipts). Dates (three receipts) and figs (one receipt) served a similar purpose, as did the various sugars—candy (“C,” one receipt), brown (“B,” two receipts), and molasses (“M,” one receipt)—that were sometimes added after distillation (see Table 1).

Irish *uisce beatha* was, by all accounts, a wine-based spirit (G.B. 1858:285-286), but English colonial administrators seemed to have understood Ireland’s *aqua vitæ* to be a grain-

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<sup>12</sup> This was the French-derived term applied in the Early Modern to those lists of ingredients and accompanying instructions followed to make a prescribed food or drink. The Latin-derived term ‘recipe’—which in the Early Modern applied more to the formulas used to compose particular medicines—came to replace ‘receipt’ from the 18<sup>th</sup> century (“receipt, *n.* 14” *OED Online*, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/159401](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/159401), accessed 18 September 2020; “recipe, *n.* 2” *OED Online*, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/159522](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/159522), accessed 18 September 2020).

**Table 1** Receipts [Recipes] for Usquebaugh from Early Modern Printed Works

Reference	Plat 1602	Moryson 1617	Company of Distillers of London 1639
<b>Type of Publication</b>	Housewifery Manual	Travel Itinerary	Retail Distilling Manual
<b>Recommended Uses</b>		To correct the negative effects a cold-damp climate has on food; to correct the effects of poorly chosen food (i.e. horse meat)	
<b>Ingredients</b>			
<b>Liquid Base</b>	<i>aqua composita</i> from Gascoigne wine		strong proof spirits from malt or wine
<b>Anise Seed</b>	•		•
<b>Fennel Seed</b>		•	
<b>Caraway Seed</b>			•
<b>Nutmeg</b>			•
<b>Cinnamon</b>			
<b>Ginger</b>			•
<b>Clove</b>			•
<b>Mace</b>			
<b>Liquorish</b>	•		•
<b>Raisin/Currant</b>	•	•	•
<b>Date</b>	•		
<b>Fig</b>			
<b>Sugar Type</b>	Molasses		Brown
<b>Musk</b>			
<b>Ambergris</b>			
<b>Number of Ingredients</b>	5	2	8

**Table 1** Receipts [Recipes] for Usquebaugh from Early Modern Printed Works (continued)

Reference	Culpeper 1649	French 1653a	French 1653b	W.M. 1655	Total Instances in All Receipts
<b>Type of Publication</b>	Home Manual (based on Retail Distilling Manual)	Home Manual (based on Retail Distilling Manual)	Home Manual (based on Retail Distilling Manual)	House-wifery Manual	
<b>Recommended Uses</b>	To strengthen the stomach against cold and flegm	As a ‘stomach water’ to treat excessive eating	To cure the lungs (as an expectorant), to warm the stomach		
<b>Ingredients</b>					
<b>Liquid Base</b>	<i>aqua vitæ</i> from wine or ale	<i>aqua vitæ</i> from wine (Canary sack) or ale	strong proof spirits from wine or beer	<i>aqua vitæ</i> from ale	
<b>Anise Seed</b>			•	•	4
<b>Fennel Seed</b>					1
<b>Caraway Seed</b>			•		2
<b>Nutmeg</b>		•	•	•	4
<b>Cinnamon</b>		•		•	2
<b>Ginger</b>	•		•	•	4
<b>Clove</b>	•		•		3
<b>Mace</b>	•			•	2
<b>Liquorish</b>	•	•	•	•	6
<b>Raisin/Currant</b>	•	•	•	•	7
<b>Date</b>		•		•	3
<b>Fig</b>				•	1
<b>Sugar Type</b>			Brown	Candy	4
<b>Musk</b>				•	1
<b>Ambergris</b>				•	1
<b>Number of Ingredients</b>	5	5	8	12	

based distillate. A 1556 Act of Irish Parliament, passed during the reign of Queen Mary (Tudor) and King Philip (of Spain), called for the licensing of all *aqua vitæ* production in Ireland in order to staunch what was deemed a frivolous consumption of grain (referred to using the catch-all English term “corn”) in that kingdom (Authority of Parliament [1556] 1765:251). Sir John Perrot, acting as lord president of Munster, reiterated the association of *aqua vitæ* production in Ireland with “corn.” His 1571 proclamation of laws and ordinances to be observed in that province restricted *aqua vitæ* production to households of means, and prohibited its general retail for the same grain-based reasons cited in the 1556 Act (Brewer and Bullen [1571] 1867:409-411; Turvey 2009). As of 1622, however, *aqua vitæ* was still being distilled in Ireland from the “leys of wine” imported into the country. Thus, at least according to the “nobility and gentry of the country,” Irish *aqua vitæ* was not yet defined as an exclusively grain-based spirit (Treadwell [1622] 2006:99). Things had changed little a decade later, when the “rebellious part of the population” of Ireland was accused of acquiring wine only to distill it into “usquebaugh or strong aqua vit” (Mahaffy [1623] 1903:169).

17<sup>th</sup>-century English health and distilling manuals could be somewhat abstruse when it came to the base alcohol used to produce usquebaugh. Most of these receipts began with previously distilled spirits—*aqua composita*, strong proof spirits, or *aqua vitæ*. The *aqua composita* that Hugh Plat suggested using as a base was itself distilled from “gascoign wine,” a wine from the Gascony region of southwest France. Plat’s “Secrets in distillation” may have foregrounded spirits distilled from wines, but he did refer to the distilling of spirits from beer and

ale, and provided instructions for distilling from mead (fermented honey), though not in reference to usquebaugh (Plat 1600, n.p.).

*The Distiller of London*—the official manual for distilling produced by the recently chartered Worshipful Company of Distillers of London (1639:14-16)—encouraged the distilling of strong proof spirits, which were the base for all its receipts, from wine and its dregs, while proscribing the use of beer or ale dregs or “sugarwaters”. This proscription was in keeping with the same company’s Royal Charter of the previous year. Here, suspicion as to the quality of grain-based distillates (“lowe wines”), derived from brewery manufacture (“wort wash dregg”), manifests itself in the right that London distillers claimed to search out and taste-test all brewery material that might find its way into the distiller’s pot. Any “wort wash dregg” found to be “unsavory or unwholsome” was to be destroyed by the distiller who found it (Charles I 1638). Still, the official Arms of London’s Worshipful Company of Distillers included, “a Barley Garbe wreathed about with a vine Branch bearing Grapes all proper” (Figure 2), indicating that both wine and ale (or beer, if hops were included) could serve as the base for distilling spiritous liquors (Company of Distillers of London 1638).

By the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, beer or ale—both brewed from fermented grains—had become acceptable as a base for the distillate used in usquebaugh. The *aqua vitæ* that the London College of Physicians used as a base for “vsquebach”<sup>13</sup> in their *Pharmacopœa Londinensis*—later titled the *London Dispensatory*—appears to have been distilled from a combination of ale and the lees (or dregs) of wine (Medicorum Collegij Londinensis [1618] 1944:109; Culpeper

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<sup>13</sup> Exactly how usquebaugh is referred to in the *Pharmacopœa Londinensis* (Medicorum Collegij Londinensis [1618] 1944:109), and later in the *LONDON DISPENSATORY* (Culpeper 1649:92).



**Figure 2** Official arms of London’s Worshipful Company of Distillers. Photograph, by author, of page from *Ordinances of the Distillers of London*, Company of Distillers of London, 1638. Guildhall Library, City of London. Call No.: MS 6228/1.

1649:92). John French (1653a:24-26,45) provided illustrated instructions for distilling *aqua vitae*—which was the base he referred to in his receipt for “vsque-bath”—both from wine and stale beer or its dregs, although beer required multiple distillations to achieve as strong a spirit as that derived from wine. W.M.’s (1655:217,283-284) receipts for “usquebath” were split between

using ale as a base for distilling and using an *aqua vitæ* previously distilled from an unspecified alcohol.

The trend seen in these distilling and health manuals toward an acceptance of grain alcohol as a base for usquebaugh is in keeping with the pollen analysis of soils immediately surrounding a still worm (condensation coil) found in the basement of Carrick Castle in the Scottish Highlands. Samples were taken from a stain noticed in the soils immediately underlying the still worm, in a context dating to between 1639—when the castle was renovated—and 1685—when it was bombarded and destroyed. The stained soil contained a much higher percentage of cereal-type pollen than the surrounding soil, more so than could be explained by differential pollen preservation in the two contexts. It was likely the product of liquid dripping or being spilled on the spot between brewing the alcoholic mash and putting that mash into the still (Haynes et al. 1998:34,41-42). The content of this soil stain provides physical evidence pointing to the distilling of grain-based spirits in Scotland by the close of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

While the composition of early modern usquebaugh was highly variable, the recognizable profile of a substance with qualitative distinctions does emerge from the documentary record. Its most consistent distinguishing feature would have been its licorice flavor, as all receipts deemed “Irish” or termed usquebaugh contained one or more licorice-flavored ingredients—aniseed, fennel seed, caraway seed, or licorice (Skelly 1994:13,57,114,180). Many more exotic spices could supplement this essential flavor. As few as five but as many as twelve ingredients might be added to a base distillate in composing something identifiable to an early modern palate as usquebaugh. Up to three quarters of these ingredients could be strongly flavored—nutmeg,

cinnamon, ginger, clove, mace, musk, ambergris—adding bite and mouth heat to the finished product (Skelly 1994:9,81,86,131,210). Dried fruits commonly contributed to “the Irish appellation’s” menstruum—in the word’s original sense as “a nutritive medium”—thickening the finished spirit and turning it the desired amber hue. This color was such a distinct feature of usquebaugh that two London merchants were discovered, in 1602, working in collusion with the County Antrim servitor Moyses Hill to pass off a white *aqua vitæ* imported from London as “usquebaff” by simply coloring the former yellow. This was the purported couterfeit usquebaugh scheme mentioned in the introduction to this study (Mahaffy [1602] 1912:509; Horning 2013:208). This would have been a far cry from a true usquebaugh—a viscous libation of heavily spiced liquor, sweetened and thickened with dried fruits, and on occasion supplemented with straight sugar or a drop of sweet wine.

#### **SITUATING THE SUBSTANCE: WHERE IS USQUEBAUGH FOUND IN THE ARCHIVE OF THIS COLONIAL WORLD?**

References contained in the ever-popular English histories and geographies of Raphael Holinshed (1586), William Camden (1610), and John Speed (1612)<sup>14</sup> would have given many early modern men and women in the metropole of London their first introduction to Ireland’s choice distillate. At the same time, this Irish *aqua vitæ*—anglicized from *uisce beatha* into usquebaugh—regularly appeared in household manuals for cooking, distilling, and domestic

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<sup>14</sup> The continued popularity of these histories and geographies in early modern England is attested to by the many reprintings each went through during the 17<sup>th</sup> century, which have been digitized and catalogued in the database Early English Books Online (EEBO).

medicine that were printed in London and circulated among the literate population there from 1602 onward (Plat<sup>15</sup> 1602; Culpeper<sup>16</sup> 1649; French 1653a, 1653b; W.M. 1655<sup>17</sup>). What the references in these varying genres reveal is how usquebaugh was situated in the world of consumables at the heart of empire. It was Ireland's contribution to a class of distilled medicinal beverage that had become popular across Europe in the 14th and 15th centuries (Magee 1991:7-8; Mulryan 2002:11-15; Wilson 2006:185-243).

That this substance would have been classed as a medicinal beverage, at least by the English, is reaffirmed by the fact that the *London Pharmacopœia*, which contained a receipt for making “Vsquebach,” was compiled and published by the Royal College of Physicians of London (Medicorum Collegij Londinensis [1618] 1944:109). Some twenty years later, the Worshipful Company of Distillers of London was formed under the aegis of royal physicians. This new company was also almost immediately at odds with London's Society of Apothecaries, who had themselves broken away from the Grocers' Company, with the help of the College of Physicians, around the time the pharmacopeia came out (Berlin 1996). How, though, was this particular substance—“The Irish appellation,” as the *Distiller of London* termed it—meant to be

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<sup>15</sup> Hugh Plat[t] was a well-educated polymath known for wide-ranging enquiries meant to serve the ordinary public who read his English-language works on everything from mechanical inventions to gardening (Lee 2004). His *Delightes for Ladies* took practices that had been the purview of aristocracy, and disseminated them to a gentry class keen to social climb (Wall 2002:26).

<sup>16</sup> Nicholas Culpeper was small-time medical practitioner, apprenticed as an apothecary in his youth, who brought the radical republicanism of 1640s England to bear on the world of medical knowledge in London. He published widely, in English, on a variety of medical matters, becoming a pariah of the medical establishment in the process. His 1649 publication of the Royal College of Physicians' *Pharmacopœia*, or as he titled it, *London Dispensatory*, amounted to an unauthorized release of what they considered their trade secrets. He would continue to publish such candid vernacular medical guides—through the agency of his widow and loyal publisher—long after his death in 1654 (Arikha 2008:203; Wear 2000:354-356; Curry 2004).

<sup>17</sup> While little is known of its author, *The Queen's Closet Opened* was a hugely successful book of cookery and medicine first published in 1655, during the English Commonwealth (1649-1660). Ten printing runs, from its first appearance through the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, attest to its popularity at the time (The British Library Board 2013).

used (Company of the Distillers of London 1639:18)? What was it most associated with, in the world surrounding the human body, as a medicinal corrective?

Edmund Campion<sup>18</sup> was the first Anglophone author of a work on Ireland to discursively tie the consumption of this particular distillate to the Irish landscape and climate. He claimed that those living in Ireland—natives and newcomers alike—partook of a unique *aqua vitae* to remedy illness. The drink was particularly effective in remedying the landscape- and climate-induced “fluxes” affecting those recently arrived in the country.<sup>19</sup> He also described the Gaelic Irish partaking of their *aqua vitae* as a digestif, to aid digestion (Campion [1571] 1633:9,18). Campion’s young protege Richard Stanihurst<sup>20</sup> repeated Campion’s assertions, verbatim, in his contribution to the 1577 edition of Holinshed’s *Chronicles* (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:8,67).

In 1586, a year before Holinshed’s monumental work was republished in its heavily revised form, the English antiquarian William Camden published *Britannia*, a work of history and topography that included a section on Ireland. He, too, made reference to the use of an Irish *aqua vitae* to treat landscape-climate-induced digestive ailments that especially troubled foreigners in Ireland. Despite having never set foot in Ireland, Camden included his best approximation of the Irish term for this distillate—“Vske-bah”—as a marginal note. This

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<sup>18</sup> Future Catholic martyr and native Englishman who sought politico-religious refuge in Ireland—with the Anglo-Norman descended Stanihursts of Dublin—from 1569 to 1571. During this time he researched and wrote a *Historie of Ireland*, using the extensive library of James Stanihurst—a volume that would not be published under the martyr’s name until 1633 (Graves 2008).

<sup>19</sup> “Fluxes” was the catch-all term for a variety of “undifferentiated diarrhoeas” in early modern diagnosis (Wear 2000:14).

<sup>20</sup> Or Stanyhurst. Irish-born fellow Oxford graduate and son of the English exile’s host in Dublin, whose own contribution to Holinshed’s coverage of Ireland advocated for the Elizabethan (re)conquest of the island (Lennon 2008b).

passage may have borne striking resemblance to that of Campion-cum-Stanihurst,<sup>21</sup> but Camden claimed to have returned to the 12<sup>th</sup>-century chronicler Giraldus Cambrensis<sup>22</sup> for the description of Ireland that surrounded this reference to usquebaugh. While it was unlikely that Camden was unfamiliar with what had been written about Ireland in Holinshed's *Chronicles*—which had come out just as he began to research *Britannia* in earnest—he had added that little bit of new information in providing the local name for Ireland's *aqua vitæ* (Camden 1610:63; Richardson 2004:113,115; Herendeen 2008).

This was information that he likely gleaned from one of his associates who were, themselves, more familiar with Ireland through direct experience of its (re)conquest and colonization. During his time at Oxford in the 1560s, Camden had met and befriended fellow students George Carew, who would serve a variety of colonial roles in Ireland between 1574 and 1624, and Philip Sidney, who would travel through Ireland in 1576 while visiting his father, the Lord Deputy Sir Henry Sidney. The younger Sidney, a noted Elizabethan courtier and poet himself, encouraged Camden in his antiquarian pursuits. Meanwhile Carew, whose own interest in Irish antiquities saw him amass an impressive collection of original documents relating to the subject, actively patronized Camden in his scholarly pursuits (Herendeen 2008; Lotz-Heumann 2008; Woudhuysen 2014). John Speed, who had no such personal contacts among those engaged in colonizing Ireland (Bendall 2008), borrowed wholesale from Camden in compiling the section

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<sup>21</sup> The term used to ascribe joint authorship to materials on Ireland in Holinshed's *Chronicles* that were based on Edmund Campion's earlier *Historie of Ireland*, with some material added by Richard Stanihurst, the official compiler of the treatise on Ireland that appeared in the *Chronicles*.

<sup>22</sup> Welsh-born chronicler of the 12<sup>th</sup>-century Anglo-Norman conquest and colonization of Ireland (Bartlett 2006). His *Topographia Hibernica*, the model for future geographies of Ireland (Morgan 1999), contained no reference to any distillates (Cambrensis [1187] 2000:12). This was likely due to the fact that knowledge of distilling and distillates did not really spread through Europe until the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Wilson 2006).

on Ireland in his *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine*, published just one year after the first English translation of Camden's *Britannia* appeared in London. While Speed reorganized the passage on Ireland's climate and landscape somewhat, the major change was incorporating "Vskebah" into the main body of the text, rather than leaving it as marginalia (Speed 1612:137).

With the republication of these historiographical geographies throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century, this picture of Ireland—of both the threats that it posed to the colonizing body and the use of its *aqua vitæ* in remedying the same—grew into a bonafide discursive tradition. It was such a durable and widely circulated image that it was recycled by writers, like the English colonial soldier John Dymmok, whose works on Ireland originally only circulated in manuscript form.<sup>23</sup> Dymmok included the copycat passage in his circa 1600 "Treatice of Ireland" (Dymmok [1600] 1843:5; Brennan 2002:253). Fynes Moryson ([1617] 1904) also drew from and elaborated on it in composing the geographical description of Ireland that appeared in print in his more personalized *Itinerary*. His major innovation was drawing together the uses of usquebaugh in remedying the ill effects of landscape-climate and diet (Moryson [1617] 1904:221).

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<sup>23</sup> Eventually published by curious antiquarians, centuries after they were originally written.

### CHAPTER 3 | Consumption and the Body: Unwanted Intimacies

So far, this study has been laying a foundation for the analytical work to follow. A theoretical framework for approaching the intersection of colonialism and capitalism in early modern Ireland has been sketched out, indicating the interpretive value in using *uisce beatha* as a lens for focusing the study. Enough of a historical background has been provided to contextualize the colonial actions and interactions that will be examined more closely in the following chapters. The actual composition of the early modern substance has been established, to clarify what exactly people were consuming under the labels of *uisce beatha* and *uisquebaugh*. And that substance has been resituated in the world of consumables as those drinking it in the Early Modern would have understood it. The last two steps have, hopefully, begun the real work of historical ethnography. To paraphrase the Comaroffs (1992:6), these small analyses have made strange something that seemed to be familiar about the past. The consumption of a substance that is so often reduced to having simply been whiskey's progenitor (McGuire 1973; McGuffin [1978] 1999; McCreary 1983; Magee 1991; Booth 1995; Townsend 1999; Mulryan 2002, 2009; Kosar 2010), may indeed have been something more.

What remains, and will follow in the coming chapters, is to make that strangeness familiar again (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:6). Regaining a sense of familiarity requires making sense of the strangeness of the past. Historical ethnography does this by resituating the past actions of individuals and groups—the typical fodder of narrative histories—within the nexus of culture and society that drove them, giving particular actions meaning and informing the shape they took. It looks for the subjective, contemporary rationales behind actions, however

“irrational” they have appeared to subsequent observers (Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:11; Dietler 2013:57-59).

In the historical ethnography being pursued here, this sense-making will be accomplished by exploring why the actions and interactions surrounding the consumption of this defamiliarized substance took the forms they did in the colonial world of early modern Ireland. Intragroup forms of consumption—and the bodily rationales informing them—will be considered, alongside their cross-cultural manifestations. This consideration will require an approach that delves into the intimate, embodied experience of hospitality—from the general forms it took, to its alimentary contents, to the theories of the body that shaped visceral reactions to both those forms and their content. The goal is to understand how and why *uisce beatha* became usquebaugh—the latter a substance that featured in colonial consumption and discourse, and which was even incorporated into health regimes meant to serve people who would never step foot in Ireland.

#### **ADOPTING USQUEBAUGH: CONSUMPTION AMONG THE ENGLISH**

For reasons that will become clear over the course of this chapter, the agents of English colonialism who encountered *uisce beatha* in Ireland eagerly embraced its use. They may have somewhat ambivalently consumed the liquor when presented with it by Irish hosts, as will be explored in the next chapter, but they wholeheartedly sought out usquebaugh for consumption and dissemination among themselves, even in the highest political circles.

Among the earliest accounts of usquebaugh being gifted between Englishmen is a letter from September 1600 (Brewer and Bullen 1869:444-446). In it, Elizabeth I’s secretary of state

Sir Robert Cecil discussed various items that the acting lord president of Munster, Sir George Carew, had gifted or should gift to other prominent men in Elizabeth's administration (Croft 2008; Lotz-Heumann 2008). Cecil began with the goshawk<sup>1</sup> that Carew had sent to then-chancellor of the exchequer Sir John Fortescue (Löwe 2008). He followed this by advising that something along the lines of "a couple of rugs,<sup>2</sup> or some uscough-baugh" be sent to then-lord treasurer Baron Buckhurst, who was saddled with balancing England's books as the Crown fought to pacify Ireland at the turn of the century (Zim 2015). Cecil suggested the same Irish gifts for England's current lord admiral, the Earl of Nottingham, a powerful privy counsellor who had served on a diplomatic mission to Ireland in the early 1580s (McDermott 2008). Sir Robert Cecil was himself the recipient of a similarly politically motivated gift of usquebaugh within the year. In the summer of 1601, the mayor of Waterford sent Cecil "two small rundells of *aqua vitæ* of our town's making," with the promise of more to come on an annual basis, to curry the English secretary of state's favor in defending the town's interests at court (Atkinson [1601] 1905:431).

In a similar vein, but on a smaller social scale, the otherwise unknown Englishman Nicholas Bennett sent a gift of "Usquebath" to his uncle William Trumbull, an English diplomat in Brussels at the time, circa 1612 (Anderson 2008). According to the letter accompanying the gift, Bennett's wife insisted that they send this particular item as a "thank you" to his aunt and

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<sup>1</sup> A bird of prey that could be trained as a hunting companion, which John Derricke (1581, n.p.), in his *Image of Irelande*, ranked first among the species bred in Ireland for falconry. Even Giraldus Cambrensis ([1187] 2000:16-17) devoted a chapter of his *Topography of Ireland* to the wealth of hawks found in that country.

<sup>2</sup> Meaning "mantles," the woolen cloak almost universally associated with Gaelic(ized) dress in English and European imagery and imagination in the 16th and 17th centuries (Jones and Stallybrass 2000).

uncle. Bennett assured the recipient that he had distilled the wholesome liquor himself. He also indicated exactly how it was best consumed—as a digestif to remedy any “offence of meat or drink overcharging the stomach” (Hinds [1612] 1938:404). This was exactly how Irish usquebaugh was prescribed in Nicholas Culpeper’s (1649:93) *A Physicall Directory*, where the substance was touted as excellent at strengthening the stomach, thus aiding digestion and overall health.

Another generation of Trumbull diplomat—the former’s grandson, Sir William Trumbull—received a similar gift of usquebaugh in 1689/90. Laurence Stanyan, an English merchant who had farmed<sup>3</sup> the Irish revenue from 1675 to 1682, sent this Trumbull, who was then serving at the embassy in Constantinople, four bottles of Irish *aqua vitæ* from his personal stock in London. The gift was offered as a “thank you” for Trumbull having accepted and trained Stanyan’s son as a secretary to the embassy in Constantinople (Purnell [1689/90] 1924:319,367; Whitlock 1709:347; Hanham 2008; Woodfine and Gapper 2013).

The inclusion of receipts for usquebaugh in 17<sup>th</sup>-century London-published housewifery manuals—like Hugh Plat’s *Delightes for Ladies*—and private receipt books—like that kept by Oxfordshire gentlewoman Lady Elinor Fettiplace—indicate that this substance was also being consumed as a medicinal water within English circles made up of well-to-do ladies providing charitable care for their households and wider communities (Plat 1602:E5; Spurling 1987:63;

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<sup>3</sup> “Farming” was a system for collecting state revenue that offered the right to collect taxes and licensing fees to private individuals who purchased the privilege for a set period of time at a given amount, hoping to make a return on their investment by taking in more revenue, which they could keep, than they had paid out in purchasing the “farm.” By the late 17<sup>th</sup> century these “farmers” of the customs were assisted by a variety of customs officers operating on the ground in Ireland. Farming of everything but hearth money was replaced by a direct excise following the expiration of the farm that ran from 1675 to 1682 (Given 2011:23-27).

Porter 1995:14; Wear 2000:22,45-47). It is unclear how such printed and private manuals interacted. Fettiplace could have transcribed a receipt from a copy of Plat's book. Plat's book could well have been compiled from the private receipts of ladies like Fettiplace (Wall 2002:42; Notaker 2017:74-80).

Sometime before the professional transcription of her personal cookery book in 1604, Fettiplace had collected four variations on usquebaugh to include among the wide variety of medicinal recipes and culinary receipts that made up her manuscript volume. While she may have been familiar with Plat's publication, his single receipt would not have accounted for the variations she recorded in her book. It is more likely that Fettiplace's inclusions came from knowledge that her friends and family had acquired firsthand in Ireland. Her paternal grandfather, Sir Giles Poole, had been Provost Marshal for Ireland and had mustered men for the first Earl of Essex's Irish expedition of 1573 (Spurling 1987:2-3,20-22,63). Two of her brothers, Samuel and Thomas Poole, emigrated to Ireland in the 1610s (Burke and Burke 1847:1056). Another kinsman, Sir Edmund Fettiplace, served under Lord Mountjoy in Ireland from the siege of Kinsale through the end of the war in 1603 (Spurling 1987:6,15). Any of these colonials could have provided receipts that Elinor Fettiplace followed in supplying her grand country household with an identifiably "Irish" *aqua vitæ* in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

What these examples demonstrate is that, by the dawn of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Irish *uisce beatha* had transformed, in terms of its practical consumption and dissemination, into the decidedly cross-cultural "usquebaugh." This new form was a distillate whose Irish genealogy continued to be acknowledged in its anglicized appellation, even in cases where it could not be

materially traced back to Ireland. An elite preference for the consumption of Irish *aqua vitæ* that actually began its journey in Ireland can be detected, however, in Stanyan bemoaning the fact that war in Ireland prevented him from sending the best (Purnell 1924:319). For those without a position or personal contacts in Ireland, a distillate bearing the same name, and by all accounts sharing the distinguishing qualities of Ireland's *aqua vitæ*, was circulating as a commodity in England by the 1640s (Company of Distillers of London 1639:27-28).

## **HOW AND WHY DID COLONIZERS COME TO KNOW AND FAVOR USQUEBAUGH?**

### THE NECESSITY OF HOSPITALITY

The key to understanding how and why England's colonial agents in Ireland—like Elinor Fettiplace's family—became so familiar with the substance they brought back to England as usquebaugh lies in the concept of “hospitality,” as developed by scholars of the same. Hospitality is a subtle yet expansive genre of social interaction that, while a significant venue for much needed consumption in any geographical or historical setting, deserves special consideration when attending to early modern Ireland. Food, drink, and a place to rest are primary needs that all animals must safely meet in order to survive. Once an individual is compelled to seek these necessities beyond his or her most immediate social circle—however that is constituted—that individual has entered the realm of hospitality. The origin of the word itself, as well as the roots of all the words we regularly associate with it, like “guest” and “host,” have been traced through Germanic, Greek, and Latin to a hypothetical Proto-Indo-European root meaning “stranger” (O’Gorman 2007:17-18). At its most essential, it is the simple offering, as host, of room and

board to an individual who falls into the culturally constituted category of “guest.” Whatever the exact nature of host and guest, their hospitable relationship is constituted in a way that categorically distinguishes it from distributive relations that revolve around the intimacy and shared association of the household itself, whether the latter be organized around kinship or around some other shared quality or pursuit (Molz and Gibson 2007:1; Sheringham and Darnwalla 2007:33).

A single act of hospitality can provide the host with an invaluable opportunity to negotiate relationships and material exchanges that are external to current group membership, but may be essential to surviving and thriving in the host’s social and material world. At the same time, such a hospitable act provides the guest with food, drink, and shelter to meet basic bodily needs when operating outside his or her own home base. Without this social mechanism encouraging exchange beyond household boundaries, an outsider’s alien status might severely hinder that person’s ability to act as an intermediary in growing connections between otherwise discrete social groups (Molz and Gibson 2007:11-13).

Hospitality thus bears special consideration in the context of colonial projects, like that taking shape in early modern Ireland. As will be demonstrated shortly, alcohol generally, and *uisce beatha* in particular, was being consumed through Gaelic(ized) acts of hospitality for intergroup social ends long before the Elizabethan (re)conquest shone light on the practice. This fact shaped how English colonials encountered this *aqua vitae* in Ireland, in turn affecting their reactions to the substance and the form its consumption would take among them over the course of the colonization.

## GAELIC(IZED) IRISH HOSPITALITY BEFORE (RE)CONQUEST

### *Guesting: Accommodating the Traveler*

Late medieval Ireland lacked the sorts of commercial inns seen in England as far back as the 14<sup>th</sup> century, with an even older history on the Continent (Mortimer 2009:143-146; Hare 2013:483-487; Flavin 2014:230-231). There were, however, members of Gaelic Irish society tasked specifically with offering hospitality to travelers. In the Old Irish period, before the arrival of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland, the term for the wealthiest class of commoner, *briugu*, translated to “hospitaller.” These were individuals capable of offering unlimited hospitality to all visitors based on the servants and livestock they oversaw (O’Sullivan 2004:18). The privately administered *tech n-oeged* (guesthouse) offered hospitality free-of-charge to those moving through the Irish landscape. It was matched by monastic facilities, like the *Lis-aiged* at Armagh, a “guest-enclosure” where church endowments provided for the hosting of travelers (Simms 1978:68-70). The part monasteries played in providing hospitality in medieval Ireland was paralleled in England, where religious houses established their own inns to serve those visiting them (Hare 2013:486).

Formal Gaelic(ized) hospitality fissioned in the later medieval period, in the wake of the Anglo-Norman conquest of Ireland. Traditional Irish—commonly called “Celtic Christian”—monasteries were eclipsed by those of Continental religious orders in a re(-)form movement tied to the coming of the Anglo-Normans (Barry 1987:139-140; Duffy 2000:28; Smith 2000:32). The holders of these new church-lands were still required to maintain guesthouses. Secular clergy in later medieval Ireland were, however, divided between those who adhered to the Gaelic tradition

of hospitality and those who affected a re(-)form that eschewed it. Some learned professionals—collectively termed *ollamhain*—also kept guesthouses, as did *brughaidh* (hospitallers) or *biatach* (food-providers) (Simms 1978:70-71).

The latter were terms applied to the heads of kin-groups that, while wealthy enough to control land, were not actually first-rate nobles. Their resources placed them in a social rank that required them to offer hospitality to any and all, sometimes in actual guesthouses, once the needs of their chief-lord had been met. Such gratis hospitality in the maintaining of guesthouses for all manner of traveler was also a means for Gaelic(ized) social climbers to negotiate and reaffirm their status. Gaelic(ized) society was thus structured—through moral strictures and social sanctions—to ensure that hospitality remained at a remove from the “commodity sphere” and profit motives (Simms 1978:71-75; Kopytoff 1986:71; O’Sullivan 2004:19,120).

### *Feasting: The Hospitable Event*

Feasts were an important aspect of Gaelic(ized) Irish sociality, as a socially significant venue for the offering of hospitality, long before the 16<sup>th</sup> century (O’Sullivan 2004; Horning 2009:117; Dillon 2010). The physical settings and forms of hospitality on offer at aristocratic feasts were said to follow the royal model established at Tara in the early medieval period, around AD 900–1200 (O’Sullivan 2004:65-68,83-87,94-98). Modern scientific archaeology has yet to recover and disseminate much on either the architecture or artifacts associated specifically with late medieval and early modern Gaelic(ized) feasting. Still, some idea of the material culture from before the Elizabethan (re)conquest has been gleaned from Irish language praise poems of the period. One 15<sup>th</sup>-century poem describes a contemporary chieftain’s compound as

including both a timber-built and a wattle-and-daub structure. That the timber structure was a residence and the wattle one a banqueting hall falls in line with the pattern seen in surface surveys of Gaelic(ized) towerhouses of this period. The poet's claim that this household had enough wooden dishes to serve one hundred guests, even if a gross exaggeration, demonstrates the continued importance of large-scale hospitality into the late medieval period (Simms 2001:253-254). Alas, wooden dishes and temporary wattled huts—such as those erected to accommodate the learned guests at a feast thrown for bards in 1351 (Simms 1978:91)—leave less trace in the archaeological record than pottery and stone castles or towerhouses.

Gaelic(ized) lords set up tables for their guests to eat at within these banqueting halls, and the hierarchy that structured their society played out visibly therein—where formal seating arrangements organized guests by rank and profession (O'Sullivan 2004:87-93). Bardic poets bore the right to sit at the host's side, where the two drank from the same cup (Simms 1978:89). Medieval Irish manuscripts even describe ranked cuts of meat being distributed in hierarchical order to those present at such feasts (McCormick 2002, 2009:405). Simultaneously reinforcing this commensality and hierarchy, drink—likely contained in the communal wooden methers and drinking horns preserved in museum collections across Ireland—made its way around the hall for all to share (Wilde 1963; O'Sullivan 2004:62,87,108-110) (Figures 3 and 4).

While the foregoing was true of the medieval period, bardic accounts of early modern Gaelic(ized) feasting that describe known structures and historical personalities from the time of the Elizabethan (re)conquest demonstrate continuities in feasting practices over the centuries. Uí



**Figure 3** Examples of medieval Irish wooden methers. © National Museum of Ireland. Object ID: A4323 (left); CT1796 (right).



**Figure 4** The Kavanagh Charter Horn, a medieval Irish drinking horn. © National Museum of Ireland. Object ID: CT1715.

Uiginn—the same bard who was mistakenly ascribed that reference to *uisce beatha* referred to in Chapter 2—composed another encomium that, while poetically vague, painted a picture of Gaelic(ized) feasting in the closing decades of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Within the lordly compound of Enniskillen castle, metalworkers busily welded goblets in preparation for a banquet to be thrown by Aodh Mag Uidhir (Hugh Maguire). Once the feast began, guests sat along the encircling walls of the hall, enjoying the food and drink offered by the lord on his throne (Simms 2001:254). It is no leap to imagine men and women at such a feast quaffing alcohol from communally passed vessels, like the four-handled wooden methers in the collection of the National Museum of Ireland inscribed “Dermot Tully, 1590” (Wilde 1863:216; O’Sullivan 2004:109-110).

A specific type of feasting practiced among the Gaelic(ized) Irish, before and after the Elizabethan (re)conquest, was *cóisir*—often anglicized in the Early Modern as “coshering” or “coshering”. While the term experienced a considerable amount of slippage as it passed into English usage, it referred to an annual round of compulsory “set feasts” that vassal-tenants<sup>4</sup> of a certain standing—meaning those in possession of a minimum number of cattle—owed their chief-lord on what was originally a seasonal basis (Simms 1978:74,79-82). The coshering of late 16<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland had its roots in medieval contracts that entitled a chief-lord to a single night’s hospitality (*cóe*) from a client-kinsman during a set season running from New Year’s Day to Shrove Tuesday. Depending on the rank of the chief-lord, which itself reflected the volume of his clientage, clients could expect to host from two to forty married couples invited as guests by the lord (O’Sullivan 2004:48-50).

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<sup>4</sup> A term used here, whatever the real or fictive kinship relationship, as the idiom for reckoning individuals’ relationships to their chief-lord.

This constituted a two-part hospitality, where hospitable goods and services—including the feasting venue itself—were extracted from the more affluent tenant class so that their social superiors, the chief-lords, could treat personal retainers to choice food and drink. The exaction of *cóe*, as an obligation expected of client-kinsmen, served as ongoing repayment for a contractual loan of cattle from the given chief-lord (Simms 1978:80). Following the arrival of Anglo-Normans in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, *cuid oidhche* (anglicized to “cuddy”) came to mean the physical exaction of hospitality from certain prominent families and office holders by a chief-lord and his guests for the sake of a feast occurring any time during the year. This evolved into the *cóisir* described by those commentating the Elizabethan (re)conquest of Ireland. Here, chief-lords collected obligatory resources from their tenant-kinsmen, now demanding supplies from territorially defined communities rather than from cattle-rich individual client-kinsmen, with the guests invited into the chief-lord’s own home (Simms 1978:80-81; O’Sullivan 2004:52-55). The sometime Tyrone ally Phelim McFeagh O’Byrne was stockpiling for a Christmas *cóisir* feast in the winter of 1600, as the Nine Years War raged (Atkinson [1600] 1905:106,169; Byrne-Rothwell 2010:157-159).

The status of Gaelic(ized) Irish feasting as “hospitality,” in the sense introduced earlier, is reinforced by the role that travel played in the *cóisir* experience. Movement across the landscape—and away from one’s own home—was unavoidable for those attending as guests, whether the chief-lord had to ride with guests in tow to a *cóisir* feast put on by his client-kinsman, or hosted the feast in his own home. Travel, particularly on horseback in married pairs, was so integral to Irish culture that the Irish had developed saddles for couples. The horses

carrying these guests to a *cóisir* were readily attended to, as well. The traditional obligations of Gaelic(ized) hospitality included a host providing accommodation for their guests' mounts (Dymmok [1600] 1843:9; Gernon [1620] 1904:360; Simms 1978:84). Having been duly welcomed out of the wider world and into the feasting venue, food and entertainments flowed—in a manner to be explored later in this chapter—until guests retired to sleep off the effects of their revelry (Gernon [1620] 1904:360-361).

### *Hosting<sup>5</sup>: Housing and Provisioning Armed Retainers*

The duty-bound hospitality that required ordinary Gaelic(ized) Irish households to offer food, drink, and accommodation to any visitor appearing at their door applied equally to the mercenary soldiers in their chief-lord's retinue (O'Sullivan 2004:66). When this hospitality was shown to armed men roving the countryside, it took on the flavor of a hospitable exaction. It even acquired its own name among Anglophone commentators, "coyne and livery." "Coyne" was an anglicization of the Irish term *coinnmheadh*, which directly translated as "guesting," but with an implication of forcible seizure. Anglophone authors used "coyne" to refer exclusively to the practice of victualing and billeting armed retinues (O'Sullivan 2004:51,55,61). The "livery" half of the phrase derived from the English term for provisioning horses with food and water,<sup>6</sup> and referred to the forced maintenance of those armed retainers' horses. While this custom may have originated as an offshoot of feasting, by the time of the Elizabethan (re)conquest it

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<sup>5</sup> This term has been chosen to describe the category of hospitality that included the provisioning of soldiers because of the root and archaic meaning of the term "host"—"an armed company or multitude of men; an army" ("host, *n.1*," *OED Online*, accessed 29 March 2018, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/88743](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/88743)).

<sup>6</sup> "Livery, *n.*," *OED Online*, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/109344](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/109344), accessed 29 April 2020.

pertained primarily to the quartering of the private armies of Gaelic(ized) lords (Simms 1978:68,82-85; O’Sullivan 2004:48-61). As late as 1572, certain local officials were bound by duty to supply the rebellious 15th Earl of Desmond, Gerald FitzGerald,<sup>7</sup> and his military retinue with room and board while he moved about his territory (Brewer and Bullen [1572] 1867:416-418).

#### HOSPITALITY IN EARLY MODERN IRELAND

As agents of English colonization moved through early modern Ireland—whether on military, administrative, or personal business—they found their expectations for hospitality confronted by the reality of the Irish world they were living in and attempting to re(-)form. Anglophone commentators who otherwise wrote very negatively about Gaelic(ized) early modern Ireland were slightly more generous in their attitudes toward the hospitality that that social world afforded. The colonially minded, if not directly colonially engaged, Campion-cum-Stanihurst judged the denizens of Ireland to be at least “passing in hospitalitie,” a generosity of opinion in a work that generally lambasted anything remotely associated with Gaelic(ized) customs (Campion [1571] 1633:13; Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67). Barnaby Rich—a career English

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<sup>7</sup> Members of the Fitzgerald dynasty, which had originally been established in Ireland during the medieval Anglo-Norman conquest, ruled the Desmond palatinate from the 13<sup>th</sup> Century through the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. The Geraldine Earls of Desmond were notorious, on both historiographical sides of the early modern (re)conquest of Ireland (from Spencer to the “Four Masters”), for their assimilation of Gaelic(ized) cultural practices into their personal and political lives. The 3rd Earl, Gerald or *Gearóid Iarla*, was certainly prominent in the Anglo-Norman administration of Ireland in the late 14<sup>th</sup> Century, serving for two years as justiciar of the lordship, or chief governor in the King’s absence. Nevertheless, he not only maintained a renowned hereditary Irish poet, he was himself an Irish-language poet whose work incorporated both Gaelic(ized) Irish traditions and those of ‘courtly love’ then popular throughout feudal Europe. He even fostered a son with a neighboring Gaelic magnate, in the Irish tradition (Spencer [1596] 1809:105-110; Otway-Ruthven 1965:227; Smith 2000:34-35,44-46; Mac Niocaill 2004; Rekdal 2007:117; Beresford and Mac Shamhráin 2009).

soldier who retired to Dublin and turned prolific social critic (Maley 2004)—esteemed those same Irish as the most generous of all European nations in the offering of food and drink to guests. This opinion was, of course, expressed in a work that was designed as a direct critique of *Campion-cum-Stanihurst* (Rich [1610] 1624:9,58). The English soldier John Dymmok, who at first glance seemed to merely parrot *Campion-cum-Stanihurst* in his characterization of “the people” of Ireland, actually subtly adjusted the classic tropes to better reflect his own opinions, presumably based on experience. More in keeping with fellow military veteran Rich’s opinion, Dymmok ([1600] 1843:6) classed what he experienced in Ireland as “great hospitallitye.”

#### *Finding Accommodation as a Colonial Traveler*

A short treatise on Ireland from 1579/80 sheds interesting light on the status of commercial hospitality in early modern Ireland. It is valuable because of the perspective from which it was written, as the author was known to have had firsthand knowledge of Ireland, but wrote outside the discursive traditions of contemporary Anglophone commentary. While the work was anonymous, context hints that it was written by a Continental (Italian or Spanish) associate of James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald who had only come to Ireland as part of the latter’s Counter-Reformation war, later known as the Second Desmond Rebellion (Walsh 1916:17). Nevertheless, this almost anticolonial piece describes the state of urban hospitality in strikingly similar terms to those of English colonial commentators. According to this Continental, guesthouses and inns—at least of the commercial type with which he would have been familiar—were rare, if not altogether nonexistent, even in port towns. Travelers instead relied on

private homes, where they could expect accommodation and provision to be freely given (O’Sullivan 2004:66; Hare 2013:496).

Edmund Spenser’s ([1596] 1809) *View* sheds light—albeit from a colonial administrative perspective—on what constituted the “Irish” hospitality that English colonials were experiencing, or rather what this local hospitality was not. In his treatise, written as a dialogue, Spenser has the character Irenæus lament the scarcity of inns and associated hostleries in Ireland. Without them, travelers had to resort to Gaelic(ized) people and material culture to meet their needs for food, drink, and shelter. In the best of circumstances, a colonial traveler could rely on the hospitable moral imperative present in Gaelic(ized) society, and lodge in an Irish household. When a journey took the traveler out of the way of welcoming households, individuals were forced to overnight on the road. Locals supposedly sought shelter, in such circumstances, in the voluminous folds of their detestable Irish “mantles,” thick, fringed cloaks that covered the wearer from head to toe (Figures 5–8). Even when a more solid roof could be procured, suspect Irish “horse-boys” had to be called on to tend to travelers’ horses in the absence of proper, inn-based hostlers (Spencer [1596] 1809:86-87,114,124).

A passing reference in the university-educated, career military man Josias Bodley’s ([1602/3] 1904:330; see also McGurk 2008a) account of his English soldier-on-leave sojourn into the Ulster countryside during Christmas 1602/3 hinted that he and his traveling companions overnights in the governor’s house in Newry, where, he felt, “we were not very well entertained.” This aligned with Fynes Moryson’s ([1617] 1904:226-228) accounts of traveling in Ireland in the closing years of the Nine Years War. He recalled Englishmen, himself among



**Figure 5** Classes of Irish men and women, with a “Wilde Irish” [Gaelic(ized)] couple depicted in the bottom row. Each class appears in the ubiquitous Irish mantle—a cloak that became iconic outwear in English colonial writing on early modern Ireland. Detail cropped from a “Map of Ireland” in *The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain*, John Speed, [1612] 1616. © British Library Board. Shelfmark: Maps.C.7.c.20.(2), 137.



**Figure 6** Early modern Irish men and women in typical costumes—including a representative “Wilde Iresche” [Gaelic(ized)] man in his mantle. Illustration from *Corte Beschryvinghe van Engheland, Schotland, ende Irland* [*A Short Description of England, Scotland and Ireland*], Lucas de Heere, 1573-1575. © British Library Board. Shelfmark: Add. 28330 f.34.



**Figure 7** Irish soldiers, with requisite mantles. From original known as “Draun after the Quicke,” unknown printmaker, late 16<sup>th</sup> century. © Ashmolean Museum. Accession No.: WA1863.3908.



**Figure 8** Mantle-clad “Irische Kriegsleute und Bauern” [Irish Soldiers and Peasants], Albrecht Durer, 1521. Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin [Museum of Prints and Drawings, National Museums in Berlin]. Image No.: 00028328. Reproduced here under CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 DE license.

them, being forced to take “chambers hired of the citizens [of Dublin and Cork].” The mechanism for acquiring this hospitality, even from English and Anglo-Norman descended residents, was not to seek the signs of advertised public—that is, commodified—lodging. Instead, city officials assigned travelers to private lodging in town. While Moryson was not particularly happy with this situation, he did attribute the retention of English foodways among the “better sort” in Dublin and Waterford to the frequency of their households having to offer hospitality to the newly arrived English.

It would appear that this system of providing impromptu hospitality to strangers, while awkward and alien to Moryson, was an attempt to employ a hybridized form to accommodate travelers engaged in the renewed colonization of Ireland. While urbanization was not typical of traditional Gaelic Irish lordships, port towns had been an important feature of the Irish landscape from the coming of the Vikings in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Dublin, Waterford, and Limerick all had Viking foundations (Duffy 2000:24). The place of towns in Ireland was reinforced by the arrival of Anglo-Normans in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. These medieval colonists took control of existing towns and established new ones on the coast and further inland (Smith 2000:38-39). By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, it appears that hospitality in the Anglo-Norman towns of Ireland looked quite different from its counterpart in England, where commercial inns had proliferated in even the smallest urban centers from the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century (Hare 2013:483-487). Instead, these early modern Irish towns met the needs of travelers for lodging with an ad hoc social system predicated on obligatory hospitality offered gratis out of private homes. This stood in stark contrast to the more permanent and spatially distinct hospitality afforded by clearly marked

public inns, where an English traveler like Moryson ([1617] 1904:226-228) could expect food and lodging to be sold as commodities.

Things had apparently not changed much by 1622, when the Irish Commission noted the same lack of inns for travelers in Ireland—which the colonial commissioners thought a requisite feature of “civil kingdoms” (Treadwell 2006:756,760). By 1635 hospitality had become more commodified, but still often occupied a gray area between public commodity and private generosity, as would-be colonial Sir William Brereton<sup>8</sup> experienced in traveling down the east coast of Ireland, from Carrickfergus to Waterford, in July of that year (Figure 9). Ever the businessman, Brereton ([1635] 1904) recorded his experiences in a private journal that included details of what commodities the countryside he was passing through produced, and the exact amounts he spent at those places where a price was put on lodging.

Of the thirteen times he gives details of his overnight accommodations, money definitely changed hands five times. These confirmed instances of commodified hospitality occurred in places that Brereton referred to as inns, houses, inns in houses, and small castles run by English women, mixed English-Scottish couples, and persons of unknown nation. Five nights were passed at establishments—inns and taverns—marked as public accommodation by the signs hanging above their doors, but a cost-per-night was mentioned at only one of these, and three of them were located in a named individual’s house. And at least three times Brereton’s lodging was provided in private homes with no mention of payment or the formal marking of

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<sup>8</sup> Brereton was an English gentleman-turned-aristocrat who bought a baronetcy from the Crown in 1627 in exchange for three years of upkeep on thirty soldiers-of-foot in Ireland. He made his wealth off of land holdings, both in Cheshire and New England, and at one point toyed with investing in Irish property. He was a staunch Puritan and gained fame as an officer in the Parliamentary army during the English Civil War of the 1640s (Morrill 2013).



**Figure 9** Map of Brereton's journey through Ireland in 1635. Traced, by author, on modern base map of Ireland taken from Nations Online Project.

commodified space. Refreshment, including alcohol, without lodging was likewise taken at a mixture of public inns and taverns, some possibly located in individuals' houses, and purely private residences (Brereton [1635] 1904:367-368,371-373,376,385-389,391,395-396,398-402,404-405).

A firm distinction between the commodified hospitality expected in Irish cities and the non-commodity forms that predominated in the Irish countryside was called upon later in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in popular media designed to appeal to English tastes for lampooning the lifestyles of “others.” “An Account of an Irish Quarter” (or “The Irish Entertainment”)<sup>9</sup> was published in English-language miscellanies throughout the later 17<sup>th</sup> century, capturing Anglophone expectations surrounding domestic hospitality and alcohol in Ireland. It was premised around two young men temporarily leaving their current penniless situation in circa 1643 Ireland—presumably as soldiers under the Earl of Ormond’s command<sup>10</sup>—to seek free refreshment in the Irish countryside. Their plan was to make the most of the local tradition of *gratis* hospitality, bolstered by a family connection and letter of reference written by the “Lord President”<sup>11</sup> to the high sheriff of Waterford, whom they sought out as host (Carpenter [1643] 2003:243-244).

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<sup>9</sup> The author is unknown, but the poem, which was in print by the 1650s, takes place in and around 1643, during a protracted period of religiously inflected civil unrest throughout Ireland and the British Isles more generally (Kearney 1989:244; Carpenter 2003:243; Gillespie 2006). Despite the important historical figures mentioned, and the fraught atmosphere of the Ireland in which it was set, the poem avoided overt reference to the politics of the time, perhaps to avoid censorship. It was still a decidedly colonialist product, couched in language and imagery that appealed to the popular English taste for lampooning Irish lifestyles.

<sup>10</sup> James Butler, 12th Earl (later Marquess, then Duke) of Ormond, was commissioned as Lieutenant-General of the Army in Ireland in the fall of 1641, the same year that the John Power caricatured in the poem served as Sheriff of Waterford (Smith 1774:159; Perceval-Maxwell 2009).

<sup>11</sup> Presumably the lord president of Munster, given the location of Carrick-on-Suir in County Tipperary.

### *Joining in the Feast*

Luke Gernon—who took the reader of his "Discourse" through a firsthand account of a “coshering,” as Englishmen termed the Irish practice of *cóisir*—was a petty bureaucrat, trained in law, who occupied various colonial positions in Munster from 1619 up to the outbreak of war in the 1640s. While most likely English by birth and upbringing (Falkiner 1904:345–347), Gernon ([1620] 1904:348-349,359-361) provided a very detailed account of an Irish feast in this “Discourse,” which he wrote as an epistolary essay for the benefit of a friend back in England. The details that he included in his essay—which are in keeping with other accounts, but cannot be traced wholesale to any known source that had been published by the time he wrote his manuscript—indicate that he was familiar with the form such hospitable events took, most likely from experience.

Gernon ([1620] 1904:359) was familiar enough with coshering to know that such events were “publick invitations, by occasion of marriages, neighbourhood or the like, and for the present open house”. Such an invitation must have been extended to Gernon more than once during his career in Ireland. The soldier-turned-colonial writer Barnaby Rich, in expressing his utter contempt for coshering in his 1610 *A New Description of Ireland* (reprinted in 1624 as the uncredited *A New Irish Prognostication*), described these events as a drawing together of men and women for feasting and entertainments; similarly, Gernon ([1610] 1624:39) described couples riding together to a castle. Rich, however, gave no indication of the particular venue that drew such parties.

What both passages reveal is how important travel was to these festal occasions, highlighting their classification as “hospitality.” Gernon was particularly revealing, lingering on the arrival of married couples sharing a horse. Such travel was so integral to Irish culture that they had developed saddle forms that struck this English observer as very odd. He was able to make sense of them, in that they afforded Gaelic(ized) couples “an easy kind of ryding” no matter the configuration of riders. Likewise, guests need not worry about their mounts, as the horses were “sessed [cessed] among the tenants” (Gernon [1620] 1904:360).<sup>12</sup>

Gernon and Rich were not alone in their interest in, and likely exposure to, a form of hospitality that English colonials associated quite strongly with Gaelic(ized) elites. It was a popular subject in everything from Holinshed’s *Chronicles* to Edmund Spenser’s *View of the State of Ireland*, although descriptions of it could be somewhat contradictory. Dymmok claimed that Irish magnates still favored “cashery” feasts of the sort where the chief-lords made a circuit of tenants’ dwellings, “with all his trayne and idle men of his cuntrye,” to demand the hospitable outlay that was their due (Dymmok [1600] 1843:9). Fynes Moryson ([1617] 1904:232) likewise defined the practice of coshering as a “progress” that lords made about their territories “to live upon their tenants.”

Some of the slippage in this English reportage of coshering practices was likely due to a profound confusion over, and contempt for, Gaelic(ized) forms of hospitality. Anglophone

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<sup>12</sup> In early modern English, “cess” was the term used for a local tax levied for local use. In Irish contexts, it generally referred to those hospitable exactions that provisioned soldiers (“cess, *n.l.*,” *OED Online*, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/30049](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/30049), accessed 29 April 2020). Gernon was here applying the more formal administrative term “cess” to the Gaelic(ized) practice of feeding and watering the horses of one’s guests for the duration of a coshering—an obligatory provisioning that the English elsewhere termed “livery.”

colonials may have been blending together distinct forms of Gaelic(ized) hospitality. In their linguistic and cultural confusion they may have merged the traveling involved in *cóisir* or coshering with the right of chief-lords to billet their (and their guests') armed retainers and servants in the households of client-kinsmen, the obligation known as "coyne." Perhaps these authors, despite their time in Ireland, had not actually experienced these festal events firsthand.

The most unabashedly Gaelic(ized) of William Brereton's experiences during his 1635 journey through Ireland was the alcohol-rich entertainment that he was treated to at Sir Morgan Kavanagh's Clonmullen Castle. The castle was "an old, high, narrow, and inconvenient building; the stairs leading up into the dining-room and chambers being narrow and steep" (Brereton [1635] 1904:389). This description bears a striking resemblance to the castle Gernon ([1620] 1904:360-361) described, with a hall for feasting encompassing the top floor, reached by very narrow and thus defensible stairs that also led guests to subsidiary chambers for sleep. While these two Gaelic(ized) homes were likely in different parts of Ireland, they were of a kind that was clearly a fitting setting for a feast.

Brereton also experienced a dinner in Wexford that demonstrated the already blurred lines of feasting in Ireland, while utterly disgusting the traveler in what was offered and how it was presented. It was a meal hosted by the mayor and his wife, and attended by highly placed circuit judges, no less. Both judges were Protestant, and likely English-born, while the mayor was an Irish recusant, meaning he was a practicing Catholic of either Gaelic or Anglo-Norman descent. While the event was described as a dinner, it bore all the contemptible markings of those Irish feasts that Anglophone commentators loved to revile. The entertainments offered by this

Gaelic(ized) couple were, regardless of their elevated administrative station, thought abysmal by Brereton. In his opinion, the mayor's wife lacked all social graces as hostess, in everything from her dress, to her presentation of the meal, conviviality, and general demeanor. The beer was also undrinkable, and the food poorly prepared (Brereton [1635] 1904:397). Brereton's description calls to mind, on a much smaller scale, the show of hospitality put on in the satirical poem "An Irish Banquet, or the Mayors Feast of Youghall," published twenty or so years earlier in London.<sup>13</sup> The outrageous scene portrayed in this poem revolved around a stereotypical depiction of Irish feasting. It derogatorily played up the peculiarity of Irish practice by highlighting unusual clothing choices, strange foods prepared by questionable hands, a lack of personal cleanliness, and drunken toasting (Scot [1616] 2003:128-133).

Then there is the curiously Gaelic-styled feast that Sir Josias Bodley—and a select group of fellow English soldiers and officers fighting the Earl of Tyrone at the tail end of the Nine Years War—took part in during Christmas 1602/3. It was a mimetic affair, thrown in a manner that imitated the Gaelic(ized) feasts with which at least the host must have been familiar. The host was one Sir Richard Moryson—younger brother to traveler, author, and minor agent of colonization Fynes Moryson (Bodley [1602/3] 1904). Sir Richard had come to Ireland as a colonel in the second Earl of Essex's army. During and just after the Nine Years War he

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<sup>13</sup> The exact authorship of this poem is somewhat contested. It was first published in a volume bearing the name of one Thomas Scott—argued by some to be a Protestant polemicist of either English or Scottish origin (Kelsey 2004b). The collection, published in London in 1616 under Scott's name, was a politically charged, socially satirical collection titled *Philomythie* or *Philomythologie: wherein outlandish birds, beasts, and fishes, are taught to speake true English plainely*. There is no evidence that Scott had any direct knowledge of Ireland, but "An Irish Banquet, or the Mayors Feast of Youghall" appears in a portion of the collection dedicated to the Cecil family, who did hold title to estates in Ireland. As Andrew Carpenter (2003:128) argues, the poem may well have been penned by an anonymous someone connected to the Cecils' Irish estates. It would then have been collected, rather than penned, by Scott, as editor of the *Philomythie* collection.

governed a handful of locations across Ireland. He also served as vice-president of Munster, before being elected to the Irish Parliament in 1613, his last full year resident in Ireland (Thompson 2004).

The feast that Moryson-the-younger hosted for Bodley and company was held at Lecale, County Down, where Moryson was then serving as governor. The multiday affair took place in a structure that Bodley described as more “palace” than house, where a welcome fire heated a spacious hall and “a bed-chamber [had been] prepared in the Irish fashion” (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:332). Once the meal had ended, everyone retired to the communal bedroom, where conversation and drink were enjoyed until all decided to sleep. This pattern continued for seven days and nights, with meals being taken in between outdoor exercise, sightseeing, games of cards or dice, and other entertainments (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:336-344).

### *Maintaining a Colonial Army*

Understanding how the English administration housed and provisioned the forces fighting its colonial wars in Ireland in the 15th through 17th centuries requires understanding the composition of those troops. The Tudor Crown had never been terribly eager to invest too heavily in supplying its fronts in Ireland with the best soldiers England could muster (Brigden 2000:159,227). Those with firsthand experience of life in early modern Ireland described a military recruitment system that, for the sake of cost-saving, bore striking resemblance to the medieval precedents established by Anglo-Norman lords in Ireland (Spencer [1596] 1809:231-233; Moryson [1626] 1904a:290-291). While this early modern system may have inherited elements from what Anglo-Normans had imported into Ireland in the Medieval, the soldiers

raised in a latter-day “hostinge” included the dreaded Irish “woodkerne.”<sup>14</sup> A reliance on such a system meant that there were apparently units composed entirely of “her Maiesties Galloglasse,<sup>15</sup> or Kerne”—a seeming oxymoron, given English opinion of the inherent rebelliousness of Irish foot soldiers (Dymmok [1600] 1843:8; Rich [1610] 1624:110).

Whether the colonial leadership liked it or not, the ranks of their “English” armies in Ireland were being continually reinfused with local soldiers, horse-boys, and female hangers-on (Canny 2001:67-75). Retired career-soldier Barnaby Rich ([1610] 1624:109-110; see also Maley 2004), who lived in Ireland until his death in 1617, reported that, in addition to the raising of whole companies of Irish soldiers to fight for the Crown, ostensibly English companies engaged in the Nine Years War were composed mainly of Irishmen. Fynes Moryson’s ([1617] 1904:228-229, [1626] 1904a:291-292) firsthand accounts confirm that there were Anglo-Norman descended men serving under Mountjoy in his campaign against Tyrone. Whether or not these were Gaelic or Anglo-Norman descended recruits, their presence and practices influenced life among the troops. Moryson ([1626] 1904a:293) claimed to have seen this in practice, as English soldiers followed the example of the Irish among them in prioritizing drink over clothing when it came to spending what little money their captains provided them.

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<sup>14</sup> The terms “kerne” and “woodkerne” have been used interchangeably by both colonial commentators and historians. “Kerne” was the anglicized term for *ceatharnaigh*, as the Irish called their ordinary foot soldiers (Canny 2001, 68). Using the longer designation of “woodkerne” has served as a kind of shorthand, recalling the association of “kerne” with woodlands and wooded ambushes of the English, for which they were known in the Early Modern (Derricke [1581] 1883; Spencer [1596] 1809:87; Dymmok [1600] 1843:6; Lane [1621] 1999:126; Moryson [1626b] 1904:325).

<sup>15</sup> Scottish mercenary soldiers in the employ of Gaelic Irish kings and lords, especially from the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century through the Early Modern (Cannan 2010; Smith 2000).

These colonial troops—mustered in pragmatic ways that ensured the presence of Gaelic- and Anglo-Norman-descended Irish men-at-arms among their ranks—were also housed and provisioned through cost-saving mechanisms that were practically identical to those used to feed the armed retainers of the Gaelic(ized) Irish enemy. “Rising out”<sup>16</sup> was an English term, only ever used in Ireland, which referred to the call to muster and provision soldiers in service to the Crown. According to John Dymmok ([1600] 1843:8), those troops mustered through a “Risingout” were drawn from “the Irishrie and Engleshrye” of Ireland alike. Despite sounding thoroughly English, “rising out” was a direct translation into English of *éirghe amach* (“rising outwards”). While the English term masked the colonial administration’s reliance on decidedly Irish social mechanisms to constitute and feed Elizabethan troops tasked with the (re)conquest of Ireland, other terms betrayed more of their Irish origins—revealing the ambivalent truth of this colonial situation. “Bonaght” referred to the potential billeting and annual payment of victuals and money by the Gaelic(ized) Irish alone in support of “her Maiesties Galloglasse, or Kerne” (Dymmok [1600] 1843:8). It was a transliteration of *buannacht*, which in Irish simply referred to the billeting of soldiers serving on whomever’s behalf (O’Sullivan 2004:57-58).

Whether the hospitable exactions supporting the military were actually ancient Anglo-Norman introductions to Ireland, as Spenser had Irenæus argue in his *View*, they were practices that were firmly identified with Gaelic(ized) lordship by the time of the Elizabethan (re)conquest and colonization of Ireland. At the same time, they were a necessary means of supplying food and drink to soldiers serving England’s colonial ends in Ireland. The “cesse [cess]”—which

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<sup>16</sup> “Rising, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 19 March 2018, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/166301](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/166301).

Spenser ([1596] 1809:131-32) described both as the preferred, cost-effective method of victualing decamped soldiers serving the Crown in Ireland, and as a critical backup when official supply lines feeding garrisons failed—was virtually indistinguishable from the “Bonaght,” as defined by Dymmok. Moryson ([1626] 1904a:303-304) argued that this system of cess was necessary in Ireland not only because it saved the state money, but because the Irish countryside was rich in victuals but poor in specie, making the levying of local cash compositions to pay for colonial troop provisioning more difficult, if not impossible, at the start of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. It was, in the end, a system that the English had to resort to out of necessity, because of how unreliable official victualing supply chains were in Ireland as late as the 1620s (Russell and Prendergast [1608] 1880:177; Treadwell [1622] 2006:762).

There is little doubt that colonial soldiers, even Englishmen like Rich and Dymmok, were quartered in local households as they struggled to put down the Irish rebellions of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Barnaby Rich, in his *Irish Hubbub*, confirmed that field officers were similarly accommodated. His experience of Irish women’s mourning practices—including copious drinking and loud keening—arose from his need to lodge in the house of a Limerick widow during “the time of the [Earl of] *Desmonds* warres,” which he was engaged in from 1579 to 1583 (Rich 1617:3-4).

In the absence of commercial hospitality, agents of colonialism traveling through Ireland relied heavily on those forms of hospitality promoted by the Gaelic(ized) cultural ethos and enshrined in its social practices. As their own writings reveal in the next section, it was their participation in such cross-cultural hospitality that simultaneously exposed them to the drinking

of usquebaugh and, in part, necessitated their consumption of the substance. The roots of this internalized compulsion to drink medicinal usquebaugh will be explored in the final section of this chapter. Here, theories of the body and health prevalent at the time will be analyzed in relation to the English reactions to the experience, or imaginary, of hospitality in Ireland that were recurrent themes in colonial discourse. The goal will be to reveal the embodied cultural logic behind English anxiety over the bodily intimacies—related to landscape-climate, food, and drink—that were an unavoidable feature of hospitable consumption in colonial early modern Ireland.

ENCOUNTERING USQUEBAUGH: PRACTICES OF CONSUMPTION AND THE CONSUMABLES  
ENGLISHMEN EXPERIENCED THROUGH LOCAL HOSPITALITY

Knowing what food and drink was available through the sorts of cross-cultural hospitality just outlined, and how its consumption was modeled to guests by hosts, is essential to understanding the English adoption of usquebaugh. This requires asking what form consumption took within these types of hospitality. What was on offer, and how was it presented? Who, exactly, was involved in such hospitality? How may they have influenced the type and quality of items on offer?

*Irish Alimentation*

Colonial commentaries may not have always included detailed descriptions of specific forms of hospitality, but they did follow a general pattern of commenting on the food and drink identified with the Gaelic(ized) Irish. Giraldus Cambrensis, medieval cleric and colonial

chronicler, made particular mention of the year-round availability of beef and dairy in Ireland, noting, however, the “unwholesomeness” of Irish pork (Cambrensis [1188] 2000:29). This discursive tradition was elaborated on in the 16<sup>th</sup> century by the English monk-turned-physician Andrew Boorde. He described the Irish boiling their meat in animal skins, rather than in proper cookware, and drinking down the broth without further ado. A superabundance of meat, especially as compared to the bread and ale they were not eating and drinking, was also noted. Boorde contrasted these unwholesome culinary customs with “the English fashion...in meat, drinke, other fare” that was supposedly followed in Irish towns and cities that enjoyed English, or at least Anglophilic, rule (Boorde [1547] 1870:131-133). Subsequent early modern Anglophone authors, in describing and decrying what the Gaelic(ized) Irish ate, reiterated these same points while painting a more detailed picture of Irish food. They focused on how the Irish incorporated—or were perceived to incorporate—bread, meat, milk, and vegetables into their diet.

A common refrain among colonial commentators describing Gaelic(ized) Irish culinary practices was the utter lack of bread in the diet, especially to accompany meat at meals. It was a common trope in published works caricaturing Gaelic(ized) Irish custom for literary effect. English authors variously attributed this absence to the Gaelic(ized) Irish either saving what grain they had for their horses, or spending it all in hospitable outlays expected of the generous nobleman during the Christmas season. They argued that this scarcity was not simply a result of war, although war had its effect, but a product of choice or cultural persuasion, given that the

lack was noted even in peacetime (Campion [1571] 1633:18; Derricke 1581; Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67; Rich [1610] 1624:40; Moryson [1617] 1904:229, [1626] 1904b:320-321).

According to these same authors, when the Gaelic(ized) Irish were able to include bread in a meal it was generally oaten cakes rather than fine wheaten loaves. These biscuit-like cakes, still a rarity in the Gaelic(ized) Irish diet, were described as being made of oats that had had their husks burned, rather than threshed, off (Harington [1599] 2003:97; Rich [1610] 1624:40; Moryson [1617] 1904:229; Gernon [1620] 1904:321). Certain authors went so far as to describe—with a sexualized gaze that lingered on the nudity of female body parts as they came into contact with hand-operated querns<sup>17</sup> and the grain itself—what they deemed the unhygienic way these burnt oats were ground into meal, which they likened in appearance to well-trodden dirt (Rich [1610] 1624, 40-41; Moryson [1617] 1904:226,229).

These writings reveal an equal, if not more acute, concern with what the Gaelic(ized) Irish ate in terms of animal flesh—which the Gaelic(ized) Irish were, of course, eating without the requisite accompaniment of good bread (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67). Anglophone authors carefully detailed the proportions of various meats in the Gaelic(ized) diet. While the husbandry of cows was central to Irish society and culture, beef was often noted as relatively lacking in their diet (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:330; Moryson [1617] 1904:228-230; Carpenter [1654] 2003:243,248). Veal, however unimpressive, was on the menu—likely because of the heavy Irish reliance on dairying (Moryson [1617] 1904:230). Mutton, which the English clearly sought out, was considered a rarity at table in Ireland, even in colonial towns, at least in the early

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<sup>17</sup> Small stone grinding mills.

17<sup>th</sup> century (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:330; Moryson [1617] 1904:228). Wild caught fish and fowl were also supposedly absent (Moryson [1626] 1904b:320-321). Pork, on the other hand, was claimed to be the Gaelic(ized) Irishman's meat of choice (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67; Moryson [1617] 1904:228; Carpenter [1654] 2003:248). Mutton and pork were highlighted as typical Irish fare by the 1660s (Carpenter [1663] 2003:388). Whether the proportions of meat that colonial commentators observed on offer at Irish tables had more to do with the strictures of providing hospitality in times of war, versus unhindered Gaelic(ized) predilections, is a point worth considering. Both Bodley and Moryson were experiencing and observing Ireland as agents of (re)conquest actively engaged in the Nine Years War (Appendix A). Meanwhile, the poem of 1654 cited above was set in circa 1643 Ireland, during a period when armed conflict had overtaken the whole of the British Isles (Carpenter 2003:243; Gillespie 2006).

These authors also took note of what parts of animals the Irish ate and how they prepared these foods. Some asserted that the Gaelic(ized) diet included intestines, eaten with their original contents intact rather than being cleaned and used for sausage casing (Derricke 1581; Moryson [1617] 1904:228). Blood was a particular component of animal bodies that appeared again and again in this commentary. Multiple authors claimed that the Irish even tapped the veins of their still-living cows in order to obtain blood (Campion [1571] 1633:18; Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67; Spencer [1596] 1809:99; Moryson [1617] 1904:230;). The Irish would, these commentators asserted, then jelly this blood, bake it, and eat it with butter (Campion [1571] 1633:18; Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67; Moryson [1626] 1904b:320-321)—as a kind of precursor to black pudding.<sup>18</sup> In

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<sup>18</sup> A sausage made from blood, suet, and oatmeal, such as that famously made to this day in Clonakilty, County Cork (“black pudding, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 19 January 2017, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/19760](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/19760)).

this way, the Irish obtained additional nourishment from cows raised mostly for their milk, without injuring their valuable beasts, or so Fynes Moryson ([1617] 1904:230) understood this culinary practice. To the classically trained minds colonizing Ireland in the Early Modern, such a practice invited comparison with the Scythians<sup>19</sup> of antiquity—some going so far as to argue a direct lineage between the two cultures (Spencer [1596] 1809:99; Moryson [1617] 1904:230).

The Gaelic(ized) Irish were also frequently accused of consuming animal flesh in an undercooked, if not utterly raw, state. When they did bother to cook their meat, either by boiling or roasting it, they did not properly dress it beforehand. It went into the pot or onto the fire without salt and came out “not boyld inough” or “green roasted.” Those unwashed intestines were cooked directly over hot embers, not a proper gridiron. They might also be boiled, like other pieces of meat, in a liquid-filled animal hide strung between poles set up over an open fire, in the manner described by Boorde. Such a “filthy poke” was used to boil meat and produce the broth that was a noted feature of the Gaelic(ized) diet (Boorde [1547] 1870:132; Campion [1571] 1633:18; Derricke 1581; Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67; Spencer [1596] 1809:99; Moryson [1617] 1735a:107, [1617] 1904:228-230, [1626] 1904b:320-321; Gernon [1620] 1904:361; Carpenter [1654] 2003:243,248; Ware [1654] 1705:53). Once again, Moryson discursively tied how the Irish “dressed” their meats to the bodies of their women. Having just disparaged the smokiness of Irish homes in his *Itinerary*, he went on to quote an Italian friar, who Moryson claimed

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<sup>19</sup> A northern nomadic people, as Spenser understood them from his reading of the work of exiled Swedish clergyman and historian Olaus Magnus (Platts 1826:450), who was active in the first half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Spenser also tied living Tartars and the peoples of the Caspian Sea region to these ancient nomads (Spencer [1596] 1809:82). Today, scholars identify these nomadic peoples written about by classical Greek sources (Herodotus) as horsemen who had ranged across the central Eurasian steppe (Rolle 2011).

complained of the rawness of Armagh's meat in the same breath that he decried the nudity of the town's women (Moryson [1617] 1904:231).

Perhaps the most iconic aspect of Irish foodways for Anglophone commentators was how much dairy was eaten in Ireland. In one incident recounted by Fynes Moryson ([1617] 1904:229), which smacks of satire over genuine reportage, the Irishmen involved so loved dairy that they made a meal of the laundry soap and starch being carried by horses they had captured, having mistaken the white substances for butter and cheese. Milk-based foods—often referred to as “white meats”<sup>20</sup>—were so significant a source of nourishment that cows were only killed when they grew old and could no longer lactate or breed. Out of necessity, Irish milkmaids had devised ingenious methods for convincing cows to continue giving milk even after their calves had been culled. These were practices that ensured that more of the milk remained available for human consumption, and supplied veal to Irish cooking pots as a byproduct (Moryson [1617] 1904:230-231). English colonials and their Anglophone advocates were likewise quick to note what great quantities of cow's milk the Gaelic(ized) Irish drank, even as adults (Campion [1571] 1633:18; White [1571] 1979:156; Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67; Spencer [1596] 1809:82; Ware [1654] 1705:53;). It was “their cheefest drinke” (Derricke 1581), an Irishman's ambrosia (Moryson [1617] 1904:229).

Of the various dairy products that the Gaelic(ized) Irish consumed, the most distinct was “bonnyclabber” or “bonaclabbe” or “bonyclabber” as the English variously transliterated the Irish term for milk soured to the point of curdling (Harington [1599] 2003:97; Scot [1605]

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<sup>20</sup> Used by Spencer ([1596]1809:82) and Moryson ([1617]1904:230) in the historical sense of a dairy product (“white meat, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 19 January 2017, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/228622](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/228622)).

2003:130; Moryson [1617] 1904:230, [1626] 1904b:321; Gernon [1620] 1904:359-360; Carpenter [1663] 2003:386,388-389).<sup>21</sup> Those Irish inhabiting “baser cabins” produced an indigestible cheese called “mullagham (mallabanne),”<sup>22</sup> which was described as “choke-daw”<sup>23</sup> by the English (Gernon [1620] 1904:359-360). When the milk itself was needed for such cheesemaking, the Irish gladly drank the whey that separated out from the coagulated milk solids (Campion [1571] 1633:18; Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67), sometimes fermented and flavored with herbs (Carpenter [1663] 2003:386).

Butter was another white meat that the Gaelic(ized) Irish were frequently associated with in Anglophone writing. James Ware ([1654] 1705:52) pushed the tradition of its consumption deep into antiquity. It was sometimes described as bluish in hue (Scot [1605] 2003:130), a characteristic that Luke Gernon ([1620] 1904:359-360) associated with the “baser cabbins” of Ireland, meaning the homes of the poor, Gaelic(ized) Irish. As Campion ([1571] 1633:18) first put it, and others repeated, this group was supposed to eat their butter “cramme[d] together” with oatmeal, or spread generously “in lumpes” over the proto-black pudding they made from the blood of their cows (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67; Moryson [1626] 1904b:321). Sometimes the

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<sup>21</sup> *Bainne* meaning milk and *claba* meaning thick (“bonny-clabber, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 20 January 2017, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/21363](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/21363)).

<sup>22</sup> The Anglophone author of the satirical poem “An Irish Banquet, or the Mayors Feast of Youghall” mentions a “bread that passeth Malahane,” referred to in printed marginalia as a “bread of cruds” (Scot [1605] 2003:130). The editor of *Verse in English from Tudor and Stuart Ireland* interpreted this as *mulcán*, a type of soft buttermilk cheese composed of pressed curds (O’Reilly 1864:372; Dinneen 1904:502; Carpenter 2003:130). This is, in all likelihood, the same foodstuff that Gernon referred to as “choke-daw” in his 1620 account.

<sup>23</sup> An unusual reference to jackdaws that seems to have its origins in Shakespeare’s *Much Ado about Nothing* (2.3.235), written in 1599 and licensed for publication in 1600 (see Cross and Brooke 1993:222). The “daw,” as this bird was commonly known, was a member of the crow family noted for its thievishness and mimicking human speech when kept as a pet. “Daw” was also an insulting term for an overly talkative, vain, or foolish person (“jackdaw, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 20 January 2017, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/100509](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/100509)). It is unclear whether Gernon meant this phrase as an insult on the foolishness of Irishmen, or was using it to call this a mock-cheese.

butter was “buried in a Bogg” (Carpenter [1663] 2003:388), presumably either to preserve it or impart a desired flavor to the finished product. The Irish were also assumed to drink down the soured buttermilk that was a byproduct of butter making (Carpenter [1663] 2003:386).

English authors also lingered on how the Gaelic(ized) Irish processed, and in so doing “defile[d],” the milk they so loved. When the Irish were not heating their milk with stones taken straight from the fire, they were using handfuls of unclean straw to strain it, rather than drinking it unstrained or passed through an appropriate cloth (Moryson [1617] 1904:228; Lane [1621] 1999:143-144;). In a passage from an anonymously composed farcical poem of 1663 depicting the passage of four English knights through Ireland, the unhygienic churning of butter by an old Irish woman was depicted. The unknown author employed imagery that sexualized the female body and the act of producing butter along lines identical to those that Moryson and Rich used in describing the grinding of oats in a hand quern. This included the intimate contact that the “old Crone” in question is depicted as having had with both the butter churn and errant butter that spilled onto her “bare Thighs” as she labored at the churn (Rich [1610] 1624:40-41; Moryson [1617] 1904:226; Carpenter [1663] 2003:389).

Colonial commentators also recorded an Irish taste for certain leafy green vegetables and roots. They were supposed to have fed upon “herbs,” especially “Shamrotes [shamrocks]” (Campion [1571] 1633:18), which Ware ([1654] 1705:52) called “the Three-leav'd-Grass.” Watercress and sorrel were also commonly mentioned, often in the same breath, by these Anglophone authors (Campion [1571] 1633:18; Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67; Moryson [1617]1904:229, [1626]1904b:320-321). This shamrock was described as a sharp tasting herb

that the Irish ate raw, freshly pulled from the sides of ditches, as “they run and are chased to and fro”—possibly a reference to its use as a food of last resort during wartime shortages (Moryson [1617] 1904:229). Colonial politician and scholar Sir James Ware argued for the antiquity of this proclivity in his mid-17<sup>th</sup>-century volume chronicling the customs of the ancient Gaels (Parry 2004). He claimed the practice must have dated to at least the time of Strabo, a Greek geographer and historian living in the Roman Empire around the time of Christ, who called the Irish “Herb-Eaters” (Ware [1654] 1705:53). By the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century potatoes were also on the Irish menu (Carpenter [1654] 2003:246, [1663] 2003:385).

While the Gaelic(ized) Irish were notable for their hospitality, they were equally well known for their observance of ritual fasting. This “visible holiness” required that adherents curtailed their normal dining practices—eating less or refraining from particular foods—on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and the vigils (or eves) of Saints Days. As for the latter, Rich balked at the number and obscurity of Saints Days (and thus fasting days) observed in Ireland (Rich [1610] 1624:9-10). These in-built fluctuations in the weekly, monthly, and yearly cycles of Catholic dining paralleled what English commentators saw as the erratic daily dining habits of the Gaelic(ized) Irish. In the aptly titled “The Disorders of the Irishery,”<sup>24</sup> Rowland White took the time to lambast the “lordes and gentills of the Irishe pale”<sup>25</sup> for “us[ing] but only one meale

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<sup>24</sup> An unfinished manuscript treatise written in 1571 by Rowland White—the dispossessed heir of an old Anglo-Norman family of Ulster—for the edification of Queen Elizabeth I’s chief advisor William Cecil (Canny 1979:147-153; Maginn 2012). White was a Dublin merchant, and occasional pirate hunter, who advocated for the Elizabethan (re)conquest and colonization of Ireland in the hopes of reclaiming some of his family’s lost territories in Ulster (Berry 1906:123, 1907:94).

<sup>25</sup> White’s term for that part of Ireland adhering to a Gaelic(ized) social order and customs (i.e., “that are not governed under the Quenes Lawes”), in opposition to the English Pale of Dublin and its environs, which had been conquered centuries earlier by Anglo-Norman knights and successfully held in the name of the English Crown (White [1571] 1979:154).

in fowre and twentie owres [hours]” when no meat was on hand (White [1571] 1979:156).

Anglophone commentators likewise noted the Gaelic(ized) Irish propensity to generally rely on sober beverages (water, milk, or broth), but binge on alcohol when it was available (Campion [1571] 1633:18; White [1571] 1979:156; Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67; Moryson [1617] 1904:229).

### *Food and Drink for the Traveler*

Given how dependent all travelers in early modern Ireland were on private Gaelic(ized) hospitality, more than a few of the commentators cited above were likely exposed directly to the foods they described in their commentaries (although it cannot be known whether they ate any of them). Most had, after all, experienced the country firsthand as soldiers, settlers, or colonial bureaucrats. There was, still, a strong discursive tradition influencing what foods they chose to describe, and how those descriptions developed in their works. The embodied roots of this discourse will be examined more closely in the next section, contextualized within contemporary theories of the body and health likely held by the authors. That said, the foods detailed above likely featured heavily in the fare offered to colonial travelers as cross-cultural guests to local hosts. These foods were supplemented with the beer, wine, mead, and *uisce beatha* that moral duty required an ordinary Irish household, in town or country, to offer to any visitor—nobleman, soldier, bureaucrat, or simple traveler—appearing at their door (O’Sullivan 2004:66).

Firsthand accounts of colonials traveling through the Irish countryside tended to focus on bread. Josias Bodley ([1602/3] 1904:330) lamented that there was none to be found in the entire town of Newry, even within wealthier households, amounting to poor entertainment for him and his fellow English soldiers as they traveled to their Christmas revels. Luke Gernon likewise

warned his reader that ordinary bread should not be expected on entering one of the “baser cabbins” of the rural Gaelic(ized) Irish. One might be treated to hot oaten cakes, however, as they were made fresh when a guest entered the home. It was only upon a guest’s arrival that unsieved oaten meal was combined with butter to form a dough that was cooked atop a griddle or grid-iron over the open fire (Gernon [1620] 1904:359-360). During wartime even these inferior biscuit-cakes were a luxury only to be found in the homes of men as prestigious as the colonial governor at Newry and the rebellious Earl of Tyrone, bestowed on guests ranging from well-to-do English soldiers to a Bohemian baron touring Ireland during Tyrone’s rebellion (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:330; Moryson [1617] 1904:229).

Despite what Bodley experienced in 1602/3, Moryson ([1617] 1904:226) insisted that English-style (presumably wheaten) bread—“such bread as ours”—was available “in the houses of the better sort” in cities. The implication was that such urban strongholds were more culturally English, given the ancient Anglo-Norman origins of their entrenched citizenry. Towns were also thought to benefit from the presence of more recently arrived Englishmen filling the ranks of the new colonial bureaucracy headquartered in them. An uptick in English colonials traveling through urban spaces was also believed, by Moryson, to draw townspeople toward English culinary habits.

Apparently, the regular Gaelic(ized) Irish practice of ritually fasting could impact the hospitality that a traveler experienced, as well. The satirical travelogue “An Account of an Irish Quarter” (or “The Irish Entertainment”) presented the dietary strictures observed at the table of

the fifth Lord Power<sup>26</sup> as conforming to this pattern of fasting and feasting. On Wednesday, the caricatured household dined on salmon, onions, and potatoes, rather than the lavish feast expected by the narrating traveler. The following midday meal was, on the other hand, overabundant in nearly inedible pork (Carpenter [1654] 2003:246,248).

### *Eating and Drinking at the Feast*

Food and drink—especially drink—were offered to guests in much more ritualized ways at Gaelic(ized) feasts. The preparation of food for a feast was less often the focus of colonial commentary (Boorde [1547] 1870:131-133; Derricke 1581). The extremes described may have been the stuff of feasts happening solely in the midst of war, or may have been the wild imaginings of highly biased Englishmen. The colonial bureaucrat most famous for such a description claimed, at least, that the scene he depicted derived from customs he had witnessed firsthand “out of the Northe” (Derricke 1581). Others limited themselves to the guest’s experience of festal consumption, beginning with their entrance into the festal venue (Dymmok [1600] 1843; Gernon [1620] 1904).

### Arriving

No sooner had a guest to a Gaelic(ized) feast handed off the reins of his or her horse, than social protocols surrounding alcohol kicked in.

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<sup>26</sup> Lord Power was the high sheriff of Waterford at the time this poem was written. He was among the local gentry descended from Anglo-Norman knights—in his case a Robert de Poher—who had settled Ireland in the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Burke 1899:373; Carpenter 2003:243).

The lady of the house meets you wth her trayne...Salutations paste, you shall be presented wth all the drinkes in the house, first the ordinary beere, then aquavitae, then sacke, then olde-ale, the lady tastes it, you must not refuse it. (Gernon [1620] 1904:360)

John Dymmok ([1600] 1843:9) similarly described the offering of drinks to guests upon arrival in “any gentlemans howse” in the countryside—a practice he called “Teignie,” after what was presumably the Irish term for such an act of potable hospitality in a Gaelic(ized) Irish or Old English household.<sup>27</sup> In this way spiritous liquor appears in a more specific context—that of a welcoming draught—within the world of Gaelic(ized) hospitality. Such a welcoming could be extended without being followed by a feast, as well. William Brereton did not write about having attended anything close to a full coshering, but the Englishman was plied with a variety of alcohols by a Gaelic(ized) Irish would-be neighbor in one of Ireland’s typical medieval towerhouses while scouting property to invest in in early modern Ireland (Brereton [1635] 1904:389).

### Dining

John Derricke (1581), in his *Image of Irelande*, painted an almost ghoulish picture of Gaelic(ized) Irish feasting. In it “hors boyes [horse-boys]”—serving and training with Irish kerne, or foot soldiers, in much the way a page served a medieval knight—supped on beef (sometimes pig) entrails, liver, and heart during the feast. Within the span of twenty-two lines of poetry and printed marginalia, Derricke made five distinct references to these youths eating the

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<sup>27</sup> Dymmok is the only Anglophone author to have used this particular term, and it has yet to be found in any Irish language source (O’Sullivan 2004:53).

guts—“intrails,” “unwashen Puddyngs,” “gutte and limine,” “durtie tripes and offalls,” “inmeates and puddings”—of freshly slaughtered cattle. He then lingered on a description of the horse-boys’ appearance after eating these intestines, their lips either swimming with blood or “with greene onytmnt be|yng fouly poluted” (Derricke 1581).

According to Old Irish legal texts, in earlier periods the culinary component of feasts included: bread, cheese, butter, milk, fresh and preserved pork, mutton and lamb, beef and veal. Of this food, what one received depended on one’s station in life. If the accounts of foreign pilgrims and colonials are to be believed, the meat of cattle and pigs still featured prominently at late medieval and early modern feasts, as did dairy products, while the only bread on offer was made of oats (O’Sullivan 2004:222-233). By the Early Modern, a change had been observed in Gaelic(ized) festal diet. Hosts were relying less on bread baked from wheaten or barley flour, and instead favoring griddle bread made from oats. This may have reflected an overall shift away from tillage, which had dominated Anglo-Norman agriculture during its medieval heyday, and towards pastoral farming, focusing on the husbandry of more portable (i.e. more easily evacuated) livestock in war-torn early modern Ireland (Simms 1978:79; Lennon 2014; Richter 2014:143,154). Milk and butter also rose in ubiquity with this shift toward pastoral farming. Fresh pork, however, was considered the height of luxury (Simms 1978:89).

Luke Gernon ([1620] 1904:361), writing about Irish banquets in the 1620s, noted that a guest was likely to encounter both red deer and mutton, however poorly prepared, among the variety of meats on offer at such a feast. In William Brereton’s ([1635] 1904:397) description of the mayor’s dinner in Wexford, among the elements that so repulsed him were meat that was not

properly prepared or served and beer so thick as to be undrinkable . Similarly, in “An Irish Banquet, or the Mayors Feast of Youghall,” the poet cast a wary eye over food that was at best unappetizing, at worst inedible, judging by its color and composition. Nowhere was there any mention of meat, other than references to certain white meats, in this poem, however (Scot [1616] 2003:129-130).

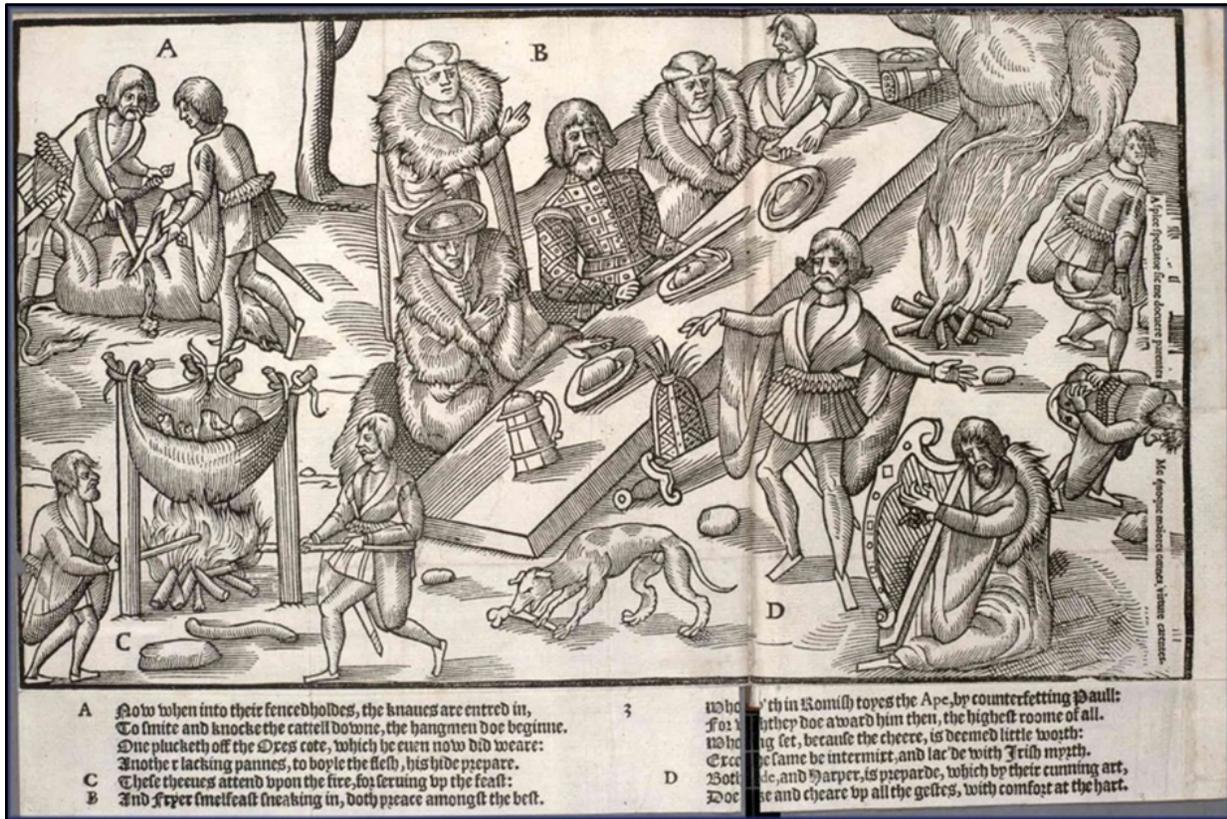
The mock-Gaelic(ized) Christmas feast that Josias Bodley and company attended at Lecale, County Down involved multiple days of eating and drinking. Shortly after the guests had taken off their boots and settled themselves into conversation, the host ordered a single cup of highly spiced wine to be brought into the room. These English military men were then made to each “drink a good draught of it.” This was followed by a call to dinner. Here the party was greeted with a parade of servants carrying “the most select meats,” served “in the very best style,” all arranged on a table where the guests could sit at “properly” arranged chairs. As everyone tucked into their food, the host raised an over-large drinking vessel—“a glass goblet full of claret, which measured (as I conjecture) ten or eleven inches roundabout”—and drank a toast to the safe arrival and health of his guests. The toasting vessel was then passed around the table, for all to drink from equally in succession. More healths were offered to absent colonial notables and friends (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:332-334,336-344).

*Uisce beatha* may have been among the provisions that everyday hosts were meant to offer to traveling guests in Ireland, but it was in the context of the feast that the bodily intentions behind the consumption of this specific substance became clear to cultural outsiders.

Gaelic(ized) Irish feasting had seemingly always involved a good deal of alcohol. The

banqueting hall of Tara was, after all, known as the “house of the mead circuit.” And Tara served as a model for lesser aristocratic feasts in early medieval Ireland, where the circulation of alcohol was absolutely essential—its presence bringing fame, its absence a point of shame and reflection of declining power (O’Sullivan 2004:65-68,83-87,94-98). 15th- and 16<sup>th</sup>-century Irish texts placed the consumption of *uisce beatha* firmly within the context of these feasts—from the “Sunday gathering” of the Ó Cearbhaill (O’Carroll) encomium to the Christmas feast where one Richard Magranell died of alcohol poisoning (G.B. 1858:284; Knott 1926:164). *Uisce beatha* was, however, one among many alcoholic beverages served—including mead, beer, and wine. It was also one of the last beverages to be incorporated into embodied practices of Gaelic(ized) hospitality (Simms 1978:86-88).

Derricke was among the first Anglophone authors to depict *uisce beatha* in a way that could be construed as digestif in the context of Gaelic(ized) Irish feasting. In his *Image of Irelande*, “Vskebeaghe” only made an appearance toward the end of the focal feast (Figure 10). The reference to it is nestled between descriptions of Gaelic(ized) dining practices and the entertainments that wrapped up the evening’s repast. This temporal positioning would suggest that it not only served as a social lubricant, but was intended to aid in postprandial digestion—a use which the reader could assume had been endorsed by the “Surgion” who presided over the feast from a position of power and authority beside his patron-chief (Derricke [1581] 1883:56). The order of the feast lampooned in “An Irish Banquet, or the Mayors Feast of Youghall” followed this general shape, including the distribution of “Nectar-like Usque-bath” among the guests after the meal (Scot [1616] 2003:130).



**Figure 10** A Gaelic(ized) feast. In the caption originally accompanying this illustration, which is included in the figure above, Derricke clarified the letters assigned in the scene to the various members of an elite Gaelic(ized) household present at the illustrated feast. The bearded man seated at the center of the table, wearing a lattice patterned doublet, is the chief-lord himself. The tonsured man standing behind the chief-lord, labeled as B, is a “fryer [friar]” blessing those assembled. The letters A and C denote “woodkarnes,” who act as butchers and cooks for their chief-lord’s feast. The chief-lord’s bard and harper appear in the lower right, labeled as D. From the poem accompanying this image, it can be deduced that the tonsured man seated to the chief-lord's left is his “Surgion [surgeon],” who advises on the healthfulness of foods on offer at the feast. The figure who partially blocks the friar, seated just to the right of the chief-lord and wearing a wide-brimmed hat, is none other than that chief-lord’s wife. Illustration from *The Image of Irelande*, John Derricke, 1581. University of Edinburgh. Reproduced here under CC-BY license.

It was in the context of a coshering feast, and the Gaelic(ized) dishes served there, that Gernon ([1620] 1904:360-361) recommended “the aquavitæ or usquebath of Ireland” as “a very wholesome drinke, and naturall to digest the crudities of the Irish feeding.” Having to accept the inevitability of joining in the Irish feast, Gernon employed a strategy of consumption designed to mitigate bodily anxieties, which will be discussed in greater detail in the next section. This enabled him to meet the social obligation of cross-cultural commensality in a way that may well have been an intentional feature of Gaelic(ized) Irish practice. He simply chose the least offensive foods and made sure to drink a reasonable amount of Irish “usquebath” to aid digestion. In a similar vein, Bodley ([1602/3] 1904:338) recommended usquebaugh as a hangover cure of sorts, claiming that it was “good for dispersing the crude vapours of the French wine” that flowed so freely at feasts in Ireland.

### Departing

Having been duly welcomed out of the wider world and into the feasting venue, food and entertainments flowed until guests retired to sleep off the effects of their revelry. In the morning, having broken their fast and partaken in any needed hair of the dog, one last ritual of hospitality awaited attendees of a Gaelic(ized) coshering. Gernon describes it as follows:

When you are disposing of yourself to depart, they call for Dogh a dores, that is, to drink at the doore, there you are presented agayne wth all the drinkes in the house, as at yor first entrance. Smacke them over, and lett us departe. (Gernon [1620] 1904:361)

A last draught of usquebaugh might thus be taken, to gird the departing guest against the rigors of cross-country travel.

### *The Food and Drink That Maintained Armies*

From the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century down to the present, historians and journalists have stressed how important provisioning is to armies by recycling the aphorism that “an army marches on its stomach.”<sup>28</sup> The original of this phrase may not have been coined until the Victorian era, but the reality that it expresses—that soldiers require ready provision to sustain military campaigns, and consequently deeply impact supplies of food and drink wherever they are—applies just as much to the seemingly ever-present warfare of 16<sup>th</sup>- and 17<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland. Official reports sent from the Elizabethan military front in Ireland would seem to confirm this, at least for Gaelic(ized) forces. In the midst of the Second Desmond Rebellion, English forces raided the hastily abandoned camp of the Earl of Desmond himself, which contained a stockpile of alcohol and several hundred head of live cattle meant to feed his army (Brewer and Bullen [1580] 1868:249).

One of the most blatant, and amusing, expressions of this military need was an anonymous pamphlet<sup>29</sup> printed in London in 1642, during the wars that racked the British Isles

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<sup>28</sup> While this phrase has been attributed to Napoleon Bonaparte, researchers have traced its origin to a biography of the 18<sup>th</sup>-century king of Prussia, Frederick the Great, written late in the career of the Victorian historian Thomas Carlyle. Carlyle’s original phrasing, which he attributed to Frederick the Great himself, was that “an Army, like a serpent, goes upon its belly.” Napoleon, on the other hand, was believed to have commented that, “Such is the influence of the belly...It is hunger that makes the world move,” during his exile on Saint Helena (ca. 1816). The two quotations came to be associated in popular media and, by 1862, the saying that “an army marched on its belly” was being attributed directly to Napoleon, generally in reference to the American Civil War. By the 20<sup>th</sup> century “belly” had become “stomach,” but the gist of the phrase remained the same (Oxford Dictionary of Proverbs 2015; O’Toole 2017).

<sup>29</sup> This pamphlet is from the British Library’s Thomason Tracts. This collection, which consists of tens of thousands of works printed between 1640 and 1661, was begun by the contemporary London publisher and bookseller George Thomason, who gathered works on religious controversy and political conflict as they were published. This consummate collector—who regularly scoured Europe for titles, and supplied the great universities of England with his finds—went to considerable effort and expense to ensure that his collection was not destroyed by the very wars it documented so well (Stoker 2008; The British Library Board 2020).

throughout the 1640s. The title of the single-page piece—“The English Irish Souldier. With his new Discipline, new Armes, Old Stomacke, and new taken pillage: who had rather Eate than Fight”—perfectly summarized the image and verse that followed (Figure 11). The poem guided the reader through the woodblock print of a soldier who has, upon defeating his enemies, replaced his weapons and armor with spoils of war that have all been lifted from the kitchen. The effect of a soldier armed with a goose on a cooking spit for a musket, sausages for match cord, an artichoke-hilted sword, dripping pan shield, and wine bottle bandolier, who wears a cooking pot festooned with a duck for a hat, while his stockings are held up by drinking flagons, was undoubtedly intended to be comical. The satirical image signified, however, the importance of food and drink to soldiers fighting the 1641 Rising in Ireland. The accompanying poem, written from the perspective of that soldier, attested to the fact that poor fighting was done on a hunger-bitten stomach, while alcohol could be counted on to quash fear and raise the courage of otherwise unruly men (Thomason Tracts 1642).

From this mid-17<sup>th</sup>-century tract, it would seem that things had not changed much from the time of Sir John Harington, an Elizabethan courtier-soldier who had accompanied the second Earl of Essex to Ireland in 1599 (Carpenter 2003:97; Scott-Warren 2015). In Harington’s poem, “Of the warres in Ireland,” the first things that this former soldier harped on were the food and drink he had been forced to subsist on there. He complained of a lack of wine, and bemoaned the local Irish foods he had begrudgingly eaten to survive. He had never encountered a “viler meat worse cook’t” than what was standard fare for the soldier serving in Ireland (Harington [1618] 2003:97). A letter that Sir John wrote while in Ireland with Essex, addressed to a member of his



**Figure 11** Broadside of “The English Irish Soldier” from the wars of the 1640s, unknown printmaker, 1642. Part of the Thomason Tracts. © British Library Board. Shelfmark: 669.f.6.(12), title page.

own household, reaffirmed the image of soldiering conveyed in the more poetic piece. In the letter, he described subsisting on the same food and drink he complained of in the poem, with the notable addition of *aqua vitæ* to the menu (Harington [1599] 1804:259). Despite being a commander in Essex's army, Harington still thought with the belly of a soldier, a belly that partook of distilled liquor in Ireland. Irish foot soldiers serving in England apparently filled their bellies in a wildly chaotic fashion, at least to the eyes of English commentators. They structured their daily repasts in a microcosm of the annual cycle of feasting and fasting demanded by their religion. Thus, they preferred to lay food aside to be eaten all at once, rather than spread between multiple meals over the course of the day and week. Moryson ([1617] 1904:230) saw this further reflected in the distributing out of beef carcasses among the "wild Irish," to be eaten all at once instead of portioned out over the course of multiple meals.

Lord Mountjoy, the Lord Deputy of Ireland who finally succeeded in bringing the Nine Years War against the Earl of Tyrone to a close in 1603, adopted the use of usquebagh as a digestive aid in promoting the health of this soldiery during the war. In his *Itinerary*, Fynes Moryson recounted an episode where Mountjoy gave one of his Anglo-Norman descended soldiers money to purchase some Irish *aqua vitæ* "for better digestion." The drink was deemed necessary after the soldier admitted to having eaten—out of a taste for it, rather than necessity—meat taken from "the buttocks of dead horses" lying near the military camp (Moryson [1617] 1904:228-229). The perceived inadequacies of a soldier's diet in Ireland, and how it was specifically understood to affect health—which will be the subject of the next section—explain, at least in part, why *aqua vitæ* was both an official troop provision for colonial forces and a

frequent find in the cached provisions of the Gaelic(ized) Irish opposition (Brewer and Bullen [1580] 1868:249, [1589] 1869:175; Rich [1599] 1899, 45; Mahaffy [1601] 1912:172, [1602] 1912:507; Erck [1603] 1846:45; Appleby [1604] 1992:106). Career military man Sir Josias Bodley alluded to such provisioning practices in recalling the poor quality Irish *aqua vitæ* that he and his comrades drank while engaged in the 1601 siege of Kinsale (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:337).

Irish *aqua vitæ* also came in handy in reviving soldiers nearly drowned in the line of duty, as witnessed by Sir George Carew during his tenure as Master of the Ordnance during the Elizabethan (re)conquest of Ireland (Brewer and Bullen [1589] 1869:8). It could stave off the cold of an Irish winter, as well, which many an English soldier had to suffer through over the course of the Nine Years War (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:338).

Whatever the reason, colonial soldiers apparently had a taste for distilled liquor. Lord Mountjoy himself reported in field dispatches that he had ransacked a freshly defeated Irish enemy's house for provisions, including *aqua vitæ*, around Christmas of 1600 (Atkinson [1600] 1905:106). *Aqua vitæ* was specifically named in orders, emanating from the Lord Deputy and the Council in Dublin, that intended to curtail abusive hospitable exactions that colonial forces were imposing on loyal subjects within the English Pale (Brewer and Bullen [1596] 1869:174-175). Spenser, in his *View*, similarly included *aqua vitæ* among the victuals that colonial soldiers were accused of acquiring by force from the poor (Spencer [1596] 1809:132). A similar complaint, complete with reference to *aqua vitæ*, was included among a series of "Notes for Ireland" that catalogued problems in the kingdom, compiled by an unknown hand sometime around 1611 (Brewer and Bullen 1873:449).

Great quantities of *aqua vitæ* were noted as entering Ireland in 1580, while the island was full of rebel armies and colonial soldiers engaged in the Second Desmond Rebellion (Brewer and Bullen [1580] 1868:249,284). By the end of the Nine Years War in 1603, the provisioning of colonial troops with distilled liquor had become official policy. Sir Thomas Smythe<sup>30</sup>—a London merchant heavily invested in various of England’s 17<sup>th</sup>-century colonial and trade ventures—was specifically instructed to provide *aqua vitæ*, among other food and drink, to colonial forces in Ireland in fulfillment of the “Office of Comissarie of Victualles in Connaght and Tirconell,” which he was granted in 1603 (Erck [1603] 1846:45; Morgan 2008). In keeping with this practice, distilled liquor was among the ad hoc provisions hastily assembled and brought out of Dungannon to feed the colonial army putting down lingering rebellion in Ulster in 1608 (Russell and Prendergast [1617] 1880:177).

The argument that this study is making is that English knowledge of Irish usquebaugh—its composition and best use—was formed at the intersection of these cross-cultural encounters and those theories of the body and health that the English brought to hospitality’s table in Ireland. The next section will explore how the early modern body was understood, in terms of health and illness, in relation to the rigors of travel through the Irish landscape-climate and the peculiarities of Irish alimentation that were the two anxiety-inducing sides of hospitable intimacy in early modern Ireland.

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<sup>30</sup> A different individual from the would-be Ulster colonizer of the 1570s. Referred to as Thomas Smith in the Victorian transcription of the original entry in James I’s Patent Rolls of Chancery (Erck [1603] 1846:45).

## AN INTIMATE NEED FOR USQUEBAUGH: THE EARLY MODERN BODY AND HEALTH/ILLNESS

What both the Gaelic(ized) Irish use of *uisce beatha*—in guesting, feasting, and hosting—and English colonial commentaries about and receipts for usquebaugh hint at is that this particular substance was consumed in specific relation to the foods and landscape-climate of Ireland. Just how intimate this relationship between landscape-climate-food-drink and the body was, or was understood to be by those acting and interacting in early modern Ireland, can only really be grasped by first gaining a familiarity with contemporary medical theories of the body. Exactly how these embodied imaginaries were applied to Irish food and landscape-climate will subsequently be explored. The analysis will then circle back to the topic of *uisce beatha*-cum-usquebaugh and its place within early modern health regimens as a corrective for specific ailments.

### SHARED THEORIES OF THE BODY, DIVERGENT MEDICAL TRADITIONS

Richard Stanihurst was among the first Anglophone commentators to hint, albeit in his decidedly bigoted way, at the form and substance of Gaelic(ized) medicine and medical thought at the time of the Elizabethan (re)conquest. In an easily overlooked passage, Stanihurst referenced the “common schooles of leachcraft [medicine]” in Gaelic(ized) Ireland, “whereat they begin children, and hold on sixteene or twentie yeares, conning by rote the aphorismes of Hippocrates” (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:868). Stanihurst’s patronizing description of Irish medicine was matched by John Derricke’s derisive characterization of the “Surgion” seated so prominently at table in the illustration of a Gaelic(ized) feast included in the latter’s *Image of Irelande*. In the

section of poem accompanying this illustration, Derricke wrote off such Gaelic(ized) physicians as miserable, lying, low-class Irishmen, whose advice on health—particularly diet—was utter nonsense (Derricke 1581) (see Figure 10).

The truth behind Stanihurst’s statement—however xenophobic its assertion of backward thinking among the Gaelic(ized) “other”—is revealed in a late 16<sup>th</sup>-century manuscript that survives in the collections of the British Library. Harley MS 4347 contains seven books of *The Aphorisms of Hippocrates*, written out in Latin and Irish, along with similarly bilingual material transcribed and translated from Bernard de Gordon’s<sup>31</sup> *Lilium Medicinæ* (ca. 1305). Such a collection of Hippocratic *Aphorisms* was part and parcel of Gaelic(ized) medical traditions in medieval through early modern Ireland. Harley MS 4347 is but one of a number of Gaelic(ized) medical manuscripts that survive to the present day.<sup>32</sup> These include the manuscript *De Amore Hereos*, copied in a combination of Latin and Irish around 1590 from an original dating to 1352, which contains material from de Gordon’s *Lilium Medicinæ* (Wulff 1932:174-175). De Gordon’s work was also referenced in a similarly bilingual manuscript dating from the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century. This circa 1460 manuscript is primarily a transcription and translation into Latin and Irish of portions of the *Rosa Anglica*—a widely read medical textbook, written circa 1314 by famed English physician John of Gaddesden, which continued in use for some three hundred years (Pearn 2013b; Wulff 1929, xiii–xxvi). As a body of knowledge, these works reveal that

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<sup>31</sup> Bernard de Gordon, who was professionally active circa 1270-1330, was faculty at the renowned Montpellier medical school in the South of France (Pearn 2013a:8).

<sup>32</sup> A number of other such medical manuscripts were described in Cameron’s (1886:2-3) *History of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland*. At the time that this book was written, these manuscripts were in the collections of Trinity College Dublin and the Royal Irish Academy.

Gaelic(ized) medicine blended a more vernacular form of healing with the highly theoretical constructs popular throughout Europe at the time (Dillon 2010:39-42).

This corpus of Latin-Irish medical knowledge was produced and passed down within a system of education and practice that more closely resembled the “schools” training Gaelic(ized) lawyers, harpers, poets, and annalists than anything producing physicians elsewhere in Europe. As with those other “learned professions,” Gaelic(ized) elites were eager to patronize hereditary practitioners versed in medical knowledge (Dillon 2010:39). A physician was a necessary part of an Irish high king’s (or lord’s) retinue. Geoffrey Keating ([1634] 2003:207) explained as much in his Irish language history *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*. John Derricke (1581) depicted the same, only with a decidedly derogatory inflection, in the illustration of MacSweyne’s (or MacSweeney’s)<sup>33</sup> feast included in his *Image of Irelande* (see Figure 10). Physician-families passed down multigenerational case-books that laid out diseases and remedies proven through experience. They also transcribed and translated Continental medical texts, such as those of de Gordon and John of Gaddesden, adding commentaries and extra content to create an amalgam unique to Ireland, but not unfamiliar to an English or Continental physician. These texts were then disseminated through traditional Irish medical schools. Stanihurst’s “schooles of leachcraft” were, in fact, centers of practical physician instruction and scribal reproduction maintained by Gaelic(ized) chief-lords (Dillon 2010:40-42). The Flemish physician and pioneering chemist Jan

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<sup>33</sup> In a preface to the poem accompanying this illustration, Derricke asserts that he has based his depictions off of the customs and habits of those descended from the “*Macke Swine*,” interpreted as a reference to the MacSweyne (Small 1883:119-201) or MacSweeney (Carpenter 2003:64) lineage in Ireland.

Baptista van Helmont<sup>34</sup> glowingly described such a tradition of medical education and practice in the Ireland he was familiar with at the dawn of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Van Helmont [1648] 1662:8; Partington 1936:365; Dillon 2010:40-41).

What the Latin-Irish manuscripts prove is that, however uniquely Gaelic(ized) medical education and practice may have been in organization in early modern Ireland, they were part of a tradition profoundly engaged with contemporary thought on health and the body in England and on the European Continent. Those transcribing and translating European texts freely picked what sections of source material they would include, rather than slavishly copying foreign works in their entirety, though. Their choices and commentary demonstrate a familiarity with the leading authorities in medieval medical thought—from ancient Greco-Romans like Hippocrates of Cos and Galen of Pergamon, to early medieval Muslim scholars such as Avicenna (Wulff 1929:xxvi ; Arikha 2008:48-77).

While professional medicine in early modern England was based on the same Hippocratic-Galenic theoretical tradition, it had grown up quite differently in English social contexts. “Learned” physicians were trained in this classical scholastic tradition at universities, which were sometimes openly hostile to practical knowledge (Wear 2000:23,35-45; Arikha 2008:78-80). In the urban metropole they were organized into the exclusive London College of Physicians, which operated on the guild model and only admitted members by examination. Barber-surgeons and apothecaries apprenticed and tested to join their respective medical

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<sup>34</sup> The famed Flemish physician’s first name has variously been rendered Jan, John, Joan, Johann, Johannes, etc., differing even between sources consulted for the current study (Van Helmont [1648] 1662; Partington 1936:359; Dillon 2010:40; EEBO).

companies in London, as well. Their ranks were matched by any number of unlicensed practitioners (Wear 2000:21-29).

### *The Humoral Body*

The practical shape that a Hippocratic-Galenic theory of health and the body took in everyday lives in 16<sup>th</sup>-century England is laid out quite clearly in renowned Tudor humanist and government official Thomas Elyot's popular medical manual, *The Castel of Helth* (Stein 2014:1-10).<sup>35</sup> The circulation of this and other resurrected antique knowledge, made available in the European Renaissance by historical events in distant lands, was given a further boost by the invention of the printing press in the same decade (Arikha 2008:110). All of this proved a shot-in-the-arm to Hippocratic-Galenic medicine in the British Isles, at least through to the Flight of the Earls in 1607.

Elyot's synthesis of Greco-Roman medicine is useful to anyone raised with a biomedical understanding of the body because it was written for laymen, and starts by laying out the fundamental principles of the Hippocratic-Galenic theory of the body. To understand that body required first understanding its relationship to the wider world. The material substance of the world that this body inhabited was divided, for the purposes of health, into three parts: things

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<sup>35</sup> Elyot's popular health regimen went into seventeen editions between its first publication in 1536 and 1610 (EEBO). As a man of the Renaissance, its author could take advantage of the Greek originals of ancient medical texts—formerly available only in Latin translation from Arabic sources—which flooded out of the former Byzantine Empire as Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Empire in 1453 (Arikha 2008:110). His synthesis of Greco-Roman medicine was composed in English for the benefit of literate laymen in preserving their own health, rather than the training of scholastic physicians in medical schools. Elyot was laying bare the secrets of this learned profession, and how it understood the body and health, much to the chagrin of physicians operating within a closed guild system (Elyot [1534] 1539:87).

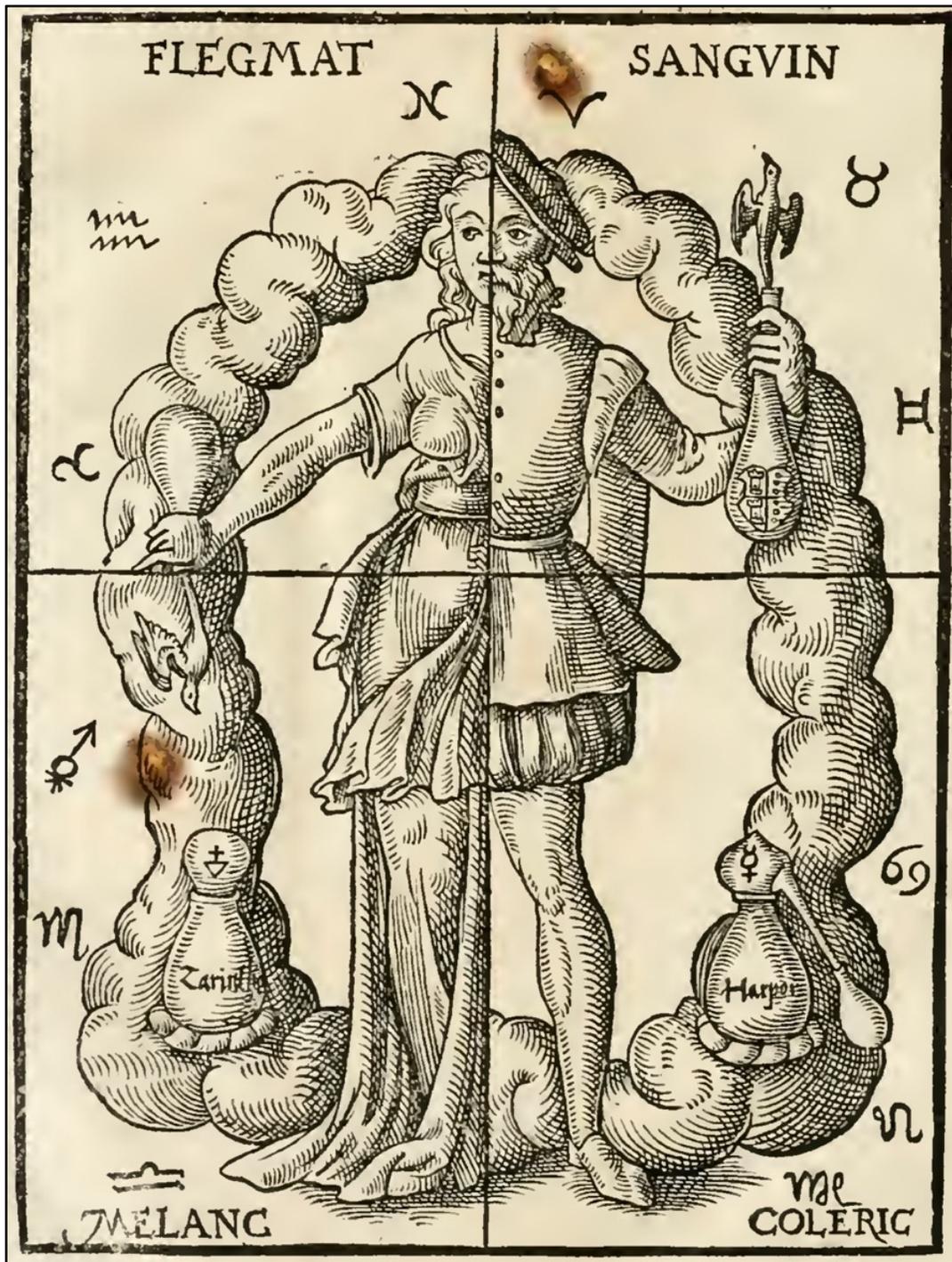
natural, things not natural, and things against nature. That which was “natural” physically comprised the human body itself, or was an aspect of the same. To this category belonged body parts, the humors, and the spirits (Elyot [1534] 1539:1; Arikha 2008:99;).<sup>36</sup>

The six “nonnaturals” were those things necessary to human life that were not physically a part of the human body, such as air and nourishment from food and drink. Sexual intercourse, as a matter of the excretion or retention of fluids, was one of these nonnaturals. As the quantity and quality of nonnatural substances could prove beneficial or detrimental to a person’s health, the proper maintenance of them warranted its own subfield within medicine—that of hygiene. While nonnaturals could prove a person’s bodily undoing, sickness itself constituted a category of thing that stood “against nature” (Elyot [1534] 1539:1; Arikha 2008:99).

Naturals and nonnaturals alike could be classified by a binary system of opposing qualities, with substances being either hot or cold, and either moist or dry. Everything in the universe—including the stages of the human life-cycle—could be classified within this binary system as hot and moist, hot and dry, cold and moist, or cold and dry (Elyot [1534] 1539:2-3). The bodily manifestations of these universal attributes were the four humors, with each humor typifying one of the binary sets. Blood (*sanguis* in the Latin) was hot and moist, phlegm cold and moist, choler (bile) hot and dry, melancholy (black bile) cold and dry. Variations in the balance of humors were considered within the bounds of nature and health. Any given individual could have one of four “complexions”—sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric, or melancholic (Figure 12)—

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<sup>36</sup> The date 1534 appears in print on the title page of this edition of Elyot’s *The Castel of Helth*, although EEBO gives the date of its printing as 1539 in the metadata accompanying the transcribed text.



**Figure 12** Image representing the four humoral complexions, with their gendered and astrological associations. Illustration from *Quinta Essentia*, Leonhart Thurneisser zum Thurn, 1574. Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles. Accession No.: 2929-675.

depending on which humor, signified by their qualities of personality and health, naturally abounded in them (Elyot [1534] 1539:8-10; Arikha 2008:9-14).

It was when the quality or quantity of one of these four humors changed within the body—becoming “unnatural” by disrupting the balance of temperature and humidity in the body—that illness ensued. A “distemperaunce,” or change in the binary attributes predominating in any bodily member, was the more specific agent of illness. The stomach, or any organ, becoming too hot or cold or moist or dry could wreak havoc on an individual’s health. Overseeing the healthy workings of the body, and its humors, were “bodily spirits,” each “an ayry substance subtyll, styryng the powers of the body to perfourme their operations.” “Natural spirit” was born of the liver and encompassed appetite, digestion, and the evacuation of substances from the body. “Spiritual spirit” proceeded from the heart and controlled emotions. “Animal spirit” originated in the brain and, as the wellspring of the five senses, oversaw voluntary motion, reason, imagination, and memory (Elyot [1534] 1539:3,8,10).

### *The Alchemical Body*

The world of European medicine and the theories of the body that accompanied it were not static throughout the period covered in this study, however. One significant shift in thinking was ushered in by Theophrastus Paracelsus von Hohenheim, who cut his teeth as a 16<sup>th</sup>-century battlefield surgeon on the Continent. Paracelsus openly bucked the scholasticism of Galenic medicine, privileging contemporary observation over “learned tradition,” and publishing in his vernacular German (rather than erudite Latin). In many ways, this movement was the medical equivalent of the Protestant Reformation. It encouraged a more direct, personal, even mystical

approach to health and illness that challenged and circumvented authority through its empiricism (Arikha 2008:135).

While the ideas of Paracelsus were circulating in England by the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>37</sup> Paracelsian theory and medical practice would not become popular among medical professionals in the British Isles until the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. Paracelsian medicine would not find solid footing in the formal medical profession in England until the rise of radical republicanism among English Parliamentarians in the 1640s (Wear 2000:354). Nicholas Culpeper was among the medical revolutionaries to promote this movement through his establishment-infuriating publications (Wear 2000:355-356; Curry 2004; Arikha 2008:203). The translation and publication of Paracelsus's *A New Method of Physick* in 1654 made explicit the Paracelsian tenants of alchemy and astrology that this movement promoted. Among these was a theory of the body that, while bearing traces of older Galenic principles, shifted the composition and workings of that body in line with alchemical thinking, while tying those workings to the celestial sphere. In place of humors were alchemical “principles”—mercury, sulphur, and salt—which were understood to comprise the body and motivate its biological functions. “Mercury” was the basic substance of “Life and Form,” “sulphur” was the “food of heat,” and “salt” promoted the evacuative faculties of the body (Paracelsus 1654:135-137,145-146,433-434).

The Paracelsian category of “salt” encompassed the old Galenic humors (blood, phlegm, choler, melancholy), which were still deemed capable of affecting the body’s temperament (and thus health) when in fluctuation. The same four qualities of the world (hot, cold, moist, dry) that

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<sup>37</sup> Hugh Plat ([1594] 1653:171) made reference to Paracelsus in a passage on distilling *aqua vitae* in his popular *The Jewell House of Art and Nature*, first published in London in 1594.

characterized Galenic humors and nonnaturals found a place in Paracelsian ontology, but their effects on the body differed in significant ways. Alchemical distillation became the metaphor by which nature and the body were understood. Heat now rarified substances by causing upward motion of their constituent elements, cold thickened the same through downward motion, moisture softened and thinned substances, and dryness hardened them. What processes applied to substances in the world likewise applied to bodily organs, and through them health (Partlicius 1654:131,137,508-509).

Health was the proper functioning of a body whose well-formed organs worked according to a harmony and union ensured by their “good temperament” and proper engagement with the six nonnaturals (diet, air, sexual activity, etc.). Conversely, sickness resulted from a change to the body—its qualities and the functioning of its organs—brought on by an intemperance in one of the nonnaturals. The major deviation from Galenic theory was that unhealthful imbalance now involved the three alchemical principles of mercury, sulphur, and salt and how they, and through them organs, were affected by the “qualities” of the world around a body. Intemperate climates—whether too hot, too cold, too wet, or too dry—could still engender ill health (Partlicius 1654:25-30,496-503). It was not surprising, then, that Paracelsians like Thomas Muffet<sup>38</sup> and Christopher Bennet—the two degreed physicians behind the 1655 edition of the dietary regimen *Healths Improvement*—gave consideration to the effects of climate on health in a book ostensibly about food preparation. This treatise, originally compiled in 1595,

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<sup>38</sup> A few variations on Muffet’s surname appear in early modern publications—Muffett, Muffet, Moufet, etc.—including the edition of *Healths Improvement* referenced in this study (Muffett 1655; Houliston 2004).

began with a consideration of climate, noting, among other things, the ill effects of “fenny aire,” as it termed the conditions surrounding and rising out of water-logged ground (Muffett 1655:28).

The root cause of such intemperances of the nonnaturals was now traced, however, to astrological alignments—the heavenly meeting of malevolent stars. Celestial bodies could change the qualities of the air itself, and through such change affect human bodies. Within this ontology, entire kingdoms and their climates were subject to the inevitable influence of specific houses of the Zodiac (Partlicius 1654:64-71,83,494). Parr Lane’s 1621 humoral characterization of Irish kerne (foot soldiers) bore the signs of this Paracelsian theory of the body. He cited the landscape of their birth and the alignment of stars as determinants affecting the quality of their blood, and thus their temperament and governability (Lane [1621] 1999:126).

Whether functioning within the humoral or the alchemical theory of the body, the category of nonnaturals seems to have been a way of meaningfully grouping intimate relationships between the body and the world that were thought capable of intruding on the innermost aspect of being human: achieving and maintaining internal health. Landscape-climate, food-drink, and sexual activity were all understood to occupy this category, which may explain the sexualization of food and drink seen previously in this study. The first two nonnaturals in this list, however, were more directly addressed in the works of early modern colonial commentators writing about Ireland. It is argued here that this reflects where early modern theories of the body and consumption placed their emphasis in differentiating between communities in colonial contexts. How bodies were understood—as humoral, rather than biomedical—impacted the process of othering taking place in the colonial discourse.

## BODILY INTIMACIES OF THE “AYRE”

Air, of all the nonnaturals, held the most potential as an agent of ill health, as it “doth both inclose vs, & also enter into our bodyes...& we cannot be separate one howre frome it, for the necessitie of breathyng.” Four things could corrupt the air and breed illness: the influence of the stars, the decomposition of animal flesh above ground, overcrowded and filthy habitation, and—unfortunately for Ireland—standing water (Elyot [1534] 1539:11-12). According to this medical ontology, the boundary between a body and its surrounding environment was highly porous. The air that an individual breathed and moved through altered the qualitative balances and internal motions that ensured a body’s health. That air was itself a medium greatly affected by both the qualities of temperature and humidity that characterized a local climate, and the presence of water in the surrounding landscape. A cold and damp climate, exacerbated by the constant infusion of humidity into the air from a water-logged landscape, necessarily distempered the human body in a cold and moist way. The phlegmatic ill health that followed this externally induced humoral imbalance manifested as the “flux,” a violent evacuation of the bowels—what is now known as diarrhea—brought on by cold and moisture (Elyot [1534] 1539:10,73; see also Arikha 2008:100).

### *Ireland’s Climate and Landscape*

For thousands of years Ireland has been typified, to varying degrees, by a rainy climate feeding a landscape scattered with raised and blanket bogs (Hall 2011). As geographers of the nascent British Empire attested, early modern Ireland was a land replete with standing water. In

the chain of early modern authors writing about Ireland, it was Edmund Campion who first borrowed from Giraldus Cambrensis in emphasizing the watery landscape and digestive ailments common to Ireland (Campion [1571] 1633:9). As far as landscape-climate was concerned, Stanihurst took the same tack as Campion, including the latter's words nearly verbatim in his contribution to Holinshed's *Chronicles* (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:8). The discursive tradition that this would establish would reappear in treatises on Ireland and published topographical surveys of the British Isles from the close of the 16<sup>th</sup> century through the 17<sup>th</sup> century and beyond (Dymmok [1600] 1843:5; Camden 1610:63, 1637, 1789:464; Speed 1612:137, 1662:137; Moryson 1617, [1617] 1735b). Parr Lane—another English soldier-turned-administrator who penned commentary on the colonization of Ireland in the first quarter of the 17<sup>th</sup> century—alluded to this common perception of the Irish climate. In his poetical “Newes from the Holy Ile,” he argued that Irish weather was best characterized as “foule” (Lane [1621] 1999:123-125). The “wetness of the [Irish] weather” was still a concern among learned men engaged in the colonization of Ireland as of the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Boate 1652:165).

*Intimate Ailments from the Irish “Ayre”*

This landscape-climate posed an unavoidable threat to the Hippocratic-Galenic body in Ireland, all the more so given how travel played into both Gaelic(ized) social life and the military and administrative needs of an expansive colonial state. Movement through this sodden landscape was essential to the cycle of *cóisir* that marked the Gaelic(ized) calendar (Gernon [1620] 1904:360). And this travel took place on horseback, exposing riders to the full fury of the elements (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:331). According to the ontology of the body that then

predominated, people living in or passing through late medieval and early modern Ireland needed to prepare themselves to experience and combat a flux brought on by the phlegmatic (cold and moist) superfluity of the Irish air (Elyot [1534] 1539:10,73; Arikha 2008:98-104). What Anglophone commentators had to say about landscape-climate and health in Ireland demonstrated just such thinking.

Disease was by no means unique to Ireland, but certain ailments were strongly associated with the island in colonial writing. As early as 1571, Campion (1633:9) was highlighting the prevalence of “distillations, rhumes and fluxes” in relation to the Irish landscape-climate. Through Stanihurst ([1586] 1808:8) it became clear that such “fluxes” were indeed fluxes. A hint as to what was meant by “flux” can be gleaned from Camden’s (1610:63) version of this passage, where it was “loosenesse and rhowmes” that troubled visitors and newcomers to Ireland. John Speed (1612:137) included “dyssenteries and fluxes” among the dangers that beset the newly arrived. Fynes Moryson went so far as to call “looseness of the body, the country disease” ([1617] 1904:221). Parr Lane drew on this same association in making passing reference to Irish kerne being “loose in body,” “this cuntries old disease,” because of Ireland’s climate ([1621] 1999, 125). Gerard Boate reaffirmed this assertion that “the Loosness” was endemic to Ireland, adding that those who left it untreated often ended up with the fatal “Bloody flux” (1652, 182). The prolific publisher and promoter of all manner of mid 17<sup>th</sup>-century learning Samuel Hartlib—famous for his circle of correspondence with European intelligentsia (Greengrass 2008)—made a concern for the endemic diseases encountered during colonization explicit in his “Interogatory Relating more particularly to the Husbandry and Naturall History of

IRELAND.” The format that Hartlib chose for this addendum was a series of questions presented to those directly involved in the British imperial project in Ireland. “What diseases,” he inquired, “[were] peculiar and reigning in some parts of the countrey?” The ceaseless inquisitor then ended this particular thought by questioning “the nature, causes, cures thereof [of those endemic diseases]” (Hartlib [1652] 1659).

Those who had experienced Ireland firsthand could attest to the prevalence of gastric ailments when traveling through the countryside. The would-be colonizer of Ireland Sir William Brereton ([1635] 1904:371,402) suffered from looseness of the bowels for nearly the entirety of his month-long sojourn across Ireland in 1635. Disease, while a discomfort to the early modern civilian traveler, was of paramount importance to those engaged in military ventures in Ireland, as the unknown author of the unpublished manuscript “A Discourse of Ireland” noted around 1599 (Quinn 1941/2:160). Fynes Moryson witnessed this firsthand. In elegizing Lord Mountjoy, Stanihurst attributed the loss of heart of “The English common Soldiers” as much to “Looseness of Body, the natural Sickness of the Country” as to demoralizing defeats in battle. This ill-health, believed to have been brought on and compounded by the Irish landscape-climate, left the English military presence in Ireland in a “miserable Estate.” Moryson likewise surmised that it was “the foggy Air of the Bogs” that did “most prejudice the Health” of Lord Mountjoy during his campaign against rebelling Gaelic lords at the start of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Moryson [1617] 1735a:107,118-119).

For Gerard Boate, “Loosness and the Malignant Feaver”—as the “*Endemii Morbi* or reigning Diseases” of Ireland—were of particular colonial concern given that English troops,

engaged in the ongoing suppression of rebellion in Ireland in the 1640s, suffered greatly from them (Boate 1652:181-186). Boate's knowledge of this medical crisis came directly from his brother, Arnold Boate, who had been practicing medicine in Dublin for almost a decade before returning to London in 1644, and who had been "Physician generall of the English Forces" in Ireland while resident there (see also Boran 2004; Baigent 2007). In his editorial contribution to *Irelands Natural History*, Samuel Hartlib (1652) made abundantly clear the colonial nature of this early scientific text. Just below his name on the work's title page, he declared that he was bringing Gerard Boate's creation to posthumous publication, "For the Common Good of *Ireland*, and more especially, for the benefit of the Adventurers and Planters therein." Hammering home the martial impetus behind the volume's publication, Hartlib dedicated his deceased friend's work,

To His Excellency OLIVER CROMWELL, Captain Generall of the Commonwealths Army in England, Scotland and Ireland, and Chancellor of the University of Oxford. AND To the Right Honorable CHARLES FLEETWOOD, Commander in Chief (under the Lord Generall Cromwell) of all the Forces in IRELAND. (Hartlib 1652:A2)

Hartlib's "Epistle Dedicatory" went on to encourage the pursuit of knowledge into the natural history and husbandry of Ireland as subjects necessary to the "Publick Use of a Society" whose interests, like those of Protestant England, were served by "the first settlement of a Plantation" in Ireland, and the subsequent prosperity (including returns on investments) of colonizing projects there. Key to this colonial success was protecting and maintaining a viable settler population on the ground in Ireland. The threat of physical incapacitation—or worse, mortality—from diseases like the flux added to the risk that violent uprisings already posed of

potentially reducing colonial populations to destabilizing levels. This threat was compounded when the very men tasked with protecting settlers from violence—in this case by putting down the latest Catholic rebellion—were wiped out by diseases considered endemic to the Irish landscape-climate. Luckily, Hartlib and his circle of emerging natural scientists were seeking out and promulgating just the sort of knowledge—of climate, environment, disease, and agriculture—intended to “improve” all aspects of Ireland’s embodied military and civil colonization (Hartlib 1652:A3-A5).

Despite shifts in underlying theories of the body—from Galenic-Hippocratic to Paracelsian—the effects of landscape-climate upon the body proved a remarkably durable concern over the period covered in the current study.

#### BODILY INTIMACIES OF DIET

Within the Hippocratic-Galenic tradition, food and drink followed air as the next most common means of unbalancing the body through unwanted intimacies that engendered ill health. Food and drink could, of course, not be avoided altogether. The best that could be expected was to manage one’s intake of them through a proper dietary regimen in order to strike a healthful balance of hot-cold-moist-dry qualities within one’s humorally constituted body. The balance one struck, of what foods to eat when and where, depended on the humoral qualities ascribed to and engendered within the body by both the foods and manner of eating one engaged with in the world. As a rule of thumb, food or drink composed of good substance generated good bodily juices and good blood; ill substance bred ill juices and ill blood. Cold foods in general congealed

the juices of the body, while excessive moisture in food led to putrefaction (Elyot [1534] 1539:2-3,8-10,12-18,23,31; Arikha 2008:9-14).

“Gross” meats, like beef, were considered nourishing, but were thought harder to digest, even though they strengthened the body admirably if properly digested. Problems arose when gross meats were eaten by those with a cold or phlegmatic stomach, as the meat would putrefy, rather than digest, in a sluggish gut. Eating to excess also had a phlegm-producing effect. Elyot’s rule of thumb in *The Castel of Helth* was that a person should always, “eate without gourmandyse [eating greedily], or leaue with some appetite.” The same held for drink, where, “A large draught of wyne is ylle. A moderate draught is not onely not ylle, but also commodious or profitable” (Elyot [1534] 1539:6,12-18,29).

In the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century a new regimen sanitatis was published, written more than a half century earlier by a degreed English physician of the Paracelsian school. Despite being based on a revolutionary movement in European medicine, Thomas Muffet’s<sup>39</sup> *Healths Improvement: or, RULES Comprizing and Discovering The Nature, Method, and Manner of Preparing all sorts of FOOD Used in this NATION* made connections between diet and health that were very much in line with what had come before. Muffet compiled his regimen in 1595, from firsthand knowledge of the health hazards that soldiers faced abroad, based on his time in service to the Earl of Essex in France in the 1590s (Houliston 2004). So highly regarded was Muffet’s (1655:“To the Reader”) writing on diet and health that learned men of the 17<sup>th</sup> century ranked their Elizabethan

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<sup>39</sup> Moffet, or Muffett, was a Cambridge-educated and well-traveled member of the London College of Physicians. He did not live to see *Healths Improvement* published, dying in 1604. It was not until 1655 that Christopher Bennet, himself a Cambridge-trained fellow of the College of Physicians, edited the work and saw it printed. *Healths Improvement* was published again in 1746 (Houliston 2004; Payne 2004).

forebear alongside antiquity's Apicius and Renaissance Italy's Platina as a master of "Dietetic" thought.

The theory of the body espoused in *Healths Improvement* was very much in keeping with Galenic tradition—emphasizing the hot:cold, moist:dry dichotomies that typified everything from the human body to the climate to the foods one ate. While the root causes of these qualities were traced by Paracelsians to astrological influences, these influences still filtered down to human bodies through the intermediaries of nonnaturals like food and drink. As alluded to in the full title of *Healths Improvement*, the volume was essentially an accounting of food stuffs seen in the English diet, giving their degree of heat or cold and subsequent effect on health when consumed. These descriptions, as well as the organizing principles evident in how foods were categorized in this text, provide a means of accessing the logic behind English judgments of Gaelic(ized) Irish foodways and feasting practices.

*Reading the Anglophone Response to Irish Alimentation against Early Modern Theories of the Body, Health, and Ingestion*

Colonial writers had taken issue with local Irish cuisine and eating habits from their earliest engagement with the customs and peoples of Ireland. Even Giraldus Cambrensis, writing in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, commented on the foods consumed by the Irish, and their perceived effect on bodily health. "A violent flux," the particular ailment that befell those new to the island (i.e., colonials), was attributed directly by him to the "succulent qualities" of foods eaten there (Cambrensis [1188] 2000:29).

Subsequent early modern Anglophone authors painted a more detailed picture of the problems they had with the Irish diet. These were the very “errours which people do commit in eating and drinking,” which were seen by colonial experts as compounding the health problems that resulted from Ireland’s landscape-climate (Boate 1652:182). These later commentaries focused on how the Irish incorporated—or were perceived to incorporate—bread, meat, milk, and vegetables into their diet. The better portion of this section will present a rundown of the particular umbrage that the English took with what the Gaelic(ized) Irish ate and how they ate it, set against the medical theories of consumption pertaining to each type of food or practice.

As discussed previously, these colonial authors were quick to point out the general scarcity of bread in Irish foodways, and harp on its nonwheaten composition when it was available. Muffet would have had as much of a problem with this lack in the Gaelic(ized) Irish culinary repertoire, from a strictly dietetic perspective, as his contemporaries had expressed having in their works treating Ireland as colonial project. The need for proper wheaten bread in a healthful diet was so pressing because its absence was thought to lead directly to the putrefaction of all other foods in the stomach, and thus to “crudities, belly-worms, and fluxes.” The oaten cakes that the Irish were described as having had occasional recourse to would not have made up for this lack. It was wheaten bread, and wheaten bread alone, which was considered suitable for all stomachs—choleric, phlegmatic, sanguine, or melancholic. Plus, the oaten variety moved either too quickly or too slowly through the belly, depending on the age of the oats. Worst of all, while oatcakes were better than nothing, they were still too rare a treat, at least in wartime (Muffett 1655:235-239).

The first category of food covered in *Healthis Improvement* was actually meat. This was clearly a central aspect of early modern English dietetics, hence the level of concern when colonials in Ireland were presented with a cross-cultural meal that lacked either enough or the right kinds of meat. When they did encounter meat at a Gaelic(ized) Irish table it was either very young veal, a moist meat, old and lean beef, a cold meat that nourished little due to its lack of fat, or fresh pork. Pork, a favorite of the Irish, was considered a moist meat that engendered “crudities” and “viscous, flashy and corrupt humours.” These distempers manifested in the body as those “fluxes of the belly” that so plagued seemingly everyone who spent any amount of time in Ireland. Lamb, a hot and commendable meat, was nowhere to be found. To make matters worse, the Gaelic(ized) Irish—especially “horse-boys” engaged in military ventures—were supposedly in the practice of eating the entrails, hearts, and livers of the beasts they slaughtered—all foods condemned as being hard to digest while providing little, if any, nourishment. Blood, which the Irish were noted for cooking into a jelly or pudding, may have been recognized as an ancient nourishment, but one that was “gross and fulsome” if eaten by anyone with a weakened stomach. Whatever the meat, it was inevitably undersalted, when salt would have dried up moisture and strengthened the stomach if adequately applied before cooking. Errors were compounded when moist meats, like pork or very young veal, were boiled and lean or dry ones, like beef, roasted. The best course was to apply whatever type of heat, moist or dry, stood in opposition to, and therefore tempered, the cooked flesh that one ate. Raw meat was not even to be touched except by those in a foodways trade such as butchers or cooks (Muffett 1655:“To the Reader”,33-35,39-40,47-48,58-59,65-66,113-114,138-141).

Milk was not in and of itself an unhealthy food, according to *Healths Improvement*, as evidenced by infants' reliance on it. Cow's milk, when drunk by adults, however, was thought to "looseneth the body," an effect linked to its moisture-inducing tendencies and the difficulty of digesting it. In reading the tone of what the Anglophone commentators had to say about dairy consumption in Ireland, it appears the Gaelic(ized) Irish drank an inordinate amount of cow's milk—far too much for a "healthy" adult. If it was to be drunk, care had to be taken in its boiling, so as to avoid it becoming soured or curdled. "Bonnyclabber," the intentionally soured and curdled milk dish, flew brazenly in the face of this dietetic admonishment. Even when the Gaelic(ized) Irish drank milk straight, they were described as preparing it in a decidedly unwholesome way, though they did bother to heat it first (Muffett 1655:119-128).

If properly "sodden" milk was consumed on an empty stomach, and no other food or drink was taken for one hour, it could provide solid nourishment to healthy individuals. As milk is mentioned in the middle of longer Anglophone descriptions of feasts, it is unlikely the Gaelic(ized) Irish were following the empty-stomach-fasting protocol when they partook of their "cheefest drinke." The observation that nearly everyone resident in Ireland suffered from the flux fit dietetically with the image of milk's popularity in the country. Given that Ireland's landscape already induced this looseness of the body, milk should have been avoided at all costs. The same was true, only more so, for both raw and "clouted" (boiled) cream, considered more difficult to digest than the milk from which it was drawn (raw or boiled respectively; Muffett 1655:119-128).

Butter, made from churning both kinds of cream, was deemed a “gross nourishment” that softened the stomach as a hot and moist substance. It was best avoided by those with a flux, and only eaten as a condiment (“sawce”), rather than a main dish (“meat”), and then only early in the day. Butter appeared in the Gaelic(ized) diet as a veritable staple food, a “meat” rather than a “sawce.” This might have served the Gaelic(ized) Irish who, like the Dutch mentioned in *Healths Improvement*, seemingly possessed “a natural affection unto it, infused (as it were) with their parents seed”—that is, a genetic predisposition that aided in its digestion—or had created a second nature of overconsumption of butter from “long custom” (Muffett 1655:33-34,128-133). With such thinking, butter could be blamed for upsetting the digestion of English colonials, who had no such multigenerational acclimation to this particular foodway, even as it nourished the Gaelic(ized) Irish.

Any curds or cheese made from the milk remaining after the cream was skimmed off for butter making was also considered unhealthy, as it should have included the skimmed milkfats in its composition. The best nourishment that could be had from any cheese—an already “cold” food—came from a “new, sweet, and fresh Cheese” that did not smell too strongly and contained sufficient fat, leaving it on the softer side of firm (Muffett 1655:34-35,128-133). The only cheese that any Englishman came across and recorded as being made by the Gaelic(ized) Irish was thus inevitably described as indigestible.

Of the few vegetables that the Gaelic(ized) Irish are said to have regularly dined upon, sorrel was classified as a “cold” and “dry” food. Shamrock, which the English didn't appear to consider a food, would likely have been thought “hot” and “dry,” given that English

commentators identified it as a type of sharp-tasting herb akin to watercress.<sup>40</sup> As such, shamrock would have been considered good nourishment for “raw and cold stomachs,” though descriptions of the Irish eating it added a certain animality to its consumption. The potato, on the other hand, was as common on the English table as the Irish by the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century. While it was classified as a “hot” food, it was less so than any watercress, and proved nourishing whatever the preparation (boiled, baked, or roasted; Muffett 1655:33-35,39,229).

While the Gaelic(ized) Irish may have seen moral virtue in their observance of fasts and feasts, the dietary watchword among Paracelsians was “temperance.” The fluctuations that were seen to typify Gaelic(ized) culinary practice were considered to be the “vices” of “surfeiting” and “self-pining” in *Healths Improvement*. “Excessive abstinence” from food, it was argued, was both unnatural and ungodly as it caused the body to consume itself. The converse to such self-denial was eating to excess when one broke the fast, as at feasts. Such surfeit not only clouded the mind and body with “heavy vapours and humours” by crowding the stomach with more food than a person had bodily strength to digest, amounting to digestive stagnation, it demonstrated a total lack of will within those who overindulged. They, and those cultures that collectively esteemed such perceived gluttony, substituted a hoggish life of “groveling and groping after base delights” for one of respectable human dignity. In a move of culinary political philosophy with decidedly imperial undertones, the lack of will evidenced by gluttonous excess translated into unruliness and contempt for government. Thus “Riot and Feasting” were linked in early modern

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<sup>40</sup> Stanihurst ([1586]1808:67), in a slight departure from Campion ([1571] 1633:18), asserted that “shamrock” was just the Irish term for watercress. Moryson ([1617]1904:229), more in keeping with Campion, differentiated the two, but lumped them together as “herbs.”

minds, even from the perspective of a bodily focused “dietetick.” Of course such practices and values typified the “Barbarians” of antiquity, creating an analogous link between them and the “barbarians” of the Early Modern—the Scythian-like Gaelic(ized) Irish (Muffett 1655:274-278). In consuming meat and alcohol in this manner, the Gaelic(ized) Irish committed the ultimate culinary crime of “approv[ing] not the orderly eating at meals” (Moryson [1617] 1904:230).

#### CONSUMING BODILY CORRECTIVES

As discussed, fluxes (diarrhea) and a general looseness of the bowels were ailments so closely associated with Ireland in the colonial mind that they were dubbed “the country disease.” Anglophone commentators writing in the tradition of Campion-cum-Stanihurst made clear that they understood such ill health to stem from the Irish landscape-climate. Others, following a connection first made by Giraldus Cambrensis, attributed these digestive ailments to diet. Fynes Moryson ([1617] 1904:221) linked the two causes in arguing that it was Ireland’s damp landscape-climate that affected its food in such a way that fluxes followed. According to the medical theories of the day, all fluxes came down to stagnated digestion, which was itself easily affected by external factors—whether landscape-climate, diet, or both. These nonnaturals were essentially unavoidable intimacies intruding on the inner, bodily selves of the would-be conquerors of Ireland on an all-too regular basis.

Phlegmatic ill health was what was manifesting as the flux. It was cold and moisture, after all, that induced such “expulsion,” as Elyot ([1534] 1539:10,73) referred to the evacuation of the bowels. An overabundance of phlegm, brought on by an excess of cold and moisture, could lead to such a flux-inducing softening of the stomach according to the Latin-Irish *Rosa*

*Anglica* as well. This text's answer to such phlegmatic illness was to avoid the cold, stick to a spare diet where little was eaten or drunk, and consume medicines infused with hot spices—such as aniseed, fennel seed, and pepper—and honey or sugar (Wulff [ca.1460] 1929:261). This parallels what Elyot had to say about remedying the flux in *The Castel of Helth*. According to him, the continued eating of cold and moist foods was a guarantee of prolonged ill health when phlegm was to blame. It was best, in such cases, to forgo eating raw leafy vegetables and roots, and to abstain from difficult-to-digest meats. These dietary restrictions were to be matched by efforts to keep head and feet warm, and to “dwell hygh and farre from mores and marshes” (Elyot [1534] 1539:10,73).

Avoiding cold and damp in Ireland was nearly impossible. The sheer pervasiveness of boglands fed by abundant precipitation already worked against the early modern body. To make matters worse, travel in the dead of Irish winter was obligatory, as this was when the traditional *cóisir* season of Christmas fell. Diet, however, was an area where interventions could theoretically be made toward the improvement of one's phlegmatic health. But following a corrective regimen—such as that laid out in Elyot's ([1534] 1539) *The Castel of Helth* or the Latin-Irish *Rosa Anglica* (Wulff [ca.1460] 1929)—would have conflicted with the social protocols of coshering. These Gaelic(ized) feasts drew on dietary preferences and culinary practices that involved the consumption of “unhealthy” types of food and drink in quantities that would have given pause to anyone operating with a Hippocratic-Galenic conception of the body. This presented a problem that even Elyot ([1534] 1539:17) had to acknowledge, as “Cvstome in feedynge” was “not to be contemned, or lyttell regarded” when it came to remedying humoral ill-

health. Interventions could be made to correct or remove particularly damaging dietary customs, but only very gradually, and when the subject was in good health.

Gaelic(ized) Irish chief-lords were just as concerned as their English counterparts with the health effects of their culinary practices. They did not maintain physicians for nothing. The “Surgion” sitting at the chief-lord’s side in John Derricke’s ([1581] 1883, 55) illustration of a feast was, according to the admittedly biased English author, dispensing dietary advice in relation to the foods and drinks being dispensed at the feast (see Figure 10). Latin-Irish versions of the *Rosa Anglica*, produced in medieval Gaelic(ized) medical schools, also contained advice on the potential ill-effects of food and drink, along with remedies for such complaints (Wulff [ca.1460] 1929:253-261). Learned Gaelic(ized) assessments of late medieval and early modern Irish culinary habits would have paralleled those of contemporary Englishmen.

Luckily for those in Ireland, bodies made intemperate by certain nonnaturals could be set aright by the administration of others of a temperature contrary to that of one’s ailment. Thus “hotte wyne...be they oftentimes holsome to them, which be fleumatike.” Such a “hot” substance could be considered nourishment to those with an abundance of cold phlegm in their stomachs, as it ensured digestion. The wine-based, pepper- and aniseed-infused *uisce beatha* of the Ó Cearbhaill (O’Carroll) encomium would have been such a corrective substance, as will be shown below (Wulff [ca.1460] 1929:257-260; Elyot [1534] 1539:10-18,25,28).

The first hint of a Gaelic(ized) Irish solution to this problem of intimate intrusions on bodily health from the Irish landscape-climate and alimentation can be seen in a circa 1460 Latin-Irish transcription and translation of the widespread medieval medical text *Rosa Anglica*.

This hybrid volume references an Irish distillate. “*Huisgi beata*” or “*tuisgi beata*”—both serving as Irish translations of the term *aqua vitae*—are mentioned in reference to an illness caused by an excess of phlegm and cold, which require a treatment that “makes for dryness.” While it is unclear whether this distillate was perfumed with any spices, anise, fennel, and pepper also appear in this section of the text as curative agents for counteracting cold and moisture. While the first pieces of advice on the use of *tuisgi beata* are to rub it on paralyzed members of the body or use it as a gargle, it is also recommended that one drink it mixed with honey or wine (Wulff [ca.1460] 1929:247-267).

The appearance of *uisce beatha* (however it was spelled) in a 15<sup>th</sup>-century Irish-language medical manuscript—when considered in light of both contemporary medical ontology and the use of the drink in particular Gaelic(ized) social practices—points toward the adoption of this distillate as a culturally compatible solution to the problem of undue bodily intimacies in Ireland. The key to safeguarding the health of festal travelers, it turned out, lay in the form that hospitality itself took as guests crossed the hospitable Irish threshold. The inclusion of a distilled spirit—particularly an *aqua vitae* perfumed with licorice-scented spice—among the beverages offered as part of a formal welcome into a Gaelic(ized) household—what John Dymmok ([1600] 1843:9) called a “teignie,” and Luke Gernon ([1620] 1904:361) referred to as “dogh a dores”<sup>41</sup>—turned these acts into the literal offering of health to a weary traveler.

No matter its status, every Gaelic(ized) Irish household was expected to keep beer, wine, mead, and *uisce beatha* on hand to offer to all travelers on the occasion of a visit (O’Sullivan

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<sup>41</sup> Much like Dymmok with the word “teignie,” Gernon ([1620] 1904:361) is the only source for the presumably Irish language phrase “dogh a dores,” which he translates as meaning “to drink at the doore.”

2004). This whiskey was offered to the traveler as they crossed the threshold into or out of the Gaelic(ized) home, or failing a house-call, the moment they alighted in one's territory (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:331; Gernon [1620] 1904:361). It was a ritual of hospitality relating to intimate anxieties of bodily porosity, inhospitable landscape-climate, and ill health. The offering of *uisce beatha* was itself the material and social embodiment of *sláinte* ("health")—a word traditionally spoken as an Irish toast. When offered as a parting drink, it was the perfect manifestation of *slán abhaile* ("safely or healthfully homeward")—*slán* itself an Old Irish adjective meaning "whole, or healthy" (Dolan 2006:1,214).

Elizabethan observers noted that the Gaelic(ized) Irish had perfected a distillate "which binds the belly, and drieth up moysture." They had, in essence, developed a substance that remedied the phlegm-induced flux, or "looseness of body," that was "the country disease" of early modern Ireland (Moryson [1617] 1904:221). This substance was so powerfully associated with Ireland and the Irish that the scholar Sir James Ware could not help but bring it up, if only to argue for its emergence well after the period of Irish antiquity he was covering in his 1654 *The Antiquities and History of Ireland*. He too noted the drying potential and heat inherent to this Irish "*Aqua-Vitæ* or *Uske-bah*" (Ware [1654] 1705:53). It was "naturall to digest the crudities of the Irish feeding" that produced excessive phlegm and Ireland's seemingly endemic flux (Gernon [1620] 1904:361).

Early modern usquebaugh must have been a sweeter, as well as a more heavily spiced, experience than a 21<sup>st</sup>-century palate would expect from whiskey. The bite and heat of that early modern "Irish" spirit was what distinguished it in the minds and on the tongues of those

Englishmen who encountered it in the process of reconquering and colonizing Ireland. Edmund Campion was among the first learned Anglophone authors to note the qualities of Ireland's choice distillate. In Campion's ([1571] 1633:9) posthumously published words, this was "an ordinary drink of Aquavitæ, so qualified in the making, that it dryeth more, and inflameth lesse, then other hote confections." Campion's writings laid the foundation for a discursive tradition in which usquebaugh was a distinctly hot and dry substance (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:8; Camden 1610:63; Speed 1612:137). Rather than referring exclusively to that momentary sensation of heat experienced as the distillate passed through the alimentary canal, this heat and drying potential were as much a reference to the impact that usquebaugh was understood to have on the humorally conceived body.

Because of their material reliance on Gaelic(ized) guesting and hosting, and political need to engage in Gaelic(ized) feasting, colonials in Ireland had little choice but to seek out a means of counteracting the unavoidable threats to body and health that such interactions were understood to generate. When social pressures dictated the sharing of a meal in a Gaelic(ized) household, the best that could be hoped was to be able to choose the least "unhealthful" dish (Gernon [1620] 1904:361). Even if Gaelic(ized) cuisine could be avoided, living in Ireland would eventually require the eating of foods grown there, foods made "more raw and moist"—and therefore unhealthful—by the country's waterlogged landscape-climate (Moryson [1617] 1904:2-221). And there was no hiding from the phlegm-inducing humid air in a place where rains and mists fell at least one hundred fifty days out of the year and watery bogland peppered the countryside, even in upland areas (Mitchell and Ryan 2001:101-102,308). A colonial

official's or settler's ability to follow medical directives to keep his or her body and immediate surroundings warm and dry while living in Ireland, let alone while traveling through its countryside, was nigh on impossible. This may well have made large-scale landscape interventions more appealing to treatise writers like Boate, but their practical implementation would have required a period of time during which a colonial might very well succumb to a flux (Boate 1652:168). A more immediate therapeutic intervention was required, and fortunately, the Gaelic(ized) Irish already possessed one, which colonials eagerly adopted and promoted.

In 17<sup>th</sup>-century England, it was a revival of earlier alchemical and astrological traditions, paired with a favoring of empiricism over scholasticism, that drove Theophrastus Paracelsus von Hohenheim's desire for a radical departure from Galenic modes of thought and practice in early modern European medicine (Arikha 2008:63-64,135-137). While vestiges of Galenism remained, the changes in the conception of the body and surrounding universe that constituted Paracelsianism went hand-in-hand with shifts in medical therapeutics, or how physicians treated illness (Wear 2000:46). These shifts would have had a direct impact on the popularity of medicinal distillates like usquebaugh among colonials in early modern Ireland and back in London.

Paracelsians called on a mode of analogic thought that tied the microcosm of the human body to the macrocosm of the universe in a very intimate way. This included the physical effects that stars had on the elements that comprised everything in the earthly realm, from the human body to the substances put on the earth for the remedy of human ailments. The meeting of intemperate ("malevolent") stars bred intemperance throughout creation among lower order

substances and beings, leading to illnesses. A malevolent heavenly conjunction occurring within the astrological house ascribed to a given locale was thus to blame for endemic diseases in the area—like the flux in Ireland (Culpeper 1654; Partlicius 1654:65-71,82-83,91).

Within this ontology, medical intervention was most effectively focused on diet and consumable remedies, as the celestial bodies that dictated landscape-climate were well beyond the reach of human intervention. Any attempt to engineer an environment, such as by draining bogs to reduce ambient humidity,<sup>42</sup> would be met with the contrary influence of the stars and planets. Paracelsian physicians were, in Partlicius's (1654:71,91) words, "servants, and not Masters to Nature." These servants of nature were still guided in their thinking about the human body by powerful analogies.

Partlicius wrote of a "Vertual Anatomy" that existed as a double to that which was visible on the anatomist's table. This invisible anatomy of ferments and vital spirits tied the celestial realm of astrology to the earthly realm of the body through analogies that drew on the tools and techniques of the alchemist. If "every place in which there is any Concoction"<sup>43</sup> could be called a stomach, a distiller's alembic gained analogic footing in the human body itself as a vessel in which "digestion" occurred as part of the process of distillation. Just as the still was where alchemical heat separated curative essences from the corrupt dregs of natural substances, so the

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<sup>42</sup> Suggested as a remedy for the "country diseases" of Ireland by English colonial re(-)formers as early as Fynes Moryson ([1626]1904a:302), in his chapter on "The Commonwealth of Ireland." This portion of his unabridged Itinerary, completed by 1617, had originally been slated for publication in 1626, but remained unpublished until 1903 (Falkiner 1904:211).

<sup>43</sup> "Concoction" here meaning "digestion" ("concoction, *n.*," *OED Online*, accessed 22 February 2017, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/38329](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/38329)).

stomach was where humoral heat began the process of turning food into blood's life-imbuing vital spirit and the body's excrements (Partlicius 1654:44,406-408,421-422,543-548).

Such a theory of the body applied equally, if circuitously, in both explaining and treating the disease that most plagued early modern Ireland—the flux. If the heat of “concoction” in the stomach rarified substances upwards—moving chyle from stomach to liver, and blood from liver to heart—cold settling in this organ had the opposite effect, moving undigested substances downwards. When the air one breathed or food one ate combined this cold with moisture, the quality which softened and thinned all substances, a flux resulted. The ever-present landscape-climate and favored diet of Ireland were thus at perpetual odds with Paracelsian health (Partlicius 1654:137,513). The local remedy to this dousing of the body's vital digestive heat, and one adopted well before Paracelsian medicine made its way to Ireland, was the consumption of *uisce beatha*—a heating and drying substance composed of *aqua vitae* and a variety of spices (see Chapter 2). This curative fit so well with the Paracelsian approach that it even appeared—as “Vsquebach. The Irish appellation”<sup>44</sup>—in 1639's *The Distiller of London*. This was the publication produced by and “for the sole use of the [Worshipful] Company of Distillers of London,” a city guild chartered in 1638 under the patronage of Theodorus de Mayerne, advocate for Paracelsian medicine and court physician to the Stuart household prior to the English Civil War (Company of Distillers of London 1639:18; Berlin 1996:7-15).

Each one of the ingredients that typified early modern usquebaugh had certain medicinal properties thought to affect the body in particular ways. When combined, the resulting substance

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<sup>44</sup> The exact name by which the substance was referred to in *The DISTILLER OF LONDON* (Company of Distillers of London 1639:18).

was understood as a specific sort of curative. What a detailing of these ingredients reveals is just how nicely the material nature of *uisce beatha*-cum-usquebaugh and its parts fits into the materiality of health attending to the illness considered most problematic to agents of colonialism in Ireland.

*Aqua vitæ* was the generic term applied in the Early Modern to distilled spirits of both wine and grain, such as that providing the alcoholic base of usquebaugh in the British Isles (Wilson 2006:157). *Aqua vitæ* made only a brief appearance, amounting to a single mention, in Thomas Elyot's ([1534] 1539) *The Castel of Helth*. This is not surprising, given that the Galenic medical theory behind Elyot's ([1534] 1539) manual eschewed the ancient alchemical traditions that gave rise to the distilling of alcohol. Knowing that Galenic curatives were allopathic, in that they corrected the humoral imbalances at the root of illness through the application of substances with opposite qualities, *aqua vitæ* must have been considered a "hot" substance. In *The Castel of Helth* it was suggested as a corrective to a cold and enfeebled stomach (Elyot [1534] 1539:46; Arikha 2008:63-64,68,136).

Sir Thomas Elyot not only catalogued the humoral qualities of meats and vegetables, he laid out the temperaments of various fruits, herbs, and spices. While he did not catalogue every spice ever recorded in a receipt for usquebaugh, a number of those used to flavor Irish *aqua vitæ* did make it into his *The Castel of Helth*. Fennel, aniseed, ginger, cloves, nutmeg, and mace were each described as "hot" and "dry" in nature. All but cloves and nutmeg were recommended specifically to comfort the stomach, while these two were commendable as more general humoral solvents. The desiccated dates and figs that contributed to the distillate's color and body

were, likewise, “hot” and “dry,” while raisins were “hot” and “moist.” All of these preserved fruits were recommended in relation to stomach problems. Sugar was a humorally neutral substance that nourished well without disturbing the stomach (Elyot [1534] 1539:20-21,25,28,38). John Gerard’s 1597 *Herball* largely agreed with Elyot, adding only that sugar was a temperate substance, which settled stomach problems of a moist nature (Gerarde 1597:34-35,729,876,879-880,1119-1121,1327-1329,1333-1334,1348-1349,1351-1354).<sup>45</sup> Nicholas Culpeper’s (1649:79) unauthorized translation of the London College of Physicians’ *Pharmacopœia*, titled by him the *London Dispensatory*, referred to anise, fennel, and caraway as “The four greater hot Seeds”, in keeping with earlier authors.

Paracelsian medical writers had less to say about the qualities of the individual plants that qualified as spices. Thomas Muffet (1655), in *Healths Improvement*, explained this choice by arguing that exceedingly hot substances, like the spices included in usquebaugh, were more medicine than meat, nourishing little. As such, they fell outside the dietetic purview of *Healths Improvement*. Rather than go into their particular uses, Muffet directed the reader to seek advice in popular herbals then in publication. He does give passing indications of the nature of certain medicinal substances in his lists of foods falling into the various categories of humoral temperament. While sugar was still considered a relatively neutral and nutritive substance, all of the rest of the ingredients added to usquebaugh were deemed “hot meats.” All of them, save dates, were likewise esteemed “dry meats” (Muffett 1655:33,231,250-252). Dates and raisins

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<sup>45</sup> John Gerard, or Gerarde, was a member of the Barber-Surgeon’s Company of London, and the curator of the Royal College of Physicians’ physic garden in the city, where he cultivated their collection of medicinal plants (Smolenaars 2008).

had, it seems, swapped places as “moist” and “dry” substances over the decades separating the publication of *The Castel of Helth* and *Healths Improvement*.

Individual spices, and unadorned *aqua vitæ*, qualified as “sweet and odoriferous simples” to distillers of medicines (Muffett 1655:252). When these simples were combined, the result was a curative compound<sup>46</sup> with humoral qualities reflective of its ingredients (Partlicius 1654:133,427-429,538). Such was true of Ireland’s compound *aqua vitæ*. Thus the composition of *uisce beatha* established before the Elizabethan (re)conquest—adding the hot spices listed above to a spiritous base in order to achieve a specific flavor and viscosity—generated consistent descriptions of the temperament of usquebaugh in Anglophone accounts of Ireland written from the 16th through 17th centuries.

While receipts for “Vsquebath, or Irish aqua-vitæ” were being published in London as early as 1600, they tended to speak more directly to the uses of the substance, rather than its abstract humoral qualities. Nicholas Culpeper’s 1649 *London Dispensatory* included instructions for making “Vsquebach” that described this particular “compovnd vvater” as strengthening the stomach against cold and moist (phlegmatic) impediments to digestion (93). Essentially it “warmeth the Stomach” (French 1653b:17). On occasion, the use of usquebaugh was tied more directly to physical discomforts, without the intermediary of humoral theory. In such cases it was noted simply that Irish *aqua vitæ* was a favorite aid in treating stomachs overstuffed with food or drink (French 1653a:45-46). The abundance of spices infusing Ireland’s *aqua vitæ* may have tipped it from food into the category of medicine (Muffett 1655:33), but it was a medicine

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<sup>46</sup> As a verb, “compound” describes the adding of additional ingredients to an already distilled base liquor to produce a more complex curative substance (Wilson 2006:221).

intimately tied to digestion. This was, not coincidentally, the bodily function most closely tied to Ireland's endemic "country disease," the flux.

## **CHAPTER 4 | Consumption and the Social-Self: Dangerous Entanglements**

The previous chapter cast its analytical gaze inward, penetrating to the practical and conceptual core of the unavoidable bodily intimacies—of “ayre” and of diet—that troubled agents of colonization in early modern Ireland, and drove their thirst for a uniquely Irish usquebaugh. The present chapter reverses the perspective, gazing outward from the individual body toward the “social-self.” Anxieties over encounters whose effects played out within the colonizing body were the focus of the last chapter. Moving forward, the analysis will shift to consider how the individual experience of cross-cultural hospitality—especially in terms of the local drink culture—generated outwardly focused anxieties of identity and community coherence, and with them concern for the success of England’s whole re(-)formatory colonial project in early modern Ireland.

### **THE THREAT OF HOSPITALITY**

Certain noteworthy episodes of hospitality in early modern Ireland not only point to the hypothetically shared linguistic roots of hospitality and hostility, but demonstrate how quickly the former can transform, intentionally or otherwise, into the latter (O’Gorman 2007:17-18). What the previous chapter has demonstrated is that, whether they liked it or not, agents of English (re)conquest and colonization relied on cross-cultural hospitality. They had to participate in what were potentially fraught encounters with local hosts. The Irish historical record reveals

just how threatening, but also normalized, these entangled cross-cultural engagements could prove in act and deed.

In 1574—after a year of frustratedly pouring money and effort into what was ever more apparently a futile attempt to settle Ulster—the first Earl of Essex used the double-edged sword of hospitality, and his knowledge of Gaelic(ized) Irish custom, to achieve his own brutal ends. Having been duped before by Sir Brian mac Phelim O’Neill of Clandeboye’s feigned allegiance—and failing to best him on the battlefield—Essex made show of extending the olive branch to his enemy, calling him to conference in Belfast (Brigden 2000:261; McGurk 2008b). While in Belfast with his family and retinue, Sir Brian extended customary hospitality to Essex in the form of a multiday, alcohol-rich feast. Following three days of shared hospitality—while the Irish were still enjoying refreshments—Essex’s men seized their host, his wife, and his brother. The rest of Sir Brian’s people were summarily executed. The reprieve that these three received was short-lived, however, as they were sent to Dublin for the drawing-and-quartering deaths afforded traitors to the Crown (Horning 2009:117, 2013:69-70).

Up to the very minute of their betrayal, the hosts of this feast apparently held no suspicion of their guests. Such an arrangement—inviting a one-time enemy to dine and drink under a shared roof—must not have been out of the ordinary for a Gaelic(ized) lord. More than likely it was an accepted strategy for building temporary alliances in the quickly shifting field of Irish politics. From the reaction recorded in the *Annals of the Four Masters*, the violence that ensued crossed a serious moral line for the Gaelic(ized) Irish, which may have been Essex’s intent—adding insult to injury (Horning 2009:117, 2013:69-70).

The situation was similar—with the political tables turned—in an action that marked the beginning of the 1641 Rising in Ulster. In October of that year—in a move coordinated with others across Ulster—Sir Phelim O’Neill<sup>1</sup> paid an unexpected visit to his colonial neighbor Sir Toby Caulfeild, 3rd Baron Caulfeild, at Charlemont, the fort the latter governed. The two Irish MPs were supposed to have been friends—the English-descended but Dublin-born Caulfeild having attended the same inns of law in London as the Gaelic O’Neill (Ó Siochrú 2009). It was this friendship, and Sir Toby’s apparent adoption of Gaelic(ized) standards of hospitality,<sup>2</sup> that enabled Sir Phelim to arrive at Charlemont uninvited and be welcomed to dinner with his retinue. Once they had gained entry under cover of hospitality, O’Neill’s men took possession of the fortifications and imprisoned the Caulfeild family (Canny 2003:469; Horning 2013:362-363). O’Neill’s actions were less bloody-minded than Essex’s had been, however. Sir Toby’s death at the hands of his captors was not what Sir Phelim had wanted. It violated the basic tenants of a hospitality that the Gaelic lord understood to extend even to hostages. When O’Neill discovered what had happened, he had those involved—even a foster-brother—hung and beheaded (Mac Cuarta 2004).

Twice in early modern Irish history, hostility had clothed itself in the guise of familiar hospitality to achieve its violent ends. Not surprisingly, a similar scenario was imagined—by the

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<sup>1</sup> Not to be confused with Sir Brian mac Phelim O’Neill.

<sup>2</sup> It should be noted here that this Sir Toby Caulfeild was a relative, namesake, and eventual heir of the Captain Caulfeild who celebrated a Gaelic-style Christmas with Sir Josias Bodley at the home of Sir Richard Moryson in Lecale, County Down in the winter of 1602/3. The elder Caulfeild was then an English officer engaged in the Nine Years War against the Earl of Tyrone. At the time of the Christmas festivities described by Bodley, Caulfeild had only just been tasked with protecting the newly built bridge and fort across the River Blackwater at Charlemont, which his grandnephew would later govern, and where the latter would be taken hostage (Falkiner 1904:329; Hunter 2008).

anonymous author of a poem published in London in 1649—as a just dessert awaiting Oliver Cromwell in Ireland. In “The Loyall Subjects Jubilee”—with tongue firmly planted in spite-filled cheek—Cromwell was welcomed to an Irish feast, specially prepared in his honor, the likes of which he would never see in London. On offer would be “a fiery Bullet for a Sallet”—prepared by Cromwell’s main royalist opponent in Ireland, the Marquess of Ormond, acting as “chief Cook” for the bellicose banquet (Carpenter [1649] 2003:276-277). Here is homicidal hostility again disguised in the trappings of hospitality.

Hospitable gatherings—especially those of a cross-cultural nature—could take less calculated violent turns, as well. A difference in expectation as to the form that a drinking session had taken—whether payment was due to complete a commercial transaction, or that cups had been offered in a gesture of *gratis* hospitality—could spark bloodshed. Such may very well have been the case in one particular episode of violence on the Mercers’ Company’s lands in the Ulster Plantation in 1615. There, a deadly brawl left four English settlers dead at the hands of nine Irish woodkerne following hours of mirthful Yuletide drinking at an unlicensed alehouse being run out of one of the deceased settler’s homes (Canny 2001:434-435; Horning 2009:123, 2013:235).

Hospitable acts can segue into the acts of hostility discussed above, posing an immediate threat to the life of guest or host. While this is demonstrably true, there is also a structural threat—built into the very nature of hospitality—that menaces guest and host alike. Despite being predicated upon travel and movement, hospitality is ultimately anchored in the domestic. It represents a social and physical fluidity dependent on static infrastructure and institutions. In

bringing a “stranger” into either one’s actual domestic space, or simply the territory that one defines as “home,” the very boundedness of that home is put into question. Proximity and distance, interior and exterior, public and private are collapsed in the welcoming of an “other” into the domain of the “self.” This vulnerability is offset, however, by the power that hosts wield in defining the form that hospitality takes, including the very conditions of entry into the hospitable space. Thus, home becomes a nexus where cultural mores, commerce, social structures, and sovereignty-over-place are manifest and contested. It presents the perfect venue for such contestation in that its existence is predicated on a juxtaposition of movement:stasis, home:away, inside:outside, self:other. In cross-cultural colonial contexts, it becomes a prime social space for the negotiation, reiteration, and transgression of identity and community boundaries that come to define colonial worlds (Molz and Gibson 2007:1-3,10-14; Sheringham and Darnwalla 2007:35-36; Bhabha 2011:8; Lynch et al. 2011:5-9).

The early modern concept of “cup friendship” demonstrates the added political potential of the potable form of hospitality, explaining why alcohol featured so prominently in feasts and entertainments where social relations were being established, reproduced, and negotiated. In his coverage of Ireland for Holinshed’s *Chronicles*, Richard Stanihurst brought up the “quaffing...swilling...bolling...gulling...brutish drunkenness...surfetting...vomitting” of early modern Germans as an extreme form of “carowsing and cup friendship.” Such a custom of excess was demanded of allies and associates, “least their felowes should mistrust them with double dealing” (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:14). This published explanation of drunken revelry paralleled the contemporary private musings of Sir Josias Bodley.

Bodley—while describing the Gaelic-styled feast thrown for his group of Elizabethan soldiers on leave for the holidays in Ireland—digressed into a consideration of the social implications of both drinking and abstaining from drink.<sup>3</sup> Prompted by the company’s drinking of healths to English military chiefs and absent friends, Bodley asserted that such actions were “a proof of unanimity and assured friendship.” To sit with others and refuse to drink in such a situation meant refusing to fully join in toasting, which brought shame on the abstainer, whatever their reason for forgoing the drink. A dislike of alcohol or of being inebriated could be taken as an expression of contempt for either the person proposing the health or the recipient of the wellwishing (Bodley [1603] 1904:333-334). In a highly charged and rapidly shifting political environment, like that of 16th- and 17<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland, such toasting would have been an important means of judging one’s festal company and negotiating alliances. A letter between a local informant and an English soldier-turned-settler in Ireland demonstrates the use of strong drink to such political ends. The informant recounted how he gleaned information from Gaelic(ized) would-be-rebel messengers sent to his home by plying them with “much *aqua vitae*” (O’Dowd [1574] 2000:498; see also Lennon 2008a).

This distrust of the abstainer was premised on how the person describing it understood alcohol to affect the mind and behavior—in other words, that person’s expectations surrounding socially acceptable drunken comportment. Drink, so they said, was “the father of Ebriety, but Ebriety is the mother of Truth.” For a social drinker like Bodley, the only possible reason a man might refuse alcohol was that he did not trust his own drunken comportment. Abstainers must,

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<sup>3</sup> In the spirit of his near-contemporary Michel de Montaigne ([1580] 2003:381-91), whose *Essays* included an entry “Of Drunkenness.”

therefore, be “self-conscious of some great crime, which they fear they would betray if drunk.” There was, however, a line that one could cross in going from socially commendable drinking to outright drunkenness. Indulging in alcohol without restraint inevitably “dull[ed] the sharpness of the intellect,” and left one incapable, or at least unmotivated, to attend to any business but drinking. Meanwhile, a person engaged in an acceptable level of drinking and form of drunken comportment could, as Bodley and friends did that Christmas, still “discourse between each health on grave affairs relating to the State” (Bodley [1603] 1904:335,338).

The physical and mental effect that drinking had—in exposing the truer selves of those involved through disinhibition—could be put to social use in weeding out potentially dangerous enemies-masquerading-as-friends through the sharing of drink and drinking of healths (Brewer and Bullen [1593] 1869:77; Russell and Prendergast [1615] 1880:32). It could also reveal secrets that messengers, operating on behalf of one’s enemies, were not meant to betray (O’Dowd [1574] 2000:498). There may have been little use for such practice in Gaelic(ized) Ireland, as the unspoken rules of hospitality seemingly precluded acts of murderous violence between guest and host during a feast. The drinking of healths seems to have come to Ireland in the 17<sup>th</sup> century from England, where it had been taken up in the later 16<sup>th</sup> century from German, Danish, or Dutch examples (Nicholls 2009:12-13,21-24; Rich 1617). Whatever its murky origins, the popularity of toasting across the 17<sup>th</sup>-century British Isles speaks to the social role that it played in fraught political climates. Through the structured practice of the “health,” the disinhibiting effect of alcohol’s material constituents was used to allay the fears of hostility that haunted acts of hospitality in colonial Ireland.

The flip side of this “political potential” was the threat such drinking and disinhibition posed to those in the already vulnerable social position of colonial guest partaking in libatious hospitality in the company of local enemy “others.” Too truthful a tongue on their part could anger a local host, on whom these agents of colonization depended for essentials like food, drink, and shelter as they traveled to settle the land. The English author and soldier Barnaby Rich—who had himself been deeply involved in the Elizabethan (re)conquest of Ireland—viewed heavy drinking in a much less favorable light, more in line with the threat such behavior posed. He blamed the prevalence of drunkenness on those same social pressures that Bodley extolled, confounding any distinction between socially beneficial and personally detrimental drinking-to-excess. “The drunken swad,” Rich laments, “he makes a wry mouth at him that will not be once a weeke drunke for good fellowship.” If Rich had had his way, he would have beaten out the brains of whomever had invented the toast. Rich also firmly disavowed the truthfulness of pledges made while drunk. What wouldn’t a person agree to while intoxicated, and thus devoid of reason (Rich 1617:7,23-24,27)?

Whatever the desires of colonial agents, cultural institutions of hospitality lend themselves to the types of cross-cultural exchanges and negotiations of power that settler populations must engage in to ensure that they survive and thrive in alien lands (Bhaba 2011). They also prove a powerful tool for incorporating newly arrived populations along lines established by native groups. To play the gracious guest—even in seeking to serve one’s own political or economic interests through the relationships thus established and maintained—can mean acquiescing to the cultural mores of the host. For the host’s part, the bringing of outsiders

into such an intimate arena of material consumption and social production poses its own risks. Even a dominant host invites disruption through the unpredictable dynamic of alien customs and expectations that a different culture—simultaneously physical and immaterial—represents (Molz and Gibson 2007:8-13).

## **GAELIC(IZED) IRISH DRINK CULTURE: THE SOCIAL IMPERATIVES OF A POTABLE HOSPITALITY**

### GUESTING: GENEROSITY IN WELCOMING THE STRANGER

“Guesting,” or the obligatory hosting of travelers by all manner of households, was a deep-seated part of Gaelic(ized) Irish custom. A traveler’s right to food and lodging in a stranger’s home had long been ensconced in Irish law<sup>4</sup> and custom. More than a mere legal stricture, such hospitality was woven into the moral fabric of a society where a lack of generosity was reviled. Its manifestations—as “Niggardliness and Refusal and Denial, Hardness and Rigour and Rapacity”—were the “six sons of Dishonour.” The free offering of food, drink—including beer, wine, mead, and *uisce beatha*—and lodging reflected not only the integrity of an individual, but the worthiness of the entire household (Simms 1978:68; O’Sullivan 2004:65-66).

### FEASTING: POWER THROUGH PRESTIGE AND ALLIANCE

Feasts were an important aspect of Gaelic(ized) Irish sociality—a central venue for the expression of competitive generosity—long before the 16<sup>th</sup> century (O’Sullivan 2004; Horning

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<sup>4</sup> Hospitality was a right legally enshrined in the Old Irish Brehon law tracts dating to AD 600–900 (Simms 1978:68).

2009:117; Dillon 2010). Late medieval through early modern Gaelic(ized) Irish culture was one of largesse deeply rooted in a class-spanning hospitable moral code. Feasts were, in turn, a central venue for the expression of this competitive generosity. *Fled Bricrend* (“Bricriu’s Feast”) sits alongside *Táin Bó Cuailnge* (“The Cattle Raid of Cooley”) in the Ulster Cycle (Eickhoff 1999, 1997).<sup>5</sup> While the trickster Bricriu may have thrown this primordial feast to have fun at the expense of mortal heroes, more prosaic feasts were being held at significant ancient Irish sites. The “Feast of Tara,” held at Samhain<sup>6</sup> in the banqueting hall—or “house of the mead circuit”—on the Hill of Tara, was celebrated in Gaelic literature as early as the Middle Irish period (c. AD 900–1200). This annual event was a massive outpouring of food and drink that secured the right of any individual to claim the kingship of Ireland. The physical settings and hospitable expectations for lesser aristocratic feasts were said to follow the model of Tara (O’Sullivan 2004:65-68,83-87,94-98).

By AD 1250 “lordship” had come to replace “kingship,” as power structures in Gaelic(ized) Ireland changed in the wake of the arrival of the Anglo-Normans (Duffy et al. 2001:40-41). The continued role of feasting, drink, and banqueting halls in late medieval power politics represented the active creation of cultural continuity by Gaelic(ized) lords taking full advantage of the cultural capital of bardic praise poetry. Wandering poets, or bards, who had been treated to aristocratic largesse, secured reputations and established cultural continuity

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<sup>5</sup> The Ulster Cycle is a collection of ancient warrior-hero tales first recorded in 12<sup>th</sup>-century manuscripts, but in language common to the 8<sup>th</sup> century, and likely depicting Iron Age culture in Ireland (Mallory 1992).

<sup>6</sup> The most important festival of the Gaelic(ized) Irish calendar, Samhain fell on the first of November and marked the end of the grazing season, when people gathered for the slaughter of their animals and for feasting. Its rituals centered around death and renewal (Jones and Pennick 1995:90).

through the high praise or biting satire and mytho-historical imagery of their poems. Such accounts spread across the Irish countryside as lesser households in turn played host to these bards in the endless cycle of hospitable reciprocity expected across all Gaelic(ized) classes (Simms 1978:90; Keating [1634] 2003:207; O’Sullivan 2004:35-41,96-103).

These bards and their poetry were closely tied to the consumption of alcohol at Gaelic(ized) Irish feasts. Derricke’s *Image of Irelande* details that bardic performances took place just after the drinking of *uisce beatha* to cap off and “beautifith the feaste” (Derricke 1581) (see Figure 10). The plying of bards with alcohol could serve a hosting chief-lord in more ways than one. A host’s largesse in keeping cups full would of course make it into the poetic record of the feast. Plus, if a besotted bard began hurling insults at—or inflicting physical violence on—his esteemed host, he could hurriedly compose a bit of praise to make amends—compounding the prestige he provided his host (Simms 1978:89).

Rather than undermining the social aims of festal drinking, such disinhibition—characterized by seemingly antisocial drunken comportment—reinforced the effect of having bards present at feasts in the first place. Social convention demanded that apologetic praise be lauded on a lordly victim by the learned perpetrator of such alcohol-induced verbal or physical violence. This furthered the aggrandizing goals of feasting in a way that could not be achieved by a chief-lord simply returning a drunken bard’s aggression with a reciprocal show of force. It transformed the antagonistic drunken comportment that was a likely outcome of festal drinking into part of a cycle of social production that tapped the special skills of the learned class and the social desires of the ruling class involved. All of this was accomplished without limiting the

amount of alcohol that was supplied and consumed at events where the objective was to earn largesse-based social capital.

The ornate methers and drinking horns being passed among guests were but a small portion of the wealth being displayed and redistributed at these feasts (see Figures 3 and 4). While poetical reputations were ensured through the lavish treatment of bards, retainers and allies were more directly secured through the plying of important guests with food, drink, and plundered gifts. That these acts of largesse were recorded with such frequency by both Gaelic bards and English colonials lends weight to them reflecting genuine material practices. The redistribution of this material wealth, gained through taxes-in-kind and won in raids against rival *clanns*, was also believed to draw more wealth to the host (Simms 1978:92; O'Sullivan 2004:110-112).

The significance of wealth redistribution during festal gathering was personified in the Gaelic Irish *cearrbhach*, or professional gambler. Their promotion of games of chance, like cards and dice, did little to permanently enrich them, according to both Gaelic and Anglophone sources (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67-68; Spencer [1596] 1809:125; Rich [1610] 1624:38-39; O'Sullivan 2004:205). Their presence would, however, have provided another route for moving wealth, in a fairly random way, through the ranks assembled for a feast. Even when the gambler left the feast on a winning streak, the wealth he had accrued was soon redistributed in the community beyond, as argued in the 16<sup>th</sup>-century *Betha Colaim Chille* (Life of Saint Colm Cille).

According to this 1532 Gaelic Irish hagiography,<sup>7</sup> Saint Colm Cille once used the examples of a gambler and a poor man to teach onlookers in Derry the value of giving alms to those thought to be less morally worthy. The moral good actually lay in the gambler's virtual inability to hoard wealth—their compulsions meant that their winnings were almost guaranteed to benefit the community at large whenever they found themselves with enough for a tavern binge (O'Sullivan 2004:205; McGettigan 2009). In this light, a 1486 entry from *The Annals of Connacht* that praised one Mac Diarmata of Magh Luirg for his maintenance of “minstrels and gamblers” makes a great deal of cultural sense (O'Sullivan 2004, 40). One place where a guest was likely to find such a gambler was at a *cóisir*, or coshering feast (Stanihurst [1586] 1808; O'Sullivan 2004:53-54).

#### HOSTING: MAINTAINING INTERNECINE LABOR

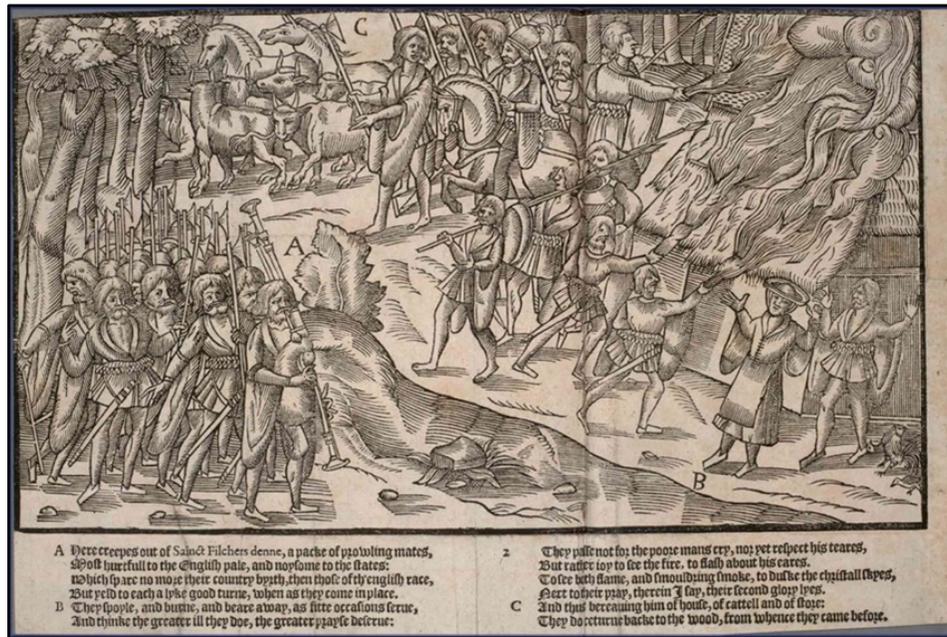
While having to continually prove himself the munificent host of redistributive feasts, a late medieval to early modern Gaelic(ized) Irish chief-lord also had to demonstrate perpetual martial prowess in open warfare and in cattle raiding. This he achieved by attracting and maintaining an armed retinue. By the Late Medieval, every chief-lord kept a small personal army of Irish kerne and Scottish galloglass—both a type of mercenary foot soldier. Hospitable exactions demanded of the chief-lord's client-kinsmen kept this retinue fed, watered, and housed as they moved about his territory. It was in these exactions that the Gaelic(ized) Irish worlds of hospitality and bellicosity met most regularly. A chief-lord's ability to maintain his armed

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<sup>7</sup> Compiled by Maghnas [Manus] Ó Domhnaill [O'Donnell], future lord of Tír Conaill [Tyrconnell] (O'Sullivan 2004:205; McGettigan 2009).

retinue rested on his client-kinsmen's willingness and ability to fulfill their end of *coinnmheadh* (coyne). This was the right of a chief-lord to demand hospitality for armed retainers—in other words, to billet soldiers and servants (and those of their guests) in the households of client-kinsmen (Simms 1978:82-83; Smith 2000, 34-44; Duffy et al. 2001:47-50; Cannan 2010). These armed retinues, at least according to Elizabethan colonial writings and records, were also treated to al fresco feasts, as depicted in the woodblock prints in John Derricke's 1581 *Image of Irelande*. One of these plates showed the chief of the MacSweynes feasting amidst his retainers (see Figure 10). This scene was sandwiched between one of cattle being raided from a farm, and another of open battle between English and Irish forces (Small 1883:119-201) (Figures 13 and 14). Official reports sent from the Elizabethan military front in Ireland appear to confirm the existence of such bellicose hospitality. One field dispatch, related in the previous chapter, recorded English forces discovering a stockpile of alcohol and hundreds of head of live cattle meant to feed the Earl of Desmond's army during the Second Desmond Rebellion (Brewer and Bullen [1580] 1868:249,284).

While hospitality was an ethically imbued imperative no matter the social station of the host, such obligations could prove burdensome to those occupying the lowest rungs of the social ladder. This was especially true with the sheer volume of armed retainers—some little more than roving bands of mercenary soldiers—seeking provision in late medieval and early modern Ireland. Not surprisingly, coyne and livery (obligatory victualing and billeting) was not without its detractors among local tenants and religious communities well before the Elizabethan (re)conquest (Simms 1978:84-85; O'Sullivan 2004:48-61).



**Figure 13** Gaelic(ized) cattle raiding. Illustration from *The Image of Ireland*, John Derricke, 1581. University of Edinburgh. Reproduced here under CC-BY license.



**Figure 14** Pitched battle between Gaelic(ized) forces (lower left) and English forces (upper right). Illustration from *The Image of Ireland*, John Derricke, 1581. University of Edinburgh. Reproduced here under CC-BY license.

## GAELIC(IZED) IRELAND: A POLITICAL ECONOMY PREMISED ON HOSPITALITY

The Ó Cearbhaill (O’Carroll) encomium that was used in Chapter 2 to establish the material substance of *uisce beatha* also hints at what social contexts were most esteemed in Gaelic(ized) Irish society before the Tudor (re)conquest. The bardic author responsible for this piece focused on two prestige-earning aspects of Gaelic(ized) social life—cattle and hospitality. The two subjects were not arbitrarily thrown together in the composition of this poem, however. Cattle and hospitality were two sides of the same chiefly coin to 16<sup>th</sup>-century Irish nobles, and the bards who sought to flatter them. The generosity of a chief—whether expressed in gifts of cattle or lavish expenditures on the food, drink, and entertainments that made a feast—was the mark of true Gaelic(ized) Irish leadership. It earned a man the title *failm na féile* (“palm of hospitality”), proving his worthiness to possess<sup>8</sup> Ireland (Knott 1922:247, 1926:162; O’Sullivan 2004:27). The emphasis placed on hospitality in Gaelic(ized) Irish society can be traced as far back as the Old Irish period (AD 600–900), when Brehon law tracts legally enshrined rights surrounding its practice (Simms 1978:68).

The late medieval to early modern Gaelic(ized) Irish operated within the idiom of a lineage-based social structure. It was a land where land itself was not held by individual lords on the behalf of divine kings; rather, it was the property of familial lineages—the *derbfine*—that traced their origins to a common mythico-historical ancestor. This land was distributed among the “kin” network of clients and tenants by a chief-lord whom the lineage deemed the most

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<sup>8</sup> “Possess” in a strictly metaphorical sense, the age of the Irish high kings of Tara having long since passed by the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

adept, based on those qualities just described (Duffy et al. 2001:39-45; Gillespie 2006:26).

Whatever the relation between these lineages and biological relatedness or timeless tradition, Gaelic(ized) political economy at this point in Irish history was organized around the (sometimes fictive) kin networks called *clann*—from the Old Irish *cland* (“offspring, family”). Septs within a *clann*—affiliated families and their cadet branches—were expected to provide tribute, in various forms, to their chosen chief-lord and his band of armed retainers as the retinue moved about *clann* territory. Chief-lords, as *clann* heads, also employed a cadre of traditionally learned lawyers, poets, genealogists, musicians, and the like in their elite households (Simms 1978:82-83; Smith 2000:34-44; Duffy et al. 2001:47-50).

What the social significance of both cattle and hospitality implies is the importance of structured mobility—travel of a sort—to large swaths of Gaelic(ized) Irish society. Set patterns of movement through the landscape informed both of these central aspects of late medieval and early modern Gaelic(ized) life, proving key to its social forms and cultural practices. The cattle economy of this period and place was structured around transhumant pastoralism. Far from a chaotically untethered nomadism, this pastoral system involved select members of the community moving cattle up to and back down from summer grazing land as the seasons dictated. These cattle were the same that were raided and gifted at feasts to secure allies and negotiate power, and whose white meats the Gaelic(ized) Irish so markedly consumed (Duffy 2001:130-134; Horning 2013:34-36).

Even the sociopolitical divisions into which the medieval Gaelic(ized) Irish landscape was carved foregrounded the seasonal husbandry needs of these large herbivores, herds of which

were said to number in the thousands by the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Key among these was the ballybetagh<sup>9</sup>—which included upland pastures, lowland meadows, access to chief settlements, and sufficient water sources for human and livestock needs. These ballybetaghs were subdivided, in turn, into ballyboe, a term derived from the Irish for “cowland” (*baile bó*). Ostensibly kinship-based territorial divisions like the ballybetagh enabled Gaelic(ized) Irish chief-lords to simultaneously incorporate allies won and maintained through feasting and the gifting of cattle into kinship networks, however fictive they might be, and the local landscape (Duffy 2001:130-134; Horning 2013:34-36).

Chief-lords “taxed” the wealth-in-cattle of key clients through the obligations of hospitality owed themselves, their armed retainers, and their guests as they traveled through their territory. Within this system, the bounds of *clann* territory—which a chief-lord was tasked with maintaining and expanding during his tenure—were defined by the area within which these hospitable exactions could be demanded. Successfully receiving exactions from this territory—along with victorious cattle raiding—enabled lavish feasting, which in itself demonstrated a chief-lord’s continued martial prowess and kin-based territorial dominance in his sheer ability to draw together the resources to host such an occasion. This, in turn, secured and furthered that dominion through allies curried at the feast. Thus hospitality and hostility constituted, at least in ideal form, a self-perpetuating cycle of prestige-building that underpinned Gaelic(ized) social life from at least the Late Medieval up to the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Simms 1978:80-83; Duffy et al. 2001:47-50). Taken together, this world of hospitality/hostility bounded the landscape and asserted

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<sup>9</sup> From *baile biataigh*, which translates as “the townland of an almoner.” In Irish, *biataigh* refers to “a feeder (of the poor), a public victualer, a hospitaller,” or even “a generous, hospitable man” (Dinneen 1904:47,65).

interpersonal power in a territoriality that relied on face-to-face social articulations, promoted by annual cycles of travel and hospitality, which often occurred over a mether of *uisce beatha*. It was within this social world that the “*t-uisge beatha*” of the Ó Cearbhaill (O’Carroll) encomium was made for a Sunday gathering of the Ó Cearnaigh (O’Kearney) *clann* (Knott 1926:161-167).

The food and drink of the feast thus had a key role to play in late medieval to early modern Gaelic(ized) Irish political economy. They were intimately engaged with in the ritualized creation of a social arena where deeply interpersonal power dynamics were expressed and negotiated. In keeping with Michael Dietler’s definition of such social phenomenon, the Gaelic(ized) “feast” was certainly a highly political venue—one in which cuts of meat and a mether of wine (or of *uisce beatha*) were the “medium of expression” within the “symbolic idiom” of commensality. In practice they maintained the hierarchical, reciprocal bonds that tied armed retainer to warlord, client-tenant to landlord (a relationship often articulated as one of fictive kinship), and unequal ally to ally. In accomplishing these social ends, Gaelic(ized) feasts were manifestly “patron-role feasts”—relatively cut-and-dried episodes of unequal wealth redistribution ostensibly flowing from chief-lord to subordinate (though the goods to be redistributed were often provided directly from the larders of a chief-lord’s tenants). The feast thus served to redistribute resources in a predominantly cattle-based economy notable for lacking either a cash basis or the sorts of extensive and highly formalized market structures common in England, Scotland, Wales, and Continental Europe at the time (Simms 1978:67; Dietler 2001:67-69, 83; Duffy et al. 2001:44; McCormick 2002, 2009:405; Gillespie 2006:26; Horning 2013:29).

A chief-lord's need for a retinue of soldiers speaks to the role that armed violence played in Gaelic(ized) Irish political economy beyond the banqueting hall. Within that hall, a very different sort of Gaelic(ized) Irish figure—the bard—wielded considerable power. The role of bards and their poetry in the Gaelic(ized) Irish feasting tradition reveals that these events were also highly competitive “empowering feasts”—pregnant with the potential to amass for the host a wealth of “symbolic capital” long after the event itself had ended. Acts of material largesse—expressed through the generous presentation and consumption of large quantities of food and drink at feasts—were part and parcel of the “moral philosophies of legitimate power” that structured hierarchy within Gaelic(ized) society (Dietler 2001:77).

#### **COLONIAL FEARS: THE THREAT OF HOSPITABLE ENTANGLEMENT**

Whatever their stated re(-)formatory intentions in Ireland, the reality of colonizing meant that England's colonial agents on the ground there were dependent on, found themselves having to engage in, and came to copy one form or another of Gaelic(ized) Irish hospitality, as described in the last chapter. That chapter explored the intimate, bodily anxieties surrounding these acts of cross-cultural consumption. The next section of this chapter will reveal English anxieties tied to the social implications of these hospitable entanglements.

#### **THE MIMETIC PROVISIONING OF COLONIAL TROOPS**

Surprisingly enough, a system that laid the burden of provisioning colonial soldiers directly on the backs of the residents of Ireland was considered—even by Anglophone apologists

and colonial administrators—to be just as onerous as the Gaelic(ized) system that the English were meant to be re(-)forming. Rowland White bemoaned the impact that such cessing had on those living near English-garrisoned forts in Ireland, like Newry and Knockfergus (i.e., Carrickfergus; White [1571] 1979:157-158). That same year, Sir Edward Fitton wrote a letter to the queen’s Privy Council that, in arguing for his removal from the office of lord president of Connacht, highlighted the problems inherent in provisioning colonial troops there. Fitton had actually led forces against the rebellious Earl of Thomond during his time in office. His experience clearly left him frustrated, seeing both the need for military intervention in the region and the ill consequences arising from the way colonial forces were maintained there (Fitton 1571; Cunningham 2015). Provisioning troops tasked with quelling rebellion in Munster a decade later (ca. 1580) would prove no easier for Sir William Pelham, who had attempted to acquire victuals directly from elites in the countryside surrounding his garrisons by means of cess (Brewer and Bullen [1580] 1868:286; McGurk 2008d).

From what officials and commentators had to say, things had changed very little in the twenty years between Fitton’s time putting down rebellion in Ireland in the 1570s and Tyrone’s Rebellion in the 1590s. As of 1596, soldiers were still being accused of using violence and intimidation to take more provisions than the countryside could afford to give—depriving the people of the English Pale of livestock and *aqua vitæ* (Brewer and Bullen 1869:174175). Similar accusations of abuse were leveled against soldiers in Ireland repeatedly in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. One of the “Notes for Ireland,” written by an unknown hand sometime around 1611, addressed such abuse (Brewer and Bullen 1873:449). Such a complaint also made its way

into the “Petition of the Nobility and Gentlemen assembled in Dublin,” which was drawn up and delivered to the Lord Deputy and the Irish Council in 1628 in response to a lack of action in carrying out “The Graces” that King Charles I had previously granted these Irish elites (Mahaffy [1628] 1900:418; Gillespie 2006:74-78). The acerbic ex-soldier Barnaby Rich ([1610] 1624:110) even called attention to the “spoiles” committed by colonial troops, which he of course blamed on the Irish presence in their ranks.

For Spenser, such actions amounted to “outrageous disorder and villany,” negatively impacting everyone from the poor souls forced to billet soldiers directly, to those in the surrounding countryside from whom additional provisions—including *aqua vitae*—were forcibly exacted. Nothing was spared as these colonial soldiers pushed their Irish adversaries out of an area; both forces were so effective at exacting provisions from local populations (Spencer [1596] 1809:132,167-168,232). Rich added his own polemic twist to these complaints, asserting that important Catholic citizens of Dublin manipulated the cessing of soldiers along confessional lines. He claimed these Papists unduly burdened their Protestant counterparts with the feeding and housing of troops while shirking their own fair share of the same duties as Crown subjects ([1610] 1624:65-66).

Then there was the similarly mimetic problem that accompanied the enshiring—dividing up into administrative counties—of Ireland, a process nearly complete by about 1588. Along with counties came sheriffs, as local administrators of law and order. Unfortunately for re(-)form-minded colonial administrators, when these sheriffs took up residence in Irish counties they

began exacting many of the traditional rights of hospitality—or rather hospitable exaction—previously enjoyed by Anglo-Norman and Gaelic lords (Brigden 2000:322).

By all accounts, the reaction that colonial soldiers (and some administrators) had to local drinkways in Ireland was to fully engage with those that benefited them. They mimetically exacted hospitality—demanding meat and *aqua vitæ* from the local populace just as their Gaelic(ized) counterparts did—with such gusto that it became a problem for the colonial project in Ireland. Meanwhile, their colonial counterparts outside the military were finding themselves in the similar position of having no option but to participate in Gaelic(ized) hospitality as they traveled through and settled into life in Ireland. The latter portion of this section will analyze colonial reactions to this civilian-oriented cross-cultural hospitality, exposing the anxieties these social interactions raised.

#### THE VULNERABLE, ENTANGLED COLONIAL TRAVELER

The blurred line of public and private hospitality in early modern Ireland could lead to outright violence, as happened on the Mercers' Company's lands in 1615 (Horning 2013:235). Whether or not colonial commentators themselves experienced such hostility when they found themselves on the road in Ireland, the ambiguous options they were forced to rely on did nothing to allay the fears that travel already raised among strangers in an alien land. A recurring theme in Sir William Brereton's journal entries—which recorded the general perils of overland travel in 1630s Ireland—was the threat of roadside bandits. They were first mentioned in reference to Sir Morgan Kavanagh's Clonmullen Castle, which stood isolated among supposedly wolf-prowled mountains and moors, and could only be reached by riding through woods where heavily armed

“rebels” (outlaws) were said to lurk in the shadows just beyond sight. Word of equally well-armed rebels stalking the roads near Ross caused Brereton to take on a local guide in order to reroute that stage of his journey. Discussion of these rebels came up twice, once in the company of a Wexford justice of the peace of English origin, and again at a dinner hosted by the same town’s Irish mayor. Of the many travelers robbed by these armed outlaws, one was even attacked in his lodgings (Brereton [1635] 1904:388-389,396-398). This represented a supreme violation of the safe haven that places of hospitality were meant to provide individuals hazarding fraught roads.

Even when it was not ill-intentioned persons threatening a traveler’s safety on early modern Irish roads, the uncertain conditions of the pathways themselves and unknown nature of destinations left overland travelers anxious for their welfare. Some sections of Brereton’s journey, like that from Drogheda to Swordes—just north of Dublin—followed “as dainty fine a way as I ever rid.” This pleasant day’s travel ended with a stay in a tavern advertised with the “sign of the Boot.” Things proved very different, however, when Brereton resumed his travels on the other side of Dublin. His route from the capital city to Hacketstown—far to the south in County Carlow—“passed through troublesome and dangerous ways and woods” that required the hiring of an “Irish guide” if one wished to avoid becoming hopelessly lost in the mountains. He and his traveling party were lucky to find lodging late that evening “in a little low, poor thatched castle” on the Hacketstown plantation holdings of a fellow Englishman, where, however, they “were very courteously and kindly entertained all night” (Brereton [1635] 1904:376,385-386,388-389,396-398).

On the road in the Gaelic(ized) fastnesses of rural Ireland, a foreign traveler might not be offered lodging at all—not surprising at times when all-out war was being waged, as was the case when Fynes Moryson first came to Ireland (Moryson [1617] 1904:232). The powerful ethic of hospitality informing Gaelic(ized) practice—as well as the political machinations of potential hosts—could induce once-and-future enemies of the colonial state to offer room and board to travelers who were very much of a colonial, if not administrative, persuasion, however. Brereton, a staunch Puritan who was traveling through Ireland to negotiate a colonial investment in landholdings there, experienced this firsthand when he was entertained with drinks by Sir Morgan Kavanagh at the “solitary, melancholy” Clonmullen Castle (Brereton [1635] 1904:388-389).

This Kavanagh was the recusant scion of an ancient Gaelic family from the Wexford-Carlow border region. The Kavanagh *clann* may have risen repeatedly against the Crown in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but their ultimate goal was always to secure their traditional lands in South Leinster. As the 17<sup>th</sup> century dawned, it became clear that this aim was best served by engaging with the colonial administration on more peaceful, legalistic terms—a strategy that would hold true until the outbreak of war in 1641. Brereton was wined (if not dined) by Sir Morgan around the time that the latter represented County Carlow in Parliament (1634), but before he took up the rebel cause of Catholic Ireland in the 1640s. In 1635, Kavanagh was clearly looking to use hospitality to build ties with would-be colonial neighbors. Brereton benefited in the form of free refreshment and a brief reprieve from the hardships of travel through rural Ireland (Brereton [1635] 1904:388-389; McHugh 2003).

The offering of such hospitality was not exclusive to Gaelic Irish magnates or the descendants of earlier settlers in Ireland. In Carnew, Brereton found “free and courteous [overnight] entertainment” virtually forced on him by a Mr. Chambers. The traveler had stopped at Mr. Chambers’s “castle” to share a drink of beer during an unusually hot day. The host—a fellow Puritan-minded Englishman who had already made the colonial leap that recentered his life and his family’s social and economic fortunes on County Wicklow—insisted that Brereton and company stay the night and enjoy his continued hospitality. Chambers was eager to impress the like-minded, would-be English colonial Brereton with the success of his own two decades of colonial endeavor. Though Brereton would ultimately forgo investing in Irish estates, his notes on Mr. Chambers’s home, estate, and hospitality were overwhelmingly positive (Brereton [1635] 1904:387; Davidson and Sgroi 2010).

Moryson’s major complaint about this seemingly ad hoc system was that such hospitality disempowered foreigners like himself. Travelers were left at the mercy of local courtesy, and made to depend on the knowledge base of potentially hostile political and cultural “others.” In Moryson’s opinion—though not in Brereton’s experience—this would inevitably lead to colonials being treated with such inhospitality that the situation was no better than being welcomed into the den of “wild beasts,” where there was an ever-present danger of being “devoured of his insatiable host” (Moryson [1617] 1904:232). As if rural Irish hosts weren’t fear-inducing enough, Edmund Spenser opined that colonial travelers were more open to being “spoyled”—attacked and/or robbed—in the “weake thatched houses” that were their inevitable lodging in inn-less regions of Ireland (Spencer [1596] 1809:260). Buildings that Brereton

encountered on his journey in 1635 matched Spenser's ([1635] 1904:385,402) description, as did his estimation of their poor quality.

For Moryson, the real shame of this entanglement in Gaelic(ized) Irish hospitality was the power that colonial guests could have had in bolstering English culture in the event that a "proper" diasporic form of accommodation were provided. Increasing numbers of English colonial travelers moving safely and comfortably through Ireland would, Moryson argued, draw at least Anglo-Norman descended residents of the island's towns towards English customs and culinary habits. As hosts, it was reasoned, the latter would naturally want to please guests by serving the Anglophilic tastes that both ideally shared (Moryson [1617] 1904:226).

#### THE ENTANGLING FEAST

Despite the often martial nature of local governance in early modern Ireland, it was more than likely that colonial administrators—like Luke Gernon, serving the council of Munster—found themselves socially obligated to accept invitations to feasts proffered by local Gaelic(ized) gentry (Falkiner 1904:345-347; Canny 2001:106-107). Whatever their lofty colonial ambitions in war and plantation, the English were never able to completely wipe the Gaelic(ized) Irish out of Ireland.<sup>10</sup> The elites among those remaining—who had managed to avoid execution or exile—had to maintain at least superficially cordial relations with the colonial administration, and their settler neighbors, to hold onto whatever sources of wealth they still had. Their other option—

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<sup>10</sup> The 1607 Flight of the Earls had not included every member of the Gaelic(ized) elite, many of whom chose to negotiate a continued existence in their homeland. Even the Cromwellian Settlement—which sought to transplant them all to Connacht on the pretense of their involvement in the wars of the 1640s—was only ever partially fulfilled, due to colonial administrative shortcomings, and was in many ways (but not all) undone by the Restoration land settlement of the 1660s (Gillespie 2006:44, 69-74, 186-191, 231).

which remained on the table throughout the period covered in this study, and was called upon more than once by one or another of them—was to plot open rebellion against the colonial system (Gillespie 2006).

Feasts had long been the favored Gaelic(ized) Irish venue for hashing out allegiance and obligation in Ireland. The early modern historical record provides a number of examples of the role that feasting played in the local power politics of latter-day Gaelic(ized) elites seeking either to curry favor with or to buck the authority of that colonial system and its agents—soldiers, administrators, and settlers alike—living in Ireland. There is, of course, that example of hospitality-turned-hostility offered at the beginning of this chapter, which saw Sir Phelim O’Neill take Sir Toby Caulfeild hostage over dinner at the outset of the 1641 Rising (Canny 2003:469; Horning 2013:362-363). The intentions of these cross-cultural engagements were not always so bellicose, though.

Gernon, composing his epistolary essay in the relatively peaceful 1620s, reassured his reader—written into the piece as a companion attending a coshering alongside the colonial administrator—that, “the Irishman is no Canniball to eate you up.” On this point Geronon directly contradicted what Moryson had written earlier about Irish hosts threatening to devour their guests. When compared to other such descriptions of Ireland, Gernon’s essay reads more like a manual on how to survive and thrive as a colonial administrator in Ireland. It was a life that apparently involved social politicking in cross-cultural contexts that—however regretfully—intimately engaged a person’s stomach, as well as their mind, in the entangling project of colonization (Moryson [1617] 1904:232; Gernon [1620] 1904:356).

Sir William Brereton's ([1635] 1904:388-389) journey through Ireland in 1635 revealed that even a Puritan-minded, would-be civilian settler could not avoid being offered festal hospitality, however truncated its form, by an ostensibly cordial Gaelic(ized) neighbor. Josias Bodley and company's encounter with Lady Sara (or Sarah) Magennis (née O'Neill)—where the gentlewoman shared many cups of "ale and usquebaugh" with the English soldiers-on-leave as they briefly tarried on her husband's land—was more than likely a similarly calculated bout of potable feasting. At first glance, the scene makes little sense—a group of soldiers being offered drink by the daughter<sup>11</sup> of the man they were currently waging war against, the Earl of Tyrone (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:331-332).

But Lady Sara was also the wife of Sir Art Roe (Arthur) Magennis, the son of a Gaelic lord whose claim to his title depended on primogeniture rather than tanistry. Tyrone supported the *tánaiste*<sup>12</sup> as head of the Magennis of Iveagh, despite being Art Roe's brother-in-law as well as father-in-law. This left Art Roe, and his wife Sara, embroiled in a sea of shifting alliances in Ulster—sometimes acting for and other times against Tyrone. The act of offering potable hospitality to these agents of colonial (re)conquest in the winter of 1602/3 was likely meant to demonstrate allegiance and cultivate friendship with the English administration. Sir Arthur was in a conciliatory mood by this point in the Nine Years War, having submitted to the English a year earlier to save his land and people from the scorched earth they threatened to inflict (O'Sullivan 2004:63-65).

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<sup>11</sup> Lady Sara (or Sarah) was the daughter of Hugh O'Neill, the Earl of Tyrone (Falkiner 1904:332).

<sup>12</sup> The chosen successor to the position of chief-lord in the Gaelic(ized) Irish tradition (Brigden 2000:151).

The Gaelic Irish enthusiasm for entangling allies through such commensal politics appeared to rub off on English- and Anglo-Norman-descended settlers and colonial administrators, especially after a few generations of diaspora. Brereton ([1635] 1904:398) experienced this in the impressive hospitality offered by Sir Adam Colclough, who lived in what was described as a “stately house” set within the ruins of the dissolved 13<sup>th</sup>-century Tintern Abbey (Figure 15). Sir Adam’s male line had arrived in Ireland as a soldier in the service of Henry VIII. By 1557, Sir Anthony Colclough had taken possession of the recently suppressed abbey, which he wished to make his permanent residence. Having been burnt out of his home at Tintern once by local Gaelic interests, Sir Anthony realized the need to engage his Irish neighbors on their terms, if he wished to settle in what was otherwise a hostile region beyond the Dublin administration’s direct control. Learning to play this colonial political game made the elder Colclough a valuable asset when a cross-cultural intermediary was needed (Clavin and McCormack 2009). Given that no mention of monetary sums was made, it appears that Sir Adam offered *gratis* overnight hospitality and “entertainment” to Brereton, who made no mention of having known Sir Adam beforehand. In all likelihood, this reflected patterns of hospitality that the elder Colclough had learned and passed down from Gaelic allies—namely the importance of overnight feasting in the often fraught political world of early modern Ireland (Brereton [1635] 1904:387,398). The mayor’s dinner that Brereton ([1635] 1904:397) attended in Wexford, discussed at greater length in Chapter 3, demonstrated similar cross-cultural adoptions and cross-community participation in festal hospitality, although his disgusted reaction to that feast was very different.



**Figure 15** Early modern manor house of the Colclough family, built into the ruined monastery of what had been Tintern Abbey, County Wexford. © Humphrey Bolton. Reproduced here under CC BY-SA 2.0 license.

Whatever the community-bounding desires of colonial powers across the centuries, the realities of (re)conquest and colonization in Ireland had, it seems, been encouraging entangled feasting since 1171. No less of a colonial figure than English King Henry II held what amounted to a Christmas coshering—in a Gaelic-style banqueting hall he had custom-built for the occasion—to cement allegiance with Gaelic Irish leaders. Then there was Richard de Burgh [Burke], second Earl of Ulster, who reportedly hosted a “great and noble feast unto the Lords and

the people” gathered for a parliament being held at Kilkenny in 1326 (Camden 1637:92,180; Encyclopaedia Britannica 2019). These medieval feasts constituted outlays of hospitality that fit into both Anglo-Norman and Gaelic Irish understandings of political economy, however the practices on display within them would have marked cultural difference. Even English governors resident in Dublin used hospitality to establish and maintain constructive relationships with local magnates within and beyond the Pale, currying would-be allies with “liberal entertain[ments]” into the Early Modern (Canny 2003:59).

Viewed in light of these examples, the mimetic Christmas feast that Sir Richard Moryson threw for his fellow English soldiers in the winter of 1602/3 could also be read as the adoption of a cross-cultural practice. However much these holiday revels may have generally reminded those present of a holiday celebration back home, the lavishness of the food and form that the drink-taking took caught English guests off-guard. Bodley and crew had to be “made” to drink from the first communally passed cup of spiced wine, while they “freely received” the second, almost comically oversized goblet of wine that Moryson passed around the table. As with anyone who, on being confronted with the expectation to join in an alien custom, opts to participate, these English soldiers struggled through a learning curve (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:332-334).

In reading across texts, a parallel can be seen in the threat to wellbeing that certain colonial agents felt as recipients of Irish hospitality and the festive guises Irish participants in particular entangling feasts chose to don. On at least one occasion, a troop of masked and costumed members of the local Irish gentry were welcomed into Sir Richard Moryson’s hall, with coin-in-hand, where they played Bodley ([1602/3] 1904:336-344) and his compatriots at

cards. Their choice of masks—“dog-skin with holes to see out of, and noses made of paper”—recall the threat of “wild beasts” that Fynes Moryson ([1617] 1904:232) saw lurking behind Gaelic(ized) Irish hospitality. While Bodley made no mention of Fynes having been present at Richard’s Christmas festivities in 1602/3, there is every likelihood that details of the celebration passed between the brothers Moryson. It comes as no surprise, then, that the specific imagery used by Fynes to describe threatening hospitality bore striking resemblance to the disguised appearance of Irish revelers gambling at his brother Richard’s multi-day entangling feast.

**ENTANGLEMENT AS THREAT TO ENGLAND’S COLONIAL PROJECT IN IRELAND:  
“DEGENERACY” VERSUS RE(-)FORM**

The ambivalence that agents of colonization and colonial commentators expressed toward their cross-cultural experiences of hospitality in Ireland was deeply influenced by the niggling sense early modern English colonials had of the looming threat these entanglements posed to their re(-)formatory project. Unlike their colonial efforts in the New World, the early modern (re)conquest and colonization of Ireland came with a long historical memory. The following section will explore how the prior endeavors of those perceived as ancestral compatriots (medieval Anglo-Normans), and the hospitable responses of anciently colonized “others” (the Gaelic Irish), were understood and brought to bear in evaluating threats to the colonial project at hand in 16th- and 17<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland.

In recent years, hospitality has come to the fore as a theoretical lens through which to explore the political implications and ethical obligations entailed in travel within and across political boundaries. Such social institutions had long been a significant feature of Irish life by the time of the Elizabethan (re)conquest, driven by the scale and fragmentation of potentially antagonistic units within a kin-based political economy impacted by earlier, piecemeal colonization. Within modern hospitality studies, where the focus is largely on cross-cultural interactions, “hospitality” provides a theoretical entrée into the intimate worlds of “paradoxical communities” that live and work in close contact despite opposing beliefs and identities that elsewhere erupt into open conflict (Bhabha 2011:1). The insights gained from thinking through these modern cross-cultural contexts can, however, be applied to hospitality within politically fractious societies with a shared culture. In both contexts, “the stranger, the sojourner, the traveler”—all representing categories of otherness—are (or are not) made welcome in a place that is not considered to be their own home (Molz and Gibson 2007:1).

The social and historical significance of Gaelic Irish hospitality—given its power to create cross-border and intercultural social spaces—becomes clearer when one considers the shape that Irish history took in the medieval imagination. The Irish past had long been conceived of as a series of invasions, bringing disparate peoples into close contact well before the Elizabethans entered the fray. Throughout the 11<sup>th</sup>-century *Lebor Gabála Éirenn* (Book of Invasions), Irish mythological traditions were woven into Biblically inspired accounts of peoples traveling to Ireland to vie with each other and supernatural beings for control over and the right

to settle the land. As new peoples entered and gained prominence, older ones were relegated to certain regions of the country and parts of the landscape, where they continued to occupy adjacent space. Thus, the Tuatha de Danann pushed the earlier Fir Bolg to the west of Ireland, only to be driven underground themselves (to reside in ancient megalithic tombs) by the ancestral *Gaeil*, Míl Espáine. These conceptions of the Irish past continued to have currency well into the early modern period, and were given new life in the great 17<sup>th</sup>-century Counter-Reformation works of Irish historical scholarship, Geoffrey Keating's *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* (History of Ireland) and the multiauthored *Annals of the Four Masters* (Waddell 2005:19-27).

While these accounts were certainly acts of medieval and early modern myth-making, the emphasis that these histories placed on invasion as a force shaping Ireland is paralleled in the archaeology and more modern historiography of Ireland. This is not to argue—as prominent antiquarian-cum-archaeologists of Victorian Ireland did—that the monuments, artifacts, and human remains of the Irish archaeological record correspond directly to the named “peoples” who populate the *Lebor Gabála Éirenn* (Waddell 2005:107,115,131-136). Rather, it is to say that Ireland's past—at least from the early medieval period onward—has been typified by the historically significant appearance of alien peoples intent on obtaining and occupying land on the island's fertile shores. Viking warriors are famous for having raided Irish monasteries at the close of the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Meanwhile, their Norse countrymen and -women migrated to and settled in coastal enclaves that would become Dublin, Waterford, Limerick, Wexford, and Cork. By the 11<sup>th</sup> century, these *gall* (foreigners) had been incorporated into the island-wide Gaelic political structure (Duffy 2000:12,24-26).

The year 1171 marked the definitive arrival of the Anglo-Normans in Ireland. These Viking-descended knights took, by the sword, those very towns that had grown up from earlier Viking enclaves. They then gradually expanded and strengthened their presence across the island over the course of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, with the help of those English-born settlers who would come to be known as the “Old English.” The Statute of Kilkenny<sup>13</sup> reveals that by the later 14<sup>th</sup> century the Gaelic Irish were well on their way to incorporating these relative newcomers into local sociopolitical structures. Much to the chagrin of administrators keen on maintaining Anglo-Norman settlements as socially distinct colonial centers, members of this diaspora not only took on the trappings of Irish culture, they made intimate inroads into Irish society. Through strategic marriages and the institution of child fostering—as well as the adoption of Irish forms of hospitality—prominent Anglo-Norman families ensured that their progeny had firsthand knowledge of and involvement in Gaelic society (Smith 2000:34-44).

Whatever the identity politics of Anglo-Norman descended elites in medieval Ireland, the cultural slippage addressed in this legislation connoted physical acts undertaken by agentive colonials in order to achieve definite social and political ends. It represented a means for a minority settler population to negotiate the cross-cultural interactions that made the difference between surviving and thriving in an alien physical and cultural landscape. Across most of the Ireland that Anglo-Normans inhabited from the 12<sup>th</sup> through the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, ideal venues for such cross-cultural negotiation were provided by Gaelic(ized) traditions of hospitality.

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<sup>13</sup> Legislation passed by a medieval parliament convened at Kilkenny in 1367 and designed to define and preserve a geographically scattered but culturally identifiable colonial population—that of the Anglo-Normans—that had first begun settling in Ireland in the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Smith 2000:35,44).

Hospitality is the perfect venue for both enforcing and disrupting given modes of behavior and power structures, a particularly fraught prospect in those ambivalent cross-cultural situations that mark the early days of colonization anywhere. The same hospitality that could “degenerate” a guest by operating across community boundaries could reinforce “proper” practice among an otherwise socially isolated host community of colonizers if the guest was of their same cultural background—a point Moryson made about “English-Irish” dining habits in Irish cities (Moryson [1617] 1904:226). As Elizabethan commentators clearly grasped, the same cultural processes that had led to what they deemed the degeneration of certain English-Irish families were as much at play during their time as they had been previously in Ireland.

#### DEGENERACY

Beyond filling the English colonials with the profound anxiety of the disempowered guest, the social practices and historical processes they encountered as hospitality in early modern Ireland were imagined to threaten the core colonial purpose that had brought these soldiers, settlers, and administrators to Ireland in the first place. The hospitality discussed in the previous sections fostered dangerously cross-cultural experiences that had, in the eyes of early modern commentators, already ruined many a medieval colonizer. By discussing this social process in their commentaries on Ireland, colonial authors were attempting to learn what had gone wrong with previous attempts to politically draw together the British Isles. How could a new round of conquerors and colonizers hope to not only maintain cultural identity, but re(-)form the culture and politics of Ireland, where their predecessors had failed?

## *Imagining Bounded Communities in Ireland*

From at least the 1540s, English authors had been publishing accounts that highlighted the existence of two distinct populations in Ireland: those of English ancestry and cultural affiliation, and the Irish. This distinction dates back even further, set in legislative stone by the 1367 Statute of Kilkenny, which differentiated between the “English of the said land [Ireland]” and their “Irish enemies” (Hardiman [1367] 1843). It was unlikely that this statute was ever intended to be widely disseminated beyond the ruling classes, however, as it was written in Hiberno-Norman French (Crowley 2000; Ó Corráin, n.d.).<sup>14</sup> The section of Andrew Boorde’s 1547 travel guide that described Ireland, on the other hand, was an English-language text intended for popular consumption (Furnivall 1870:36-37). As such, he was among the first early modern Anglophone authors to characterize these opposing populations. He began his brief coverage of each with a description of their respective regions, then moved on to the people. The English Pale was, of course, productively ordered with towns and agricultural fields, and peopled with those who were “wel manerd, vsing the Englishe tunge.” The region called “wild Irish” was almost the exact opposite. It was a land of marshes and mountains, where crops were virtually unknown. Rudeness was assumed among those who inhabited this land, as their refusal to commit to agriculture was matched by a lack of materialism that meant they must necessarily “lak maners & honesty” (Boorde [1547] 1870:132).

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<sup>14</sup> Anglo-Norman practice, even in England, had already departed so far from what the Normans had brought across the English Channel in the 11<sup>th</sup> century that French was only used in the most formal of settings—at court and in official government proceedings—by the time this legislation was composed. English was the vernacular language of the Anglo-Norman community in 14<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland—when its members weren’t conversing with locals in Irish—and it was the use of English that needed legal protection and promotion (Crowley 2000).

Richard Stanihurst made a particular point of differentiating between the “meere Irish” and the descendants of English and Welsh settlers who, like himself, inhabited the English Pale. His scholarly protégé Edmund Campion—whom Stanihurst borrowed from heavily in the treatise he submitted to Holinshed’s *Chronicles*—largely conflated the two groups in his general characterization of the “Disposition of the People” of Ireland. Campion did acknowledge, though, that “the simple Irish are utterly another people then our Englishe in Ireland” (Campion [1571] 1633:13-15). Stanihurst—in defending the prestige and cultural continuity of his own community of Anglo- and Cambro-Norman descended Palesmen—combined Campion’s general comments about all the inhabitants of early modern Ireland with the elder scholar’s specific depiction of the Gaelic(ized) Irish, producing a single description that only applied to the latter identity. This chapter of the *Chronicles*, entitled “The Disposition and Maners of the Meere Irish, Commonlie Called the Wild Irish,” even began with a disclaimer that the descriptions of “barbarous custome” to follow did not apply to “the citizens, townesmen, and inhabitants of the English pale” (Stanihurst [1586]1808:66-69).

Irenæus attempted to explain this same distinction to Eudoxus in Edmund Spenser’s dialogic *A View of the State of Ireland*. The expositor started off with a history of the Anglo-Norman population in Ireland, explaining how they were sent over by Henry II and “setled such a strong colonie therein.” Some of their descendants continued to be distinct enough to be said to have “remain[e]d English” in the face of Irish efforts to root them out. This “Englishness” stood in marked contrast to the “barbarous rudeness” inherent to the Irish, whose different habits set them apart as a different “nation” (Spencer [1596] 1809:76-81).

In naming the politically important families of each Irish province, Fynes Moryson described some as either “of Irish race” or “being by birth English” or “of English race.” These identities were only mentioned in passing earlier on in his published “Description of Ireland.” They really took shape and gained meaning when Moryson shifted his attention to “the diet” observed in Ireland. This is where he laid out the distinguishing practices of the English-Irish, who were not quite English however hard they tried, and the typically barbarous “mere Irish.” For Moryson ([1617] 1904:215,225-232), at least, it was differing traditions of cuisine and hospitality that set the English apart from the Anglo-Norman descended “English-Irish” and the Gaelic(ized) “mere” Irish populations of Ireland.

### *Degenerate Colonials*

However much Gaelic(ized) Irish culture and social structure changed in this medieval colonial world, what most concerned early modern Anglophone authors was the cultural slippage that Anglo-Norman colonials experienced as they learned how best to operate in the Irish Marches<sup>15</sup> (Smith 2000:44). These colonial commentators were haunted by some collective memory of what they perceived to have been the cultural betrayal of men like Roger de Mortimer, Earl of Ulster, at the close of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Mortimer was a solidly pedigreed Norman nobleman who fought alongside the English king on Richard II’s first Irish expedition. Despite this, Mortimer was said to have donned “Irish dress and horse trappings” in his

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<sup>15</sup> As these cultural and political borderlands were then known.

skirmishes against Irish chieftains. It was even believed that he was killed in combat because of confusion over his identity when thus attired (Tout 1894).

Accounts of England's early modern colonial project in Ireland were rife with examples of "degenerated" Anglo-Norman lineages (Campion [1571] 1633:4,6,9; Stanihurst [1586] 1808:57; Spencer [1596] 1809:107-110; Moryson [1626] 1904a:244,250-251; Camden 1637:99-100,104). Among the most interesting of these was the claim that the rebellious MacSweynes of Munster were "aunciently English" (Spencer [1596] 1809:108-109). If this were true, then the Gaelic(ized) feast featured in John Derricke's 1581 *Image of Irelande* may well have been hosted by a "degenerate" Anglo-Norman lord, now chief of these MacSweynes (see Figure 10).<sup>16</sup>

More recent historians have uncovered the stories of Elizabethan colonials who became too comfortable with Irish cultural practice, and paid the price for their perceived national betrayal. For nearly thirty years of Elizabeth I's reign the Englishman William Piers served the Crown in Ulster. By the 1570s he had gone from fighting Gaelic Irish chiefs to acting as an intermediary between them and Dublin, as mayor and constable of remote English holdings at Carrickfergus. Acting in this role, and succeeding as he did in such a Gaelic(ized) setting, Piers ran afoul of the first Earl of Essex during the latter's ill-fated attempt to subdue Ireland. Essex accused the older colonial of having become far too cozy with the local population—spying for the Gaelic community with whom he had so successfully established economic and political ties. Piers's reward was imprisonment for a time in Carrickfergus Castle (Canny 2003:85-90).

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<sup>16</sup> More recent historians have traced the origins of the Mac Suibhne family, anglicized as MacSweeney (or MacSweyne), to the highlands of Scotland. When they were pushed out of their lands in Argyll in the 13<sup>th</sup> century by a rival family with royal backing, the MacSweeney family sought their fortune as galloglass mercenaries in Ireland (Cannan 2010:6).

There was also the case of Thomas Lee, whose fate was tied to that of the second Earl of Essex. His tale stands as an example of how time served in Ireland—coupled with the real or apparent taking-on of Irish customs (and costumes) (Figure 16)—could be taken as evidence that the seeds of treason had been planted in an English colonial’s heart. Lee made a career for himself as a colonial agent and military officer in Ireland from the 1570s through 1599. He twice married “English-Irish” Catholic wives, forged his own alliances and carried out his own feuds with local Irish magnates, defended rebellious Irish lords against what he asserted was the corruption of certain of his fellow English colonials, and had a famous portrait painted of himself, barefoot in the guise of an Irish kerne. His longterm association with Hugh O’Neill—Earl of Tyrone and chief antagonist against the Crown during the Nine Years War—fed suspicions that Lee was a national traitor. In the end, Lee shared the fate of his former commander, the second Earl of Essex. He died a traitor at Tyburn for threats against the queen’s person that he supposedly made in plotting to win Essex his freedom on the heels of the earl’s failed 1601 coup (Morgan 1993; McGurk 2008c).

One can only speculate what suspicions may have formed around Sir Richard Moryson had he not left Ireland in 1614, only a year after being elected an Irish MP (Thompson 2004). He had, after all, betrayed an overfamiliarity with Gaelic(ized) feasting practices during the Christmas festivities he hosted in the winter of 1602/3, according to his countryman and brother-in-arms Josias Bodley ([1602/3] 1904:332-344). Bodley’s was, however, a Latin manuscript that remained unpublished until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. So long as such knowledge remained among friends, all was well in terms of the identity politics at play in early modern Ireland. And,



**Figure 16** Portrait of Captain Thomas Lee, Marcus Gheeraerts II, 1594. © Tate Gallery. Reproduced here under CC-BY-NC-ND 3.0 (Unported) license.

however much Sir Richard enjoyed playing the Irish host, he did return to England to take up the mantle of country squire with his English wife and children, dying at his estate there in 1628 (Thompson 2004).

### *The Causes of Degeneracy*

Those same Anglophone commentators who catalogued the effects of degeneracy in Ireland also theorized about its causes. For some, such cultural slippage was just an inevitable result of subsequent generations being born in Ireland (Quinn [1599] 1941/2:164). This was equivalent to blaming the country itself—the air, food, drink, and other nonnaturals that typified it—for “alter[ing] mens natures,” which Eudoxus does in response to Irenæus’s description of degeneracy among Anglo-Norman descendants in Spenser’s *View* (Spencer [1596] 1809:237).

If the disposition of the Gaelic Irish could, however, be attributed to “their education,” as Rich argued, then “degeneracy” into Gaelic(ized) ways of thinking and acting might equally be a matter of learning, as Campion had stated (Campion [1571] 1633:14; Rich [1610] 1624:15). Campion and Camden both agreed that it was interaction with local people that affectively altered colonial settlers. For Campion, simply “living neere them” could degenerate even the “English of birth” as soon as they became “conversant with the brutish sort of that people” (Campion [1571] 1633:14-15). Camden chalked this up to a universally weak human nature, “prone to entertain the worst” dispositions (Camden 1637:148). Spenser took a similar tack in blaming the laxity of law in Ireland, which he saw as encouraging man’s unfortunate natural love of liberty. When combined with the “ill examples” offered by the Gaelic Irish, this manifested as a degenerate life of unbounded licentiousness (Spencer [1596] 1809:105,238).

The social institutions that were understood to solidify this degeneracy, by encouraging prolonged “conversing with the Irish,” included marriage and the local practice of fostering children as young as infants between families to strengthen political alliances (Spencer [1596] 1809:110,237; Lane [1621] 1999:144-145; Moryson [1626] 1904a:261). Dymmok saw this as connected to the adoption of coyne and livery, as colonial settlers could only defend themselves against powerful Irish neighbors by allying with others of the “meer Irish” and living “after the Irish order.” Laws were in place that were meant to prevent such practices, but were not enforced (Dymmok [1600] 1843:6-7). Moryson ([1626] 1904a:260) cast more derision on such practices by emphasizing the profit motive behind their adoption. Profit would, of course, be impossible without survival, making these motivations just as blurred as the community boundaries that were supposed to have separated English settlers from Gaelic(ized) locals in Ireland.

The long-standing political use of cross-cultural feasts by leaders on both sides of the supposed community divide in colonial Ireland unnerved Anglophone commentators because of the entrée it provided to “degenerative” social mixing and the inevitable adoption of “uncivilized” cultural forms by colonists. This anxiety was poetically expressed in allusions to the classical enchantress Circe that were woven into discussions of civility and degeneracy in Ireland (Lane [1621] 1999:123,128; Stanihurst [1586] 1808:69). Circe was, in the Homeric tradition, an enchantress encountered by Odysseus when he landed on her island of Aea during his voyage home from the Trojan War. What she was renowned for—the act that Renaissance authors were referring to—was having offered Odysseus’s men a draught that turned them into pigs (Smith 1867:757) (Figures 17 and 18). In this light, a host’s (or hostess’s) presentation of



**Figure 17** Circe offering her chalice to Odysseus (Ulysses) and his ship of animal-men. Illustration cropped from the *Liber Chronicarum* [*Nuremberg Chronicle*], Hartmann Schedel, 1493. © Cambridge University Library. Reproduced here under CC BY-NC 3.0 license.



**Figure 18** Circe offering her chalice to transforming animal-men in her grand hall. Illustration cropped from *P. Ovidii Metamorphosis* [*The Metamorphoses of Ovid*], Sigmund Feyerabend, 1581. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek [Bavarian State Library]. Reproduced here under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 license.

festal drink to guests as an act of Gaelic(ized) hospitality took on a more ominous cast—that of a sorceress luring unwary travelers to their dehumanizing doom. This literary device was made all the more powerful by the frequency with which colonial authors depicted Gaelic women offering drinks to English men. The classical imagery of travelers being lured to unwelcome fates through an act of hospitality sheds new light on the preeminence of feasting as subject matter in Anglophone accounts of early modern Ireland.

Hospitality was of unquestionable significance within Gaelic(ized) Irish society. What these classical references, once unpacked, reveal is just how fixated English cultural paranoia was on the potential of cross-cultural social forms to overwhelm an Englishman’s proper sense of identity and community. This explains why Moryson so abruptly turned from what was an overwhelmingly positive description of the material qualities of usquebaugh to a seethingly negative depiction of the rather bestial English-Irish (descendants of Anglo-Normans) at drink during a feast. It also goes some way toward explaining his particular focus on the comportment of women at such events. The feast of excess he described was both an example of historical degeneracy and a demonstration of the means by which the Gaelic(ized) Irish were understood to catch their unwitting colonial targets in webs of degenerative entanglement. An invitation to such an event used the presence of engaging women and offers of delicious drink to lure Englishmen to acts of commensal intimacy that led down a slippery cultural slope (Moryson [1617] 1904:227). This was surely among the “hurt” that the Irish Commission of 1622 feared an Irish “enemy within” could inflict if community mixing were allowed within colonial plantations (Treadwell 2006:157).

### *The Consequences of “Degeneracy”*

The powerful among the Anglo-Norman colonial diaspora in Ireland had long worried about cross-community entanglement and cultural slippage within their ranks. As early as 1367 there was legislative proof of this concern in the form of the Statute of Kilkenny. What this legislation expressed was a concern with the shift in political allegiance and compliance with law that followed when the king’s liege men of Anglo-Norman descent in Ireland abandoned English cultural norms in favor of Gaelic(ized) Irish ones. These worrisome adoptions included local language, naming traditions, legal systems, dress, horseback riding style, sports, entertainments, and hospitable exactions. The goal in curtailing such slippage was to ensure that “no difference of allegiance shall henceforth be made between the English born in Ireland, and the English born in England.” This meant that there was to be “one peace and war...throughout the entire land,” as dictated by feudal allegiance to the English Crown, without petty warfare between local factions within the kingdom. Those who continued to promote cultural and political slippage were, in addition to other penalties, to be excommunicated from the church (Hardiman [1843] 2011).

By the time Edmund Campion was writing in the 1570s, in the thick of the Protestant Reformation in the British Isles, much had changed from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Excommunication from the Catholic Church was, for many, no longer the threat it had once been. “Blood” and “degeneracy” had also taken root in colonial discourse on the maintenance of group boundaries, although questions of behavior (rather than biology) underlay this othering—as will be discussed in the last section of this chapter. Simply an education in Irish customs and lifestyle could

convert anyone into “the worst ranke of Irish Rogues”—be they drawn from the ranks of the Anglo-Norman diaspora or more recent English colonial arrivals (Campion [1571] 1633:13-15).

Campion led his description of Irish people with a discussion of degeneracy, and was quick to point out the degenerate English among “The temporall Nobility” of Ireland (Campion [1571] 1633:4,6,9). His mentee, Richard Stanihurst, refrained from assigning cultural persuasions to Ireland’s noble houses, and only brought up cultural slippage among English colonials at the very end of his chapters on “The Lords Temporall” and Irish manners. This subtle change can be attributed to the younger scholar’s stated aim in crafting his submission to Holinshed’s *Chronicles*—that of “defending my natiue countrie against such as labour to distaine it with their slanderous scoffes.” In keeping with this defense of Anglo-Norman descended Ireland, the colonials that Stanihurst ([1586] 1808:57,66-69) did cite as degenerating were “the verie English of birth”.

William Camden (1637:99-100,104,148) included accounts of degenerated Anglo-Norman lineages in his authoritative geography of *Britain*, and concluded his description of “The Maners of the Irishry” with an obligatory mention of the degenerate English colonials who had been drawn into Irish ways. Edmund Spenser’s *View* took a similar tack in highlighting how much of a problem the degeneracy of Anglo-Norman colonials was for English administrations in Ireland. In his *View*, he used Irenæus to call out specific Anglo-Norman lineages that had degenerated over the centuries in Ireland. He drove home how “unnatural” he thought such cultural slippage by having Eudoxus balk at a colonial diaspora showing the kind of antipathy and aversion to “their owne natural countryes” that was evident in the adoption of Irish cultural

practices by those of English descent. He even had Irenæus argue that those among their descendants who had “growne almost mere Irish” were “more malitious to the English then the Irish themselves” (Spencer [1596] 1809:76-80,105-110).

Degeneracy had become such a common refrain in the colonial discourse on Ireland that, as the 16<sup>th</sup> century drew to a close, it could be described as proverbial. The unknown author of “A Discourse of Ireland” even claimed the existence of a proverb on it: “English in the second generation become Irish but neuer English” (Quinn [1599] 1941/2:164). In his full unpublished account of Ireland, Fynes Moryson repeated a lot of what commentators before him had said about the degeneracy of specific families in Ireland. He added to this, however, with more extensive descriptions—even in the abridged version of his “Description of Ireland” published before his death—of “English-Irish” lifestyles, playing up how this group had “by little and little been infected with the Irish filthiness” (Moryson [1617] 1904:225-232). This cultural slippage, whereby an older generation of colonizers had been “infected with the barbarous customs of the mere Irish,” would have been little more than a nuisance to newer colonizers if such “English-Irish” were not also particularly rebellious in their hatred of those to whom they should have owed cultural fealty (Moryson [1626] 1904a:250-251). Parr Lane ([1621] 1999:145) adopted a similar tone in describing “some that bragg of English name and birth” degenerating into “as much kearne as kearne and more our foe” in his 1621 poem about the state of Ireland.

Stanihurst’s antiquarian assertion that Gaelic(ized) Irish feasting was materially similar to that used by Dido in entertaining a Trojan prince is an easily overlooked and seemingly out of place line in Holinshed’s *Chronicles*. But it would have brought to the Renaissance mind a

politically charged classical allusion that spoke to the threat degeneracy posed to England's entire early modern colonial project in Ireland (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67). Dido was a complicated literary figure in early modern England. Through the twists and turns of classical and medieval reinterpretation, she had come to represent opposing potentials for gendered power. She could represent a loyal if passionate sovereign, or a love-crazed woman-scorned—even as her story stood in for the marital politics of Elizabeth I's reign. Her story was also one that engaged themes of colonialism and empire building, as she founded Carthage and her lover Aeneas went on to found Rome (Williams 2006).<sup>17</sup>

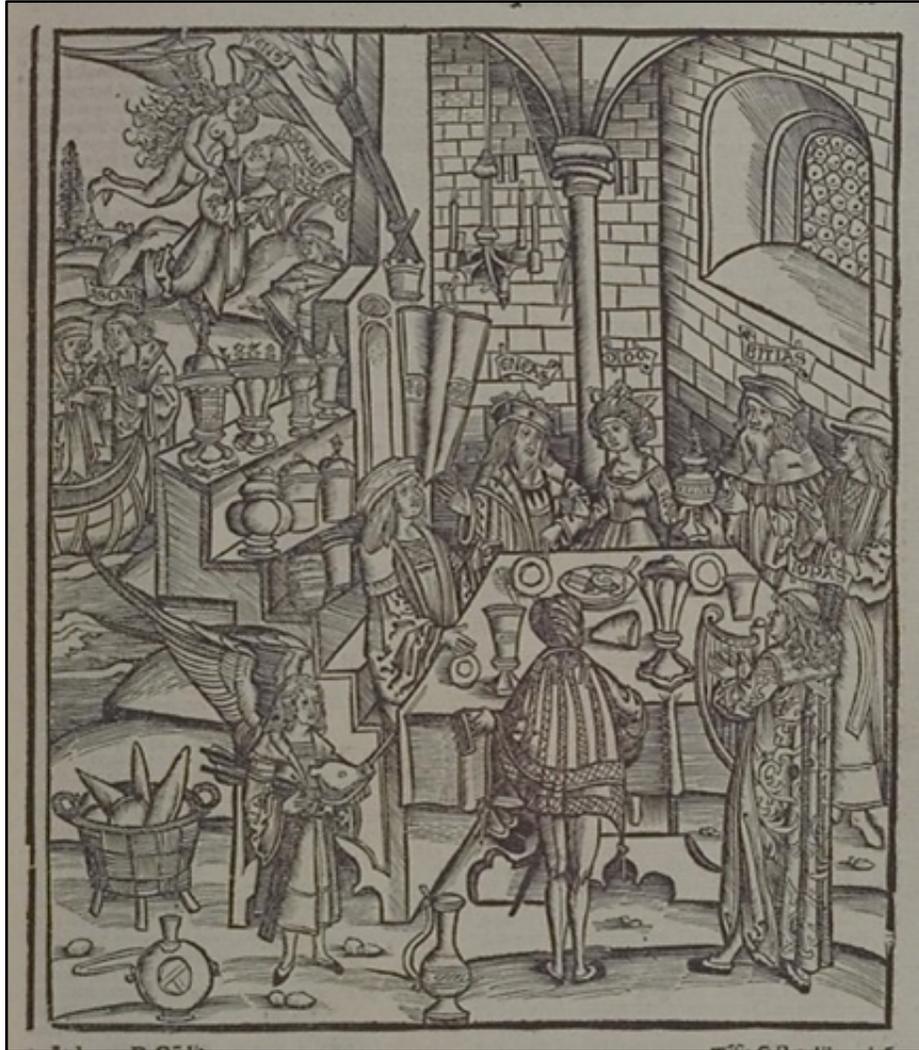
Stanihurst's brief allusion to Dido hosting Aeneas presented the reader with yet another antique example of a female using hospitality to draw a stranger into local politics and practice, this time as a guest and future lover-husband (Figures 19 and 20). Dido's efforts, and temporary success, were a cautionary tale to colonial males encountering hospitable female "others" during their colonizing missions in Ireland. Rather than fall to the degeneracy that threatened Aeneas and themselves, early modern Englishmen in Ireland needed to follow the ultimate example Aeneas provided. Like him, they would have to spurn the comforts of love and luxury—especially in avoiding marriage to exotic "others"—to complete their colonial destinies in re(-)forming Ireland through (re)conquest and colonization. Aeneas had to reject Dido to found Rome. Those reading Holinshed's *Chronicles* before setting off for Ireland were reminded, through this classical allusion, that they too needed to reject all manner of material, physical, and

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<sup>17</sup> Certain men engaged in colonizing early modern Ireland—like Sir Thomas Smith—quite self-consciously modeled their projects on their Renaissance understandings of Roman imperialism, however well this did or did not fit the reality of life on the ground (Jardine 1993:68; Horning 2013:65).



**Figure 19** Dido welcoming Aeneas. Illustration cropped from *P. Ovidii Metamorphosis* [*The Metamorphoses of Ovid*], Sigmund Feyerabend, 1581. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek [Bavarian State Library]. Reproduced here under CC BY-NC-SA 4.0 license.



**Figure 20** Dido feasting Aeneas. Illustration cropped from *Publij Virgilij Maronis Opera* [*The Works of Virgil*], Sebastian Brant, 1502. Universitätsbibliothek Heidelberg [University Library Heidelberg].

social entanglement with the Gaelic(ized) Irish—however much their bodily needs drove them into intimate engagements—in order to achieve the colonial objective of reshaping Irish society through force and example.

While hospitality provided critical cross-cultural venues for the material, social, political, and economic negotiations that ensured settlers success on the ground in Ireland, sharing in these foreign cultural practices won such colonials the mistrust of their own central administration. The potential for cultural mores to cross-community boundaries as one-time Englishmen took up local customs and employed them as a means of securing bodily health and a place in overseas political landscapes presented a double-edged problem to colonial administrators. Not only did it imply a diffusion of centralizing power, it ran counter to the general colonial project of bringing the Irish social and political landscape more in line with that of England. The latter needed cultural exchanges to flow in the opposite direction—for the Gaelic(ized) Irish to adopt English customs and institutions in place of their own (Spencer [1596] 1809:237; Treadwell [1622] 2006:127).

### **ENGLISH REACTION TO DRINK CULTURE IN IRELAND: DISPARAGED PRACTICES, COLONIAL IDEALS**

Gaelic(ized) hospitality created social venues in early modern Ireland where English colonials were confronted both physically and intellectually with commensal practices and a culinary material culture that stood well outside the realm of the acceptable. Their reactions to, and solution for, the foods on offer was the focus of the previous chapter. The focus of the rest of this chapter will be on understanding why everything surrounding that food—the material

objects, enculturated behaviors, and typical professions that facilitated the flow of substances like usquebaugh at feasts—were so problematic for Anglophone commentators concerned with the overall colonial project in early modern Ireland.

A good entrée to this topic comes from Holinshed's *Chronicles*, where Richard Stanihurst ([1586] 1808:69) passed from a brief mention of “degeneracy” to his re(-)formatory hopes for Ireland. As a final statement on the island, Stanihurst implored those governing its people to “reduce them from rudeness to knowledge, from rebellion to obedience, from trecherie to honestie, from sauagenesse to ciuilitie, from idlenesse to labour, from wickednesse to godliness...as to the happie reformation of hir realme of Ireland”. This passage will be used as an organizing principle in exploring five loci of anxiety for Anglophone commentators writing about Gaelic(ized) customs of hospitality. The goal is to understand what threat these practices posed to the re(-)form-minded desires of the English administration in Ireland.

Each locus will juxtapose English portrayals of Gaelic(ized) Irish practice with English ideals pertaining to that practice. Departing briefly from Stanihurst's commentary, the portrayal of general drunkenness as a character trait of this would-be subject people will be addressed first. “Civility” will then be analyzed in relation to commensal dining practices and understandings of universal “order.” “Knowledge,” as opposed to “rudeness,” will be the site for interrogating English expectations of gendered comportment at hospitable events, and in society more broadly. A consideration of piety, contrasted with irreligion in festal celebration, will reveal the consequences that early modern Christians anticipated from “godly” versus “wicked” acts of alcohol consumption. The question of “honesty” will expose the role that the English expected

materialism to play in feasts and the political economy writ large. This will lead to a consideration of what was believed to be the proper form for labor to take in re(-)formed Irish society, as opposed to the “idleness” that colonial commentators saw everywhere in Gaelic(ized) society, and blamed on hospitality. Finally, “obedience” will be considered in terms of those elements of Gaelic(ized) hospitable practice most associated with the converse, “rebellion.”

#### THE GAELIC(IZED) IRISH AS PRONE TO DRINK

Before analyzing how Anglophone discourse responded to specific drink practices associated with Gaelic(ized) Irish hospitality, a moment must be taken to address how frequently the same commentators characterized the Gaelic(ized) Irish as generally inclined to drink and drunkenness. Early on in the Elizabethan (re)conquest, Rowland White made such a comment, almost in passing, in reference to Irish dining habits. While pointing out that the “common drinke” of Gaelic(ized) Irishmen was milk or water, “which seldomme makith them dronke,” he could not help but add that such individuals “ar never sober but whiles they are a slepe” when stronger drink was available (White [1571] 1979:156).

Fynes Moryson included many a passage in his *Itinerary* that cast the “mere Irish,” as he referred to Irish Gaeldom, in a poor light. Among these dispersions was the charge that this community was prone to luxuriate in drunkenness. Moryson’s accusation followed closely along the lines of White’s manuscript, with the English travel writer adding colorful flourishes to bulk out his description of the form this drinking took. In both passages of the *Itinerary* concerned with Gaelic(ized) drunkenness, lords and commoners alike were painted as happily subsisting on water, milk, and beef broth while living in the countryside. It was only when business, such as

the selling of a cow or horse, called them to a town that they demonstrated their drunken proclivities. Two versions<sup>18</sup> of the latter vignette were written, though only one definitely appeared in print in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In them, the Gaelic(ized) Irish were portrayed as either drinking a town's tavern dry of Spanish wine and usquebaugh when opportunity provided, or consuming an amount of the same that equaled the price of the cow they had just sold (Moryson [1617] 1904:229, [1626] 1904a:249-250).

In the unpublished passage, this bingeing was tied directly to what was described as Irish slothfulness. This was a not altogether surprising discursive move, given that the earlier version had highlighted the *days* it took to sleep off such drinking sessions (Moryson [1617] 1904:229, [1626] 1904a:249-250). For Moryson's (1617:52) contemporary and fellow Englishman Barnaby Rich, drunkenness, lechery, *aqua vitae*, and "old Ale" were all immoral bedfellows that plagued Ireland, bound together in Irish culture by the ribbon of Catholic corruption. The official Irish Commission of 1622 did not link these two scourges of Ireland as directly as Rich did. Nevertheless, it was concerned with minimizing the effects of both Catholicism, as a contrary religion, and drunkenness in Ireland (Treadwell [1622] 2006:54,127,153,157,179,348,759).

English soldier-turned-administrator-turned-commentator-on-Irish-affairs Sir Parr Lane, in his unpublished 1621 poem deriding Irish kerne and their Catholic priests, went so far as to

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<sup>18</sup> This passage first appeared in "CHAP. V. Of Ireland" in Part III, Book III of the 1617 London publication of "An itinerary vwritten by Fynes Moryson Gent" (Moryson 1617). In 1735 it would be reprinted in "The Description of Ireland," appended to a Dublin publication of Part II of Moryson's original *Itinerary*, which focused on Lord Mountjoy's Irish military career and was thus retitled *An History of Ireland, From the Year 1599, to 1603* (Moryson 1735a, 1735b). A longer version of the passage, conveying roughly the same information, but with certain details changed, had originally been set for publication in a subsequent volume of that 1617 *Itinerary*. While this volume was licensed for posthumous printing in 1626, it would remain unpublished until rediscovered in 1903 (Hughes 1903:xli; Falkiner 1904:211; Thompson 2004).

sarcastically suggest the canonization of Hugh O’Neill—the Earl of Tyrone who had led opposition forces during the Nine Years War with England—as the patron saint of drunkards. Such a characterization of Irish Gaeldom was in keeping with what Lane went on to write, toward the end of the same poem, about the unquenchable thirst of kerne for alcohol, including wine, beer, and *aqua vitæ* (Lane [1621] 1999:137,154; Carpenter 2003:143).

Lane’s association of Hugh O’Neill with drunken excess was, in fact, a refrain to accusations leveled a generation earlier against O’Neill’s uncle, Shane. According to “The Chronicles of Ireland” that John Hooker—private colonial legal advisor, short-lived Irish MP, and English antiquarian (Mendyk 2005)—added to the 1586 edition of Holinshed’s *Chronicles*, the elder O’Neill was a drunken tyrant who imbibed wine and spirits more copiously than seemed humanly possible. Hooker recorded that Shane regularly had himself buried up to the neck in earth—an unusual practice that this O’Neill supposedly used to remedy having drunk vast quantities of “Vskebagh or Aqua vite of that countrie.” The seeming madness of such a remedy was tempered, even in the commentary of this politically motivated English chronicler, by the fact that it fit with the general theory of the body prevalent at the time. According to such reasoning, the coolness of the soil brought Shane’s humorally overheated body back to a sound, healthy temperature. However well this worked as a short-term physical corrective against alcoholic excess, the intemperate bingeing that it sought to remedy was still to blame, in Hooker’s ([1586] 1808:331) opinion, for O’Neill’s increasingly tyrannical nature.

There was no political love lost between uncle and nephew during their lifetimes—as Shane and Hugh stood on opposite sides of a violent, colonially tinged dynastic struggle for

supreme leadership of Ulster in the latter half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Whatever their differences, both O'Neills proved major irritants to, and eventual armed opponents of, English rule in Ireland. Shane's 1562 royal petition for recognition as Earl of Tyrone—brought before the Crown during a lull in his ongoing war with then-Lord Deputy of Ireland, the Earl of Sussex—laid bare the irreconcilable differences between English and Gaelic(ized) Irish sociopolitical systems (Brady 2009). Hugh O'Neill's political and military career as much as proved what his uncle had previously argued. The boy—raised to be a colonial pawn in English efforts to hobble Gaelic power in Ireland—would take up the mantle of Gaelic chiefly lordship in his majority, becoming “the O'Neill” and chief rebel during the Nine Years War at the century's end (Morgan 2014) (see Figure 1). While internecine politics would divide these O'Neills in life, their memories would be discursively united after death as colonial writers perpetuated, in poetry and prose, the image of a Gaeldom ruled by drunken tyrants.

It would be easy enough to write off these characterizations of the Gaelic(ized) Irish as inveterate drunks as the malicious inventions of xenophobic Englishmen and Anglophone colonial sympathizers. While such cultural bias and colonial interests did indeed shape this discourse, it was a response to a suite of real cultural practices, albeit exaggerated for colonial affect, which the English encountered in Ireland. Alcohol, including *uisce beatha*, played an important role in Gaelic(ized) politics, as discussed earlier in this chapter. The path it followed through society reflected and affirmed bonds between individuals and demarcations across Gaelic(ized) classes, while the hospitality it fueled provided the means for negotiating one's place within this social structure. By the time of the Elizabethan (re)conquest, Irish *aqua vitae*

was woven into the rights and responsibilities that defined Gaelic(ized) power in Ireland, many of which made English colonials profoundly uncomfortable.

#### COMMENSAL “CIVILITY”: FEASTING, HUMANITY, DEGENERACY

The anxiety that English commentators expressed toward degeneracy is interpreted by some scholars as moral outrage over a perceived threat to identity that undermined everything “civilized” man had gained since the Biblical fall (Canny 2001:120). John Speed (1612:137-138) used the concept of civility to distinguish a particular class of Ireland’s inhabitants, “The Civill Irish,” in illustrations of men and women that adorned the map of Ireland in his *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine* (see Figure 5). William Camden often employed the term, or a version of its inverse, in describing the “wilder” inhabitants of Ireland in his *Britain*, another work of geography that originally came into print around the same time. In his usage, “civil” stood for everything the “wild and barbarous” Irish were not (Camden 1637).

More than once Camden brought up “civility of manners” among the inhabitants of Ireland, including a reference to the Cambro-Norman descended Earl of Kildare, who, “for a while in his feeding and apparell conformed himself to all kind of civility” (Camden 1637:121). The earl’s temporary political concession to civility in “feeding”—and Camden’s choice to include this in his account of Ireland—highlights the importance that the English placed on culinary practice in defining proper subjecthood. Degeneracy, as a decivilizing process, was the proof that material practices—like the feast—opened colonizers up to a betrayal of the most essential goals of the (re)conquest and colonization of Ireland.

Englishmen engaging in and writing about Gaelic(ized) Irish feasts may have been unaware of how these events achieved their “empowering” and “patron-role” ends, but they knew that politics played into feasting. The architectural space, communal drinking vessels, and presence of bards and harpers were all diacritica that set the secular ritual of feasting apart from quotidian meal-taking in a way that even English colonials could recognize (Dietler and Hayden 2001:9). These were not, however, the “diacritical feasts”—feasting as a social practice that differentiates hierarchically defined discrete segments of society (Dietler 2001:85-89)—that English commentators wanted to see from someone sitting atop a local social hierarchy as Renaissance lord-of-the-manor. And the role that alcohol played did not help.

Luke Gernon struck a relatively sympathetic tone in his immersive description of the role of alcohol in a coshering. Aside from the more formalized moments when drink was offered—upon entering the house, once everyone awoke the morning after, and again as guests took their leave at the door—alcohol was also drunk throughout the feast in the form of “healths,” or toasts to the health of named individuals. As Gernon himself put it, all this drinking ensured “iollyty” (jollity) and prepared guests for the “Irish rymes of auncient making” sung by harpers about halfway through the meal (Gernon [1620] 1904:360-361). This echoed John Derricke’s (1581) description, forty years earlier, of “Vskebeaghe” being drunk to “beautifith the feaste” just before the bards and harpers performed (see Figure 10).

Barnaby Rich, in summarizing what he found to be the most abhorrent aspects of Gaelic(ized) Irish coshering feasts, brought up the “good store” of *aqua vitæ* that a host had to lay aside for the evening in order to make the event “worthy to bee called a feast.” The

implication was that such strong drink inappropriately lubricated the social interactions of men and women gathered to dine and be regaled by the offerings of “their *Rythmers & their Harpers*” (Rich [1610] 1624:39-40). Fynes Moryson claimed that even Anglo-Norman descended “English-Irish” families had a decided taste for the copious drinking of usquebaugh at feasts (Moryson [1617] 1904:227). All of that strong liquor, he reckoned, led to those gathered for such “frequent drinkings and those feasts of flesh”—Gaelic- and Anglo-Norman-descended Irish men and women alike—“putting frolics about the table, as pinching and kissing over the shoulders, and many strange ways” (Moryson [1626] 1904b:321).

The slightly later poem “An Account of an Irish Quarter” (or “The Irish Entertainment”) captured expectations surrounding Gaelic(ized) hospitality and alcohol in Ireland in the early 1640s. In this satire, the most contemptible aspect of the Gaelic(ized) hospitality that the carefree soldiers in the poem availed themselves of was an inversion of earlier depictions. What they found in the Irish countryside failed to meet the expectations that colonial discourse had raised. Their host, instead, proved a frustratingly light hand in offering strong drink to his travel-weary guests before their meal (Carpenter [1654] 2003:244-248).

The drinking expected at a Gaelic(ized) feast was offered up as proof that Irish men and women threw acceptable hierarchical standards of bodily comportment—manners—to the wind when it came to alcohol consumption on what should have been tightly structured occasions. Elaborate table manners had been an important part of courtly English dining since at least the 1430s, when at least one treatise on the subject was already circulating in manuscript form. By 1508 an abbreviated version had appeared in print, dispersing this knowledge down the social

scale (Goody 1982:140-143; Paston-Williams 1993:78; Brears 2003:2-3; Hadley 2005:102). A lapse in hierarchical manners would have seemed well suited to an event that also failed to properly define a Gaelic chief-lord's social superiority through "commensal exclusivity" (Dietler 2001:85-89). The English nobility has been staging elaborately ritualized meals that physically set elite diners apart from their social inferiors in separate dining spaces since the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century (Paston-Williams 1993:72; Brears 2003:5).

What Anglophone commentators described were, to them, inappropriately unpolished affairs. The food on offer was never properly handled, due to the absence of culinary professionals or servers. By the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, distinct kitchens had become an integral part of elite English residences, and master cooks had been high-ranking members of these elite households even earlier in the Medieval. Without skilled cooks, the social stations that the English recognized within society could not be marked with the appropriate culinary flourishes and differentiation of foods (Paston-Williams 1993:43-44).

To make matters worse, the physical setting of Gaelic(ized) feasts was said to better suit animals than elite members of a civil society. Hay stood in for proper seating, and utensils and high-end tableware of materials like pewter were absent. A marginal note printed beside Derricke's description of the material components of MacSweyne's feast drove this home. The author declared that the "sittyng, table, dishes, and cushens" found at the feast were no better than those that actual pigs would use, which meant that the Gaelic(ized) Irish involved were "Deseruyng for manners to sitt amongst dogges" (Derricke 1581) (see Figure 10). In a similar vein, in "An Account of an Irish Quarter," the protagonists of the poem could not at first

distinguish the filthy country seat of the high sheriff of Waterford from a stables. The only diacritica that hinted to the befuddled guests that they were standing in their host's domestic hall were a standing harp, poised for a feast, and a chimney built into the wall (Carpenter [1643] 2003:244-245).

Social inclusivity, improper food, and an utter lack of appropriate dining paraphernalia meant Gaelic(ized) feasts lacked essential elements that Anglophone commentators felt lordly outlays should possess. There were ways of marking social hierarchy at Gaelic(ized) feasts—which involved things like what food was offered to whom, and where one sat—but these social mechanisms required an enculturated eye and the presence of a broader swath of society to have any relative meaning. That such a form of hospitality bore greater resemblance to medieval English court custom, which had been supplanted by more privatized dining by the 16<sup>th</sup> century, would have made it that much more alien to early modern Englishmen (Goody 1982:141-143).

Gaelic(ized) feasts in Ireland stood in stark contrast to formal public dining among the ruling merchants of the City of London, which was a highly ritualized affair. At banquets hosted by the lord mayor of London the performative emphasis was placed on hierarchically seating guests at tables set with the requisite linens and utensils for eating endless varieties of food served in numberless silver and gilt vessels. Even the more limited range of foods on offer in affluent English households was served in vessels of wood, tin, or pewter (Willmott 2005:122-124). The other end of English “diacritical feasting” can be seen in accounts of royal dinners at Elizabeth I's court. An elaborate table would first be set ostensibly for the queen alone, provisioned with far greater varieties and quantities of food than one person could possibly

consume. After the queen had eaten her fill in a chamber physically removed from where her courtiers were seated, her honored guests would be served what amounted to her royal leftovers (Willmott 2005:122-123).

While the Gaelic(ized) feasts described by colonial commentators were explicitly being thrown by Irish lords, none of the diacritical culinary practices that should have marked elite dining were present. Such perceived lapses in upholding commensal hierarchy were drawn on to discursively bolster Anglophone judgments of the civility—and stemming from that, the shared humanity—of alien cultures. An absence of “proper” festal diachritica, as understood by the colonial observer, meant a lack of humanizing civility among the observed, leaving these “others” closer to non-human animals in the colonial observer’s reckoning of the world and its “natural” order. In London, and across 16<sup>th</sup>-century Europe, the dominant Christian cosmology prized a “Great Chain of Being” as foundational to all aspects of life. The concept dictated a strict social hierarchy on earth in line with the hierarchy that defined all entities in the universe. It formed a basis for not only ordering the world, but forming moral judgments on everything from the perfection of celestial bodies to the abject depravity of wild beasts (Lovejoy 1936). The social practice of diacritical feasting was the alimentary key to maintaining the separate spheres of Renaissance Europe’s ranked social chain.

Humanity, as a category falling somewhere between the divine and the bestial, was itself diacritically defined as much by acceptable culinary standards and dining habits as anything else. Humans ate properly chosen and processed foods fit for humans, and they ate those foods using material assemblages and manners that set them above beasts of the field and forest. A prime

feature of humanity, within the Great Chain of Being, was the strict hierarchy that defined European social structure from the pope (until the Reformation), through the monarch and aristocracy, down to guild merchants and grooms. This was a hierarchy that eagerly embraced dining habits in justifying and naturalizing the order it imposed on humanity—where specialized food preparers and stylized food service marked status and commensal-yet-ranked inclusion (de Worde [1508] 2003; Paston-Williams 1993:63). Such hierarchical practices reaffirmed that those practicing and recognizing them were, indeed, human.

English commentators did not shy away from likening the Gaelic(ized) Irish to beasts, both of the ferocious and of the squalid variety. Dymmok ([1600] 1843:6) called the Irish outright “bestial” in the care they took of their corporeal selves. The Irish Commission of 1622 better defined these “bad and beastly” usages of the “mere Irish” as pertaining specifically to “attire, diets, and habits,” each of which stood a step removed from the body itself as objects of colonial re(-)formation (Treadwell 2006:57). Moryson ([1617] 1904:229) gave an example of this with his depiction of Irishmen “eat[ing] the herb shamrock...which, as they run and are chased to and fro, they snatch like beasts out of the ditches.”

Rich’s ([1610] 1624:11) animalization of hospitality in Ireland focused on housewives who sold drink out of their homes in Irish towns, calling them “filthy and beastly *Alehousekeepers*.” Their connection to animality may well have derived, in Rich’s mind, from the alcohol these women served and the drunkenness they promoted. A drunkard, of any national origin, was “a beast, and no man” in Rich’s opinion. Reason was the distinguishing feature of

mankind; in lacking the capacity to reason, drunkards lost all ability to prove their humanity. They became, to Rich, “more loathsome and filthy then is a hogge” (Rich 1617:23,27).

Culinary xenophobia, when expressed within the context of the Great Chain of Being, became a means of further dehumanizing colonial “others.” To colonial commentators—enculturated to expect a formalized dining experience as a mark of civility and class distinction—the total lack of “courtlike guise” in Gaelic(ized) feasts proved that the Irish were not only undeserving of noble titles; they were downright nonhuman in their lack of commensal refinement. This discursive move in turn underscored the need for a social re(-)formation in Ireland, which was the stated aim of early modern colonization.

The allusions to Circe that English commentators called on to emphasize the risks involved in cultural slippage take on a new meaning<sup>19</sup> when viewed in light of this Anglophone concern for the lack of civility in Gaelic(ized) Irish feasting. Circe’s image tied together cross-cultural hospitality, dehumanization, and the fear of degeneracy that gripped the colonial imagination. In Holinshed’s *Chronicles*, Stanihurst ([1586] 1808:69) ended his contribution on Ireland by writing that degeneracy in Ireland left “the verie English of birth...as though they had tasted of Circes poisoned cup.” Sir John Davies—one-time attorney-general for Ireland and undertaker of the Ulster Plantation—was more direct in his use of the allusion. In his opinion, agents of English colonization in Ireland who had adopted local customs were “like those who had drunke of Circes Cuppe, and were turned into very Beasts; and yet tooke such pleasure in

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<sup>19</sup> Early modern references to “Circe’s poisoned cup” have previously been read as a simple metaphor of anxiety over sexuality and ethnic difference in cross-cultural political encounters in Ireland (Carroll 2001:2,57-58).

their beastly manner of life, as they would not returne to their shape of men againe” (Davies [1612] 1747:183; Kelsey 2008).

Soldier-turned-administrator in Ireland Parr Lane used the same allusion in his poem “Newes from the holy ile.” He first makes a sidelong allusion to Circe with a reference to the “Ile of Swyne,” whose porcine inhabitants would have been indistinguishable from Irish kerne, given the latter’s dining habits. The same poem’s later reference to her by name highlights the animality of Irish kerne: Circe herself could not further dehumanize them with her magic. The figurative Circe that had turned these Irishmen into veritable swine was *erroneous habitus*—the practices of Gaelic(ized) hospitality—rather than an actual enchanted being (Lane [1621] 1999:123,128).

To Stanihurst’s and Davies’s minds, the Gaelic(ized) habits that English colonials adopted as they participated in and recreated local forms of cross-cultural hospitality in Ireland were, in effect, dehumanizing. What is most telling about their choice of classical allusion is that it conjured an image of drinking from a cup proffered by a powerful female, just as a guest was made to do at the start of a coshering (Gernon [1620] 1904:360).

From the perspective of Anglophone commentators and agents of English colonization in Ireland, the material dimension of commensal practices involved in Gaelic(ized) feasting could be used to discursively prove how subhuman the Irish were. At the same time, these material practices actively drew English colonials into Gaelic(ized) commensal politics in so subtle a way that the process was best likened to antique sorcery. What resulted were degenerated agents of colonization who were so far gone in their adoption of local practice that they could no longer be

relied on to re(-)form the supposedly colonized society they were meant to be civilizing. The subject society had, instead, altered them in its own image. This was the great threat of degeneracy in early modern Anglophone thought, and a reason to fear cross-cultural entanglements through participation in Gaelic(ized) hospitality.

#### RUDE FEMALES: WOMEN, HOSPITALITY, LINEAGE

As if the dehumanizing potential of Gaelic(ized) Irish hospitality weren't enough, there were gender dynamics at play in these events that threatened the very social fabric that English colonials wished to reweave in Ireland. Feasts, and the politically pregnant category of hospitality more generally, provide powerful settings for the representation and negotiation of gender identity and gendered relationships between men and women (Dietler 2001, 90–93). This was as true of Gaelic(ized) feasts—which brought together men and women of varying rank to share in lavish outlays of food, drink, and entertainment—as of feasts anywhere (Rich [1610] 1624:39).

#### *Forthright Mixing—of Men, Women, and Drink—in Gaelic(ized) Hospitality*

Englishmen writing about their colonial experiences in early modern Ireland seem to have been inexorably drawn to comment on their interactions with local women. What they wrote highlighted the thrill and discomfort they felt toward the gender dynamics on display in Irish drinking customs. The divergence, in practice, between Gaelic(ized) and English gender expectations was an important feature of colonial experience and policy-making, and should be given due consideration in any study of the subject (Horning 2009:122). A closer analysis of the

anxieties surrounding gender and drink in early modern Ireland reveals the profound clash of colonial ideals and local practices that were playing out in episodes of cross-cultural hospitality there.

Josias Bodley—in his account of the Christmas holiday near the end of the Nine Years War—described the pleasant hours that his brothers-in-arms passed drinking *al fresco* with the Irish gentlewoman Lady Sara Magennis as they waited to meet up with the rest of their traveling party. Even after everyone being waited for had arrived, drinks were shared between the lady and men before the latter “duly kissed” their hostess and were on their way (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:331-332). The writings of other English authors confirm that Lady Sara’s forthright hospitality toward strangers of the opposite gender was not out of the ordinary in Gaelic(ized) Ireland. Luke Gernon described the custom of the “Benytee,” or married woman of the house, meeting guests at the door with her full train of female relatives, each waiting their turn to be kissed in greeting. The chief hostess then presented her guests with “all the drinckes in the house,” including beer and *aqua vitæ*, which one dared not refuse (Gernon [1620] 1904:357,360). Fynes Moryson also included a similar, albeit more highly sexualized, account of such a role for women in Gaelic(ized) hospitality in his *Itinerary* (Horning 2013:191-192).

The role that Irish women played in meaningfully shaping the alcohol-infused hospitality so central to Gaelic(ized) society was reinforced by legend. In medieval Irish literature, it was the Lady Medb’s ritual offer of drink that conferred the territorial power of kingship upon the man she deemed most fit (O’Sullivan 2004:71). The act of a woman offering a cup came to

personify—in a markedly gendered way—the Gaelic(ized) Irish conceptualization of sovereignty that tied right-to-rule to festive largesse, whatever the scale of hospitality involved.

That the social protocols underlying Gaelic(ized) Irish political economy demanded women play such a prominent role in the flow of alcohol between genders and beyond the family colored colonial views of Irish womanhood. Younger Irish women were noted to socialize quite freely, possibly too freely, with men they had just met. Even when colonial commentators were enjoying the attention, they noted that these young ladies talked and drank in a decidedly less “reserved” manner than their English counterparts (Gernon [1620] 1904:357). Gaelic-descended women were not alone in exhibiting such openness across genders, however. Anglo-Norman descended gentlewomen were, according to Moryson ([1617] 1904:227), as likely as “the wives of Irish lords” to spend long hours drinking in the company of men. Then there was that rebel MacSweyne’s wife, whose presence and prominence—seated to her husband’s right at table—was described in verse and illustrated in black and white in Derricke’s (1581) *Image of Irelande* (see Figure 10).

The expected colonial move for English authors would have been to write off all of Irish womanhood as morally bankrupt over this issue of alcohol flow and gender relations. Fynes Moryson did just this in his writing, reveling in his depiction of the drunken excesses of Irish women. He had Anglo-Norman-descended gentlewomen imbibing to the point that they could no longer stand erect, and instead drank kneeling beside men. Gaelic-descended noblewomen supposedly pushed consumption even further—drinking beyond the point that they could even

control their own bladders, they passed water without a care in mixed company (Moryson [1617] 1904:227).

While Josias Bodley was less graphic, he was no less disparaging in his assertion that Irish “women of every rank” accompanied men in “pour[ing] usquebaugh down their throats by day and by night...for constant drunkenness which is detestable.” Bodley was by no means a teetotaler. A significant portion of his manuscript account was, in fact, a tangent devoted to arguing the social necessity of alcohol consumption. This laudable and socially necessary drinking was distinguishable from the habits of the “drunkard,” however. The drunkard ignored all else in life to drink wherever and with whomever whenever the opportunity might arise, while mere drinkers limited themselves to being only “occasionally conquered” by the “rational madness” of drunkenness as social circumstances (and health) demanded. The drunkenness of those Irish women whom Bodley called out in reference to usquebaugh certainly fell into the former category—as morally reprehensible and a black mark on the character (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:335,338).

While some colonials were content with such caricaturing of Irish womanhood, others concluded their disparaging remarks by offering a glimmer of hope in respect to Ireland’s “fairer” sex. Moryson was by no means promoting the virtues of anything Irish or Anglo-Norman in his writing, but even he had to concede instances of moral fortitude in how Irish women engaged in local drink culture. He admitted that while in Ireland he had seen “virgins,” by which he meant young and unmarried “gentlewomen” and “citizens,” sent off to bed by their mothers after having met their youthful social obligations of toasting a few healths with the

guests of the house. From what Moryson had described earlier in the same passage of his *Itinerary*, it would have been these young women's mothers who stayed up with the men to get rousingly drunk at mixed-company gatherings. The implication was that it was simply a matter of time before these abstemious maidens grew into the besotted social roles currently occupied by their female elders (Moryson ([1617] 1904:227). The proclivity that Gaelic(ized) Irish women, in particular, had for social drinking was driven home for Moryson ([1626] 1904b:318) by stories that new mothers left their beds mere hours after giving birth in order to drink with women stopping by to wish mother and child well.

The greater freedom that women had within the Gaelic(ized) system enabled them to actively engage outside the home as political liaisons for their husbands when circumstance demanded. This proved politically necessary as Irish lords negotiated complicated, and sometimes contradictory, alliances in the midst of the Nine Years War. English intelligence reported in 1602 that none other than the Earl of Tyrone had "sent his wife to parley with Randoll the Scot" (Randal MacDonnell), presumably to secure provisions mentioned in the same passage as having been supplied to Tyrone by "the Scotch." The same intelligence also mentions an O'Cane (O'Cahan) sending his wife to meet with Tyrone, despite said O'Cane having supposedly renounced his allegiance to the rebellious lord at the urging of English military leadership (Mahaffy [1602] 1912:454).

*Cloistered Wives and Daughters: Preserving Genteel Women as Unsullied Vessels Reproducing Irrefutable Lineages*

Quite tellingly, the compliment that Gernon paid “yong [Irish] wenchēs”—on the heels of noting that they “salute you, conferre w<sup>th</sup> you, drinke w<sup>th</sup> you w<sup>th</sup>out controll”—involved casting judgment on their sexual habits, particularly in relation to reproduction. According to Gernon, the “honesty” that he attributed to Irish women meant that, despite their unreserved manner, “Cuckoldry is a thing almost unknowne among the Irish” (Gernon [1620] 1904:357). Moryson took the opposite view of the sexual conduct of Irish women, drawing Anglo-Norman descendants into his moralizing attack, which still focused most strongly on the Gaelic-descended Irish. Like Gernon, Moryson’s rhetoric pulled “immoderate drinking” into his discussion of female sexuality. Moryson’s ([1626] 1904a:284) conclusion was, however, that the freedom and “licentiousness” of women attending Irish drinking events fed a female sexual “incontinency” that was the root cause of rampant bastardy among the Irish.

An analysis of elegiac poetry published by the fellows and scholars of Trinity College, Dublin on the death of the Countess of Cork in 1630 reveals the ideal of womanhood that English colonials would have preferred to see in their re(-)formed Ireland. Lady Catherine Boyle (née Fenton) was the daughter of a prominent figure in Ireland’s 16<sup>th</sup>-century colonial administration, who, in marrying and bearing fifteen children to an up-and-coming colonial magnate, birthed a dynasty and died a countess (Barnard 2004; Hadfield 2004). The elegies composed in her honor and published in the Trinity College volume were less of a heartfelt show of mourning for the late lady herself, and more of an exercise in flattery aimed at the supremely

powerful husband who survived her—Richard Boyle, the first Earl of Cork (Pollard 1969; Carpenter 2003:195). These lines of verse are thus being read more for what they say about colonial attitudes toward womanhood, however much they may or may not have reflected the lived experience of their female object.

One particular elegy praised Lady Catherine for having possessed all of the desirable attributes that could ever possibly “adorne a noble loyall wife.” It was virtue like hers—“free from spot or staine”—that ensured the happiness of husbands, and mankind in general. She was, apparently, such a paragon of virtue that it was against her character that all women should check themselves for “their soules deformity.” The particular traits that women were to check for were the “Honour, wealth, worth, Justice, Integritie” that shielded Lady Catherine’s actions in a “veile of humble modestie.” Everything she had been in life stood in marked contrast to the “sinfull sensuall man” or, in the case of Ireland, woman. Most importantly, her chaste reserve ensured the “lineall virtue” of both the family from which she had descended, the Fentons, and that which the Earl of Cork sought to establish through her and “the hopefull issue of [her] loyall bed.” The author clearly conceived that the crux of Lady Catherine’s social role—and thus the significance of her virtue—rested in her status as a viable mother to legitimate progeny. Here he was praising her for serving as a passive social conduit—and “rich ornament”—between generations, rather than lauding any active performance she had given in life. It was, to his mind, a shame that death had robbed the world of such a moral beacon (Brady [1630] 2003:196-201).

The case of the Countess of Cork sheds light on why English colonial men were so concerned with female drinking practices in Ireland. It was a concern rooted in the maintenance

and perpetuation of colonial wealth and power along social lines established in the imperial core. The early modern English social order, as opposed to that of the Gaelic(ized) Irish, was grounded in primogeniture, the practice of passing status and property down through first-born *consanguineal* male offspring. Such a mechanism of social reproduction was vital to a feudal state, where territory was distributed from the top down, flowing from king to subjects in acknowledgement of loyal service (Brigden 2000:24,70; Mortimer 2009:38-41).

Within this system, “legitimacy” was premised on a husband knowing that he had biologically fathered any children born to his wife. Such proof-of-parentage was paramount in reckoning kinship, and in constructing networks of power based on ties of marriage and blood. Key to the Earl of Cork becoming one of the most successful adventurer-magnates in early modern Ireland was his mastery of these lineal kin networks. This was a feat that he could only accomplish if the women in his life adhered to the sexual virtue of marital chastity epitomized in this elegy to the earl’s late wife (Barnard 2004).

Husbands and fathers could, to some extent, exert physical control over the sexual practices of wives and daughters living under their legal dominion. Popular media—like published elegies—reinforced this moral order within the wider community by praising females who restricted their social and sexual activities to the domestic, while shaming those who engaged too widely outside of the home, and thus courted the cuckolding of husbands. The elegy itself demonstrated the social significance of a lady’s chaste virtue by listing the politically significant matches that Boyle made between the virtuous daughters of his virtuous wife and men of note in England and Ireland (Brady [1630] 2003:198). It was through such control of female

sexuality that men like Boyle secured the land-based wealth and expansive power that enabled them to succeed in imperial worlds.

The “licentiousness” of Irish women—which colonial commentators highlighted having already spread from Gaelic-descended matrons to their Anglo-Norman-descended counterparts—was a threat to this whole system. It undermined an Englishman’s faith in the consanguineous lineages on which so much in his ascribed social world was based. The roles that Gaelic(ized) ladies played in their wider political world were much more expansive than that allowed the Earl of Cork’s wife. Their husbands were not only less possessive over the movement of wives beyond the home, they needed their wives to be able to travel through public space unaccompanied by a spouse. This was aided by the fact that Gaelic(ized) lords did not need to police their wives’ bodies for the sake of pure lineages in the way that those adhering to the right of primogeniture did.

Ruling families following the Gaelic(ized) system were not as concerned with biological fatherhood. The legitimacy of an heir was, after all, moot when a chief’s successor (*tánaiste*) was elected from among a wider kin-group (*derbfine*), and not dictated by birth order within his nuclear family (Brigden 2000:69,151,160). In keeping with a political economy that happily embraced fictive kin-based networks, Gaelic(ized) custom emphasized the rearing of children outside of the natal household through various forms of fostering. It even provided formal space for the creation of fictive bonds of fraternity through “gossiprid” (Fitzsimons 2001:141-144).<sup>20</sup> It

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<sup>20</sup> “Gossiprid” (or “gossipred”) was a term used in reference to Gaelic(ized) social practices as far back as the Statutes of Kilkenny (Hardiman [1367] 1843:9). Fitzsimons (2001:143) defines “gossiprid” as “a pledge of fraternal association between a lord who thereby gained service, and his client who received protection, patronage and, again, preferential treatment of his suits in court.” The term, used by early modern Anglophone commentators in reference

was this fundamental difference between how the Gaelic(ized) Irish and English ensured the intergenerational reproduction of their respective social orders that underlay colonial concerns for the drinking practices of Irish women. For these reasons, the “adultery” and “bastardy” that the mixing of genders around alcohol in Ireland was thought to promote was considered important enough to be taken up by the Irish Commission of 1622, as part of the “heathenish and brutish manner of living in Ireland” in need of re(-)form (Treadwell 2006:57,757).

The restriction of women’s activity to the domestic sphere and nuclear family was preferable to colonial commentators because it preserved a social order that they deemed necessary and natural. Moryson’s ([1626] 1904b:318) depiction of Irish women drinking among themselves in the homes of new mothers bore less of the scorn he so often poured on the Gaelic(ized) Irish. There was even a hint of admiration in his tone as he used this custom to demonstrate the heartiness of Irish women and the ease with which they were delivered of offspring. This positivity quickly turned to vitriol, however, as Moryson ([1626] 1904b:318) immediately turned to the topic of fostering among the Irish—a detestable practice he described as the nursing of infants who were not one’s consanguineal kin. Blame for the degeneration of earlier Anglo-Norman settlers was placed squarely on the cross-cultural implementation of this act of maternal hospitality (Spencer [1596] 1809:112-113; Lane [1621] 1999:144-145).

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to Irish custom (Davies [1612] 1747), derives from the Old English *godsibb*, which translates to “god related”—in other words, individuals who have contracted a spiritual (as opposed to biological) affinity between themselves, usually a reference to baptismal sponsors (i.e. godparents) (“gossipred, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 1 June 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/80206](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/80206); “gossip, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 1 June 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/80197](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/80197)).

The political stakes of maintaining appropriate gendered comportment and gender relations in something as seemingly mundane as a local feast were captured quite lyrically, if altogether absurdly, in the satirical “An Irish Banquet, or the Mayors Feast of Youghall.” The poet set the piece’s tone by casting Irish hospitality as uncivilized from the outset—with pigs, and their feces, playing a prominent role in the procession of classical deities arriving for the allegorical feast. This was followed by a typical description of the unsavory fare and copious alcohol partaken of by the Irish aldermen-cum-Roman gods present at the feast itself (Scot [1616] 2003:128-131).

What offended the poet’s sensibilities the most, however—and provided the moral lesson of his verse—was the gender dynamic at play in his scene of Gaelic(ized) hospitality dressed in Roman garb. Husbands and wives drank healths together at the feast, to the point that all were drunk and certain goddesses—led by the mayor’s wife—began acting with aggression toward their mates. The women bound their husbands, sleepy with drink, and extorted powers and freedoms from them. By the end of the feast, these divine wives had assumed unnatural power and were using it with unreasoned abandon—controlling finances and seeking sex outside of the marriage bed. Taken to what the poet saw as its natural conclusion, such female usurpation would end in nothing short of an “Amazonian state”—where women, Catholic priests, and low-born Londoners alone ran the political show in Ireland (Scot [1616] 2003:131-133).

Steps clearly needed to be taken to guard against the degeneracy of gender roles that had obviously befallen the descendants of Anglo-Norman settlers in Ireland, lest more recent colonizers began carrying on like the characters that populated “An Irish Banquet, or the Mayors

Feast of Youghall.” This anxiety over gender relations and sexuality also played into the imagery that English colonial administrator, and unpublished essayist, Luke Gernon used in describing the overall project of (re)conquest and colonization in Ireland. Gernon began by likening the “Nymph of Ireland” to a young woman suffering from “greene sicknes,” a “disease of virgins” that overtook girls on the cusp of puberty.<sup>21</sup> The answer to Ireland’s figurative ailment was the colonial “taking” of Ireland’s virginal landscape through masculine agricultural endeavor (Gernon [1620] 1904:349-350). The submission of docile but fecund females to the domination of industrious men was central to the English colonial project of re(-)forming Ireland, and was only impeded by the drinking culture of Gaelic(ized) Ireland.

#### PIETY: STATECRAFT, (IR)RELIGION, POTABLE HOSPITALITY, AND A WRATHFUL GOD

The real and perceived divergence of religious practice in Ireland from that of the re(-)formed church, headed by the Crown of England and Ireland, was a concern for a number of colonial commentators. It even surfaced in seminal depictions of Gaelic(ized) feasting. Derricke featured a friar prominently in both his poem on MacSweyne’s feast and its woodblock illustrations (see Figure 10). A tonsured figure can be seen standing behind the lord, blessing the feast and those present, before sitting at the lord’s side for the meal. In the poem, this religious practitioner then preached a sermon on the Irishman’s Christian duty to rebel against the English

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<sup>21</sup> “Greensickness” was the early modern term for a disorder understood to affect young women. It was characterized by amenorrhea, or the stoppage of menstrual periods in women of child-bearing age, occurring for reasons other than pregnancy or breastfeeding (i.e. in someone not yet sexually active). This was accompanied by a green pallor, weakness, and cravings for non-food substances (pica) (“green sickness, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 17 April 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/81235](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/81235); “chlorosis, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 4 March 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/32071](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/32071); “pica, *n.2.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 4 March 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/143319](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/143319); Cressy 1993:115-116).

Crown and its loyal subjects. According to Derricke (1581), the friar occupied “the chiefest and hiest roomes at feastes amongst the Irishrie,” which Derricke snidely noted should have won him pride of place on the execution block, as well.

Spenser revealed the underlying problem with the centrality of Catholic clergy in Gaelic(ized) social practice. It was doubtful whether Catholic lords in Ireland, as recusants<sup>22</sup> who had supposedly been “sworne to a priest” in order to take the Eucharist, could reckon the English monarch their supreme liege lord, as they should. There was always the problem that the pope ranked above heads of state in feudally structured Catholic Christendom (Spencer [1596] 1809:230). Barnaby Rich, ever the Protestant polemicist, attributed the perpetual rebelliousness of the Irish directly to their papal subservience. This misplaced allegiance was, in Rich’s and Moryson’s opinions, constantly reinforced by the Irish welcoming Catholic clergy into their homes. For Rich, these “Priests, Fryers, Iesuites, and such” naturally sowed discord, as “the Kings vowed and protested enemies.” Catholicism and loyalty to a Protestant state and its crowned prince were thought to involve mutually exclusive political and moral obligations (Rich [1610] 1624:16, 1617:53-54; Moryson [1626] 1903:289). The political philosophy of early modern statecraft known as *cuius regio, eius religio* (“whose realm, his religion”) stemmed from such beliefs (MacCulloch 2003:164).

Members of the Irish Commission of 1622 actively inquired whether a people, like the Irish, could be truly and obediently loyal to the state and its prince if they followed a “contrary”

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<sup>22</sup> Referring here to those Catholic elites in Ireland, often of Anglo-Norman ancestry, who refused to swear the Oath of Supremacy and attend services of the Church of Ireland. Pledging such an oath would have meant that a Catholic was denying the right of papal succession that descended from Saint Peter by foreswearing the supremacy of the pope as spiritual and temporal head of all of Christendom (Brigden 2001:120-121).

religion. Their conclusion was in the negatory, as it was put forward and reaffirmed multiple times in commission documents that “no distinction might be between the Irish and English [in the planting of Irish plantations with loyal subject-tenants] if they will conform in religion, habit [clothing] and language” (Treadwell [1622] 2006:54,127,157,178). Homogeneity of religion within a nation had the added benefit of preventing what Fynes Moryson claimed was happening in Ireland—a bitter factionalization of the populace along religious lines that touched all aspects of life. While Moryson blamed Catholics alone for acting this way toward converts to re(-)formed religion, acrimony was likely acted out by all involved. Friends and family on opposite sides of the confessional isle were said to disavow one another, declaring mutual hatred and avoiding even economic interaction across boundaries of religious identity. Converts were purportedly harassed in life, and attempts were supposedly made to coerce deathbed conversions back to the “true religion” (Moryson [1626] 1903:286).

Colonial commentators did not restrict themselves to philosophizing over the general political-economic implications of religious discord. They also harped on Catholicism’s influence over particular Irish practices outside of church precincts. Moryson ([1626] 1904b:319) saw barbarism mixed into Catholic practice in the home-based festal drinking that surrounded baptisms in Ireland. For Rich ([1610] 1624:15), what he perceived as Catholicism’s intrinsic “superstition” and “idolatry” were as troubling as papal allegiance. When Parr Lane ([1621] 2003:140-143) made the tongue-in-cheek argument that the Earl of Tyrone could become the patron saint of the same drunken and murderous woodkerne he had led in life, he was wittily driving home the perceived connection between drunkenness and Catholic “idolatry.” Rich

(1617:52) less poetically linked *aqua vitae* and drunkenness specifically to “Popery” in his diatribe against the latter toward the end of *The Irish Hubbub*.<sup>23</sup>

Whether it was men or women doing the drinking, Anglophone commentators found moral fault in drunkenness itself, which they had already asserted typified Irish hospitality and society more broadly. Earlier in his *Hubbub*, Rich (1617:52) had railed against the drunken excesses of feasting, arguing that, by such practices, “God is dishonored”. Not surprisingly, he added his own puritanical spin on what other colonial writers, like Josias Bodley, had argued about drunkenness. Both agreed that drunkenness was an alcohol-induced state of being in which the drinker was deprived, however temporarily, of reason. Rich, however, focused on how this loss of wits effectively transformed drunkards into animals. It was, after all, the ability to reason that separated humanity from lesser beasts within the Great Chain of Being (Bodley [1602/3] 1904:335; Rich 1617:27). That drunkards reveled in their drunkenness, and rarely showed remorse the morning after, only deepened the sin against virtue—an offense against God—committed by anyone who willingly deprived themselves of god-given wit through excessive alcohol consumption. It came as no surprise, then, that he abhorred the fact that in Ireland there were “no Feastings, no Banquetings, no merry meetings, but if it be not solemnized with a company of drunken sots...it is not worthy to be called a feast” (Rich 1617:7,23-24,27).

When it came down to it, any and all displays of drunkenness dishonored God, as the drunkard, bereft of reason, was “fit for no good company, nor godly exercise amongst men.”

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<sup>23</sup> Rich was novel in styling his moral call-to-arms a conscious act of inverted colonial mimesis—with the colonizer taking on the garb of the colonized. He was, however, using the Irish cultural form of the hubbub, which he defined as Irish for “hue and cry,” for satire. His goal was to critique the social practices he had encountered in Ireland in an entirely predictable, colonial way (Rich 1617:1).

This ungodliness included lechery—supposedly leaving women at greater risk from a lack of “reverence” among their besotted menfolk (Rich 1617:23-24,27,52). What was most shocking to Rich, though, was the amount of public drinking and outright intoxication on display any given Sunday in the City of Dublin. Much to his Protestant chagrin, “Papists” seemed to take no offense at what was, to Rich’s mind, a blatant blaspheming of the Lord’s Sabbath day. It was, in his estimation, the Catholic religion of local administrators that led them to make absolutely no effort to shutter the city’s inns, taverns, and alehouses during the Church of Ireland’s weekly Anglican<sup>24</sup> service and sermon—the minimum of practice that Rich claimed was observed in “euery well gouerned Citty or Towne.” With the option available to them, it seemed the people of Dublin preferred to flock to drinking establishments, rather than attend services at the established (state) church—seemingly confirming that drunkenness and godliness were mutually exclusive states of being in Ireland (Rich [1610] 1624:62-63). A bylaw passed by Belfast’s borough assembly in 1617 expressed similar concern for the selling of alcohol while “Divine Services” were being celebrated in the town, and imposed a fine as punishment (Young 1892:5).

Alcohol was, however, an important part of vernacular practices surrounding religion throughout the early modern British Isles. Moryson ([1626] 1904b:318-319), in discussing “The Manners and Customs of [Gaelic] Ireland,” mentioned customary drinking in relation to two

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<sup>24</sup> “Anglican” is used here to describe the Church of Ireland as the early modern history of this Protestant church tied it closely to the Church of England. From 1537, when the Irish Parliament accepted the Act of Supremacy, the same monarch was the official head of both churches. The two churches merged into a single institutional entity after the Act of Union of 1800. While the two churches were formally separated with the Irish Church Act of 1869, the Church of Ireland has, since 1867, been a member of the Anglican Communion, along with the Church of England and Episcopal Church in the U.S.A. (Brigden 2001:156-157; Irish Council of Churches 2018).

childbirth-related religious rites—christening and “churching.”<sup>25</sup> While he pointed out that the choice in Ireland of whether or not and how to follow these customs was tied to Catholicism, his descriptions of the practices themselves lacked the puritanical vitriol of Rich’s commentary. He brought up “solemn churching,” rather, to highlight the hardiness of Irish women. Unlike their English counterparts—who had to wait the prescribed month of their “lying-in” before they could join in the convivial, female-oriented hospitality of their own churching celebrations—Irish women were up drinking with female visitors within hours of giving birth. In both cultures’ cases, alcohol flowed quite freely as new mothers were welcomed, by other women, back into the wider community. Christenings, according to Moryson, were just another reason for the Irish to throw a feast and entertain friends with meat and drink; although by all accounts such was equally true in early modern England, as well. What galled Moryson ([1626] 1904:318-319) about Irish Catholic practice, rather, was that “bachelor” fathers hosted feasts at the christening of their own “bastards”—celebrating children born out of wedlock to women they had “devirgined” but not married.

Catholicism was seen as leading these Irish men and women into morally unfit practices with consequences not only for their souls, but for the state as a whole. For Rich, it was as if “Letters Patents from hell” had been granted to such drunkards to live life following “lusts and

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<sup>25</sup> “Churching” was the presentation of new mothers at church for a community rite, variously described as a ceremony of thanksgiving or ritual of purification, that marked the end of the woman’s month-long postpartum “lying-in,” as the period of sequestration and recovery following labor was termed (Cressy 1993:108-109). From his positive attitude toward churching, as well as his use of this term to describe the practice, it is likely that Moryson favored a Protestantism more in line with the established Church of England. Those who favored a more Calvinistic Reformation thoroughly rejected rituals like churching, which they saw as superstitious holdovers from the idolatry of Catholic tradition (Cressy 1993:118-127). It is clear from Rich’s ([1610] 1624, 1617) writings on Ireland that he fell more into the latter category of English Protestant, wishing to purge the church of as much Catholic corruption as humanly possible.

pleasures” in order to “feed themselues fat for the deuils owne tooth” in the afterlife. Divine reckoning was not restricted to the afterlife, in Rich’s understanding, either. Living in such “voluptuous idlenes” was sure to bring down the material wrath of God in life, as well. He would, doubtless, “attend thee with such plagues and punishments,” including putting one off of food and drink altogether, “as shall make thy hardened heart to tremble” (Rich 1617:7-8,55-56). When enough sin was being committed in one place, this wrath might fall upon an entire city. The 1622 burning of much of Cork in a fire sparked by a lightning strike was attributed to just such divine retribution against a sinful citizenry (Carpenter [1622] 2003:148-150). Whether festal or ordinary, drunkenness—as a symptom of irreligion and direct affront to God—could not be tolerated in a God-fearing commonwealth that hoped to stay in the good graces of a wrathful divinity.

#### “HONEST” MATERIAL RELATIONS: HOSPITALITY, CONSUMPTION, GOVERNABILITY

##### *Prodigality Enough to “Devour the People”*<sup>26</sup>

Cosherings, those alcohol-rich feasts that marked major life events among Gaelic(ized) Irish elites, raised myriad concerns for early modern English colonials. Among these was the perception that such festal rounds exhausted the resources of the Irish countryside and rural poor. Colonial commentators painted Irish lords, Gaelic- and Anglo-Norman-descended alike, as profligate tyrants who made an annual circuit of their domains for the sole purpose of consuming every last provision their long-suffering tenants had in reserve (Dymmok [1600] 1843:9;

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<sup>26</sup> Moryson [1626] 1904a:245.

Moryson [1617] 1904:232; Treadwell [1622] 2006:57). Some even went so far as to number “teignie”—the offering of alcohol, like *uisce beatha*, to guests before and after the meal at a coshering—among the “Irish taxes” levied by lords upon their tenantry (Dymmok [1600] 1843:6,8-10). Christmas coshering was still being complained of as a “fault of Ireland” as late as 1649 (Mahaffy [1649] 1903:276).

Coyne and livery was the other form of Irish hospitality that most raised the ire of colonial commentators, and for similar reasons. The idea that Irish lords maintained private armies on the backs of their tenants—billeting soldiers in poor homes and feeding them from impoverished larders—was further proof of the tyranny of local elites. It was also a practice that threatened the king’s peace if any of the parties involved objected to the expectations of their counterparts, and resorted to violence in protest. Colonial law went so far as to declare the practice treason, according to Irenæus’s accounting of Irish statutes in Spenser’s *View*. The two characters engaged in this dialogue on Ireland could not see why these exactions amounted to treason, however. They even conceded the need for such a system in Ireland, given the absence of commercial hospitality in many parts of the country (Spencer [1596] 1809:51-54).

Anglo-Norman descended advocate for Anglicization Rowland White was among the first to play up how detrimental the practice of “Coyn and Lyverye” was to the spirit of agriculture in Ireland. He argued that such impositions sapped whatever enthusiasm might have existed for the art of husbandry from those already struggling to make a living off the land (White [1571] 1979:155). Many colonial commentators followed White’s lead in blaming what they saw as the abject failure of subsistence systems in Ireland—which tended to favor mobile

pastoralism over settled tillage—on what they judged to be the tyranny of Irish sociopolitical practice, especially landlord-tenant relations (Spencer [1596] 1809:133-134; Dymmok [1600] 1843:5-6,8-9; Treadwell [1622] 2006:756-758; Moryson [1626] 1904a:245-246, [1626] 1904b:311).

These commentators were not alone, nor were they original in their complaints about “traditional” hospitable exactions in Ireland. An inquest from the General Sessions held in Kilkenny in 1537—around the same time that renewed Tudor interest in Ireland was just beginning to stir—charged that the Earl of Ossory and his family were exacting all manner of forced hospitality from the unwilling inhabitants of County Kilkenny in order to maintain the earl’s household and retainers. These impositions included formal coshering and coyne and livery, as well as random provisions of food and drink to those employed in the earl’s service, including his builders (Hore and Graves 1870:87-91).

That both forms of profligate hospitable exaction included the furnishing of distilled alcohol—whether this was termed *aqua vitæ* or usquebaugh—only compounded the problem for English colonials (Brewer and Bullen [1572] 1867:418; Dymmok [1600] 1843:8-9). As early as 1556, Ireland’s choice distillate had been judged to be a waste of resources—specifically grain—which was seen to hurt the poor in particular (Authority of Parliament [1556] 1765:251). Sir John Perrot, acting as first lord president of Munster, argued nearly the exact same point about distilling and waste in his 1571 ordinance outlawing the making and selling of *aqua vitæ* throughout the province he oversaw (Brewer and Bullen [1571] 1867:409-411; Turvey 2009). This statutory connection between distilling and the wasteful destruction of grain was recalled

again by the mayor and citizens of Londonderry in a petition to the Irish Commission of 1622 (Phillips 1928:57). Grain scarcity and *aqua vitae* continued to be discursively linked as late as 1641 in official discussions of the Irish revenue (Mahaffy [1641] 1901:299).

### *Consuming Durable Goods for a Peaceful Polity*

These Gaelic(ized) forms of hospitality were not simply wastes of resources that wasted the people, they also promoted the wrong sorts of relationships between people and the world of material *things*. The lack of high quality material possessions on display in their observance was a symptom of the larger sociopolitical problem of materialism, or a lack thereof, in Irish life. Analyzing the anxieties that arose from this issue highlights the role that a desire for durable material things played in English political philosophy during the period covered in this study. What led to the early expression of this belief here—well before the “consumer revolution” of the 18<sup>th</sup> century—was the colonial nature of the discourse surrounding it (Johnson 1996:188-201).

John Derricke made a point of describing the material deficiencies of Gaelic(ized) feasting in his *Image of Irelande*. According to him, the furniture and tableware employed in these feasts was all relatively perishable. Seating consisted of willow branch banquettes stuffed with straw, rushes, or hay; plates were turned wood; and everything could be set on the ground, in the absence of a table. Derricke was, of course, describing an *al fresco* feast being held in the midst of armed conflict, as revealed in the woodblock prints that accompanied his poem (Derricke 1581) (see Figures 10, 13, and 14).

What his description played into was a long-lived discursive obsession with the material deficiencies of Gaelic(ized) Irish life, and hospitable practice in particular. Stanihurst's contribution to Holinshed's *Chronicles* furthered this tradition, setting his depiction of a coshering feast in a world composed entirely of straw (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67). Rich, who generally contested Stanihurst's account of Ireland as exceedingly biased and misinformed, agreed with the former in his description of a coshering. Straw or rushes still took the place of proper furnishings, and food was served on a wooden platter, as in Derricke's *Image* (Rich [1610] 1624:39-40).

This discursive tradition extended at least as far back as Andrew Boorde. The short verse that introduced the reader to the Ireland chapter of Boorde's ([1547] 1870) travel guide made repeated reference to the material poverty of Irishmen. The fictional Irish narrator of this introductory rhyme claimed to dine seated on the ground, and to sleep in naked straw. Boorde's Irishman then ended his verse by proudly eschewing concern for the material culture of drinking, caring neither for "maszer [mether]...cruse nor cup." The mether, a square drinking vessel carved out of wood (see Figure 3), and the cruse,<sup>27</sup> a small earthenware drinking vessel, were both archaic forms made from lower value raw materials, hence their association with poverty in the poem. In the prose portion that followed this verse, Boorde became the first Anglophone author to attribute the technique of boiling meat in an impromptu animal skin vessel<sup>28</sup>—rather than a durable metal pot—to the Irish nation (Boorde [1547] 1870:131-132).

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<sup>27</sup> "Cruse, *n.*," *OED Online*, accessed 13 April 2018, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/45265](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/45265).

<sup>28</sup> An early modern English consumer of print media would eventually see this practice depicted in the woodblock print that accompanied Derricke's (1581) poem (see Figure 10).

Boorde reiterated the material deficiencies of Gaelic(ized) dining in the latter prose portion of his coverage of Ireland, listing all of the things one wouldn't find in a Gaelic(ized) Irish household, including "pot, pan, kettyl, not for mattrys, fether bed" (Boorde [1547] 1870:132-133). In a passage where Moryson may have been describing either feasts or everyday dining, the Gaelic(ized) Irish were said to not bother with candles because they commonly used "a bundle of grass" as a table. They also supposedly forwent "any beds, much less feather beds and sheets," and even the lords among them were described as dwelling in highly perishable houses made of clay, tree boughs, and turf (Moryson [1617] 1904:231). While Gernon ([1620] 1904:360-361) wrote more favorably of the multistoried castle he was entertained in, where there was at least one festal table and a bed, he cautioned his reader to "not expect canopy or curtaynes" to enclose that bed.

In a passage from *The Irish Hubbub* that was aimed more at satirizing the frivolity of ladies' fashion, Rich (1617) may have hit upon the cultural imperative that drove what appeared to English commentators as such a material deficiency in the lives of Irish elites. He saw good lordly housekeeping in Gaelic(ized) social circles as emphasizing the aspects of hospitality involved in entertaining others by "spending amongst their fellows"—meaning that wealth was best redistributed. This stood, for Rich, in marked contrast to the fashion for reinvesting lordly wealth in lavish home furnishings. An Irish lord would be "ashamed to sell either corne, cattell, or any manner of victuall, but to spend it in his house." The latter would have been an act of pride, rather than one of hospitality (Rich 1617:48).

This interpretation was in line with Moryson ([1617] 1904:229) reporting that, “Yea, the wild Irish in time of greatest peace impute covetousness and base birth to him that hath any corn after Christmas, as it were a point of nobility to consume all within those festival days.” In the longer-form version of his Irish *Itinerary*, Moryson ([1626] 1904b:321) claimed that the Gaelic(ized) Irish considered “him a churl who hath any bread left after Christmas.” From what English commentators had to say, the Gaelic(ized) rural economy as a whole was geared more toward such redistributive hospitality than toward the accumulation of wealth that the colonial administration would have preferred to see. Grain was grown on a scale that met local needs—among them *uisce beatha* production—but precluded its wider marketability.

The same could be said of cattle, much relied on for their milk, which Moryson ([1617] 1904:230) claimed were only slaughtered if their meat could be distributed for immediate consumption. In an age before refrigeration, in a countryside where permanent markets were lacking and professional butchers nonexistent, feasts were the only way—aside from the presence of a hungry army—to ensure that the flesh of such a large animal would not rot and go to waste (McCormick 2009:405). In this scenario, it was more of a happy coincidence that the hides of these cattle were a commodity that the urban-dwelling merchants of Ireland desired, and were willing to trade for the beverages that lubricated Gaelic(ized) hospitality, like wine, and the spices that flavored them (Hartnett 2010:111; Horning 2013:254). Cattle were not raised and slaughtered for their hides, as such.

“Great housekeeping” in Gaelic(ized) Ireland was not only blamed for encouraging the people’s dependence on their lords through the redistribution of food, it was practiced in a way

that ran counter to what English commentators saw as the necessary conspicuous consumption of durable goods. In Gaelic(ized) Ireland, wealth was destined for redistribution among a chief-lord's socially inferior retainers (Simms 1978:93). Meanwhile, European nobles and gentry increasingly invested their wealth in the conspicuous consumption of luxuries to adorn private homes and wealthy bodies (Goody 1982:143; Johnson 1996:170-201).

For these colonial authors, the material deficiencies of Gaelic(ized) housekeeping—reflected in the culture's hospitality—were tied to yet another much maligned feature of Gaelic(ized) society, pastoralism. What use was a soft bed or hardwood table, Moryson's ([1617] 1904:231) argument went, to someone who lived "like the nomads removing their dwellings, according to the commodity of pastures for their cows." This perceived "idleness," rhetorically tied to an engrained pastoralism and devotion to bottomless hospitality, was thought to have led the Gaelic(ized) Irish to be "slovenly and sluttish in their houses and apparel," which was reflected and reinforced in the material poverty of their feasts (Moryson [1626] 1904b:312, [1626] 1904a:249,283). In such a society, even the country home of a high sheriff could be mistaken for an unkempt stable (Carpenter [1654] 2003:244-248).

It could be argued that the material deficiencies captured in these descriptions of Gaelic(ized) feasts and households were the result of decades of warfare raging across later 16<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland. Boorde, however, was writing in the relatively peaceful 1540s when he had his fictional Irishman declare, "I care not for ryches, but for meate and drynke." The much earlier date of this text lends credence to the argument that what was lacking in Ireland was not just rich material culture, but the materialism that English colonials expected of social elites.

This was such a problem for the English because they equated a proper aspirational desire for the objects of everyday life with honesty (Boorde [1547] 1870:131-132).

Worse, from a colonial perspective, this lack of materialism—which signaled that one did not hold appropriate stakes in personal or real property—produced a more rebellious people. That this view amounted to a political philosophy in early modern England is attested to by its recurrence into the 1620s in treatises on the colonial re(-)formation of Ireland. The unknown author of 1599’s “A Discourse of Ireland” tied wealth and riches to a people’s acceptance of governance, whereas “a sauage and poore people is inconstant” in their obedience as subjects (Quinn [1599] 1941/2:163). “Reasons for the plantations in Ireland,” a treatise written by the colonial landowner and administrator Sir William Parsons for the Irish Commission of 1622, summed up this sentiment well: “for a people barbarous and poor are apt to rebel, but the same people, being made effeminate and rich, will be obedient to suffering” (Treadwell [1622] 2006:758,760; see also Kelsey 2004a).

Materialism was a necessary prerequisite for proper subjecthood, regardless of how much actual wealth the subjects had. This materialism was equally critical to the re(-)formability of a subjugated people. Parr Lane’s assessment of Irish kerne in his 1621 poem “Newes from the holy ile” hinged on this premise. In Lane’s logic, the foundational problem that kerne posed to re(-)formation-minded colonials—which meant that “art cannot chaunge their kinde”—was that they could not be “wonn with favour or with guiftes.” Lane ([1621] 1999:127) provided proof of this when he claimed that these Irish foot soldiers, recently returned from war in Flanders and “sparckling with silver as the night with starres,” were back to wearing nothing more than a plain

mantle within the year. A desire to amass high-value, durable material goods could not, it seems, be relied on to tempt individuals with a solid place in Gaelic(ized) society toward the socioeconomic world that English colonials wanted for Ireland. Colonial work had to first be done to shift social mores away from those manifest in Gaelic(ized) hospitality and toward the materialism of the marketplace and durable conspicuous consumption (Moryson [1626] 1904a: 299).

#### COMMENDABLE LABOR: IDLENESS, HOSPITALITY, AND A SETTLED SUBSISTENCE

“Idleness” was another character flaw that colonial commentators saw everywhere in Ireland, promoted by Irish hospitality and permeating the Gaelic(ized) social order. To these writers, being idle was not simply a matter of an individual wasting their life and potential. It was a social ill, prone to spreading, that posed an existential threat to the pacified commonwealth that English interests needed Ireland to become, for the safety and security of the metropole. Idleness, and the social practices thought to encourage it, was seen as such a threat that its persistence was used to justify plantation as an official strategy to re(-)form and pacify Ireland (Treadwell [1622] 2006:756). The practices of hospitable exaction that constituted Gaelic(ized) Irish political economy—the “great housekeeping” to which Fynes Moryson referred in his criticism—drew people away from what the English saw as productive livelihoods. Instead, the system lulled individuals into what the English considered at best nonproductive, at worst “thievish,” livelihoods associated with Gaelic(ized) hospitality (Moryson [1626] 1904a:249).

### *Idle Irish Professions*

What resulted from this political economy were those idle Irish types that populated early modern Anglophone colonial literature, frequently appearing alongside their favored distillate. Coyne and livery, which included the right to demand distilled liquor at no cost, maintained “Idell men of warre” (White [1571] 1979:154; see also Spencer [1596] 1809:54; Dymmok [1600] 1843:9). These came in two varieties, according to Anglophone commentators, the more common woodkerne and the gentleman-swordsman. The importance of the former within the English colonial imaginary is evidenced in the full title of John Derricke’s (1581) illustrated poem *Image of Irelande with a Discoverie of VVoodkarne*. Derricke lampooned the hair styles and dress of these armed foot soldiers, lambasted them as driven by nothing but pure destructiveness and rapacity, and mocked their role as cooks at their lord’s *al fresco* feast (see Figures 10, 13, and 14). Both constituted the private armies that Rowland White ([1569] 1977:459) so wanted to see eliminated.

Campion-cum-Stanihurst was more succinct, if no less extreme, in the treatment of kerne that appeared in Holinshed’s *Chronicles*. In this account, they were described as a degree of “ordinarie [foot] souldior” armed with sword, shield, and gun. Moving through the Irish countryside as “the diuels blacke gard,” they brought hell in their wake. These men-at-arms were, once again, closely tied to feasting (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67-68). In his Irish dialogue, Spenser had Irenæus invoke a similar description of kerne as inhuman beasts bent on rape, pillage, murder, and blasphemy. Irenæus likewise called out Irish “horse-boyes”—the young

grooms serving a Gaelic(ized) lord's armed retinue—as little more than woodkerne-in-training, and thus a source of the same colonial trouble (Spencer [1596] 1809:118,124-125,167,231-232).

Sir Parr Lane's satirically titled "Newes from the Holy Ile" was an extended characterization of the blasted Irish woodkerne, designed as a call for action in re(-)forming the religion and culture of Ireland. As others had before, Lane tied the existence of such a class of men to the Gaelic(ized) social system that maintained them in a staunchly Catholic idleness and sedition (Lane [1621] 1999:126-128). The always polemical Barnaby Rich ([1610] 1624:37) accused Ireland's kerne—those rebellious "*Hags of Hell*"—of forcing bread from the mouths of poor children through the hospitable exactions that maintained them. The rebelliousness that kerne enabled, and general "mischiefs" they undertook, were enough of an issue that officials included them specifically among the topics in need of addressing as part of the review of plantation carried out by the Irish Commission of 1622. Here they were depicted as keeping the general Irish population in barbarous poverty and awe through the threat of property destruction (Treadwell [1622] 2006:57,758).

Between Irish chief-lords and their base woodkerne stood the gentlemen, also known as "swordsmen," after their status-laden weapon of choice. The gentleman was a particular type of idle Irish figure who came across as more of a wastrel, and less of a hell-spawn, in the colonial literature. English authors understood this class of armed retainer to derive from the younger sons of wealthy yeomen and nonnoble gentry. Their ranks were also thought to include the illegitimate sons of Irish nobles, who could reckon genteel lineages back to the heads of ancient Irish septs. Rather than pursue what the English saw as the productive work of farming or skilled

trade, these men sought out kerne, in whose company they honed “the gentlemanly trade of stealing” (Spencer [1596] 1809:228). Spenser was here referring to those hospitable exactions that maintained such an armed retinue as they sought out reputation-building opportunities for disturbance and rebellion, or so other colonial commentators described this Gaelic(ized) practice (Moryson [1626] 1904a:245,283).

These bands of woodkerne led by gentlemen-swordsmen constituted the “loose followers...prone to fight their lords’ quarrels—yea, to rebel with them” that were understood to be part and parcel of the much reviled “great housekeeping” of Gaelic(ized) Ireland. Drunkenness, whether from wine or usquebaugh, was seen as a defining feature of the luxuriant sloth that characterized gentlemen-swordsmen. When formal hospitality failed to provide the luxuries that this Irish type so desired, they were depicted as resorting to woodland banditry. In the woods they purportedly lived as collectives of seditious outlaws—stirring rebellion when they ventured a drink with their alcohol-sodden compatriots, and preying on the local countryside and passersby. Meanwhile, the English administration was supposedly doing nothing to prosecute them, at least at the dawn of the 17<sup>th</sup> century when Fynes Moryson ([1626] 1904a:249-250,267) was in Ireland.

The colonial administration in Ireland brought up these “gentlemen” as a line item in a report submitted to the Privy Council in London in 1621—questioning what should be done with them. The report highlighted the recent multiplication of men of this type who, having no other means of support, did nothing but disturb the peace through their typically mischievous lifestyle. To the English, they “swarm[ed] in such multitudes in the remote parts of the realm” that they

were a veritable plague of human locusts, who left unrest in their wake as their insect counterparts left famine (Treadwell [1621] 2006:16).

Another idle type who came under close colonial scrutiny for their association with Gaelic(ized) hospitality were the professional gamblers who went from feast to feast. The *cearrbhach*, anglicized as “carrow” or “kerragher,” was referenced in Gaelic Irish and Anglo-Norman texts from at least the 15<sup>th</sup> century. A letter patent issued in Henry VI’s name in 1435 made direct reference to kerraghers. The patent—assented to by the lord lieutenant of Ireland and the Irish Council in Dublin—harkened back to the Statute of Kilkenny<sup>29</sup> in arguing that these travelers were actually spies in the service of “the K[ing]’s Irish enemies.” Under the pretense of merry-making, these professionals gained entry into the towns of the English Pale in order to gather detailed information on Anglo-Norman infrastructure, which they promptly reported back to the enemy Irish, who were themselves barred entry where persons of English descent and allegiance lived. Or so the patent claimed (Crooks [1435] 2012b, 2012a; Beresford 2009).

Campion-cum-Stanihurst characterized the professional gamblers more as desperate addicts. They may have been prone to gambling away their clothing, and even their hair and fingernails, but they posed no real threat to colonial travelers, whom they only waylaid for companionship, and a hand (or two) of cards (Campion [1571] 1633:19-20; Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67-68). Surprisingly, the generally more polemic Rich ([1610] 1624:38-39) described these

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<sup>29</sup> There is no mention of *cearrbhach*, carrow, or gamblers in the 14<sup>th</sup>-century statute, however (Hardiman [1843] 2011).

“common gamsters” as the most innocuous of Gaelic(ized) “Septes,”<sup>30</sup> a lesser part of the kin-based social structure that so irritated the English in Ireland.

As Irenæus described them in Spenser’s *View*, the carrows were impoverished wanderers who survived on the hospitality of “Gentle-mens houses” in Ireland. The biggest threat they posed was in bringing others to “lewdnesse and idlenesse” through games of chance that were nothing but drains on everyone’s resources (Spencer [1596] 1809:125). Moryson was among the most acerbic critics of this profession, characterizing them as a “generation of vipers.” He abhorred their omnipresence at communal gatherings, claiming they had “infected” everything from “public meetings” to “the private houses of lords.” This disgust grew from the observation that the games of chance promoted by carrows drew all manner of the Gaelic(ized) Irish into risking and losing every form of property possible—including money, goods, land, even bodily members (Moryson [1626] 1904a:248). Another anonymous author, writing around the same time, attacked these “dicers and carders” for spending their winnings too freely, only acquiring the means of paying off losses in less-than-honest ways, and drawing others into the same questionable life (Brewer and Bullen [1611] 1873:449).

This particular idle type reemerged in a short colonial treatise written in 1561. “Smyth’s Information for Ireland” included typically deprecatory descriptions of a number of Gaelic(ized) Irish professions—including *breitheamh* (judges), *seanchaí* (historians), *aos-dána* (bards), and

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<sup>30</sup> The unit of kinship, below the level of *clann* or *derbfine* (“sept, n.2.,” OED Online, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/176152](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/176152), accessed 24 April 2020), by which early modern commentators like Rich understood the various traditional professions—of lawyer, historian, bard, gambler, even physician—to have been organized in Gaelic(ized) Ireland. According to scholars of medieval Ireland, these learned professions had indeed been organized along hereditary lines within particular families (Smith 2000:45; Richter 2014:168).

the *cearrbhach* (gamblers). The games of chance that professional Irish gamblers preferred, according to this Thomas Smyth ([1561] 1858:166),<sup>31</sup> were dice and cards. An anonymous author, in writing to the Lord Deputy in 1584 on the subject of re(-)forming Ireland, recalled this association of the errant carrow with traveling poets and musicians (Brewer and Bullen [1584] 1868:397). Lane made a similar discursive move, inserting a reference to “Carroghe” into his list of all the idle Irish types he included under the rubric of insidious “kearne.” The drunkenness Lane associated with kerne would thus have extended to the ranks of harpers, bards, and *cearrbhach* that constituted lordly retinues in Lane’s depiction of Gaelic(ized) Ireland (Lane [1621] 1999:127).

Colonial commentators directly associated this whole range of idle Irish types with Gaelic(ized) feasting. Cosherings were, according to them, the best place to experience the diversity of idle professionals populating the Gaelic(ized) Irish social world (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67-68; Rich [1610] 1624:38-39). A letter that the first Anglican Bishop of Cork wrote in 1596 to England’s lord chamberlain explicitly tied the wanderings of the professional gamblers to Gaelic(ized) hospitality. Bishop Lyon asserted that these men—together with bards and musicians—lived to attend idleness-inducing and impoverishing “quiddyes [*cuid oidhche*] and night suppers,” two forms of hospitable exaction related to the practice of coshering (Fletcher 2000:54; O’Sullivan 2004:54; Ford 2009). The idle Irish types were thus likened to “Grashoppers, and Catterpillers”—who, in feeding off the industry of others, destroyed the life and property needed to constitute a proper body politic (Derricke 1581). This systemic idleness

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<sup>31</sup> This commentary was the work of a Dublin-based English apothecary named Thomas Smyth (yet another colonial with nearly the same name), who wrote for the benefit of the Privy Council (Hore 1858:166).

made such Irish types a “poisoned blood in the body” of the would-be Irish commonwealth—or so Sir William Parsons argued in an extended, humorally informed metaphor that appeared in his “Reasons for the plantations in Ireland,” drafted for the Irish Commission of 1622. Blame, he asserted, could be placed on these Irish types—and the social practices that sustained them—as the cause of rebellious disease in the Irish body politic (Treadwell [1622] 2006:760).

As it was an alcohol-rich hospitality that supposedly lured the local populace into idle Irish professions, it was unsurprising that colonial commentators discursively linked strong drink to idleness and idle types in Ireland. Moryson ([1626] 1904a:249-250) included copious usquebaugh drinking and drunkenness among the luxurious symptoms of the idleness that affected all ranks of the Gaelic(ized) Irish. All idle types, including the carrow, were indirectly associated with alcohol by being tied to the festal events and hospitable exactions that typified the Gaelic(ized) social world (White [1571] 1979:154; Derricke 1581; Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67-68; Spencer [1596] 1809:54,167,228; Rich [1610] 1624:37-39; Moryson [1626] 1904a:247-248; O’Sullivan 2004:54). Then there were the distilled liquors that a Gaelic(ized) Irish lord’s armed retainers could demand at will of his tenants (Dymmok [1600] 1843:9). Meanwhile, the woodkerne among them participated in usquebaugh-beautified drunken revelries in the midst of lordly feasts (Derricke 1581) (see Figure 10). Both depictions contributed to the sense of general drunkenness surrounding Irish foot soldiers, and their leadership, that could even be found in poetry concerning colonial Ireland (Lane [1621] 1999:122-137).

Instructions appended to martial law enacted in Munster in 1579/80 reinforced the connection between idleness and alcohol by specifically targeting all manner of “idle persons”

and “makers of *aqua vitæ*” active in the region, in an attempt to staunch rebellion (Brewer and Bullen 1868:197). This association, and the law that attempted to suppress it, was well known enough to be recalled by Moryson ([1626] 1904a:250) in his *Itinerary*. By 1622 the association had shifted to one between “idle persons” and “alehouses,” with the “good ordering” of the latter seen as a means of reducing the intertwined social ills of “drunkenness and idleness” (Treadwell 2006:160,348).

### *An Idle Subsistence*

Yet another deeply idle aspect of life in Ireland was the chief form of subsistence—the transhumant pastoralism that supplied the cattle that fed hospitality, the twinned sources of prestige for Gaelic(ized) elites. Booleying,<sup>32</sup> as the practice of taking cows into remote mountain pastures in summer was known in Ireland, drew the particular ire of colonial commentators (Horning 2013, 36–42). Spenser’s *Irenæus* called it a “savage sort” of living that, in removing able-bodied individuals from more densely inhabited lowlands to more scattered and remote highlands, served as a conveniently “fit nurserie for a theife,” however justified it may have been by the seasonal needs of cattle feeding. The ill manners of Ireland’s itinerant scoundrels were seen to be fostered in what was assumed to be an antisocial isolation. In the English imaginary, at least, there were no neighbors at booleys, as there were in proper towns, to surveil and correct the habits of those inclined to roguery. Transhumant pastoralism was thus seen to lead to “the usuall stealthes in Ireland.” Its ubiquity as a means of subsistence fated whatever “barbarous and

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<sup>32</sup> This term is an Anglicization of *buaille*, an Irish term referring to a milking pasture (Dinneen 1904:95; Costello 2016:66).

uncivill” people lived by it—whether Gaelic(ized) Irish, Muscovite, Norwegian, or Armenian—to unceasing war. Spenser went so far, in the voice of Irenæus, as to trace the origins of this invidious form of Irish subsistence to barbarous ancient Scythians. The Scythian roots of disdained Irish customs were further recalled in the Irish practice of cooking with the blood drawn from living cattle. It was reasoned that ancient Scythians had brought their food and feasting traditions, along with the detestable item of clothing known as the mantle, to Ireland in deep antiquity (Spencer [1596] 1809:82-84,100,247-248) (see Figures 5–8).

Moryson ([1626] 1904a:249-250,283; [1617] 1904:231-232) made a similar connection in his *Itinerary*. He reasoned it natural that those with the “innate sloth” to rely on the “spoils” of extractive hospitality, or live off of “robberies” for survival—the former an acceptable livelihood promoted by Gaelic(ized) hospitable forms—would prefer pastoral life. The transhumant keeping of cattle was, after all, a necessarily less rigorous life than one devoted to tillage, or so colonial commentators like him asserted. To make matters worse, Moryson suspected (as Spenser had before him) that the remote life these able-bodied men lived while seeking pasture for their cattle—in his case imagining them “in thick woods abounding in grass”—was really a ploy to hide outlaws from justice. That these same pastoralists drank taverns dry of wine and usquebaugh when they came into town only proved to Moryson and his would-be readers how pervasive the luxuriant idleness of the Gaelic(ized) Irish was.

As late as the Irish Commission of 1622, transhumance was depicted as a form of “stealth and barbarous living,” stemming from local custom and an ignorance of proper agricultural techniques. The residents of Ireland, it was claimed, knew neither the proper way to harness a

plough horse to prepare a field, nor how to harvest said field without destroying much of the crop. The Crown's written response to this issue tied these agricultural failings to itineracy among even the more settled Irish peasantry. Much to the chagrin of colonial landowners seeking farmers to work their lands, Irish tenants felt free to leave a landlord and his holdings regardless of contracts and without giving prior notice (Treadwell [1622] 2006:57,157).

With so many drawn to idle livelihoods and pastoral transhumance, too few individuals in Ireland were pursuing “handycrafts and husbandry,” “sciences,” “liberall arts,” or “merchandize and chafferie, that is, buying and selling”—all of which were trades a commonwealth was judged to need (Spencer [1596] 1809:245-46; Treadwell [1622] 2006:761). The state of animal husbandry in Ireland proved the deficiency of the idle pastoralism practiced there, as well. The very grass that cattle fed on as they were moved between unkempt seasonal pastures was said to “groweth so ranke...that oftentimes it rotteth their cattell” (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:20). The perceived advantage of the “proper” practice of trades and subsistence—beyond the material benefits—was that they enabled individuals “to live every man of his own.” In other words, tenants could gain independence from those Gaelic(ized) social networks—and forms of hospitality—that colonial commentators understood to feed idleness, which could never serve a functioning commonwealth (Moryson [1626] 1904a:249).

English thinking reasoned that more settled tillage—that is, the growing of crops rather than the raising of cattle—not only would feed the nation with the food considered necessary to healthful living—wheaten bread—but was a livelihood “most enemy to warre” (Spencer [1596] 1809:246-248). Farmers were, in this estimation, more invested in peace than pastoralists

because their crops were more susceptible to destruction in times of war. A stalk of wheat or barley was, after all, harder to drive to safety in advance of internecine raiding than the cattle that English commentators saw as regrettably central to Gaelic(ized) life. This, combined with the surveillability of settled lowland farming communities, meant that tillage “engender[ed] industry, peace, and civility” (Treadwell [1622] 2006:57; White [1569] 1977:457-459).

The last section of this chapter has analyzed specific Anglophone critiques of the practices, the materials, and the types of people that shaped and participated in Gaelic(ized) Irish hospitality. This has involved juxtaposing what colonial commentators wrote about Ireland against their expectations, as early modern Englishmen, for these areas of cultural practice. The goal here has been to understand why the English so denigrated Irish customs. The particular form this othering took speaks back to the fear of degeneracy discussed earlier. It explains the anxiety generated by cross-cultural exposure to and potential adoption of Gaelic(ized) habits in the colonial context of early modern Ireland. So far, the current study has analyzed the socially situated fears and anxieties of hospitable entanglement, which themselves stemmed from the ever-present intimate needs of colonizing bodies. This study will now wrap up with an analysis of colonial interventions into hospitality and the flow of usquebaugh in Ireland. The goal here will be to demonstrate how the form these interventions took relates back to the contemporary anxieties of intimacy and entanglement—the physical body and the social-self—rather than the teleological pull of a future political-economic system.

OBEDIENCE: MISCHIEVOUS USQUEBAUGH, REBELLIOUS DRINKERS, SUBVERSIVELY POETICAL  
FEASTS

Rebellion was a recurrent, seemingly continuous, problem facing the colonial administration of Ireland from the 1570s through the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, and again in the 1640s. Even as things settled down on the ground, commentators and administrators combed the kingdom's history and cultures to understand why rebellion so plagued Ireland. How and why, as the Irish Commission of 1622 put it, did Irish lords so readily combine against the English (Treadwell [1622] 2006:757)? Many blamed the decentralized colonial system that had reigned in the medieval era (Spencer [1596] 1809:231-233). Others tied it to Gaelic(ized) Irish duplicity in playing the colonial system to their own advantage (Moryson [1626] 1904a:244).

One substance that was identified directly with the seemingly innate rebelliousness of the Irish was usquebaugh. Time and again, colonial administrators harkened back to a statute that had originated in 1556 to argue this connection. A note delivered to the Lord Deputy of Ireland in 1584 was the first to argue for the proper execution of that old statute, on the grounds that locally made *aqua vitæ* "sets the Irishry a madinge, and breeds many mischiefs" (Brewer and Bullen 1868:397-398). The staunchly anti-Catholic Lord Deputy Sir Arthur Chichester did as much in his response to the religiously tinged political crisis of 1613. In arguing for the tightening of control on distilling in Ireland, he repeated the belief that the distillate favored by the Irish not only wasted grain, it engendered drunkenness, which "enrage[d] the minds of the people." As a threat to peace, distilling was deemed "a trade not fit to be so generally used as

they [Ireland's Catholics] would have it" (Russell and Prendergast [1613] 1877:373; see also McCavitt 2004).

These usquebaugh-induced "mischiefs" included rebellious activities captured in state intelligence from the 16th and 17th centuries. In 1580 the recently returned Earl of Desmond was reported to be gathering forces and *aqua vitæ* in his latest attempt at rebellion (Brewer and Bullen 1868:249). A decade later, an informer observed and relayed the scene of a rebel leader establishing a supply line for gunpowder and *aqua vitæ* by accepting a token gift of these two items and offering a toast of the latter in honor of his new supplier (Brewer and Bullen [1593] 1869:75-77). A letter from the bishop of Meath to the English secretary of state, Sir Robert Cecil, depicted the Earl of Tyrone similarly accepting the offer of victuals and *aqua vitæ* as a mark of allegiance from local Irish magnates even as he marched across the country at the head of a rebel army in 1601 (Mahaffy [1601] 1912:188). Official accounts from throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century continued to supply stories of conspiracies worked out, in homes and in the woods, over draughts of *aqua vitæ* (Horning [1614] 2009:127; Russell and Prendergast [1615] 1880:29,81; Mahaffy [1632] 1903:169). These genuine incidents lent an aura of truth to Parr Lane's ([1621] 1999:154) poetical assertion that Irish kerne could easily slip into rebellion over "aquivitie" shared in a tap-house.

The association of *aqua vitæ* with rebellion was underscored by its continual inclusion among the supplies that rebel leaders were reported to seek out whenever they gathered forces. Barnaby Rich included it in his 1599 manuscript "A looking[-glass] for Her Majesty, wherein to view Ireland," where he explained to Queen Elizabeth "how this rebellion hath been kindled, and

the rebel thus strengthened”—a detail that he included, verbatim, in his later publication *A New Irish Prognostication* (Rich [1599] 1899:45; [1610] 1624:104). Official correspondence between those on the ground in Ireland and the English secretary of state Sir Robert Cecil, recounting recent events during the Nine Years War, confirmed that the Earl of Tyrone’s rebel forces were being supplied with large amounts of *aqua vitæ*—some of it only colored to look like “usquebaff” (Mahaffy [1601] 1912:172,454,507). Things had not changed by 1632, when an official memorandum was composed that accused “unlicensed people” in Ireland of distributing locally made “usquebagg or strong *aqua vit*” to “rebels and outlaws” (Mahaffy [1632] 1903:169). This supplying of distillates to rebel forces would explain the “hoart [hoard] of Usquebagg” that the Irish narrator of the poem “A Medley of the Nations” bemoaned English besiegers having stolen after they put the citizens and defenders of Drogheda to the sword in 1649 (Carpenter [1655] 2003:312).

Beyond its direct consumption by rebel soldiers, Ireland’s *aqua vitæ* also played an important part in the world of Gaelic(ized) Irish hospitality so heavily associated with rebellion and rebelliousness by colonial commentators. Spenser, Dymmok, and Moryson all understood these hospitable social forms to be a means by which Irish lords, as Dymmok ([1600] 1843:9) put it, “draweth the obedience of the subject from his prince,” and into rebellion. Hospitable exactions, which included *aqua vitæ*, also enabled Irish magnates to maintain private armies. While, as Rich ([1610] 1624:18) and others noted, these had initially been directed toward internecine warfare, they could easily be called into action against Crown forces, if the rebellious need arose (Spencer [1596] 1809:232-33; Moryson [1626] 1904a:249). Thanks to Gaelic(ized)

hospitality, the Irish were able to maintain rebellion against the English Crown even though they lacked the state apparatus for warfare that England supposedly enjoyed, which stupefied colonial military experts like Rich ([1610] 1624:94-104).

According to the English, liquor-infused Gaelic(ized) hospitality not only made rebellion possible, it provided a social venue for encouraging that rebellion. Such was the subversive power of the feast that it posed a threat even when it was not taking place in the midst of open rebellion. Luke Gernon poetically expressed this association of hospitality with colonial violence when he likened the destruction he saw in the wake of “cyvill rebellion” in Ireland to “the latter end of a feast.” The ruins of a castle reminded him of a mostly consumed meat pastry. What remained of a fort looked like a half-eaten pie. The walls of an abbey stuck out like the bones of a goose carcass (Gernon [1620] 1904:355) (Figure 21).

Bards were a necessary part of the social diacritica that set Gaelic(ized) feasts apart from everyday Irish dining. Even colonial commentators saw this. They noted that bardic song—their poetic compositions were sung—was a much loved and standard fixture of all Irish “feasts and meetings” (Spencer [1596] 1809:119-120). The bards were supposedly commending past rebellions against the Crown and extolling general “out-rages...done against the English” through elegiac verse designed to “stirre vp their [Gaelic(ized) Irish] hearts to imitate the example of their Ancestors” (Rich [1610] 1624:39; Moryson [1626] 1904a:244). The power of these rebellious songs could be felt in the awed silence that accompanied their performance (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67).



**Figure 21** Ruins of Armagh City during the Nine Years War. Detail cropped from “Plan of Armagh City and Mountjoy Fort on the Blackwater river, circa 1602,” Richard Bartlett, c.1602. Courtesy of the National Library of Ireland. Call No.: MS 2656(3).

Colonial commentators often brought up these poets independently of such feasts, though. “Irish Bardes” were depicted as a powerful social force for rebellion—valorizing to Irish youth “the most licentious of life, most bolde and lawlesse in his doings, most dangerous and desperate in all parts of disobedience and rebellious dispositions” (Spencer [1596] 1809:121-123). Irish bard-poet-rhymers were considered “pestilent members in that commonwealth” because the honor—or rather, “vainglory”—that their work reflected and defined was premised on what the English saw as immoral and rebellious action (Moryson [1626] 1904b:311, [1626]

1904a:247-248,287). They were a profession of supreme liars, who fed Irish “vice and villany” through their memorializations of rebellion and murder. To the colonial mind, the Gaelic(ized) Irish acted as infamously as they did to achieve immortality in “their Rymers rolles” (Rich [1610] 1624:74-75).

From what is known about the role bards played in late medieval Irish society, colonial commentators were right in their estimation of the social power this profession wielded, especially in the context of the feast (O’Sullivan 2004). The disinhibiting effects of copious drinking, and musical accompaniment, would have ensured that the lessons contained in bardic verse took hold of those in attendance in a way that would not be true of a sober individual reading the same poem in a manuscript collection housed in the quiet library of a country estate. Whether or not this effect operated on a conscious level, it demonstrated the power of the specific form that bardic practice took in relation to Gaelic(ized) hospitality. However biased and flawed the colonial understanding of bardic practice was, their anxieties surrounding this profession led to the inclusion of the maintenance of “rhymers” among the offenses that Irish lords were accused of committing, which diminished royal power, and thus necessitated re(-)formatory plantation in Ireland. It was claimed these poetical retainers “incited [the Irish lords] to combustion by often singing and repeating their predecessors’ warlike acts” (Treadwell [1622] 2006:757).

Scholarly analysis of surviving bardic output from the Early Modern shows that these poets were, at least initially, still singing about those qualities that had made their patron-hosts worthy of leading Gaelic(ized) Irish populations in the Late Medieval. Their verse extolled the

nobility, courage in battle, and generosity in hospitality of their patrons—regardless of whether the lord in question supported English rule or rebelled against it. Unsurprisingly, those following the bardic profession were most concerned that their art continued to be appreciated, as it had been within the late medieval Gaelic(ized) social system. They cared less about who they wrote in praise of than that they continued to be employed to produce such praise. Over the course of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Irish poetry was co-opted by Counter-Reformation forces on the Continent, who directed it more specifically against English efforts to religiously re(-)form Ireland. Even an enthusiasm for monarchy—so long as it espoused the “true” religion—crept into the poetry produced in this Counter-Reformation drive to solidify Irish identity as Catholic. This opened the medium up to more rebellious subject matter, but by this point Irish poetry had moved well beyond the realm of the festal bard (Canny 2001:410,421-425,426-427,438-439,462).

The English interpretation of what it was that bardic poetry was doing at feasts would seem to have presaged this later shift in Irish poetry, but was off the mark when it was originally written (Cunningham 1986:164). Bardic verse was, nevertheless, extolling a Gaelic(ized) social system that was—in all the ways this section has shown—anathema to English colonial rule and re(-)formation in Ireland. Through their festal song, bards promoted cultural orientations—to everything from gender and commensality, to wealth and power—that ran directly counter to English ideals of political economy and interpersonal relations in a properly constituted commonwealth (Campion [1571] 1633:20; Dymmok [1600] 1843:Rich [1610] 1624:18-19). Bards, rather than serving as passive conduits of cultural memory, deliberately shaped local expectations surrounding political-economic action in Gaelic(ized) Ireland, reproducing a social

system they could comfortably inhabit. Colonials, however, needed Irish society to change in ways that were anathema to traditional cultural practitioners like bards, whose very existence (at least as they knew it) hinged on the continuance of Gaelic(ized) forms of hospitality.

Gaelic(ized) feasts were social venues that engaged alcohol and poetry in unique, politically powerful ways that colonial commentators saw as inherently subversive. The same alcohol that flowed at these feasts—what the English called usquebaugh—was also being exchanged between leading individuals actively rebelling and covertly supporting such rebellion against English rule. The distillate and the networks of hospitable exaction through which it was made available for consumption were likewise seen to materially sustain persons fighting against and socially undermining the project of colonial re(-)form in Ireland. These associations were real enough to the agents of English colonization in Ireland—however imagined they may also have been—to necessitate the colonial interventions that will be addressed in the next chapter.

Ireland was unique among early modern English colonies in that it had experienced a much earlier wave of colonization that had succeeded in settling Anglo- and Cambro-Norman people in pockets throughout the island. Many of their descendants were, in fact, thriving at the time of the Tudor (re)conquest—but the manner in which they had accomplished this did not please all promoters of the new colonialism. From the perspective of these authors, too many of the earlier colonizers' descendants had succumbed to a creeping Gaelicization that ran counter to the early modern desire to re(-)form Irish culture after an English model. This chapter's close examination of exactly how these commentators wrote about this “degeneracy,” as they termed it, has revealed what was at stake in the maintenance of cultural practice in colonial Ireland, and

the role hospitality was understood to play in cultural slippage. The connection being made between hospitality, usquebaugh, and this unwanted social process explains the force behind attempted colonial interventions and the shape they took, which will be the focus of the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 5 | Resituating Consumption to Re(-)Form Irish Society

Accomplishing the perpetual subjugation of Catholic Ireland—a feat believed to be needed to ensure the continued sovereign existence of Protestant England in the face of Counter-Reformation aggression from continental European powers—would, in the English colonial imaginary, require massively re(-)forming Gaelic(ized) political economy. This societal overhaul could only be accomplished if the social practices that drove that political economy could themselves be eliminated, altered, or redirected in favor of a more agreeable social system. Such re(-)form, it was imagined, could be best accomplished with a multipronged attack. Examples of preferred social practice would need to be provided, in the personages of model settlers who successfully upheld what should have been their own cultural standards. Inappropriate forms of consumption would be strongly discouraged. Proper social relations would be encouraged through correctly ordered space. This chapter will focus on how these colonial principles manifested in English attempts to disrupt and re(-)form hospitable practice, and with it the consumption of usquebaugh, in early modern Ireland. Consideration will also be given to the unintended consequences of colonial interventions that met with mixed success in trying to balance the intimate needs and potential entanglements that threatened not only life on the ground for agents of colonization, but the whole colonial project in Ireland.

## A DIFFICULT RE(-)FORM: THE ANTIQUITY OF IRISH FEASTING

The seemingly academic pursuit of Irish antiquity that made its way into so much of the Anglophone literature on colonial Ireland served a purpose. It prepared the agents of colonization who were to engage in the re(-)formation of Gaelic(ized) Irish society for the difficulty of their colonial project. The tenacity of the forms of hospitality so typical of Ireland in the Early Modern was proven by the depth of their origins in the Irish past, laid out and argued over in true Renaissance fashion.

The embeddedness of strong drink in Gaelic(ized) Irish cultural practices—so often tied to feasting and obligatory hospitality in colonial accounts of contemporary Ireland—was discursively reinforced by Anglophone antiquarianism.<sup>1</sup> While Edmund Campion ([1571] 1633) had traced an antique genealogy for the Irish themselves in his earlier *Historie of Ireland*, it was Richard Stanihurst who drew Irish feasts, in particular, into conversation with ancient authors. Stanihurst ([1586] 1808:67) was original in calling upon Virgil’s account of Dido entertaining a Trojan prince in arguing for the “antiquitie of this kind of feasting,” specifically the use of straw furniture for dining and the musical accompaniment of harpers and bards for entertainment.

In keeping with this Renaissance impulse, Eudoxus and Irenæus spent a good portion of Edmund Spenser’s *A View of the State of Ireland* dialoguing over the classical geographic origins of the Irish, trying to pinpoint the exact cultural antecedents of “mere Irish” habits.<sup>2</sup> Of the three

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<sup>1</sup> The fact that Hibernia—as Ireland was known in antiquity—was never conquered by Rome, and only just registered as a point of interest on the furthest fringes of the known world as Ptolemy composed his *Geography* in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D., did not stop Renaissance scholars from turning to classical authorities in arguing the origins of what they asserted were typically Irish habits (Duffy 2000:11-14; Craven 2007:5-8).

<sup>2</sup> Irenæus made a point of explaining his methodology: a comparison of Gaelic(ized) customs observed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century with those that he had gleaned from Irish bard-chroniclers and the great writers of classical antiquity.

ancient cultures that Irenæus-cum-Spenser saw as anciently contributing to the peopling of Ireland—Scythians (by way of Scotland), Spaniards, and Gauls—he dwelt largely on the cultural contributions of the Scythians. While it was only mentioned in briefest passing, feasting was numbered among the Irish customs that bore such a resemblance to those of the ancient Scythians that there could be no question that the one people derived from the other. No mention was made of the origins of particular festal drinks among the Irish, but Irenæus did trace the bardic tradition to Gauls, via descriptions of Cæsar (Spencer [1596] 1809:56-104).

The significance of feasting in colonial Ireland, combined with this Renaissance obsession with classical antiquity, was what inspired the poet who penned “An Irish Banquet, or the Mayors Feast of Youghall,” to set his satirical verse at a feast attended by local Anglo-Norman descended Irish worthies clothed in the guises of Greco-Roman gods. Original marginal notes made clear that the overthrow of Saturn by Jove was an allegory for the induction of a new mayor in Youghall, which provided the impetus for the sottish feast attended by the rest of the town’s aldermen-gods. Upon introducing this particular scenario, there followed a stereotypical depiction of Irish feasting, as previously discussed. The festal scene came complete with musicians, bards, “daintie dishes” of questionable edibility, and copious amounts of alcohol. This included a round of toasts, wherein aldermen-gods pledged healths to one another’s wives until all were thoroughly drunk on wine, ale, and “Usque-bath, or Aqua-vitæ.” This tongue-in-cheek

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He listed “Cæsar, Strabo, Tacitus, Ptolomie, Pliny, Pomponius Mela, and Berosus” as the authors from antiquity that he drew upon, also listing a handful of later medieval and Renaissance scholars whose work he consulted (Spencer [1596] 1809:63).

poem, dense as it was with classical allusion, ended with a typical warning against the Catholic Church and its clergy.

By the 1650s Anglophone scholars had expanded beyond merely arguing the origins of early modern Irish cultural practices. In his *The Antiquities and History of Ireland*, Sir James Ware called on classical and Gaelic authorities<sup>3</sup> to reconstruct Ireland's past as lived by the ancients. Through them he compiled one of the first relatively apolitical accounts of ancient Irish dietary practices published, originally in Latin. In describing the "Ordinary Feasts" of antique Gaeldom, Ware drew material parallels between "the manner of the *Gauls*" and that of "the Antient Irish," including grass furnishings and the passing of drink in a common cup among all assembled. The chroniclers of Ireland's medieval history provided Ware with proof of the political significance of feasting in Irish antiquity. Ware followed the *Annals of Ulster* in tracing the Feast of Tara, or "Supper of Temra" as he put it, to a universal entertainment hosted by "Lægarius" (Lóegaire mac Néill), the mythico-historical high king of Ireland said to have ruled at the time of Saint Patrick's arrival in the 5<sup>th</sup> century (Ware [1654] 1705:52-53; Irwin 2004).

The vision of Irish antiquity that Geoffrey Keating<sup>4</sup> summoned from ancient sources in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century did nothing to refute the role of feasting, and concomitant drinking, in early modern Gaelic(ized) Irish social practice. He described three days of feasting that were mandated to accompany the peaceful law-making assembly of Irish kings held every

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<sup>3</sup> These authorities included Strabo, Pliny, and Dioscorides, as well as the unnamed Irish authors who had penned "The Life of S. Barach" and the *Annals of Ulster* (Ware [1654] 1705).

<sup>4</sup> An Anglo-Norman descended, Irish born and educated Catholic cleric, Keating was trained on the Continent and returned to Ireland as a Counter-Reformation preacher. After his death, he became famous for the history of Ireland that he finished in 1634, and which circulated widely in multiple languages until its publication in English in the 18<sup>th</sup> century (Cunningham 2009).

three years, around the Feast of All Saints, at Tara. Feasting was so central to ancient Irish kingship that “the proper household for an Irish high king” included—in addition to a chronicler, harper, and physician—at least three “wayting men” whose job it was to coordinate the festal hospitality on which a king was judged by his peers assembled at Tara. That such hospitality, which marked great kings in Irish antiquity, included copious amounts of alcohol was reinforced by a supernatural tale retold in Keating’s *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn* (History of Ireland). In the passage, priests of hell haunted the grave of a recently deceased king, singing a dirge that praised the late ruler’s command of soldiers and hospitality, specifically the chronic exhausting of his household’s supply of drink. Their demonic song was meant to shame the new king for having abandoned the hospitable revelries of his late father-in-law (Keating [1634] 2003:205-208).

### **CRIMINALIZING CULTURAL FORMS**

A knowledge of previous colonial endeavor in Ireland, familiarity with contemporary commentary on the past and present customs of the island’s inhabitants, and firsthand experience more than convinced agents of English colonization in positions of administrative power in Ireland of the centrality of hospitality to Gaelic(ized) society. As such—and for all the reasons covered in the last chapter—these local cultural forms became the target of renewed legal intervention in the colonial world of early modern Ireland.

## SHIFTING ELITE PRACTICE, CURTAILING RIGHTS OF HOSPITALITY

Gaelic(ized) hospitality—its form and participants—had been the target of parliamentary legislation in Ireland as far back as 1310. In this year, an Anglo-Norman parliament passed legislation that specifically targeted hospitable practice in Ireland. This “Act to restrain great lords from taking of prises, lodging, or sojourning against the will of the owner” established that the hospitable exactions demanded by traveling Irish elites, when forced on unwilling households, amounted to robbery before the law. It also granted that the Crown had the right to prosecute such cases, even if neither party involved brought suit against the other. To further preempt friction between elite-guest and commoner-host, all such hospitality was to be commodified, with both parties agreeing on payment from the outset (Authority of Parliament [1310] 1765:1). Whether intended or not, this early legislation marked the beginning of administrative attempts to criminalize Gaelic(ized) forms of hospitality and the Irish ethos of generosity that demanded such hospitality be offered without an expectation of immediate, monetary compensation.

A “Great Council holden at *Dublin*” in 1450 again took aim squarely at Gaelicizing practices of hospitality. One ordinance produced by this council focused on the local Irish customs—of coshering, here termed “cuddies,” and coyne and livery—that Anglo-Norman descended lords inhabiting the border lands known as “marches” were want to adopt. While the restrictions this ordinance imposed had been inspired by the actions of “marchours” (“marcher” lords), they were meant to apply equally to all men in Ireland who maintained armed retinues. At the council’s insistence, the colonial elites in question were to cease and desist provisioning their

private armies through the unpaid exaction of coyne from local farmers. They were also to abandon the local practice of gathering together their families, retinues, and Irish allies—the last of which the Dublin administration deemed “the Kings Irish enemies”—at seasonal “night suppers called cuddies.” What the late medieval colonial power was here referring to were those festal events—hosted by a lord’s tenants—that would come to be called “cosherings” by the Early Modern. Anyone found breaking either of these provisions would be “judged as felons,” and their property forfeited as a result. And if erring lords were to lose their life in the process of justice being served in regards to such hospitality, no one serving said justice was to be held accountable (Authority of Parliament [1450] 1765:10-11). It was most likely this statute that Moryson ([1617] 1904:232) referred to in his *Itinerary* when he asserted a legal prohibition against coshering during his tenure in early modern Ireland.

The portion of the ordinance intended to suppress coyne and livery was strengthened by Parliament in 1495. In that year, an act was passed that held households liable for offering certain types of visitors “money or horsemeat by colour of gift, reward, or otherwise by reason of any such menace” when hospitality was demanded. In the eyes of Anglo-Norman administrators, such offerings amounted to thinly veiled coyne and livery, and all involved needed to be subject to a fine to discourage the practice. Commissioners were to be appointed to gather the names of involved parties, so that fines could be collected for each infraction (Authority of Parliament [1495] 1765:54). The government’s ability to enforce such a law throughout the Anglo-Norman diaspora of the 15<sup>th</sup> century was questionable enough, given how favorably its local magnates—through whom England attempted rule in Ireland—viewed Gaelic(ized) practice. The Gaelic

population itself—in which such hospitality was firmly rooted—lived outside Anglo-Norman enclaves, by administrative design, leaving them beyond the reach of this law (Smith 2000:44-46).

These same hospitable practices continued to concern those promoting English colonial efforts in early modern Ireland. The Anglo-Norman descended Rowland White ([1569] 1977:459; see also Finberg 1981) expressed a desire for these forms of hospitality and hospitable exaction to be replaced with the system of monetary rents that had been common in England and Wales from the Medieval. Substituting cash rent for hospitable exactions would disrupt, while not eliminating, the festal practices that were the backbone of Gaelic(ized) political economy. It would, or so it was hoped, also dissolve the social bond of hospitality tying commoners to their lords—replacing this moral obligation with the economic one of tenant to landlord. Such a streamlined economic relationship would have the added benefit of, as Fynes Moryson ([1626] 1904a:249) put it, breaking up “great housekeeping” in Ireland by cutting the automatic maintenance of armed retainers out of the equation. This social atomizing of individuals would result in a properly ordered commonwealth, where industrious inhabitants would “live every man of his own.”

Edmund Spenser, as an actual settler in Ireland, was more pragmatic about the implementation of colonial laws designed to discourage the use of Gaelic(ized) forms of hospitality, like coyne and livery, while traveling through Ireland. As Irenæus pointed out in Spenser’s *View*, private houses were often the only lodging to be found on the road in that kingdom. If any lord in Ireland, while traveling, was forced to seek this form of hospitality in the

home of a tenant, he ran the risk of being charged with a crime if his hosts complained that hospitable exactions were being forced upon them, whether this was the case or not. Even Eudoxus could see that it was equally improper for this flawed law to make such an infraction an act of treason, as it in no way hurt “the royall estate or person,” nor did it amount to “practizing with his [the Crown’s] enemies” (Spencer [1596] 1809:51-54).

What Spencer would have liked to see outlawed instead was the Irish mantle—the thick, oversized cloak that served rebel kerne as a form of shelter on the road (see Figures 5–8). The statutory prohibition of this garment—on pain of punishment as harsh as that potentially meted out for acts deemed “coyne and livery”—would be facilitated by, and itself encourage, the proliferation of proper commercial inns to accommodate travelers of every stripe moving through rural Ireland. With inns readily available throughout the countryside, there would be no need for the mantle, and all acts of hospitality approximating “coyne and livery” could also be outlawed without fear of catching otherwise upstanding travellers in the law’s seine (Spencer [1596] 1809:84-89,113-114).

#### ELIMINATING THE IDLE PROFESSIONS

The social types that the colonial administration most fervently sought to prune from Irish society were, not coincidentally, those whom colonial commentators most associated with the Gaelic(ized) hospitality and Ireland’s choice distillate. As early as 1435 the Dublin administration appointed a marshal to arrest and seize the property of various classes of Gaelic Irish entertainers—among them harpers, bards, and “carrowes” (gamblers)—as cross-cultural spies (Crooks [1435] 2012b; 2012a; Hardiman 1843:55-59; Beresford 2009). During the Second

Desmond Rebellion, the Lord Justice of Ireland authorized martial law in Munster, with provisions that recalled this 15<sup>th</sup>-century proclamation. In these later provisions, “idle persons, vagabonds, rhymer, aiders of outlaws and rebels,” criminals, and “makers of *aqua vitæ*” were specifically allotted punishment that was to be executed by the provost marshal of each Irish province (Brewer and Bullen [1579/80] 1868:197).

Anonymous advice supplied to the Lord Deputy in 1584, “for the reformation of the realm of Ireland,” similarly attended to both the punishment of idle Irish types and the curtailing of *aqua vitæ* production in the subject kingdom. In relation to the former, it recommended that, “every harper, rimer, carow, or valiant beggar” caught traveling through a parish “be put in the stocks, and punished” (Brewer and Bullen 1868:397-398). Similar instructions—to whip or “execute marshallie” any “idle person, vacabounde, masterless man, bard, rimer, or malefactor” found to “haunte or abide” in the area—were supplemented with the threat of punishing anyone found maintaining or materially supporting such outlaws in County Dublin in 1603/4 (Erck [1603/4] 1846:86). These laws and this administrative advice were what Fynes Moryson ([1626] 1904a:250) was likely referring to when he wrote that, “at the end of the last war it was wished and expected that this luxury [usquebaugh] should be suppressed, at least from general excess, that all vagabond persons should be severely punished.”

From as early as 1310,<sup>5</sup> Anglo-Norman parliaments were enacting legislation that they hoped would push Gaelic(ized) lords toward the keeping of “idle men” at their own charge, so as to cease imposing their maintenance on the lord’s tenants. A harper, bard, or carrow who took

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<sup>5</sup> The Parliament convened in Ireland in 1310 was held at Kilkenny (Authority of Parliament 1765:1).

anything by force from tenants was to be punished like “an open robber” before the law (Authority of Parliament [1310] 1765:2). To the minds of early modern English colonials, these hospitable exactions amounted to able-bodied men living as beggars off the alms and charity of the countryside. By 1447 Irish Parliament was legislating that the sons of laboring peasants be made to follow their parents’ “honest” profession—on pain of a year’s imprisonment and a fine—lest they turn to one of the idle livelihoods listed above. Spenser even reminded his readers of this statute in his *View* (Authority of Parliament [1447] 1765:8; Spencer [1596] 1809:247).

England had passed legislation targeting “vagabonds”—the term for the social category of able-bodied beggars into which so many Irish professions were lumped—in the 1530s (Slack 1995; Brigden 2001). In 1542 the Irish Parliament followed suit, quoting the earlier English act in its entirety in passing their own culturally imperial “Act for vagabonds.” The effect of the bill was the licensing of every “impotent begger” in the country, allowing them to beg for charitable alms within set limits granted by form letters and tangible badges they were to carry at all times. Those deemed “able-bodied beggars,” “vagabonds and idle persons” who, despite “being whole and mightie in body and able to labour,” could not prove they worked either the land, the market, nor any craft specialization—were to be declared vagrant and arrested by local authorities. These wanderers were to be seized and taken to the nearest “market towne,” or other sufficiently public place, to be tied naked to a cart and whipped bloody. Anyone known to be an “idle person” was to be held in stocks until someone came forward to pledge money that the “vagrant” would take up settled employment (Authority of Parliament [1542] 1765:195-198).

After this public punishment, the wanderers were sent back to either their birthplace or their last place of stable residence, where they were to employ themselves in “labour like as a true man ought to doe.” These “vagabonds,” after the first punishment, were required to carry form letters attesting to their crime of vagrancy in perpetuity. If they were found relapsing they were to be whipped again every time until they re(-)formed. Anyone discovered providing charity to or harboring such an “idle person,” and any official found turning a blind eye, was liable to pay a fine in coin or kind, and might even risk imprisonment themselves (Authority of Parliament [1542] 1765:198-205). While this law was passed by the government in Dublin, its execution was left to local authorities, whose means and desire to enforce it would have varied greatly across 16<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland.

There were also problems executing a law in Ireland that had been designed in England, given how differently communities were constituted and overseen in both kingdoms. The English-by-design “Act for vagabonds” had placed the onus of enforcement on local authority figures—justices of the peace, mayors, sheriffs, bailiffs, constables, and the like—typical of its country of origin, and at best only present within the Anglo-Norman towns Ireland before 1588 (Authority of Parliament [1542] 1765:196; Brigden 2000, 322). A 1569 Irish parliamentary act attempted to redress this problem. It demanded that Gaelic families inhabiting “the countries that bee not as yet shire grounds”—meaning regions where there were no English-style officials to enforce colonial law—bring in “all the idle persons of their surname” to face judgment under the law (Authority of Parliament [1569] 1765:319). As members of the idle professions, harpers, bards, and carrows all qualified as vagabonds. The 1569 amendment to the “Act for vagabonds”

thus meant that Gaelic(ized) elites had to turn over cultural practitioners whom they valued highly, and who were central to their festal practices and political economy. Punishing individuals for seeking charity, whatever the status of their physical abilities, also ran completely counter to the ethos and practice of generalized Gaelic(ized) hospitality.

In 1582 the Irish Council, which represented the Crown in Ireland, tried to revive this law and develop a more effective method for executing it. This colonial administrative body ordered that every inhabitant of Connaught act as an officer of the law in seizing “vagabonds, sturdy beggars, harpers, carrowes.” These idle types were to be taken thereafter “to her majestys’ gaol to be punished according to the lawes provided for such persons” (Quinn [1582] 1967:132-133). The “lawes” in question were the 1542 “Act for vagabonds” and its 1569 amendment. There was at least one confirmed case of a group of Ulster bards being arrested as they passed through Connaught on their way to the Earl of Thomond, around the year 1590. The official who made this arrest was eventually imprisoned himself, and the bards were deemed not to have committed “rhymes against Her Majesty” in poems that no purely Anglophone official could have claimed to have understood. But their fate as idle persons has been lost to history (Canny 2001:94).

By the time Spenser was writing his *View* in 1596, no better means of enforcement seems to have been developed. In proposing a more systemic approach, Spenser’s *Irenæus* assigned the task of rounding up wandering idle Irishmen—“Carrowes, Bardes, Iesters”—to duly appointed provost marshals—each traversing their respective shires on the lookout for such “loose persons.” Individuals found wandering, assumed to be “idely roguing,” would be put in stocks

for their first offense, whipped for their second, and subjected to “the bitterness of marshall lawe” for their third (and presumably final) infraction (Spencer [1596] 1809:251).

Whether or not the means of enforcement had improved, the colonial administrators involved in the Irish Commission of 1622 followed a similar tack in seeking to suppress these idle types. Just as the Irish Parliament had in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, so the 17<sup>th</sup>-century commission took special interest in encouraging youth to pursue the right kinds of occupation, and steer clear of an idle upbringing. It was suggested that youth at risk of becoming idle be bound into apprenticeships with industrious colonists—putting them to work improving Ireland, while at the same time securing their own orderly future. For those individuals already committed to an idle life, record was to be kept of them in every manor. If these “dissolute and vagrant persons” were unable to find anyone to materially vouch for their “good behaviour,” they were to be thrown in jail. First, of course, provision needed to be made to build such “houses of correction” in every shire (Treadwell [1622] 2006:57,161,764).

The statutes directed against bards and carrows seemed to agree with Spenser that even ostensibly “evill people” could be “made good” with the application of “good ordinances and government.” These idle types were to be given a chance to re(-)form before individuals were eliminated from the commonwealth (Spencer [1596] 1809:153,165). The same leniency was, somewhat surprisingly, applied to the more bellicose idle professions of kerne and gentleman-swordsman as well. These men were also to be allowed to redeem their labors by putting them to less rebellious service.

Kerne, the foot soldiers that filled the ranks of Gaelic(ized) lordly retinues in the late medieval and early modern periods, were also targeted by laws and colonial schemes designed to pacify and re(-)form Irish society. A parliamentary statute of 1310 explicitly directed legal action against kerne being kept in peacetime. The problem lay in the use of hospitable exaction to provision these men. The law declared such exactions tantamount to robbery, and decreed that those found seeking provisions in this manner were to be treated as thieves (Authority of Parliament [1310] 1765:2).

The better known Statute of Kilkenny, passed in 1367, reiterated this exact law in its provision limiting the keeping of “kerns, hoblers, or idlemen” to those who could maintain such a retinue from their own personal resources (Hardiman 1843:61). The same provision, albeit expanded upon, formed part of the ordinance enacted by the Great Council of Dublin convened in 1450. These laws held “marchours [marcher lords]...and other men within the land of Ireland” fully responsible both for the maintenance of armed retainers out of their own personal resources and for the actions of those retainers in demanding hospitable exactions. Any soldierly retainers were to be duly registered by name with local officers in every county and nearby town or city (Authority of Parliament [1450] 1765:10). If a lord could not maintain his armed retinue out of his own personal funds, which may have been an impossibility within the Gaelic(ized) system of corporate land tenure, then that lord had to disband his private army and live within his private means.

This desire to limit the scale of private Irish armies, and re(-)form their provisioning system away from hospitable exaction, was reiterated by no less a figure than the then-retiring

Lord Justice of Ireland Sir William Pelham. He suggested, in a postwar scheme for settling and sustaining the colonial administration of the province of Munster, that lords should be constrained to only keep those idle men they could maintain out of their own domestic stores. The local lords known to cause trouble for the colonial administration were to be “restrained from the entertaining of loose men” altogether, whether in a military or festal capacity (Brewer and Bullen [1580] 1868:285). This theme was taken up again by the Irish Commission of 1622, which raised the question of whether efforts should be made to “limit how many men and followers he [any gentleman] shall keep according to the proportion of his ability” (Treadwell 2006:57).

History would argue that Gaelic lords did not limit the practice of maintaining armed retinues through hospitable exaction following the 1310 statute. Rather, their system for provisioning private armies appeared to have spread cross-culturally and become enough of an administrative nuisance among medieval colonists in Ireland that it was addressed again in the 1367 Statute of Kilkenny. The Kilkenny provision targeted crimes committed by “the retinue of any chiefteyn of English lineage within this land.” Such crimes, according to the statute itself, would have included hospitable exactions taken by a retainer against a lord’s tenant’s will. If any crime, hospitable or otherwise, were committed by members of a lord’s retinue—whether they were reckoned to be of the same lineage as the lord or not—the individual members were to be jailed and punished under the law. If they were not found and punished, the lord who maintained them would be confined as a veritable hostage until the suspect retainers were delivered to jail (Hardiman [1367] 1843:65-69). A parliamentary act passed in Ireland in 1455 reaffirmed this

law, adding that it made no difference if a retainer received wages or not (Authority of Parliament [1455] 1765:18).

It would seem that little headway had been made over the course of the 16<sup>th</sup> century in fully executing these late medieval statutes throughout the kingdom of Ireland. The 1622 Irish Commission was thus left to query whether a system should, or could, be set up to hold “gentlemen” accountable for the behavior of their “men and followers.” The method this administrative body had in mind was to enroll the names of retinue members with county officers. The gentlemen maintaining the retinues would have to offer the county bonds in surety of the good behavior of their followers. If any member of his retinue broke the law, the master’s bond would be forfeit and the master would be responsible for bringing his follower before the law (Treadwell [1622] 2006:57).

Unsurprisingly, colonial administrators attempting to pacify and re(-)form Ireland paid special attention to these classes of armed Irish retainers. Lord Justice Pelham himself suggested that a count be taken of “how many horsemen, gallowglass [Scottish mercenaries], and kearne are maintained in Munster” at the end of the Second Desmond Rebellion (Brewer and Bullen [1580] 1868:285). Knowing how many armed Irish retainers there were in a rebellious region was a first step toward disarming them. In the opinion of some, arms should have been taken from all but those elites possessing the privilege of military ornament, for whom the wearing of a sword announced their social status (Moryson [1626] 1904a:300,307). This disarmament, it was believed, would force an otherwise disruptive segment of the population into laboring at agriculture or another nonmilitary trade (Brewer and Bullen [1580] 1868:285; Spencer [1596]

1809:246). Such a productive outcome could be furthered if ex-armed retainers were relocated elsewhere in Ireland before recommitting themselves to “labour of the earth” (Spencer [1596] 1809:194-197). Future generations of kerne and galloglass needed to, as Spenser put it, “be cut off,” as well. The sons of Irish soldiering types could be turned from their hereditary professions by being taken, as children, “from their fathers to be placed in service.” These offspring of an idle sort would be set on a re(-)formed path by working, from a young age, in properly constituted households (Treadwell [1622] 2006:57).

If—as soldier-turned-administrator Parr Lane ([1621] 1999:127) feared—Irish kerne were effectively unre(-)formable, then there would be no use trying to make farmers out of them. There were those who argued that kerne could still prove of value to the Crown even if their lifestyles could not be altered. However much Irish foot soldiers were the scourge of the English, they were hardy and courageous fighters. The trick was harnessing their martial prowess on behalf of the metropole. The threat of them defecting from Crown service in Ireland was too high, but England was almost always fighting someone overseas. Irish kerne could be sent abroad to fight (Spencer [1596] 1809:118-119; Moryson [1617] 1735a:130). Irish soldiers also left their homeland of their own accord to fight in conflicts on the European Continent throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century. When the English were lucky, these wars were entirely contained to Protestant regions like Scandinavia, and did not pit Irishmen against the English in European theaters of war (Lyons and O’Connor 2008:12-47; Clark 2010).

By 1622, primary concern had shifted from kerne to listless gentlemen-swordsmen—those elites allowed to keep their swords as a sign of their status. Materials submitted to the Irish

Commission repeatedly brought up the need to expunge such Irishmen from the province of Ulster, and the plantations being undertaken there. This mischief-making Irish type posed a threat to peace, while contributing nothing to the prosperity of the remote regions they haunted. Ulster needed farm laborers, not landless would-be soldiers. These unwanted “gentlemen” could, like kerne, be sent to fight overseas, so long as they did not join forces with England’s enemies. If these Irish soldiers survived to return to Ireland, they would have acquired a taste for a better sort of life than they had lived before, making them less of a threat to the Commonwealth (Treadwell [1622] 2006:16,127,157-158,170).

If all else failed—and these idle martial men proved to be as irredeemable as some English commentators suspected—they could be summarily executed by the provost marshals that were to be sent out to canvas the shires for other idle types (White [1569] 1977:463). In this way, any “reliques of the olde rebellion” left in Ireland—upon proving themselves to be “unfit to live in the common-wealth” through their refusal to alter their ways—would be trimmed from the national tree to encourage a peaceful fruiting of the kingdom (Spencer [1596] 1809:251-252).

### **RE(-)FORMING THE FLOW OF ALCOHOL: CONSUMING A DIFFERENT ECONOMIC FORM**

Legislation targeting the practices, professions, and material culture of an othered local people for suppression was not unique to England’s project of (re)conquest and colonization in early modern Ireland. Such administrative moves are considered par for the course in colonial studies, and can be interpreted as clear-cut attempts of colonial powers to exert control over subject people (Horvath 1972; Osterhammel 1997:15-18; Abernethy 2000:282). Colonialism,

from ancient to modern, can even be glossed as the export of legal systems to imperial worlds (Gosden 2004:72). From the world-systems perspective, these acts of domination are given consideration for how they sought to shape local socioeconomic worlds into forms that better fit the metropole-enriching goals of the modern capitalist world-system (Wallerstein 1974:5; Wolf [1982] 1997:ix-xiv; Mintz 1986:xv-xvi, xxiv; Comaroff and Comaroff 1992:41,232 Trouillot 2003). What these interpretive models reinforce is the sense of a sharp community divide and opposition between colonized natives and colonizing settlers that was more the desire of colonial powers than the reality of lived experience in colonial worlds (Cooper 2005:23-24).

What the case of hospitality in early modern Ireland has revealed so far is that such administrative efforts were aimed as much at the settler community as they were at any “native” population. From the Medieval onward, these laws marked colonial attempts to define and maintain what they understood to be “their” community. That hospitality was a focus of legislation early on, going back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century, and continued to attract administrative attention well into the 17<sup>th</sup> century, speaks to the role of hospitable practice in establishing and negotiating cross-community relations in colonial contexts. According to the accounts of early modern colonial commentators, three centuries of such legislation had done little to dampen the power of hospitality in an Irish society that encompassed multiple communities, none of which were as exclusive or self-possessed in practice as the colonial administration desired. This fluidity, and the power it afforded people who were the target of subjugation, was a problem for a colonial project that sought to re(-)form society through colonization.

The rest of this chapter will focus on the English colonial struggle to control the consumption of one particular element of Ireland's cross-cultural hospitality—*uisce beatha*-cum-usquebaugh. This substance was, as the current study has shown, central to how English colonials mitigated their anxieties over the bodily intimacies inherent in their colonization of Ireland, even as their access to it was predicated on participation in entangling acts of cross-cultural hospitality that were understood to threaten their whole colonial project there. Consuming usquebaugh through existing channels resolved one colonial anxiety, while generating another. Effectively resolving this secondary anxiety of social entanglement, without renewing intimate bodily anxieties, would require interventions in the flow of the substance—reshaping the socioeconomic form and contexts of its consumption. Comparing these early modern administrative interventions to those attempted in the medieval period reveals how approaches to safeguarding settler identity and community had evolved, particularly in respect to the promotion of the commodity form in a cash economy. It also demonstrates how complicated these administrative interventions actually were in execution, and how ill-prepared colonial powers often were to implement their grand designs. Unsurprisingly, the contingencies of reality led to many unforeseen consequences. These would shape social change in the centuries to come, pushing the socioeconomy toward what has been retroactively recognized as a capitalist world-system.

*Economic Life in Gaelic(ized) Ireland: Socially Entangled Selves*

The *uisce beatha* being consumed in late medieval Ireland likely had a short and highly social trip from production to consumption. As will be detailed shortly, there is no evidence for anything but domestic distillation in late medieval Ireland, nor is there any evidence that *uisce beatha* was being produced for retail at the time. What history has preserved is evidence of this particular liquor flowing through those forms of hospitality that have so far been the focus of this study. Whatever other pathways may have existed to alternative social venues for the substance's consumption, all of them failed to draw the attention—or were intentionally prevented from drawing the attention—of those recording such things, be they town corporations, the colonial administration, commentators wishing to revive colonization, or literati. However else the substance may have flowed and been consumed in the waning colonial world of late medieval Ireland, it was a key feature of Gaelic(ized) hospitality.

One prime piece of evidence revealing something of the flow of *uisce beatha* among the Gaelic(ized) Irish is the circa 1530 Ó Cearbhaill (O'Carroll) encomium used earlier in this study to define the composition of Ireland's choice distillate. While the bardic author was poetically vague on the subject of economic form, he did describe the acquisition of exotic spices for the domestic production of a distillate that was already earmarked for a named individual. There is no mention of anything being directly exchanged between Ó Grádaigh (O'Grady) and Ó Cearnaigh (O'Kearney) in return for the “*t-uisge beatha*” that the former produced for the latter.

This libationary “gift” is mentioned, however, in relation to a “gathering on Sunday” of the “tribe of O’Kearney” (Knott 1926:164).

To briefly recap what was covered in greater detail in Chapter 4, in the Gaelic(ized) sociocultural world of late medieval Ireland, ethical imperatives translated into the social obligation of a host—whether lord or tenant—to offer a guest this health-giving liquor as an act of “generosity.” This “generosity” was predicated on nothing being directly exchanged—in cash or kind—for a host’s offering of food and drink to a guest. This is not to say that a host gained nothing by expending wealth on such gestures. Gaelic(ized) “generosity” was not only a means of accumulating social capital, it was mandatory to maintain what social capital one had, lest the taint of “dishonor” pull one down in social standing (Simms 1978:68,86-88; O’Sullivan 2004:65-68,83-87,94-98).

The Sunday gathering of the “*clann* Í Chearnaigh” alluded to in the Ó Cearbhaill (O’Carroll) encomium was likely a sort of coshering, whereby lesser elites supplied food and drink to feasts hosted by their social superiors (Knott 1926:164, 1922:1,249-250). As a client’s wealth in Gaelic(ized) society derived from gifted cattle raised on lands gifted by a chief-lord on behalf of the *clann*, the hospitable exactions that enabled feasting amounted to the meeting of reciprocal obligation on the part of client-kinsmen (Duffy et al. 2001:48; Gillespie 2006:26; Conolly 2007). The feasts thus supplied served, in turn, as a prime venue for the redistribution of *uisce beatha* and all sorts of other food, drink, and more durable wealth, as described in Chapter 4.

In his introduction to *The Social Life of Things*, Arjun Appadurai (1988:21) termed such events “tournaments of value.” These are occasional events where valuable items change hands in contests for status marked off as distinct from, yet related to, everyday economy. Gaelic(ized) feasts may have been dominated by the exchange of more ephemeral goods—foodstuffs and drink that were consumed on the spot, rather than durable household or wearable objects that could become heirlooms—but their social role was not unlike the “potlatch” described by Marcel Mauss ([1925] 2000) in his seminal book *The Gift*. Among native peoples of the American Pacific Northwest, an entire season was devoted to such feasting. In the potlatch season, hostile rivalries played out through the medium of obligatory hospitality that lavishly expended wealth in the negotiation of rank. Calculations were taking place, in terms of the repaying of social credit in some given time frame, with honor at stake. The gifting that constituted a potlatch was, in essence, a tournament of obligation production. The winner here was the individual with the most owed to him on account of the extremes of his generosity in giving to others. It was a system predicated on the obligations to give, receive, and reciprocate. Opting out by refusing to receive was not an honorable option, as it amounted to admitting defeat within the competitive cycle (Mauss [1925] 2000:6,33-41,75).

Mauss pointed out, in his conclusion to *The Gift*, that it was Bronislaw Malinowski who first attempted to classify the difference between gifting and barter on a continuum from relative self-interest to disinterest. Mauss found such differentiation utter nonsense, as all gifts could be argued to involve some amount of social calculation. All expenditures of wealth were at their core self-interested, but in different ways when the logic and moral code of either gifting or

capitalism predominated (Mauss [1925] 2000:73-75). Appadurai, in characterizing more than a half century of economic anthropology, pointed out the influence that the Malinowski-inspired dichotomy of gift:commodity had had—focusing a generation of scholarship on the spirit of relative “interestedness” thought to drive opposing categories of action (Appadurai 1988:11).

Starting with Karl Polanyi’s work on ancient economic systems in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, Malinowski’s attempt at a classification of types of exchange was extended into a typology of economies. Polanyi’s evolutionary model moved through three formal stages. In the first, kinship dominated economies that were based on symmetrical reciprocity within “primitive” societies. Next came “archaic” societies, where the centralizing tendencies of politico-religious hegemony organized the redistribution of goods and wealth. “Modern” market societies, the third stage, were characterized by the haggling of market exchange, which “disembedded” the economy from other social institutions. While the three types might coexist, there was a necessary historical progression from one to another (Polanyi 1944, 1968; Gudeman 2001:84-85).

Marshall Sahlins tweaked Polanyi's model into one built around a scale that classified acts of exchange, rather than whole economies. Sahlins’ model replaced the evolutionary imperative of Polanyi with a consideration of the social proximity and motivations of the participants in a given economic act. The “altruistic” obligations of close kin fell into the category of “generalized reciprocity.” Potentially calculated acts of gift giving and receiving tended to occur between more distant kin engaged in “balanced reciprocity.” “Negative reciprocity”—or attempting to get the most out of a transaction by haggling in barter, or resorting

to theft—marked the most distant social relations, generally between non-kin “strangers” (Sahlins 1972; Gudeman 2001:85-86).

Sahlins’s analytical model is the most useful for the purposes of a study interested in the messiness of colonial worlds, where imagined ideals confronted practical reality. There is room within it for all of the forms of exchange to exist within the same society in the same historical moment. The importance of this for a study of late medieval to early modern Ireland will become clear shortly. In a more general anthropological sense, Sahlins’s model is most relevant because it emphasizes the sorts of social relationships promoted or discouraged through certain types of economic action. This has great significance within a colonial context like early modern Ireland, where government administrators and published commentators took great interest in promoting specific forms of exchange while proscribing others.

Guesting and coyne and livery in late medieval Gaelic(ized) Ireland represented a “generalized reciprocity” that extended beyond close kin on the basis of duty and moral censure. The “black rents” that medieval Gaelic chief-lords gleaned from Anglo-Norman towns in Ireland fell somewhere between “generalized” and “balanced reciprocity.” These “black rents” were a tax-in-kind that heavily armed elites from the Irish hinterland extorted from the merchants who ruled the urban enclaves of Ireland. Feasting, on the other hand, was a venue for social competition that simultaneously drew more distant kin and non-kin into relationships of allegiance and obligation—constituting “balanced reciprocity.” Some form of “negative reciprocity,” manifest in acts of barter or cash sale involving the commodity form of goods—was present in dealings between the Gaelic(ized) Irish and their Anglo-Norman descended urban

neighbors—the latter a supposedly alien nation determined to keep itself apart in Ireland’s urban enclaves. Beyond these towns, however, “negative reciprocity” was only minimally present, if at all, as the Late Medieval rolled into the Early Modern. While none of these forms of reciprocity disappeared completely in the coming centuries, the balance between them would change in ways and for reasons attributable directly to the English colonial project in Ireland.

### *Individual Consumers of the Commodity Form*

But the goal here is not simply to categorize the economic forms encountered in this study. The aim is, rather, to understand the social implications of those economic forms that predominated in late medieval to early modern Ireland—forms that early modern English colonials were interacting with and sought to re(-)form. In this way, the deeper colonial anxieties driving the social and economic reforms that typified the early modern (re)conquest and colonization of Ireland can be tied more directly to the form these colonial interventions took.

What was the essential difference between the typically Irish economic forms, against which the English reacted so strongly, and the economic forms that the colonial power promoted? Contributors to *The Social Life of Things* volume provide some clarity here, boiling the riot of “reciprocities” Sahlins delineated back down into the dueling forms of gift and commodity. The key to this dichotomy is not, however, the “interestedness” of those involved, as economic activity is never disinterested. The difference lays in how social relations justify and mediate the flow of goods in each. The gift form—seen in “generalized” and “balanced reciprocity”—maximizes the social embeddedness of economic activity by lengthening the duration of nondiscrete reciprocal relations. The commodity forms of barter and cash sale—

representing “negative reciprocity”—minimize the social ties involved in the exchange of things to an immediate reciprocation of object for object, or object for currency (Appadurai 1988:9-11; Kopytoff 1988:69).

This fundamental difference in the types of social relationships that different economic forms encourage explains the powerful role that commodification has played in colonial projects, across seemingly discreet aspects of society. In *Ethnography and the Historical Imagination*, Jean and John Comaroff (1992:76,144,225,231) demonstrated how the interests of a variety of colonial agents—missionaries, health officials, teachers, merchants—overlapped in the promotion of commodity consumption in African colonies. The imposition of the commodity form in these contexts had as much to do, the Comaroffs argued, with creating ordered and governable subjects in the colonial periphery as with generating markets for goods produced in industrialized colonial cores. The goal in re-forming local African economies away from gifts and toward commodified material relations was, as the Comaroffs put, to “cut loose from ‘tribal’ entanglements and set on the path to individual self-construction” the local peoples. This “self-construction” was built around the “radical individuation” inhering in this economic form, which was tied to the religiously intoned concept of “the ‘free’ individual, who ostensibly had the capacity to negotiate his/her place in the moral and material economy” as a “discrete, sanitized” person.

The Comaroffs (1992:144) tied the “notion of person and property” inhering in the commodity form of economic transaction, as imposed on 19<sup>th</sup>-century Africans, to the cultural mores of industrial capitalist worlds back in Europe. What the current study of early modern

Ireland has revealed is that these politico-economic ideals, and their colonial impacts, had deeper roots in a decidedly preindustrial Europe. The Comaroffs' insights into the more obfuscated politico-economic motivations of missionaries in Africa bear striking resemblance to what Fynes Moryson had to say more directly about the political economy of hospitality in Gaelic(ized) Ireland. As far back as the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, when Moryson wrote his colonial commentary, all of the noncommodified economic forms covered in this study—guesting, feasting, and hosting—were blamed for perpetuating relationships that ran counter to a properly constituted, pacified society. The local gifting culture stood in marked contrast, in his critique, to “the custom of industry to live every man of his own,” which was “a strong establishment of any commonwealth” (Moryson [1626] 1904a:249). A desire to re(-)form the local socioeconomic entanglements of subject people—replacing them with what was argued to be greater individual “independence,” but actually involved greater entanglement in the more distended modern world-system, thus spanned the centuries of English imperial growth.

What this perspective on commodification has the potential to reveal is the complex and messy process of negotiated change across multiple areas of colonial life, nuances that are lost in historical models that strive to simply catalogue the spread of a preformed economic world-system. It can also be extended in analytical scope to consider how the imposition of the commodity form across different segments of the colonial economy was meant to create more desirable cross-community relationships, and thus allay the anxieties of intimacy and entanglement that life in a colonial world engendered among agents of colonization living there.

## CONTROLLING HOW DISTILLATES FLOWED IN IRELAND: GRAPPLING WITH ECONOMIC FORMS

From as early as 1556—just as the Tudor (re)conquest and its plantation land settlements reaffirmed England’s colonial interest in Ireland—the government in Dublin was expressing a concern for the ubiquitousness of distilled liquor in Irish life. The opening of this public discourse—and government intervention—was heralded by an Irish parliamentary statute passed during the brief reign of Mary I and her husband Philip (II of Spain) (Authority of Parliament [1556] 1765:251).<sup>6</sup> This 1556 “Act against making of *Aqua Vitæ*” would continue as a touchstone throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century, called upon when English colonial administrators sought to reinvigorate or realign the military (re)conquest and civil re(-)formation of Ireland.

These reprisals of the 1556 act would specifically mention controlling the sale of Irish-made *aqua vitæ*—highlighting a cash-based commodity form of exchange at these later dates (Brewer and Bullen [1571] 1867:409-411; Russell and Prendergast [1613] 1877:373; [1623] 1880:424). The original statute, however, made no reference to the economic mechanism by which distilled liquor was moving through Irish society—whether through a commodity or noncommodity form. All it had to say was that the liquor was being made—“especially in the borders of the Irishry”—and drunk as an in-demand item of household “furniture of Irishmen.” Parliament also noted that the drink was “nothing profitable to be daily drunken and used” (Authority of Parliament [1556] 1765:251).

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<sup>6</sup> Mary and Philip were Catholic monarchs of England ruling, if in name only, over the Kingdom of Ireland by right of Henry VIII’s claim (Brigden 2001:197-211).

Building a better understanding of the scope and impact of such colonial interventions into Irish drinkways—which focused on distilled liquor itself—requires that as clear a picture as possible be developed of the production and distribution of the substance, to complement what this study has already revealed about its consumption. Where, how, and by whom was it made? Outside of the hospitable redistributions already covered in earlier chapters, what might the circulation of *uisce beatha*-cum-usquebaugh—and its component parts—have looked like as the Late Medieval turned over into the Early Modern?

*“A drink...now universally throughout this realm of Ireland made”<sup>7</sup>*

Evidence of where, how, and by whom distilling was undertaken in late medieval to early modern Ireland is scant. The production portion in the life of the substance was not its most noteworthy in Gaelic(ized) bardic tradition. There are, however, tantalizing clues in other sources that reveal the faint outlines of the local production process. The late medieval diocesan register from south-central Ireland known as the *Red Book of Ossory* contains instructions for *aqua vitæ* that describe the process of its material production in surprising detail. Distilling began with a strong red wine being placed in a pot that then had its mouth closed tightly with a “clepsydra made of wood.” A piece of linen cloth was then wrapped around this compact still, sealing the parts. Something called a “cavalis” emerged from this linen-wrapped combination of pot and “clepsydra.” The whole setup was placed over a fire, where the wine was distilled,

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<sup>7</sup> From the first line of “An Act against making of aqua vitæ,” passed into law in Ireland during the reign of Queen Mary I and her husband King Philip (I of England and Ireland and II of Spain) (Authority of Parliament [1556] 1765:251).

reducing the quantity of liquid by half, and producing a more potent alcohol (O’Sullivan 2004:103-104).

Determining the material culture to which this scribe was referring—to better understand the scale of such an operation—requires a bit of translation work and a brief foray into contemporary practices of distilling. “Clepsydra” was a term for an ancient water clock that consisted of a bowl with a small hole in the center of it (McNown 1976:347). “Cavalis” may well have been a creative spelling of *caulis*, Latin for a stalk or stem.<sup>8</sup> These two items—a bowl with a hole in the center and a thin hollow tube that resembles a plant stalk—resemble equipment used to distill alchemical medicine in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. An illustration of them and explanation of their use can be found in the 1576 English edition of Conrad Gessner’s<sup>9</sup> *The Newe Iewell of Health*. In this dense volume, an annotated woodblock print described: the furnace that the pot was placed on, the pot itself, the cover for the pot that had a hole for the pipe to emerge from, and the pipe emerging from that cover. Given the size of pot and receiver depicted in Gessner’s woodblock print—which conveniently included a man for scale—such an operation as described in the *Red Book of Ossory* could only have produced small amounts of distilled liquor at a time (Gessner 1576:214-215).

The only other physical evidence for the material culture actually involved in distilling in late medieval Ireland comes from an *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* article published in 1859 in response to a piece of the previous year. The author of “On the Antiquity of Brewing and

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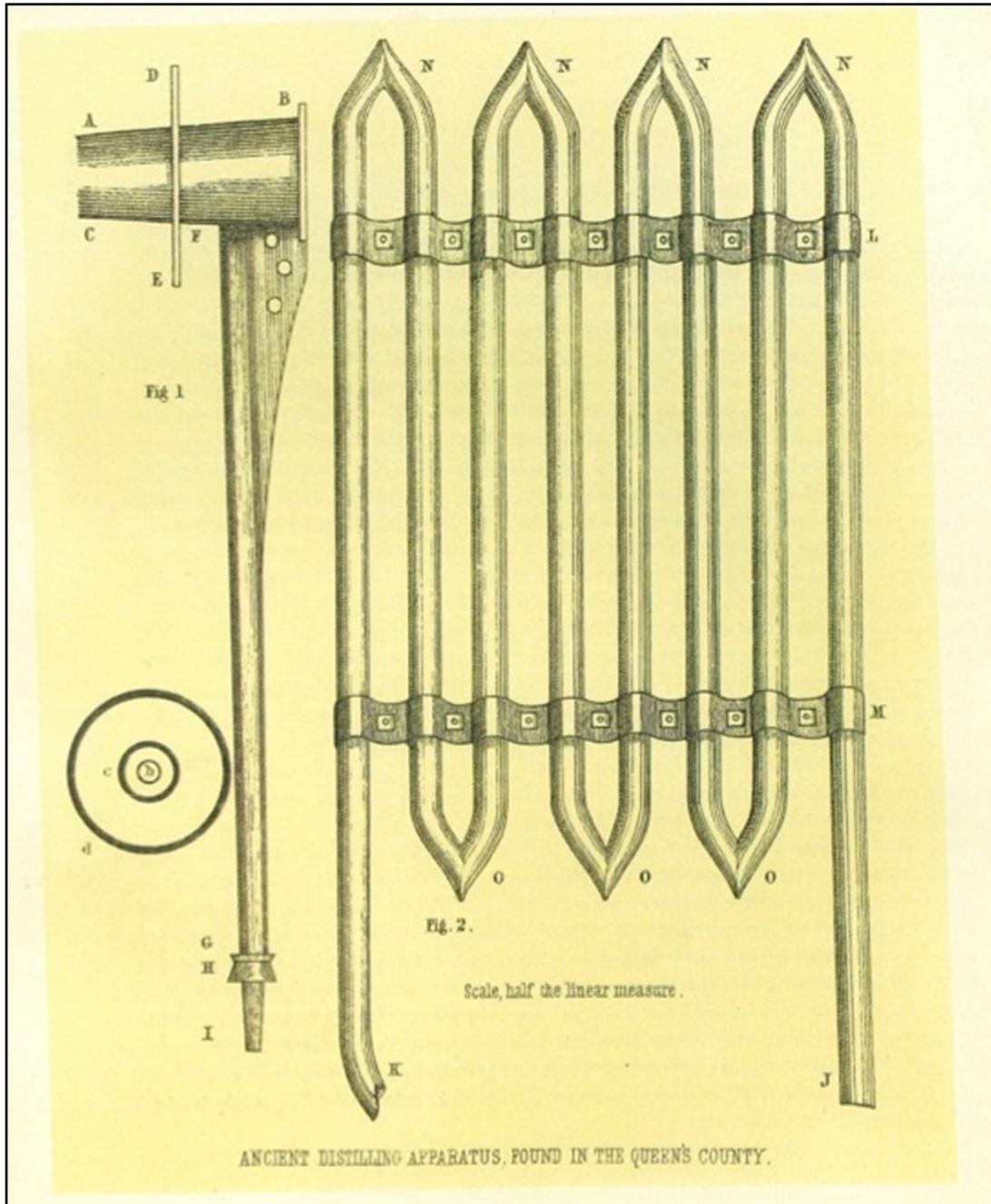
<sup>8</sup> “*Caulis, n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 17 April 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/29108](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/29108).

<sup>9</sup> Conrad Gessner (or Gesner) A 16<sup>th</sup>-century Swiss polymath who studied and practiced ancient languages, and published in medicine and the natural sciences (Public Health Service of the US Department of Health, Education, and Welfare 1965:4-5).

Distillation in Ireland” included an annotated copperplate etching of an “Ancient Distilling Apparatus, Found in the Queen’s County” (Figure 22). This illustration depicts two sections of a copper “serpentum or worm” (condensation coil)—another name given to the “cavalis” (*caulis*) or tube emerging from the cover sitting on the distilling pot. It was designed to transport alcohol vapor—which was boiling off of the wine in the pot, and collecting in the “clepsydra” or alembic head—to the receiver. This vapor condensed into liquid distillate as it cooled in the worm on its way to the receiver. Once again, only a small (nonindustrial) amount of concentrated alcohol could be collected per boiling (E.C. 1859:37-40).

Two similar artifacts of distillation were in the collections of the Irish Academy in the 1850s. One was found in King’s County (County Offaly), which abuts Queen’s County (County Laois) in central Ireland, while the other came out of late medieval Gaelic(ized) castle ruins in County Sligo, in the northwest of Ireland. The Victorian author asserted that the material composition and condition of these still worms date them to as early as the 14<sup>th</sup> century (E.C. 1859:38-40). This claim, however, has no basis in the scientific dating techniques employed by modern archaeology, nor were any of these artifacts scientifically excavated from closed contexts.

To a certain extent, the problem of dating these Irish artifacts can be remedied by comparing them to the brass still worm excavated from Carrick Castle (Figure 23), a late medieval to early modern castle context in the Scottish Highlands first brought up in Chapter 2 during a discussion of the material constitution of early modern usquebaugh. The still worm was found during small-scale excavations conducted by contract archaeologists at the behest of the



**Figure 22** A late medieval to early modern Irish still worm. Illustration from “On the Antiquity of Brewing and Distillation in Ireland,” E.C., 1859, *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*. Reproduced here with permission from the Ulster Archaeological Society.

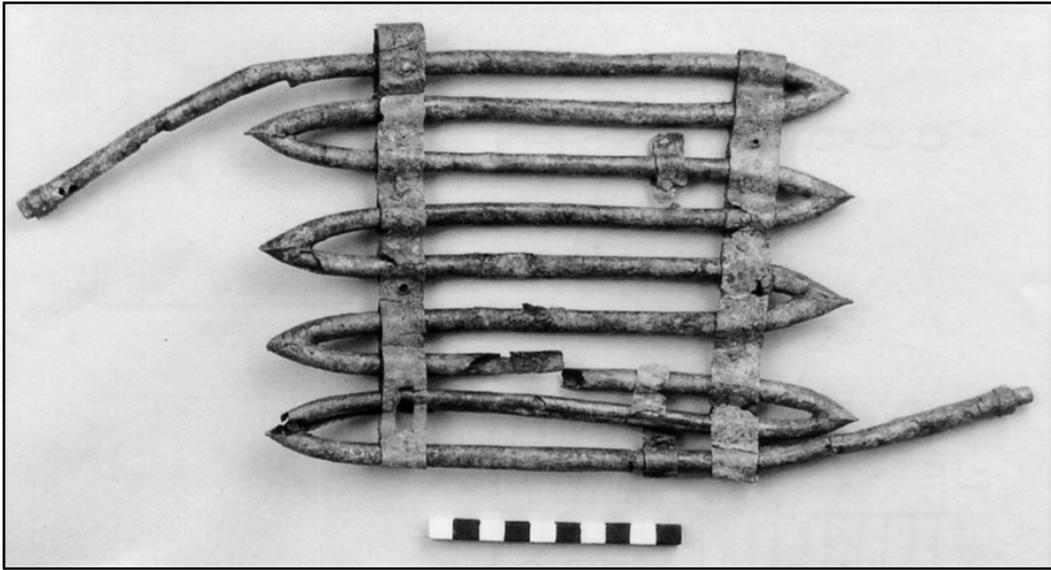
structure's private owner and Historic Scotland. It was recovered from an assessment trench abutting the south wall of the castle's basement, in a strata that was laid down sometime between 1639 and 1685. Sherds of late medieval Scottish pottery were found in the same strata. The archaeology revealed other indications that small-scale distilling had been undertaken in the basement in the Late Medieval. In a room east of the one where the still worm was found, the stain of a wooden barrel was present on a raised floor adjacent to a 15<sup>th</sup>-century hearth feature (Haynes et al. 1998:33-37).

Such a still setup would have been strikingly similar to that depicted in Gessner's (1576:214) illustrations (Figure 24). The still worm itself was of a size that only small amounts of distillate could have been produced at any one time (Haynes et al. 1998:41). From illustrations in Gessner's (1576:11,28-29) book, it would seem that larger-scale production of distilled liquor in the 16<sup>th</sup> century simply involved setting up a greater number of small stills (Figure 25). Larger pot stills—like those seen in Diderot's (1763) *Encyclopédie*<sup>10</sup>—had apparently not yet been engineered.

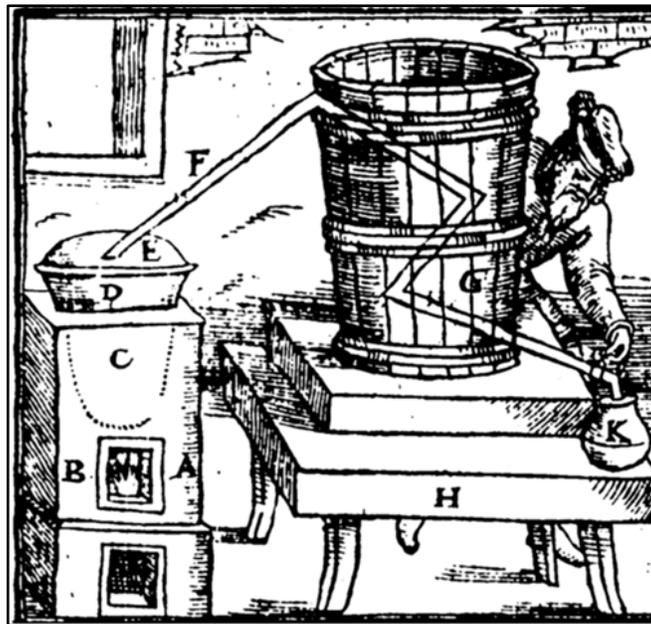
Who in late medieval to early modern Ireland was employing such utensils to distill the wine-based liquor that featured so prominently in Gaelic(ized) hospitality? As far as can be discerned from the surviving documentary record, Gaelic(ized) *uisce beatha* was a substance composed of exotic ingredients that had to be imported from overseas. Ireland's climate has never been conducive to the growing of grapes for wine-making, meaning that wine for drinking

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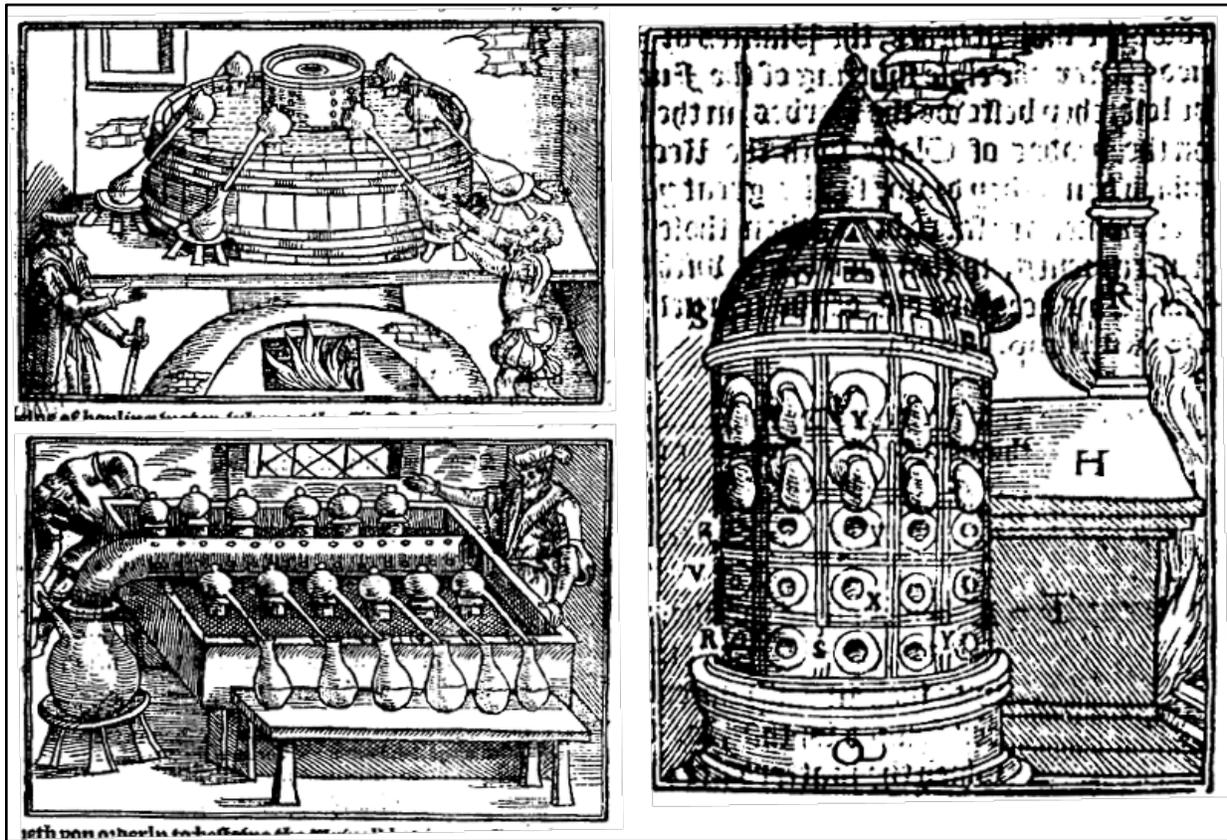
<sup>10</sup> "Spirit distillation," The Encyclopedia of Diderot & d'Alembert Collaborative Translation Project, accessed 19 June 2019, <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/spo.did2222.0001.438>. Originally published as "Distillateur d'eau-de-vie," *Encyclopédie ou dictionnaire raisonné des sciences, des arts et des métiers*, vol. 3 (plates) (Paris, 1763).



**Figure 23** A late medieval to early modern Scottish still worm. Illustration from “A Still Worm from Excavations at Carrick Castle, Argyll,” Haynes et al., 1998. This article was published by Taylor & Francis in *Post-Medieval Archaeology* in 1998, available online: <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1179/pma.1998.003>.



**Figure 24** Setup for distilling *aqua vitae* from the lees of wine. Illustration from *The Newe Jewell of Health*, Conrad Gessner 1576. The Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Call No.: RB 59956.



**Figure 25** Large-scale distilling setups involving multiple alembics drawing heat from a single furnace. Illustration from *The Newe Iewell of Health*, Conrad Gessner 1576. The Huntington Library, San Marino, California. Call No.: RB 59956.

or distilling has always had to be imported (Hall 2011). This—and the exotic spices that distinguished the substance—would have put the production of a drink like that described in the Ó Cearbhaill (O’Carroll) encomium beyond the means of the lowest order of Gaelic(ized) household, unless they were producing it with resources supplied them by their social superiors. That “*aqua vitæ* pots” were bequeathed in the wills of individual residents of Irish towns is evidence that they were distilling some manner of liquor in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, albeit on a small scale (Flavin 2014:174-175).

It is possible that a less costly cereal-based *uisce beatha*—where the equivalent of beer replaced wine in the distilling process—was being produced before the Elizabethan (re)conquest of Ireland. That a fermented cereal base for late medieval *uisce beatha* is not mentioned in the Irish documentary record is not surprising, given how biased this record would have been toward the lives of wealthier members of Irish society. Cereal was being grown in Ireland—in various forms and to varying extents—from as early as 4800–4500 BC (Hall 2011:77). By the Late Medieval tillage, while still present, had waned in importance in the Irish countryside. This led to a shrinking of whatever grain surplus had existed during the expansion of such agriculture at the height of Anglo-Norman power earlier in the Medieval (Lennon 2014; Richter 2014:143,154).

A local source of grain would have presumably made alcohol brewed and distilled from it a cheaper alternative to wine as a base for *uisce beatha* distilling. Such a use of grain would, however, have diverted resources from the feeding of local populations on breads and porridges. This factor, whether real or imagined, surfaced time and again in the arguments that early modern colonial administrators made against unfettered distilling in Ireland. The negative impact that distilling in particular had on food availability was made all the more wasteful, according to these arguments, because the diversion of grain from kitchen to still room, while yielding a higher alcohol-content drink, consumed at least twice as much grain as brewing a comparable volume of beer or ale. In other words, brewing one pint of beer or ale supposedly used the same amount of grain as distilling a half pint of Irish *aqua vitæ* (Authority of Parliament [1556] 1765:251; Brewer and Bullen [1571] 1867:409-411; Phillips [1622] 1928:57; Treadwell [1622] 2006:246,274,328,766; Russell and Prendergast [1623] 1880:426; Mahaffy [1641] 1901:299).

Whatever the base alcohol used, the very act of distilling was a more costly process, in terms of sheer amount of material inputs, than brewing alone. This might qualify it as a “luxury,” but it was a “luxury” that was necessary for all manner of Irish households to produce or purchase to have on hand. The necessity of complying with the hierarchically structured social obligations and Gaelic(ized) moral imperatives covered in earlier chapters meant that a wide swath of Gaelic(ized) society was expected to supply some form of this “luxury” not only to their chief-lord, but to any traveler who presented himself or herself at the door (O’Sullivan 2004:63-66). If it was a luxury, it was one that embodied generosity and ensured health when individuals ventured beyond their own thresholds.

#### *A Brief History of Irish Economic Forms*

Despite being an identifiably Irish distillate, *uisce beatha* was a substance with material roots outside the Gaelic(ized) material world. Both the wine from which it was distilled, and the spices that lent their aroma to the finished product, had to be imported into Ireland (Cambrensis [1188] 2000; Mitchell and Ryan 2001; Hall 2011; Flavin 2014:148-184). Archaeological finds have revealed that a thirst for wine—either for secular imbibing or use in essential Christian ritual—played a role in Irish overseas trade in the latter days of the Roman Empire. Following the contraction of Roman power in Europe<sup>11</sup>—which coincided with the introduction of Christianity into Ireland, and marked the transition to the Early Medieval across the British Isles—an increasingly settled Viking presence in towns along the Irish coast used their maritime

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<sup>11</sup> Rome had dominated what would become England and Wales from the 1st through the early 5th centuries CE (Hanson 1999).

trade networks to supply the exotic needs of inland Irish elites. This wine trade grew to dominate from the mid-9<sup>th</sup> century. The Irish for “market”—*margadh*—is, in fact, a loan word from the Old Norse—*markadhr* (Doherty 1980; Richter 2014:29,108-124).

From early in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the trade networks supplying port towns like Dublin shifted from the North Sea to the English Channel. By the end of this century, Anglo-Norman merchants had taken over and expanded the import of exotic goods, like wine, into towns that had fallen under the direct control of the English Crown (Richter 2014:134). By the Late Medieval, Anglo-Norman descended merchants were using their connections to Spanish, French, and English suppliers to bring European cloth, hops, and wine into Ireland. These goods were then traded on into the Irish hinterland for Gaelic-raised animal products (Simms 1978:86-89; Smith 2000:44; Hartnett 2010:126,212-144; Horning 2013:19; Flavin 2014:173-174; Lennon 2014, n.p.). *Aqua vitæ*—which in its plain form could serve as the base for compounding *uisce beatha*-cum-usquebaugh through the addition of spices—did not appear as an item officially imported into Ireland via the English port of Bristol in the 16<sup>th</sup> century (Flavin 2014:143-184). French or Spanish *aqua vitæ* did appear among those goods imported into Galway from the last quarter of the 16<sup>th</sup> century, though (Hartnett 2010:301-302). The urban dwellers distilling small quantities of liquor in their homes in Ireland may very well have traded it about town and on into the Gaelic(ized) hinterland, through the economic forms discussed below (Flavin 2014:174-175).

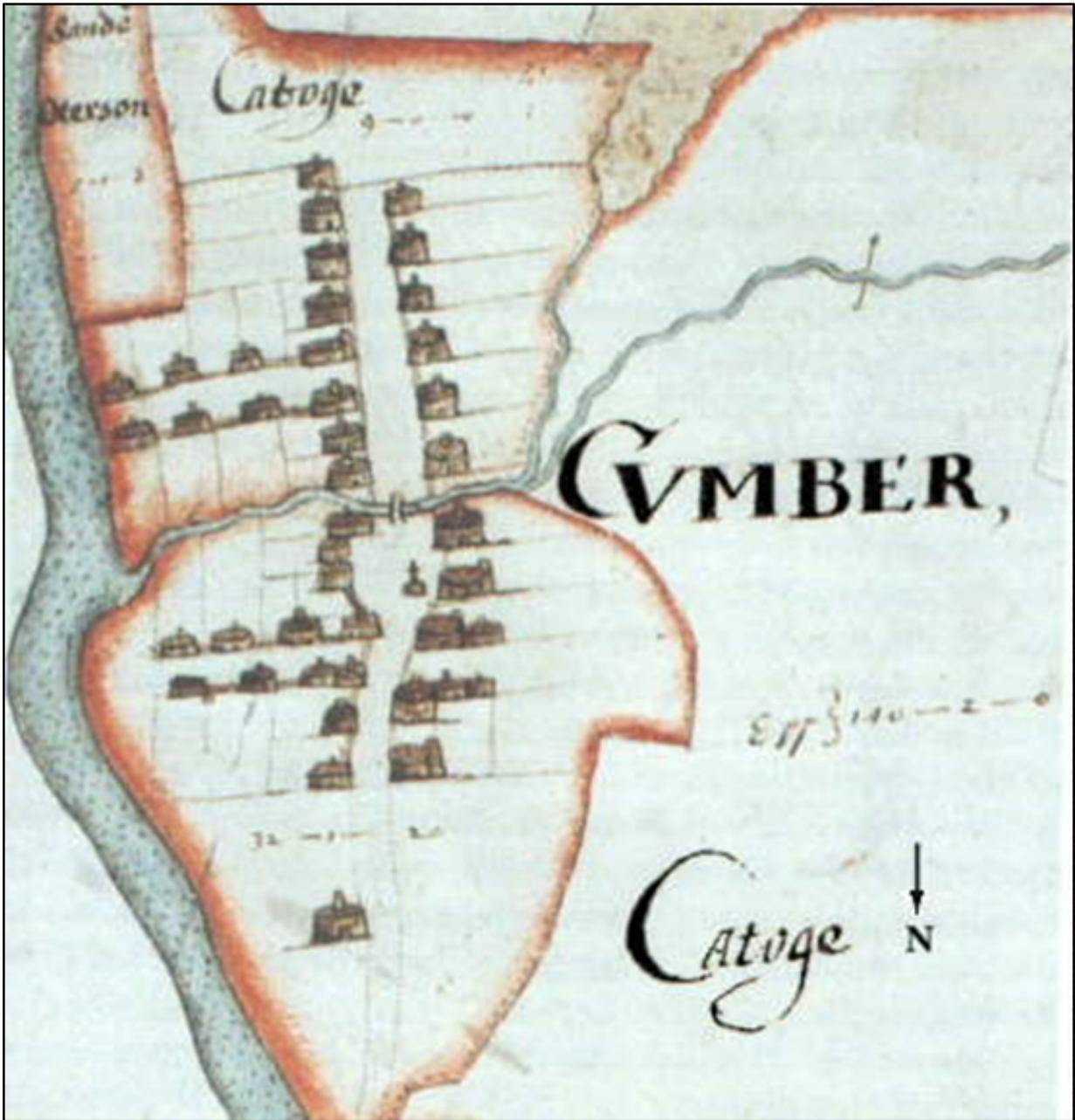
What form economic transactions took as exotic goods like wine and spices, and possibly *aqua vitæ*, made their way from Anglo-Norman port towns to Gaelic(ized) feasts in the Late Medieval and Early Modern remains an open question. Many options seem to have been

available to serve contemporary Irish socioeconomic worlds. If these Irish port towns had been faithfully following the Anglo-Norman model seen in medieval England and Scotland, goods from the agricultural hinterland would have entered a tightly controlled physical marketplace within the town. Once there, the produce would have been sold at set prices, out in the open, and those selling it could then have bought locally made goods (such as *aqua vitæ*) and exotic imports (such as wine and spices) at set prices in a public setting. The exclusive power vested, by royal charter, in a corporate body of townspeople to oversee the production and distribution of goods within this urban space was physically manifest in the market cross. This stone monument, generally surmounted with a cross or other symbol of authority, stood in a widening of the main thoroughfare that constituted a borough's marketplace (Figures 26–29). Temporary stalls, either freestanding or opening out of the fronts of burgesses' homes, were where goods were sold, out in the open for all to see, at specified times on specified days of the week. The aim of such coordination was to ensure that fixed prices were charged for quality goods moving as cash commodities through the public space of the marketplace (O'Keefe 2001:90-95; Hall 2002:11; Edwards 2006:17-19,29; Mortimer 2009:22-23,91-95,228; Lennon 2014, n.p.; Richter 2014:134).

Despite what some scholars have argued (Doherty 1980), there is no clear evidence that spatially defined marketplaces structured trade in Ireland outside of the urban spaces established by Vikings and taken over or founded anew by Anglo-Normans in the later Medieval. The ornately carved high crosses of early medieval Ireland marked purely ritual space. Neither they nor pre-Norman Irish monasteries served as the perpetual centers for trade that would have







**Figure 28** Market cross at “Cumber” [Comber], a proprietary plantation town on James Hamilton’s Clandeboye Estate, Thomas Raven, 1625/6. © North Down Museum.



**Figure 29** Market cross and inn signage at Londonderry Plantation town of Limavady. Illustration from “A platt of Sir Thomas Phillips buildings” with cartouche reading “Sr Thomas Phillips buildings at Limavadde,” Thomas Raven, 1622. Image courtesy of Lambeth Palace Library. ID No.: Carew MS 634.f34v-35r.

earned the designation of “market.” The economic exchange practiced beyond town boundaries was much more nebulous than that. Since at least the Early Medieval, trade goods were distributed beyond the trading enclaves of coastal Ireland through “itinerant peddlers” (Valante 1998:9,11-12). This pattern continued up through the Medieval, and well into the Early Modern.

However much the colonial administration of medieval Ireland wanted the Anglo-Norman descended community to isolate itself from its Irish neighbors, as seen in the Statute of Kilkenny, socioeconomic reality fostered their mutual entanglement. Settlers from England and Wales at first attempted to establish feudal manors in the Irish countryside to supply agricultural commodities—mostly grain—to borough towns, in a largely self-contained colonial system. Over the centuries, these extramural settlements shrank in scale and number in the face of a Gaelic resurgence and the gradual collapse of English rule. Those among the lower orders of the Anglo-Norman diaspora wishing to retain some semblance of a settler identity retreated to the safety of urban enclaves. In order for those enclaves to survive, however, socioeconomic ties had to be maintained with an increasingly Gaelic(ized) hinterland—where animal products were obtained for the export market that enabled the import of wine and other exotic goods into Ireland. This colonial retreat out of the late medieval Irish countryside took with it what cash economy had been established—leaving barter, hospitable redistribution, and strong-arm tactics in its wake (Lennon 2014; Richter 2014:143-144,151,166,170).

Thirsty Gaelic(ized) chief-lords did not shy away from using intimidation, if they had the means, to acquire the exotic goods they wanted from these colonial port towns. Peace, rather than rural produce, was offered by these chief-lords from the hinterland when they engaged townsmen in Ireland in the form of urban exchange—or rather extortion—known as “black rents” (Simms 1978:86-89; Smith 2000:38,44; Hartnett 2010:126,212-244; Horning 2013:19; Lennon 2014). Not all Gaelic(ized) elites could so successfully intimidate town merchants. They had to rely on less dramatic means of acquiring what towns had to offer. When the minor

Gaelic(ized) chief-lord mentioned in the circa 1530 Ó Cearbhaill (O'Carroll) encomium sent a boy into town for the spices needed to make *uisce beatha* (Knott 1926:164, 1922:1,249-250), the acquisition presumably involved barter, or a rare cash purchase.

However, on the off chance that colonial law was being closely observed, no one of a Gaelic(ized) persuasion was allowed into Anglo-Norman urban space, even for trade (Richter 2014:166). Fortunately, the rural population of 16<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland could also acquire exotic goods, in exchange for their own produce, through “gray merchants.” These were individuals employed by town merchants specifically to circumvent laws against forestalling<sup>12</sup> that urban elites had set for those areas under their jurisdiction. As such, they were not beloved of 16<sup>th</sup>-century colonial parliaments in Ireland (Simms 1978:67; Lennon 2014). Such gray merchants continued to be a thorn in the side of the colonial administration in Ireland up through the imposition of martial law in Munster during the Second Desmond Rebellion. They were so problematic at the time that they were numbered among the professions requiring particular punitive attention, as outlined in instructions accompanying the public dissemination of that law (Brewer and Bullen [1579/80] 1868:197). By the late 17<sup>th</sup> century these itinerant peddlers went by the name “chapmen,” especially known for the books (“chapbooks”) their mobile merchandizing spread around the Irish countryside (Leitch 1990; Gillespie 2005:18-23).

Nonurban elites in Ireland could also choose to bypass trade with urban merchants altogether. They took advantage of the vast stretches of unsurveilled coast in early modern Ireland, with its many shallow inlets and small harbors, to set up their own trading relations with

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<sup>12</sup> Defying the terms of exchange set in market charters by buying and reselling goods outside of the set space and time in which the market-as-event was held (Leitch 1990:175).

overseas vessels (Lennon 2014). The lack of any way to store goods where they were being offloaded, and the unpredictability of weather and ocean conditions outside of a sheltered port, meant that this sort of exchange would have required a good deal of knowledge and coordination, and would have been precarious and prone to disaster.

Whatever the economic form used to acquire the component materials needed for *uisce beatha*-cum-usquebaugh production—whether formal urban markets, gray merchants, extortion, or direct contact with foreign ships—the interactions themselves rarely involved the use of hard currency. Specie, in the form of officially minted coinage, was not unknown in Ireland, but its availability fluctuated over the course of Irish history. Coinage was in use among Irish Vikings and their Gaelic neighbors from the mid-10<sup>th</sup> century, and the cash economy extending outward from Anglo-Norman towns in Ireland survived until English rule began retracting in the 14<sup>th</sup> century (Richter 2014:110-111,170). By the Late Medieval, and into the Early Modern, hard currency had become scarce in Ireland, especially outside of the towns, and society functioned without it (Simms 1978:68; Lennon 2014). Even when the colonial administration began minting its own coins in Dublin in the 1550s, it was a debased currency containing a third less silver than its English equivalent, and no one trusted it (Lennon 2014). Whatever wealth the inhabitants of early modern Ireland possessed, they lived in a cash-poor colonial world.

#### *Early Modern Colonial Concern for the Flow of Distillates*

The small-scale nature of early modern distilling, and the variety of economic forms interacting with one another in late medieval to early modern Ireland—especially around the flow of distilled liquor across community lines—was a constant source of frustration for colonial

administrators seeking to pacify and re(-)form the island from the 1570s. The first lord president of Munster, Sir John Perrot, refocused attention on Irish *aqua vitæ* during the Elizabethan (re)conquest of Ireland. Upon taking up his provincial post—and arms—in the face of open rebellion, Perrot reaffirmed a law-and-order approach to pacifying the region (Turvey 2009). Perrot’s proclamation concerning local spirits expanded on the 1556 “Act against making of *Aqua Vitæ*” by targeting the sale of this substance, as well as its production. He went further again by outlawing, rather than simply limiting, the making and selling of this substance in the provinces (Brewer and Bullen [1571] 1867:409-411). Perrot may have considered extending the proclamation he had made against *aqua vitæ* in Munster into a kingdom-wide suppression of the substance when he took up the office of Lord Deputy in 1584 (Turvey 2009). An anonymous note appeared that same year, addressed to the Lord Deputy and endorsed in Perrot’s name, that brought up the continued need to actually enforce the 1556 act throughout Ireland (Brewer and Bullen [1584] 1868:397).

The commercial distribution of Irish *aqua vitæ* resurfaced as an administrative concern again during the religiously tinged political crisis of 1613. Attempts to control its sale were among the issues taken up in the midst of a political stalemate brought on by the packing of the Irish Parliament to create a Protestant majority. This, in turn, prompted a year-long boycott on the part of Catholic MPs, who sought direct Crown adjudication for their grievances concerning the running of their kingdom by the staunchly anti-Catholic Lord Deputy Sir Arthur Chichester. In his response to these “recusants of Ireland,” Lord Deputy Chichester articulated his argument for why, among other things, earlier statutes against Irish *aqua vitæ* should stay in effect—

maintaining existing provisions for licensing the sale of local spirits through the office of Ireland's Lord Deputy (Russell and Prendergast [1613] 1877:373; McCavitt 2004).

*Bringing Order to Liquor's Flow in Ireland*

These colonial legislative acts betrayed a desire to corral the flow of distillates into a cash-based commodity form. This was implied in the use of the term "sale," and this would be the only way that the colonial administration in Ireland could hope to rein in the production and consumption of distilled liquor in general. The riot of economic forms present in late medieval to early modern Ireland had defied the effective execution of the 1556 "Act against making of *Aqua Vitæ*," necessitating its reassertion again and again in the early years of the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

The distribution of distilled liquor was to be brought into conformity with English desires through licensing, which was seen as the best mechanism for curtailing the sale of locally produced liquors (Authority of Parliament [1556] 1765:251; Phillips [1622] 1928:57; Treadwell [1622] 2006:246,274,328,766; Russell and Prendergast [1623] 1880:426). The practice of licensing was itself a messy and devolved affair until the creation of an official bureaucracy in the 1660s (Mahaffy [1641] 1901:299; Given 2011:23-30). Prior to this, the state attempted to sidestep the costs of enforcement by "farming" the right to grant licenses and collect the associated fees and fines to individuals who paid the administration for the privilege. For an upfront fee paid to the patent-granting body, grantees obtained the right to collect as much in fees and fines as they could from those within their jurisdiction operating the business (e.g., alehouses) or producing the product (e.g., *aqua vitæ*) to which the licenses applied (Given 2011:23-30). This system balanced the cost-consciousness of the state with the profit motive

driving colonial settlers—like the Sir Thomas Phillips whose patent to make and sell *aqua vitæ* and usquebaugh in a portion of Ulster opened this study—to invest their lives and wealth in the English project of re(-)forming Ireland.

In Perrot’s 1571 ordinance for Munster it was presumably the Lord Deputy of Ireland—or whomever he had deputized in the role—who was tasked with licensing the sale of *aqua vitæ*, on pain of fines and imprisonment, as laid out in the 1556 statute. Both the earlier statute and the later ordinance included class-based exceptions to the licensing they covered, opening space for the continued circulation of noncommodified liquor in Ireland. Peers,<sup>13</sup> gentlemen worth at least £10 in real property,<sup>14</sup> and borough freemen<sup>15</sup> were free to distill as much spirit as they liked so long as it was limited to household consumption. These exceptions to licensing would have only applied to Irish elites who agreed, at the very least, to abandon Gaelic(ized) political-economic forms in favor of the English common law concept of property ownership that underlay the social designation of “gentleman”.<sup>16</sup> Irish elites of higher social standing—the chief-lords—had to conform to the social model of “peerage” by remaining infeudated to the Crown as titled

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<sup>13</sup> Anyone with a hereditary title of nobility, all of which had originated from English Crown infeudations, who could thus claim a seat in the Irish House of Lords when a parliament was called (“peer, *n.* and *adj.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 3 July 2017, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/139725](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/139725)).

<sup>14</sup> Meaning lands or buildings (i.e. immovable property) held through individual legal title, within the tradition of English common law, and ascribed a fixed monetary value within a market economy (“real, *adj.* 2, *n.* 2, and *adv.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 3 July 2017, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/158926](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/158926)).

<sup>15</sup> Freemen were those individuals granted the privilege of working as masters of their given craft or trade within a specific town, known as a borough. The same men, acting as the borough corporation, also took up the mantle of local government within their towns (“freeman, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 3 July 2017, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/74415](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/74415); “freedom, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 3 July 2017, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/74395](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/74395)). The towns themselves were distinguished by holding charters from the English Crown that entitled them to hold regular markets and govern their own affairs with a certain level of autonomy. They also held the privilege of sending representatives to sit in the Irish House of Commons when a parliament was called (“borough, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 3 July 2017, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/21687](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/21687)).

<sup>16</sup> “Gentleman, *n.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 5 June 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/77673](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/77673).

nobles (i.e. “peers”) following the primogeniture system of inheritance. (Authority of Parliament [1556] 1765:251; Brewer and Bullen [1571] 1867:409-411). The categorical exception covering “freemen” would also have disproportionately excluded the Gaelic(ized) Irish, as statutes existed that, if observed, would have prevented members of this community from holding such privileges in ostensibly Anglo-Norman towns (Lennon 2014). As this whole system involved the buying of a license to sell distilled spirits, it likewise intentionally limited the participation of those too poor to pay, or anyone who was not operating in the cash economy.

The most famous of the licenses held within this system was the one that opened this study—that granted to Sir Thomas Phillips in 1608, which gave him and those he deputized a monopoly on making and selling “aquavite, usquabagh, and aqua composita” (Horning 2009:125, 2013:208). This monopoly was, of course, limited in territorial scope and was only to last for seven years. It was also probationary, with the “cheife governor” holding the right to recall the license “yf it appeare by any cause that same may prove hurtfull to the commonwealth.” As with the general statute, Phillips was to avoid imprisoning or fining any “peers, gentlemen, or burgesses.” He was also warned not to overreach in asserting his monopoly in neighboring County Londonderry, where a formal plantation scheme was planned (Erck [1608] 1852:477-478). The license granted to Phillips in 1608 must have been renewed throughout his lifetime. The reach that he presumed it conveyed to him was disputed on at least three separate occasions—in 1623, 1624, and 1635—by the London Companies, his neighbors in County Londonderry, with whom he maintained a longstanding feud until his death in 1636

(Russell and Prendergast [1623, 1624] 1880:449,500; Mahaffy [1635] 1903:206; Horning 2013:209,213-215).

A glaring omission from both the 1556 statute and the 1571 proclamation was any indication of how this licensing would be practically enforced on the ground in Ireland. A set of “Instructions for Wines, Aqua Vitæ, and Usquebaugh”—which Sir George Carew either produced or received in the course of a 1611 fact-finding mission that he was sent on to inquire into the state of Ulster’s plantations—fills in these details. This tract, endorsed by a man who had been a soldier and colonial administrator in Ireland before becoming a high-ranking courtier of James VI and I, detailed how the administration in Dublin intended to execute a system for licensing the retailing of alcohol throughout the kingdom. To aid in efficiency, customs agents for the Crown already present in Ireland would take on the additional business of licensing, which would require extensive travel. These agents, with their newly expanded purviews, would convene in session with the Lord Deputy and the Irish Council to chastise all home retailers of wine, *aqua vitæ*, or usquebaugh and draw them into a retail license relationship with the Crown. Failure to pay for a license would result in an order to cease such retailing (Brewer and Bullen [1611] 1873:207-208).

This elaborate scheme relied on the accuracy and thoroughness of local enrollments to be gathered by the “bailiffs and officers” of “every sheriff, mayor, magistrate” in Ireland. These enrollments would have to be composed by local officers of the law blanketing their “several circuits and precincts” through tireless travel in order to discover and record “the names of every person retailing any sort of wine, *aqua vitæ*, or usquebaugh within the same, and the place and

places in which they then dwell.” Those recorded in these enrollments would then have to travel to Dublin to be rebuked by the colonial administration and pay their licensing fees. Alternatively, the agents, the Lord Deputy, and the Irish Council would have had to travel all over Ireland to do the rebuking locally. Anyone who did not make payment was to have their name and dwelling place noted, so that they could be watched—apparently by those agents who were also working customs—to ensure that no retailing of the listed alcohols was being attempted out of their homes. The punishment was being bodily seized by these agents, with nothing more said about the accused’s fate (Brewer and Bullen [1611] 1873:207-208).

The amount of clerical work and travel that this plan involved, and the coordination it required across multiple central and local administrative bodies and officials, would have rendered it impractical to implement. Continued reliance on local office holders to gather information, when such individuals had no training in detecting domestic retail operations, meant that such enrollments, in addition to being skewed by local politics, would have inevitably been incomplete. It is debatable whether the licensing system ever took the form recommended in 1611. There is one example that provides a more detailed glimpse of local licensing mechanisms in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century. At a 1616 meeting of Belfast’s borough assembly, it was agreed that anyone seeking “to sell ale or other liquor within the said Burrough” had to “be thought fitting” enough to receive a license from the town’s “Sovereigne” (i.e., mayor; Young 1892:5). This local bylaw appears to have been inspired by the standard colonial rhetoric surrounding unfit persons selling alcohol in unfit places throughout Ireland.<sup>17</sup> There is no indication, however, that

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<sup>17</sup> This same imagery appeared repeatedly in materials produced by the Irish Commission of 1622, as well as a petition sent to the Crown in 1632 (Treadwell [1622] 2006:6,34,160,243-244; Mahaffy [1632] 1903:169).

Belfast's provision in any way tied into the system imagined to flow down from the Lord Deputy of Ireland.

The same year as the drafting of Belfast's bylaw, the Lord Deputy of Ireland made a proclamation relating to the patent for licenses to sell wine and *aqua vitæ* held by two London gentlemen, one a prominent lawyer in James VI and I's English court. The patent holders' deputies in Ireland had failed in the execution of what may well have been an unwieldy licensing scheme, and so lost their positions. Their failures reveal something of the actual practices implemented to enforce this licensing system, though. At this point, those engaged in selling wine and *aqua vitæ* were told to see the new deputies within a month of their arrival, to confirm licenses and pay outstanding fines. Anyone who failed to present themselves and take out a new license was to have their doors shuttered by their local "mayors, &c." (Steele [1616] 1910:22; Gardiner 2008). This was presumably the system within which three residents of Ireland received their licenses within the year (Russell and Prendergast [1617] 1880:152). It was not until 1637 that license holders actually retained paper licenses, of which "certified copies" could be made (Steele [1637] 1910:37).

By 1622 there was already some dispute about who should be assigned the right to license the sale of *aqua vitæ* in Ireland. The Lord Deputy had traditionally been tasked with this role, as dictated in the 1556 statute passed by the Irish Parliament to regulate the making of distillates. Only the Irish Commission of 1622 realized the lack of reference to the sale of distillates in this statute (Treadwell 2006:99,246). Whatever the statute said, it appears that by 1622 the Crown had begun granting this licensing monopoly to English aristocrats, intruding on

the rights of the Lord Deputy (Treadwell 2006:152). As of 1628, the Lord Deputy had been wholly replaced by elite English patent holders, but not without protest. Those with competing interests in Ireland went directly to the king to have him end the whole system of colonial monopolies, claiming it bred confusion and was oppressive (Mahaffy [1628] 1900:331,368,405, [1628] 1903:118). Others defended the system of licensing as being neither a monopoly, nor provoking unjury to those subject to it in Ireland (Mahaffy [1628] 1900:325). The faction favoring the patent system during these debates apparently won out, as the colonial administrator and antiquarian Sir James Ware held the grant for licensing distilling in Ireland in 1637 (Steele [1637] 1910:37). This system's continued use to control the flow of liquor in Ireland is attested to in official references to the patents it generated, which run through the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Mahaffy [1628] 1900:405, [1638, 1640] 1901:187,243).

#### PROMOTING SPECIFIC COMMODITY FORMS IN EARLY MODERN IRELAND

“but whoe can hope civilitie to see  
where neither Innes nor fayres nor marketts bee”

Pharr Lane, “Newes from the holy ile”  
(Ford [1622] 1999:154)

Re(-)forming Irish society would require leading by colonial example while executing laws designed to suppress undesirable local practice. As Spenser ([1596] 1809:51-54) and Moryson ([1617] 1904:225-228) pointed out, it was absurd to expect to maintain what the commentators understood to be ‘civility’ among colonizers—let alone re(-)form the colonized—if alternatives to undesirable local socioeconomic forms were not provided to meet, at the very

least, the essential material needs of colonial stranger-travelers for food and shelter. Eliminating one distributive system, that of Gaelic(ized) hospitality, and replacing it with another, that of cash-based commodity exchange, was a materially involved undertaking. It would require taking material steps to establish and promote preferred physical and social spaces that encouraged the desired economic forms on the ground in the colonial world. This section will use usquebaugh to trace this process of commodification across economic spheres—of hospitality, retail marketing, and military provisioning—that, despite all falling under the rubric of hospitality in the Gaelic(ized) world, were made distinct in the “civilized” commonwealth that English colonials hoped to create in Ireland.

The overall point of what follows is to demonstrate the ways that the colonial administration and agents of colonization in Ireland promoted specific commodity forms of usquebaugh in order to shield their own consuming social-selves from entanglements they felt threatened the very essence of their colonial project in Ireland. For newly arrived colonizers—or those having to travel beyond established domestic spheres into the wider world of early modern Ireland—this meant creating a space for commodified hospitality: the inn. When the need was for a place where individuals could engage, on their own terms, in a more equitable commensal politics of drink exchange, the commodified spaces of the alehouse and tavern were established. In order to encourage a more impersonal, and regulable, system through which to dispense and acquire goods, physical marketplaces needed to be established and maintained. The restless politics of early modern Ireland—part of the longer-term politico-religious tensions that would periodically erupt into all-out war at various locations in Europe throughout the 16th and 17th

centuries—drove a need for a more formalized, commodified military establishment in England’s colonial periphery. Soldiers needed to be provisioned by the state, rather than maintaining themselves directly off the proximate countryside through hospitable exaction.

### *Commodifying Hospitality*

In the Medieval, any problems that colonial administrators had with hospitality were limited to those areas of Ireland that Anglo-Normans could be said to control. By the Early Modern, the colonial project in Ireland had shifted from guarding the cultural boundaries of diasporic “English” communities scattered in what were mostly coastal enclaves,<sup>18</sup> to re(-)forming society throughout the whole of the island kingdom (Lennon and Gillespie 2000:50). Both governmental and civilian agents of colonization now had to travel through regions where their only recourse for hospitality might be the colonized “other.” A means was sought to overcome the dissonance of being dependent on a social form—in this case Gaelic(ized) guesting—that one was ideologically opposed to as a proponent of colonial social re(-)forms. Such cross-cultural hospitality also generated bodily and social anxieties from the intimate and entangling effects of the consumption of what were essentially hospitable “gifts.” Alternative forms of hospitality needed to be established on the ground in Ireland.

The system of hospitality that English colonials wanted to see in early modern Ireland was based on what would have been present in England at the time. Explicitly commercial inns

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<sup>18</sup> For a depiction of the areas left in Anglo-Norman descended control by the late 15<sup>th</sup> century—which included the Pale and the towns of Downpatrick, Kilkenny, Wexford, Waterford, Cork, Limerick, Athenry, and Galway—see the section on “The Late Middle Ages” in *The Atlas of Irish History* (Smith 2000:46-47).

dated back to the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century in England, and even earlier in the Medieval on the European Continent. They were businesses—located along trade routes and in urban centers—where purpose-built halls and ranges of chambers served the merchant class, those in other professions whose work required travel, and gentry coming into town to tend to local administration, or for leisure. For a set price, inns provided these individuals with relatively private and secure shelter, food geared to the tastes of the consumer, and drink—for oneself and one’s horse (Hare 2013; Lane 2018:19-22). The English inn stood in marked contrast to the decidedly noncommodity forms of hospitality available to travelers in Ireland—even in port towns with a healthy Anglo-Norman descended population—well into the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It was, nevertheless, an economic form that was sorely needed in the context of the early modern (re)conquest and colonization of Ireland.

### Establishing Inns for Travelers

Edmund Spenser, through the voice of Irenæus, was adamant that someone erect “convenient innes” in the enclosed towns that also needed to be established along the byways that crisscrossed Ireland (Spencer [1596] 1809:259-260). Fynes Moryson ([1617] 1904:228) best explained what distinguished “public inns” from other forms of ad hoc hospitality in early modern Ireland—the hanging of a sign above the door advertising commercial lodging within. The English belief, as expressed by Moryson ([1617] 1904:228), was that this commodity form empowered the vulnerable traveler. The clear signage that advertised an inn enabled consumers of hospitality to “challenge [their] right to be entertained” at said establishment, presuming they had the coin to pay. In other words, the sign marking a building as an inn made it clear to a

traveler that they were within their rights to demand food and lodging from said business's proprietor—the innkeeper—in exchange for payment, of course.<sup>19</sup> Physical signage was so important because these establishments so resembled private homes, and such businesses were in fact frequently conducted out of what was otherwise domestic space. Once the community of colonial travelers had built up a body of knowledge about these various identifiable inns, and developed a means of circulating that knowledge, they could make informed choices about where to stay.

This may have been one reason Sir William Brereton was keeping such careful notes of where he stayed. The accommodations that he referred to as inns during his 1635 journey were generally associated with particular signs—the Prince's Arms in Newry, the Windmill in Wexford town, the Three Cuts in Carrick-on-Suir, the King's Head in Waterford City, and the Bell at "the passage" just outside of Waterford. This was, however, not always the case, as at "Miss Wharton's house" in Carrickfergus and "Mrs. Veasie's house" in Dundalk, the latter of which was still "reported one of the best inns in the north of Ireland." All but the Prince's Arms and the Bell were described as "the houses" of named proprietors, a linguistic ambiguity that betrayed the gray area between domestic and commercialized space even in the world of public, commodified hospitality in early modern Ireland (Brereton [1635] 1904:368,372-373,394,401,404-405).

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<sup>19</sup> This interpretation of the quoted passage hinges on an archaic usage of the verb "challenge"—meaning "to demand as a right"—which was in use at the time Moryson was writing ("challenge, v.," *OED Online*, accessed 6 June 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/30299](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/30299)).

For Spenser, well-constituted English-style inns would kill multiple colonial birds with one stone. By providing a monetized alternative to the local forms of hospitality that had developed in Ireland in the Late Medieval, they would make any offer of private hospitality approaching the hated Gaelic(ized) forms unnecessary. Proper inns would also eliminate the need for—and thus any excuse for wearing—Irish mantles, as a form of portable shelter (see Figures 5–8). Filling the countryside with hostelries capable of tending to travelers’ horses in a commercial setting also circumvented the need for horse-boys—a profession seen as an apprenticeship for becoming a despised kerne or galloglass. The role of groom, so essential to hospitality in an age of horse-powered locomotion, would instead be taken by an ostler, who was paid in cash for services rendered (Spencer [1596] 1809:51-52,114,124-125,259-260).

A parliamentary act was even proposed in 1612 to promote inns. If the attribution of this law to Sir John Davies is correct, the reason for its creation—to remedy this particular colonial shortcoming of Ireland—likely came down to firsthand experience. As attorney-general of Ireland in the first decade of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Davies’s duties had him crisscrossing the island to administer law and encourage plantation. The travel involved in fulfilling this colonial office would have acquainted him all too well with the paltry state of commodified hospitality in early modern Ireland (Kelsey 2008; Horning 2009:118,120).

Commercial inns continued to be such an important tool of the early modern colonial project in Ireland that they were deemed a necessary element of plantation. The Irish Commission of 1622 reaffirmed inns specifically as one means by which “plantation will induce reformation both in religion and manners.” Echoing Spenser, the commission asserted that

accomplishing England's "civilizing" project would need to involve not only the laying of highways, but the establishment of inns on those improved roads, as "places of receipt for travellers" (Treadwell [1622] 2006:759-60). Perhaps the colonial administrators behind this assessment had the inn Sir Thomas Phillips had apparently already built on his Newtown Limavady lands in mind when they offered their advice. This inn can be seen on the map of Limavady that Thomas Raven drew up for Sir Thomas Phillips's 1622 survey of the greater Londonderry Plantation in Ulster. It is identifiable by the presence of a sign hung above its door, the details of which are absent from the map and have otherwise been lost to history (Horning 2007, 2009:118,125, 2013:205,212) (see Figure 29).

At least one 17<sup>th</sup>-century commercial hostelry remains standing in Ireland. The building—currently home to Downpatrick's Denvir's Hotel—was erected in 1642 as an inn to serve County Down. Fittingly enough—for what this study has revealed about the world of hospitality in early modern Ireland—this inn was built by a Scottish soldier who took the lands as payment for his services in the Royalist Army. A dated inscription on the building's gable end advertised the husband and wife who built and ran the inn, as well as the year of its founding (Parkinson 1928:144). Small-scale excavations and an architectural survey of the ground-floor interiors of the building revealed an original fireplace with built-in ovens (Brannon 1988).

Alcohol would have been on offer at commercial inns run in the English fashion. In England, many innkeepers were, in fact, brewers (Hare 2013:482). Given how necessary usquebaugh was to maintaining health as a traveler in Ireland—due to the intimate onslaught of the island's landscape-climate and foodstuffs—there can be little doubt it would have been

available for purchase at colonial inns. Perhaps Sir Thomas Phillips's interest in distilling and selling this substance in particular, as expressed in the 1608 patent that opened this study, related to aspirations he held to run a hostelry as part of a well-executed plantation town. By 1611 Phillips had, in his settlement at Newtown Limavady, "put in good forwardness an Inn builded English fashion, for the relief of passengers passing that way." Audrey Horning (2013:207-211), who has undertaken archaeological investigations of Phillips's Limavady, argues that at least brewing was being undertaken on these plantation lands to supply hospitable operations there. The same official commission that noted the state of affairs on Phillips's land in 1611 visited the nascent town of Belfast. Here they also found a well-ordered "Inn with very good Lodginge which is a great comferte to the travellers in those partes" (Canny 2001:206-207; Ó Baoill 2011:101; Gillespie 2012:156).

### The Emergence of Alehouses and Taverns

If life in early modern England was any indication, a need for public drinking venues would arise among settlers trying to establish themselves in colonial Ireland. The "alehouse," where beer and ale were on tap, and "tavern," where wine was sold, would come to meet this need, just as they had in England. These were places where individuals could engage, on their own terms, in a more equitable liquid commensal politics. The line between commodified hospitality intended for travelers and that provided for local residents was what differentiated inns from alehouses and taverns. While that line could blur—with alehouses occasionally providing accommodation—the two business types were considered distinct (Nicholls 2009:11; Hare 2013:480).

Inns might have been a contemporary and typically English form of hospitality that colonials would have loved to see multiply in the Irish hinterland, but alehouses seemed to follow English colonization like a plague. The latter were considered just as problematic in Ireland as they were in contemporary England (Nicholls 2009:11; Hare 2013:480). Phillips himself—although he had built an inn on his plantation lands to serve travelers where options were few—opposed the running of alehouses in out-of-the-way places (Horning 2013:235). Davies likewise legally differentiated inns and alehouses in his proposed legislation of 1612, hoping to promote the former and suppress the latter (Horning 2009:118,120).

The presence of alehouses in England actually predated that of inns by a good few centuries, with the former tracing back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Originally, they were little more than someone selling home-brewed ale out of a private residence. By the 16<sup>th</sup> century, English alehouses had developed into more distinct public drinking spaces, and their ranks had supposedly multiplied. Scholars have attributed this growth to the expansion of wage labor among the lower classes of England that frequented such establishments. How much the documentary record reflects a genuine shift in practice, rather than a growing concern among elites about drinking patterns and public congregation of the lower classes, is impossible to tell. Either way, the early modern alehouse was a place where less-than-affluent Englishmen, and probably some women, came together in leisure to share a convivial brew (Johnson 1996:183-186; Nicholls 2009:9-12; Lane 2018:22-27).

One such alehouse had sprung up in the private home of an English leatherworker and his wife on the London Mercers' Company's Ulster lands by Christmas of 1615. The alcohol on

offer here included what was likely home-brewed beer, what had to have been imported wine, and distillates that most probably included usquebaugh. Three years later, tenants living in the Drapers' Company's town of Money more went all the way to London to lodge a formal complaint against the proliferation of alehouses on that Ulster plantation. By the late 1620s, an untold number of individuals settling on plantations in Ulster had opened some portion of their homes up as commercial drinking establishments (Canny 2001:435; Horning 2009:123; 2013:234-235). Just such an unlicensed alehouse—run by an English settler out of his “house,” and hosting all manner of drinker—may well have been the setting in which the planned kidnapping of a particular English soldier-turner-settler, Sir Toby Caulfeild,<sup>20</sup> was discussed over “a pint of *aqua vita*” shared by Gaelic(ized) Irish conspirators in 1615 (Russell and Prendergast [1615] 1880:81).<sup>21</sup>

Taverns did not appear in England, at least in the documentary record, until the second half of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. There, they were commercial venues where a better sort of English consumer went to drink—wine, in particular—and share supper with his social equals (Nicholls 2009:9-12; Lane 2018:22-27). In contrast, the early 17<sup>th</sup>-century “taverns” of Dublin were more akin to the worst sort of English alehouse—in terms of both their clientele and the alcohol on offer—according to Barnaby Rich ([1610] 1624:11,70-73). Rich portrayed Dublin's taverns as unsavory haunts of drunkards where beer and ale, both little better than “Hogges wash” in quality, was sold and consumed out of filthy homes. Moryson ([1617] 1904:226, [1626]

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<sup>20</sup> The elder Sir Toby Caulfeild, who would not be ennobled as the 1st Lord Caulfeild, Baron of Charlemont until 1620 (Hunter 2008).

<sup>21</sup> A discussion that may have taken place entirely in the Irish language, as the confession recounting the whole affair required an interpreter to be taken down by colonial officials (Russell and Prendergast [1615] 1880:81).

1904a:250) also referred to urban taverns in his *Itinerary*, describing them as urban drinking spaces, little distinguished from the domestic sphere, where all manner of Irishman bought and drank wine and usquebaugh till very drunk.

A government memorandum of 1632 reinforced this association of Irish taverns with domestic space, the vending of wine, the making and selling of usquebaugh, and rebellion. Such domestic-cum-commercial drinking spaces were where unsavory types were assumed to “meet and plot many mischievous villanies, and there also receive their intelligences, whereby they know how to execute most strange and cruel stratagem upon some of his loving subjects as by divers and most bloody examples is too well known to your Majesty’s subjects of that kingdom” (Mahaffy [1632] 1903:169). Brereton ([1635] 1904:376,395,402) stopped at three taverns during his journey, two of which merited little comment, one of which was “the poorest tavern I ever saw—a little low, thatched Irish house” in the town of Carrick-on-Suir. Irish alehouses and taverns had not, apparently, taken the same hierarchical divergence in quality of premises or patrons that such establishments had in England. Nor did Irish taverns limit themselves closely to the sale of wine.

Administrative antipathy toward the colonial alehouse manifested itself in the highest level of government, through pronouncements of the king. Shortly before the Irish Commission of 1622 set about reviewing the state of colonial affairs on the island, two royally decreed Acts of State for Ireland set royal sights on this form of commercial hospitality. The goals were to reduce the number of alehouses proliferating across the subject kingdom, and bring those that

remained closer to inns in form and function. This nonstatutory law<sup>22</sup> required that any licensed alehouse maintain “two beds well and conveniently furnished for the lodging of strangers,” among other provisions (Treadwell [1622] 2006:244). There is evidence that this decree was enacted in Munster, where a proclamation asserting the same licensing regulations was recorded in Youghal’s council book in the year 1620 (Horning 2009:114). The question of how best to control the quality of persons offering alcohol for sale through alehouses, and ensure that such commercial establishments were only run in the most amenable of locations, was a recurring theme throughout the materials produced by the Irish Commission of 1622 (Treadwell 2006:6,34,160,243-244).

However much colonial authorities wished inns, taverns, and alehouses to offer clearly distinguishable forms of hospitality, their offerings overlapped well into the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Ireland. Brereton found accommodation at a “tavern” at least once on his journey—overnighting at the Boot in Swordes, just north of Dublin. He also stopped for brief refreshment (“baited”) at “a good inn” at least once. He did not specify exactly what kind of establishment Mr. Wardes’s house, the King’s Head, was, which he stopped at for both brief refreshment and rest on two separate occasions. To muddy the waters further, Brereton made specific mention of the price of drinks at two lodging “houses” that lacked any reference to signage in their descriptions (Brereton [1635] 1904:371-373,376,399-400,404).

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<sup>22</sup> Meaning that it was not passed by a legislative body (“statute, n. 1,” OED Online, accessed 28 April 2018, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/189362](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/189362)).

## Controlling Commercial Hospitality

Just as these commodified forms of hospitality allayed the bodily and social anxieties of agents of English colonization in Ireland, so they better fit the administrative needs of the colonial project there. Commodification of hospitable space made drinking in Ireland more observable. Surveillability was understood to be important in Ireland because, as Spenser put it, “the Irishman (I assure you) feares the Government no longer than he is within sight or reach” (Spencer [1596] 1809:209).

Inns, taverns, and alehouses were spaces made visible as a condition of their commodified form—even when their location blurred the lines dividing public and private space. To pull in as much commerce as possible, these establishments ideally advertised themselves through word of mouth and with large signs that even the nonliterate could recognize. Such visibility made them regulable by the state, at least in theory, in a way that Gaelic(ized) hospitality never could be. This is not to say that the ambiguity of domestic-cum-commercial space used as inns, alehouses, and taverns did not complicate their regulation (Horning 2009:120). But the licensing of alehouses—which, of the three forms of commercial hospitality discussed here, drew the particular attention of the colonial administration in early modern Ireland—was at least an imagined possibility, in a way that the licensing of cosherings was never seriously entertained.

The licensing process was intended to gate-keep who would operate these re(-)form-minded drinking establishments, what activities were permissible within them, where these establishments could be open, and how many there were to be in a given area in Ireland (Russell

and Prendergast [1620] 1880:282; Treadwell [1622] 2006:34,243-244). Through morally inflected regulation, English colonials hoped to change those elements of Irish drink culture they most disliked, bringing public practice in Ireland into better alignment with the “civil” forms they had known back home. Chief among these re(-)formations: supplanting the more domestic forms of Gaelic(ized) hospitality, which encouraged the sharing of strong drink among mixed-gender groups, with the more exclusively masculine public drinking spaces of English-style commercial establishments (Horning 2009:118-119).

### *Retailing Spirits*

English interest in commodifying the flow of alcohol in early modern Ireland was not confined to public drinking venues. It included the administrative need to corral the flow of locally made distillates into a regulable, preferably cash-based commodity form. As later reprisals of and debates over the 1556 *Aqua Vitæ* Act showed, official attempts to limit the distilling and consumption of liquor in colonial Ireland assumed that the substance was being sold (Brewer and Bullen [1571] 1867:409-411, [1584] 1868:397; Russell and Prendergast [1613] 1877:373; Treadwell [1622] 2006:13,90,96,99,181,246).

Sale of a commodity form was necessary for regulation to even be possible, as class-conscious provisos had to be included in such English-style legislation, to excuse distilling intended for domestic consumption by wealthy-enough—and therefore politically significant-enough—households. For the retailing of spiritous liquor to be easily regulated within the devolved power structure that typified the early modern British Isles, its production and distribution needed to occur within a certain local institutional framework—that of chartered

markets. Unfortunately for the early modern colonial administrators of Ireland, such economic forms did not predominate there in the Medieval. As discussed earlier in this chapter, economic practice in medieval Ireland never quite lived up to the contemporary English model.

Local historic precedent aside, early modern English colonials persisted in their belief that properly ordered market structures were the key to re(-)forming the political economy of Ireland. As the following discussion will demonstrate, colonial commentators, administrators, and agents of colonization alike all expressed enthusiasm, in word and act, for the idea of the marketplace as a tool for transforming Irish society in the 16th and 17th centuries. The marketplace was—and had been for most of Europe from the 11<sup>th</sup> century—a physical space at the heart of urban life. It was the place where economic transacting was temporally and geographically concentrated, enabling merchant corporations and guilds to regulate the goods on offer, for the sake of consumer and producer alike (Casson and Lee 2011:14-24).

The term “market” referred to both the strictly delimited event and its location, the latter defined by iconic infrastructure like the market cross, market hall, and/or a proliferation of shops. The market was a more permanent manifestation of economic activity than the fair, which was a short-term, annual event traditionally tied to a religious feast day. Shops, as the most permanent form of retail outlet, were not really a widespread feature of urban life anywhere in Europe until the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The ever-increasing scale of trade in the Early Modern—a feature that scholars<sup>23</sup> point to as marking the emergence of the modern world-system—pushed commerce, especially in durable goods, away from the more communal and periodic form of the

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<sup>23</sup> E.g. Wallerstein 1974; Braudel [1979] 1992a, 1992b; Wolf [1982] 1997.

medieval market, and toward product-specific shops selling a steady supply of more specific classes of goods (Casson and Lee 2011:14-24).

What is interesting is that such a seemingly archaic economic form as the central market would be so heavily promoted in a world—that of colonial early modern Ireland—which some scholars have argued was colonized through the whole cloth imposition of the modern world-system (Delle 1999b). This, despite the impression that English commentators left their readers with: of the same economic form having seemingly disappeared from the Irish landscape, having presumably fallen apart as a colonial tool in the waning years of Anglo-Norman ‘control’ before the Tudor (re)conquest of Ireland (Spencer [1596] 1809; Lane [1622] 1999; Moryson [1626]1904a).

#### Creating Colonial Marketplaces:

##### Setting Apart Space for the Retail Sale of Commodities

Edmund Spenser was among the first colonial commentators to stress the importance of urban markets within the early modern colonial project in Ireland. His plan was that markets should be chartered in towns, some to be laid out around forts, that would be strategically scattered across the Irish landscape on well-traveled roads. If a “civilized” English model were followed, with the towns answerable to the Lord Deputy alone, this urbanization would naturally attract industrious individuals out of England to follow their crafts and trades where new opportunity arose. They would feel their economic interests adequately protected by the traditional mechanisms of regulation possible in a focused marketplace. Once properly ordered and well-enclosed, market towns would funnel travelers and draw in locals, whose presumed

reliance on the commodities for sale in the marketplace would call them back to these islands of civilization on a regular basis. After enough time spent there, all the civil manners that the local Gaelic(ized) Irish saw around them would become their own learned behaviors (Spencer [1596] 1809:202,259-262).

Fynes Moryson ([1626] 1904a:298-299) reprised Spenser's praise of cities and their markets as tools for winning "barbarous people" to "civil manners and profitable industry." In Moryson's opinion, Gaelic(ized) Irish consumers could not help but be drawn to productivity by the riches they would come to associate with the prosperity of hardworking merchants and craftspeople settled in well-ordered urban centers. Parr Lane ([1622] 1999:154)—toward the end of his epic poem on the sorry state of England's colonial project in early 17<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland quoted earlier in this chapter—lamented the failure of colonials there to erect such civilizing urban marketplaces. The English were, in Lane's estimation, too distracted building Jamestown across the Atlantic, to take what care they should to properly commodify economic life in Ireland. Around the same time that Lane's verse was being published, the Irish Commission of 1622 reasserted its colonial mission of establishing markets and fairs "for the civil commerce of the people," using them to promote all of the desired economic activities and forms missing from Gaelic(ized) lifeways (Treadwell [1622] 2006:760-761).

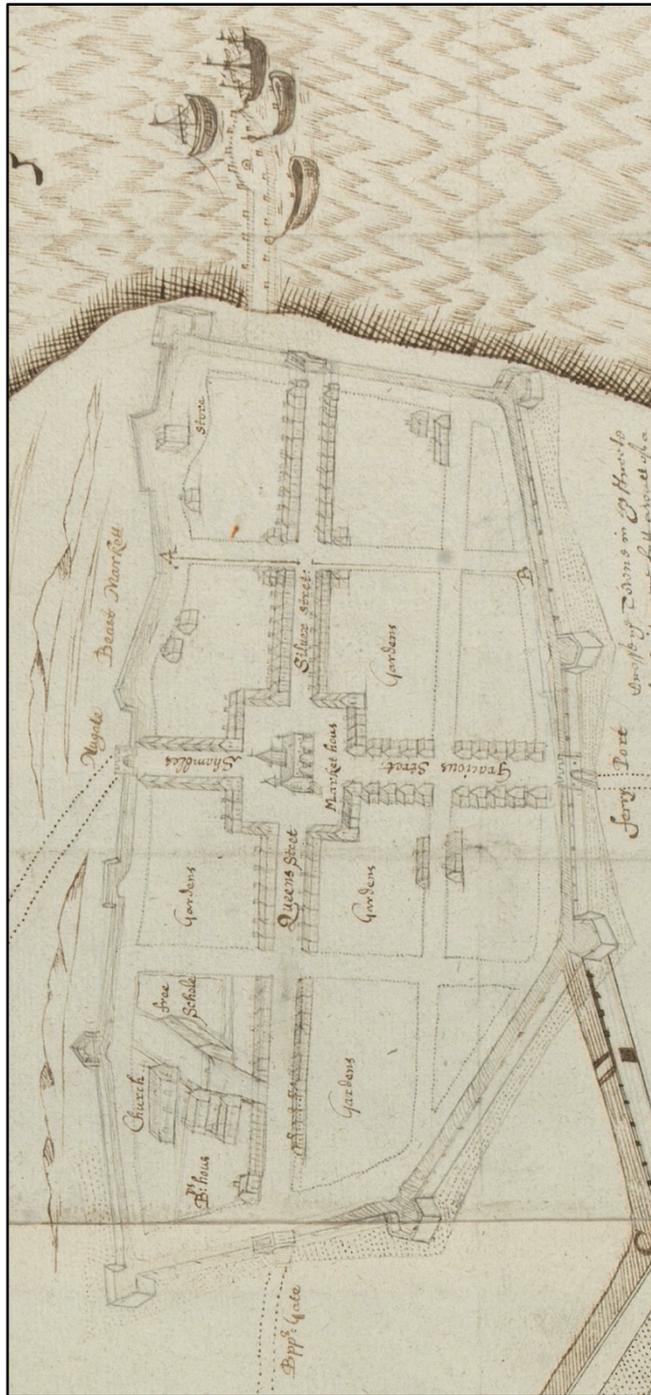
Two grants of markets and fairs to Irish towns in 1603/4, recorded in the *Patent Rolls of Chancery*, made explicit the colonialist link between commodification and the civilizing project in Ireland. In granting a market and fair to Newcastle it was hoped that, "by selling and buying merchandizes and other commodities" the residents of the area "may thereby be the easier

reduced to a human and civil kind of life.” Almost the same exact wording was used in the granting of markets and fairs to towns in counties Roscommon and Mayo that same year (Erck [1603/4] 1846:84,110). The prevalence of this political-economic philosophy led to the chartering of some five hundred markets throughout Ireland in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. These official numbers are not that surprising, considering that people granted land in plantation settlements were often required to build market towns as a condition of their colonial grants (Gillespie 2006:50,80). The question remains whether any of the five hundred or so market grants were acted upon on the ground, and if so, how well the markets prospered, and how long they survived in practical terms (Horning 2013:204).

Thomas Raven’s maps of Ulster plantation lands depict market crosses at: two London Company towns, Bellaghy (the Vintners’ town) and Moneymore (the Drapers’ town); Sir Thomas Phillips’s town at Limavady; and one town—Comber—on lands where ownership was in dispute between two major Scottish planter families, the Montgomerys and the Hamiltons (see Figures 26–29). Coleraine had an unadorned “market place” in the center of town on Raven’s map (Figure 30). Derry, the other town held directly by the City of London’s Irish Society, had a grand “market house” in the heart of the gridded Renaissance city (Horning 2013:239-240,340) (Figure 31). This extreme ordering of colonial space would have stood in marked contrast to what a settler encountered at other plantation “towns” like Movinagher (on the Mercers’ Company’s lands), where no clear marketplace existed for the market that was supposed to be held there early in the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Horning 2010:18).



**Figure 30** “The Market place” at Coleraine. Illustration from “The plot of Colerane,” probably Thomas Raven, 1611. Image courtesy of the Board of Trinity College Dublin. Ref. No.: MS 1209/24.



**Figure 31** “Market hous[e]” at Derry. Detail cropped from “The River of Lough Foyle, with the city of Londonderry,” Thomas Raven, 1625. Image courtesy of the Board of Trinity College Dublin. Ref. No.: MS 1209/22.

A Gaelic(ized) settlement, including a “castle,”<sup>24</sup> had existed at the ford on the River Lagan, where river met lough,<sup>25</sup> from at least the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Prominent English planters were expressing an interest in establishing a colonial town here—at what had come to be known as Belfast—by the 1570s. The first Earl of Essex was actually first to forward such a proposal to the English Privy Council in 1573. While he does seem to have erected an earthen fort in the area, his plans for the town failed to materialize before his death in 1576. In 1603, soldier-turned-servitor Sir Arthur Chichester was rewarded for his service in the Nine Years War with grants that included Belfast castle and its environs. By 1605, an official market had been chartered in the would-be town, which was granted a fair in 1608. Belfast was not granted the royal charter that set up its governing structure—a corporation of burgesses headed by the mayor—until 1613 (Gillespie 2007:54, 2012:123; Ó Baoill 2011:80,100).

The market aspect of urbanization clearly played a formative role in the development of a “voluntary” colonial town as well placed as Belfast for overseas trade, local water transport, and overland travel into eastern Ulster. Quays were built up where the River Farset met the Lagan, and a wide marketplace was set out adjacent to the river, on what would become Bridge Street. Vendors would have sold their goods from a mixture of more permanent and more temporary stalls. By 1639 a market house stood beside the open marketplace—the physical manifestation of a town corporation that wanted to confine trade to this traditional commercial space, even if permanent shops were appearing there. Guilds, which provided structure to craft trades and

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<sup>24</sup> Really an Irish towerhouse (Ó Baoill 2011:81).

<sup>25</sup> The Hiberno-English term for a lake or inlet of the sea (“lough, *n.2.*,” *OED Online*, accessed 25 June 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/110480](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/110480)).

merchant relations, were not a feature of economic life in Belfast until very late in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Despite (or because of) their absence, a number of craftspeople had settled in Belfast by the end of the century. Their presence was encouraged by a charter that allowed such tradesmen to become freemen of the town in due course (Gillespie 2006:3, 2007:54,62-66, 2012:126,133,158; Ó Baoill 2011:101).

At the same time that Chichester was building up Belfast, Randal MacDonnell—loyal head of that formerly rebellious Scoto-Irish family—began building up a town around their seat at Dunluce castle. Unlike Belfast, Dunluce Town was ill-suited to overseas trade, as it sat perched atop tall sea cliffs, exposed to powerful North Atlantic gales. The urban settlement was still built up around a designated marketplace—a triangular widening of the main street extending from the castle gates into the heart of the town. However small it was, Dunluce Town was apparently prosperous enough to boast a number of substantial and well-built merchants' houses lining a cobbled street. The economic success of the town and its market took a serious hit when the violence of the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century drove the MacDonnell family away (Breen 2012:130-163,177).

On the other end of the island, in Munster, the importance of central market areas was retained in towns, like Cork, whose origins lay in the Early Medieval. A designated “market house” (*tholsel*) was erected in the late medieval port town of Kinsale around 1600. Plans for Bandon Bridge—designed as a colonial market town for the first Earl of Cork, Richard Boyle—show two market houses on either side of the river that bisected the town (Breen 2007:59,64,72). Scottish planters in Ulster established their own market towns, as the business-minded would-be-

colonizer Sir William Brereton ([1635] 1904:366,386) noted while passing through Sir Hugh Montgomery's "Newton de Clanboyes" (Newtownards) in 1635. The long-time colonial magnate the Earl of Ormond was also trying his hand creating "market towns" on his lands in the 1630s. Brereton ([1635] 1905:366,386) thought the earl's "Haggers town" (Hacketstown) "a poor one," though, given its remote, mountainous location and poor agricultural potential.

Market houses—the permanent structures associated with the marketplace—not only defined the center of commercial space in a town, they were where the corporate leadership of a town met to set regulations and govern that town's economic life (Breen 2007:188; Ó Baoill 2011:101). A market house would have also provided a convenient space for the convening of market courts, a common law institution essential to enforcing any kind of regulation over commerce undertaken in urban contexts (Gillespie 2006:50,80). Official pronouncements, like the reading of proclamations to the general public, were also made in the vicinity of market houses (Gillespie 2012:126).

Proving just how interconnected the seemingly differentiated early modern commodifications of alcohol were, it turns out that commercial inns were also key to facilitating the market economy that had been growing in England from the Late Medieval. Reputable inns provided secure storage for goods being brought more than a day's journey to market. With a steady stream of merchants passing through, they often became centers for informal commerce themselves (Hare 2013:477-481).

## Retailing Liquor

As has already been discussed in terms of commercial hospitality—or the on-site purchase and consumption of alcohol at public drinking venues—the line between domestic and commercial activities surrounding alcohol was highly blurred in early modern Ireland. The same held true for the retailing of spirits for presumed consumption off-site. The island would not see the development, or at least the official recording, of a distilling economy of any scale or organization until after the Restoration, which is a topic that falls beyond the scope of this project (McGuire 1973:97). As will be discussed below, wine and *aqua vitæ* were being imported into Ireland and sold on locally, but in what seems to have been a poorly controlled and highly variable way. This is asserted with the caveat that records for what was happening in this sector of the Irish economy throughout most of the 17<sup>th</sup> century are scattered and piecemeal—an artifact of the devolved system of licensing and the small-scale nature of local production taking place at the time.

The ready demand for spirits further afield in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland meant that there was a considerable flow of distilled liquor through colonial port towns, despite the long-held concerns of the colonial administration that these substances fueled Irish rebellion. A mere three years into Sir Arthur Chichester's<sup>26</sup> governorship of Carrickfergus, London merchants were importing large quantities of “white *aqua vitæ*” into that port. In one particular usquebaugh counterfeiting scheme discussed earlier in this study, profit-grubbing merchants, working with the locally prominent soldier-turned-settler Sir Moyses Hill, were said to have colored this spirit yellow to

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<sup>26</sup> The same soldier-turned-servitor who can be said to have founded modern Belfast.

pass it off as “usquebaff.” This they then were to have sold on, at artificially elevated prices, either directly to rebels currently fighting the Crown in the Nine Years War, or to “the Irish subject” who passed it on to the rebels (Mahaffy [1602] 1912:507; Bigger 1907:99-100; Ó Baoill 2008:40).

Seven years on, in 1609, “aqua vitae” and “strong waters” were listed among “the most vendible commodities at the Derry and north parts of Ireland” (Russell and Prendergast [1609] 1874:340). Given its date, it is likely that this note was drawn up as part of Sir Thomas Phillips’s effort to attract the interest of the City of London’s Liveried Companies (guilds) to the plantation of adjacent Ulster counties—which would become the Londonderry Plantation (Horning 2013:201). Barnaby Rich (1617) tapped into this high demand for spirits in his moralizing tract *The Irish Hubbub*. In a scathingly tongue-in-cheek line aimed at deriding Catholics in Ireland, the staunchly Protestant Rich numbered *aqua vitae* alongside “periury” (perjury) and “ole Ale” as “three commodities that be of great antiquitie in Ireland,” particularly among the kingdom’s resident Catholic population (Rich 1617:52-53).

Local statutes from early 17<sup>th</sup>-century eastern Ulster give some clue of how spiritous liquor was likely being retailed in urban spaces at the time. The earlier law, from 1601, provided the mayor of Carrickfergus with a stipend “towards his Housekeeping,” so that said burgess could forego to “sell either Wine Ale or Aqua Vitae or others either at his Table or in his premises” during his tenure overseeing corporate affairs in the town. By 1660, Belfast had adopted a similar provision, whereby the borough sovereign (i.e., mayor) was prohibited to “sell by retaile in his house any Wines of what kinde soever or any Beere Ale or Aquavite or keepe

entertainem<sup>t</sup> in his house *during* his office” (Young 1892:89,303). What both of these local bylaws make clear is that common economic practice in the urbanized colonial spaces of early modern Ireland not only blurred the spatial lines of the domestic and the commercial, but confounded the differentiating of hospitable from retail space.

This gray area between commercial-domestic space and retail-hospitality seems to have been what Fynes Moryson was describing for wine merchants in cities like Dublin, which he had experienced during his time in Ireland (Moryson [1617] 1904:226). Such economic practice flew in the face of a long-standing, but apparently unenforced, colonial statute<sup>27</sup> meant to distinguish these spaces and economic forms, as far as the sale of wine was concerned (Mahaffy [1632] 1903:169). The “Instructions for Wines, Aqua Vitæ, and Usquebagh” endorsed by colonial officialdom in 1611 proposed extending to the sale of wine, *aqua vitæ*, and usquebaugh within Ireland the English laws restricting and penalizing the home retail of wines (Brewer and Bullen [1611] 1873:207-208). There is, however, no surviving evidence that these “Instructions” were ever actually implemented on the ground in Ireland.

What evidence there is indicates that actually regulating the sale of distilled liquor proved as difficult as regulating the sale of wine, or controlling the proliferation of drinking establishments, with the bureaucratic means available to early modern colonial administrators. The sheer confusion involved is captured in the debates that wove their way through the materials produced by the Irish Commission of 1622. In them, the commission seems to have realized that the oft-cited statute of 1556 for the licensing of *aqua vitæ* only expressly applied to

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<sup>27</sup> A statute passed by the Irish Parliament in 1551, the seventh year of Edward VI’s reign (Mahaffy [1632] 1903:169).

the making of distilled spirits, and not their sale. Another standard form of commercial regulation at the time was the official setting of prices, which had to be followed by merchants within a jurisdiction. The Irish Commission of 1622 questioned whether statutory law had ever been passed in Ireland for the pricing of wine or *aqua vitæ*, at least as of the convening of their body. The pricing of wine had, apparently, been made law there during the reign of Elizabeth I (Treadwell [1622] 2006:13,99,245-246). Still, merchants were being accused of ignoring those prices—interestingly enough, in the sale of wine for the local making of real or counterfeit usquebaugh—in 1602 and again in 1632 (Mahaffy [1602] 1912:507, [1632] 1903:169).

#### Retailing Usquebaugh in the Metropole

For all the variety of commercial outlets through which usquebaugh was flowing in 16th- and 17<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland, there is no evidence for its distribution through the sort of “medical marketplace” for distilled spirits that was emerging around this time in London. By 1618, a licorice-infused “Vsquebach” was likely being sold out of apothecary shops in London. The evidence for this is its inclusion in the *Pharmacopœa Londinensis*—the formulary of “chemical medicines” drafted by the Royal College of Physicians of London to inform best practice among the apothecaries and distillers they had been tasked with regulating from the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century until the royal chartering of a separate Society of Apothecaries in 1617 (*Medicorum Collegij Londinensis* [1618] 1944:109; Culpeper 1649:92; Urdang 1944:6,19; Wallis 2006:25). Apothecaries had been making and selling medicines out of multigenerational shops in the Cheapside neighborhood of London going back well into the Medieval (ca. 1300). Their

presence in the wealthier parts of London grew throughout the 17<sup>th</sup> century, as the fashion at court for “chemical medicines” promoted the popularity of their wares (Wallis 2006:23-24).

Abiding suspicions about the inherent danger and questionable purity of ingredients being commercially compounded into medicines made and sold in the “medical marketplace” motivated close oversight of such trades. By 1553, the Royal College of Physicians of London was assigned “to survey and examine the stocks of apothecaries, druggists, distillers and sellers of waters and oils, and preparers of chemical medicines.” Understanding that this task could only really be undertaken properly after standards of practice had been set, the college formed a Pharmacopoeia Committee in the closing years of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. By the time the manual was published, the apothecaries had been formed into a freestanding chartered company, responsible themselves for overseeing the quality of goods produced and sold by their members (Urdang 1944:6,9,16,19).

The royal chartering of the Worshipful Company of Distillers of London in 1638 may have given rise to ongoing tensions over whose prerogative it was to oversee the production and sale of distilled “chemical medicines” in London, and England more broadly, but oversight was still mandated (Charles I 1638; Company of Distillers of London 1639; Berlin 1996:17-19). That this contested oversight included the likes of an identifiably Irish usquebaugh is attested to by the distillate’s inclusion—as “*Vsquebach*. The Irish appellation.”—in the 1639 publication of *The Distiller of London*, the manual of standards for members of the Worshipful Company of Distillers of London to follow (18). Whatever the disputes, the medical inflection given any commercial production and retailing of usquebaugh in 17<sup>th</sup>-century London seems highly

probable. Apothecaries and distillers shared a common advocate in the royal physician, and member of the Royal College of Physicians, Theodore de Mayerne—who personally petitioned to establish both the Society of Apothecaries in the 1610s and the Worshipful Company of Distillers in the 1630s (Charles 1 1638; Urdang 1944:19).

The same concern for quality control that manifested itself in the proliferation of standards and regulating bodies applicable to medicinal distilling in the 17<sup>th</sup> century pushed the retailing of such medicine toward permanency and visual transparency earlier than in other areas of commerce. Hence the apothecary shop, as mentioned earlier, existed long before other crafts had migrated from open market stalls into shop fronts. While other professions might crowd in on the apothecary's business, apothecaries alone had retail practices that visually assuaged their customers' fears as to the quality of medicines not compounded at home out of one's own stock of known ingredients (Wallis 2006:27) (Figures 32 and 33).

This sort of emerging “medical marketplace,” with apothecaries and distillers vying to regulate the production and sale of “chemical medicines,” was nonexistent in 17<sup>th</sup>-century Ireland, even in Dublin. The whole formal medical profession was little attended to, except in a piecemeal way, by the colonial powers or settlers until late in the 17<sup>th</sup> century in Ireland. Trinity College Dublin had been established by royal charter in 1592, but it was not until 1654 that a nebulous “Fraternity of Physicians” was established there. This body would not gain any real regulatory power over apothecaries until it was elevated to a “Colledge of Physitians in Dublin” in the late 1660s. Barber-surgeons played a more prominent role in the early modern Irish medical profession than their counterparts in London did. They were formed into a corporate



**Figure 32** Home distilling by genteel women. Detail cropped from frontispiece of *The Accomplisht Ladys Delight*, Hannah Woolley, 1675. Library of Congress. Call No.: TX705.A26.



**Figure 33** Distilling medicinal essences from herbs in a late medieval to early modern apothecary setting. Detail cropped from frontispiece of *Kreuterbüch von natürlichem Nutz und gründlichem Gebrauch der Kreuter, Bäum, Gesteud unnd Früchten* [Herbal of the Natural Utilization and Thorough Usage of Herbs, Trees, Studs and Fruits], Eucharius Rösslin, 1550. Wellcome Collection. Shelfmark: EPB 5522/D. Reproduced here under CC BY 4.0 license.

body in Dublin much earlier than physicians (1667) or apothecaries (1687)—with a Guild of Barbers royally chartered as the Fraternity of Saint Mary Magdalene in 1446. The surviving 1572 charter—which joined the barbers to the “chirurgeons” (surgeons), as a single corporate body devoted to “the Health of the Human Body”—was loose about membership and light in emphasis on the “Rule Governance and Oversight” of barbers, although it did mention apprenticeship. A later royal charter seems to indicate that the entire guild system in Dublin fell apart once the City of Dublin’s royally chartered corporate structure was dissolved en masse under Cromwell’s rule in the 1650s (Cameron 1886:60-65,70,91-93; Cooper 1987; Kelly 1999:21-23).

With no real oversight or system for training medical professionals in Ireland until after the period encompassed by the current study—outside of the Gaelic(ized) Irish schools of medicine discussed at the end of Chapter 3—it comes as no surprise that even apothecaries appear only sporadically in the documentary records from this period. Sir William Brereton—who was suffering “an extreme flux” while traveling from Carrickfergus to Waterford in 1635—mentioned meeting just one medical professional his entire trip. His medical savior was a Dutch apothecary and traveler living in Waterford who finally provided him an unnamed cure (Brereton [1635] 1904:401,404).

It seems the best that the Anglicized towns of Ireland could do in the 16th and 17th centuries was to try to attract at least one non-Gaelic(ized) medical professional, of whatever stripe, by guaranteeing stipends to anyone who promised to stay and serve the medical needs of local residents and colonial troops. The Lord Deputy of Ireland extended such a concession to

the Dublin apothecary Thomas Smyth<sup>28</sup> in 1566, especially to serve “suche of the Englishe byrthe in this realme resident.” A different doctor was offered a stipend by the Corporation of Dublin in 1580 if he agreed to reside and practice in the capital. Things were no better in Munster in 1626. In that year, the Corporation of Cork had to offer a physician the annual rent for a house to entice him to practice in their town. Meanwhile, Youghal had the luck of having convinced a physician, married to the widow of a town freeman, to open an apothecary shop there to serve their residents. In the 1630s and 1640s those at the top of the colonial administration were attended to by the Dutch physician Arnold Boate—who, along with his brother Gerard, was discussed at greater length back in Chapter 3. Arnold was eventually made surgeon-general for Ireland, but was forced to flee—first for England, then for the European Continent—in the wake of the 1641 Rising (Boran 2004). Cromwell’s colonial administration in Ireland would bring in Gerard Boate, his brother, to serve as physician-general to the army there in 1647 (Cameron 1886:92,103; Baigent 2007).

It is telling that an usquebaugh that was by all accounts the same sort of substance, being drunk for the same reasons of bodily health, found such different homes in the retail landscapes of the Irish colonial periphery and the colonial metropole of London. In early modern Ireland it was most readily available, in a retailed form, through commercial exchanges happening within a space that also provided commodified hospitality—the tavern. In London, an individual interested in buying it would have sought out a shop specializing in the production and sale of medicine—the apothecary. The retail system emerging around the sale of usquebaugh in early

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<sup>28</sup> The same Thomas Smyth who wrote “Smyth’s Information for Ireland” for the English Privy Council in 1561 (Hore 1858:166).

modern Ireland, with all of its ambiguity, drew from the Gaelic(ized) medical tradition in which health was attended to through acts of potable hospitality. Given how little institutional support existed for a “medical marketplace” to develop at the time in Ireland, it would have been unlikely for that colonial world to effectively emulate the model of commercialized medicine present in contemporary London. The result was an ad hoc, if at times commodified, flow of usquebaugh through Irish society that frustrated and confounded colonial officialdom well into the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

### *“Modernizing” the Military*

The final area of potable hospitality that vexed colonial commentators and administrators was the provisioning of troops involved in conquering and keeping the peace in Ireland. A common theme among English colonial commentators at the turn of the 17<sup>th</sup> century was the need to maintain garrisons—as a permanent military presence—across the Irish landscape to ensure success in subjugating the island to the political will of its ‘sister’ kingdom across the Irish Sea. The forts in which these garrisons were to be housed would become, in turn, the loci of formal urban settlements. The advantage of such a plan was that it would turn the soft underbelly of the British Isles into its most well-defended quarter. And such garrisons would serve as a storehouse of “brave olde souldiers” and a training ground for new, who could be called into active service whenever England felt threatened (Spencer [1596] 1809:157,202,220-221; Moryson [1626] 1904a:296-97,303-304).

How to maintain these soldiers without resorting to old forms of extortionary hospitality was another problem, which these same commentators tried to work out. Theirs was part of a

general shift away from direct exaction toward commercial supply of military forces in 16<sup>th</sup>-century Europe (Hale 1986:159-160). One certainty of the colonial commentators was that such garrisons would require a stockpile of food and drink. The Earl of Essex was apparently planning as much for a proposed fortification at Belfast, where he wanted an additional “store house for victuals” to be erected by the Crown (Ó Baoill 2011:80). Accomplishing an effective stockpile would require that care be taken to store ingredients in their most preservable states, with facilities provided on-site for preparation into edible-if-perishable foods like bread and beer (Spencer [1596] 1809:159; Moryson [1626] 1904a:304). From the 1570s, *aqua vitæ* was a staple of the provisions that soldiers serving the Crown in early modern Ireland relied on. It was, by the 17<sup>th</sup> century, a necessary supply for troops garrisoned there (Fitton 1571; Erck [1603] 1846:45; Appleby [1604] 1992:106; Russell and Prendergast [1617] 1880:177).

In wartime fresh provisions could be obtained from enemies as spoils, but this was a short-term fix (Spencer [1596] 1809:159). Through rental income from the escheated lands and goods confiscated from rebels, it was hoped “victual would be found whereby to relieve soldiers” on a longer-term basis (Spencer [1596] 1809:159,198; Rich [1599] 1899:50). Relying on a local cess conducted by soldiers seemed the most expedient choice, but only “severe discipline” would keep soldiers from taking advantage of and “spoiling the country” in their quest for provisions (Moryson [1626] 1904a:297,303-304). Eventually, it was hoped, colonially induced agricultural productivity would generate enough surplus to fill storehouses in garrison towns, for the provision of soldiers, and as a recourse for the civilian population in times of scarcity (Spencer [1596] 1809:219). To this end, an “office of supervisor” was granted in 1603

“to stop the transporting of...staple wares” out of Ireland, which had proved a “hindrance of provisioning garrisons and forces” there (Erck [1603] 1846:73).

As the 17<sup>th</sup> century progressed it became clear that massed soldiers would be a nearly ever-present feature of the colonization of Ireland (Gillespie 2006:65). Forts that included lodging for sizable garrisons were being built throughout the century, some designed by that same Josias Bodley who enjoyed a Christmas feast at Lecale in 1602/3 (Breen 2007:144,152-166; McGurk 2008a). The soldiers manning these forts needed provisions. By 1603 the Crown was instructing officers how best to victual their troops in Ireland, and the accounts of victualers there were being audited. From that same year various individuals were granted the offices of “comissarie of victualles” for different parts of Ireland, under a “generall purveyor and issuer of victualles to soldiers” throughout Ireland (Erck [1603] 1846:xiv,xxviii,13-14,45,53,101). Even five years after the resolution of the Nine Years War, the army was in need of provision as it put down smaller attempted rebellions (Russell and Prendergast [1617] 1880:177).

Complaints were still being made into the late 1620s, by Irish nobles and gentry no less, about soldiers “taking meat and money” from the countryside around where they were garrisoned. The official response of the government in London was that troops were to be kept in their garrisons unless engaging with enemy forces, and that all officers and soldiers moving through the countryside were to “pay for what they take” and “take only such food as the people can afford” (Mahaffy [1628] 1900:330,418). Similar problems were still cropping up in 1641, as tensions rose toward all-out warfare throughout the British Isles. A committee of the Irish Parliament had petitioned Charles I to cease billeting soldiers or collecting “billet money” from

the residents of garrison towns. The king's response was that soldiers would either be billeted in person, or "billet money" would be paid for the duration of their stay in any locale (Mahaffy [1641] 1901:317-322).

Engaging a standing army in such direct commercial exchange, or even indirect commercial provisioning, was a heavy burden for an early modern colonial state to bear. It was proposed, as the Nine Years War was winding down, that the ports and towns of Ireland be made to provide for the annual victualing needs of "certen bandes and companies of souldiers for the abatement of our martial chardges," if no other custom<sup>29</sup> or composition<sup>30</sup> could be set to acquire the necessary revenue (Erck [1603] 1846:14). As of 1641, this heavy burden of military maintenance was being felt again in the courtly metropole. Ireland had, apparently, been self-sustaining in terms of supporting its garrisons in the intervening years, but the situation had deteriorated recently, and soldiers were not being paid (Mahaffy [1641] 1901:299).

Provisioning armies continued either to be a haphazard and precarious endeavor relying on the generosity (or suffering) of the local populace, or to be commercialized and hence a strain on the administrative purse, during the civil wars that racked the British Isles in the 1640s—including Cromwell's pacification of Ireland (Firth 1902:209-230). Cromwell's New Model Army, touted for its modernizations, was funded by an act of English Parliament that promised land in Ireland to those private individuals who invested, or "adventured," the money that would

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<sup>29</sup> This usage could be referring to either a general duty collected on imported or exported goods, a local duty levied on the movement of goods into or out of a town, or any customary dues owed to a lord by someone of lower social standing ("custom, *n.* and *adj.*," *OED Online*, accessed 26 June 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/46306](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/46306)).

<sup>30</sup> Here referring loosely to "an agreement for the payment of a sum of money, in lieu of the discharge of some other obligation" ("composition, *n.*," *OED Online*, accessed 26 June 2020, [www.oed.com/view/Entry/37795](http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/37795)).

provision soldiers and ensure a Parliamentary victory there. Parliamentary soldiers who had served in Ireland were also compensated with land, in lieu of back pay. These promised Irish lands were made available for redistribution only through confiscations, and were not unlimited in supply—making this, at best, a temporary solution to the perpetual problem of provisioning armed forces (Gillespie 2006:185-186).

#### UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES OF THE COMMODITY FORM

Promotion of commercialized inns, licensed drinking establishments, marketplaces, and a professional standing army would greatly impact how usquebaugh flowed through Ireland. Whether or not the practices that accompanied these institutions fell in line with the civilizing mission of England's colonial project, the encouragement of these forms certainly affected life in Ireland. The final section of this chapter will examine the unintended consequences of administrative efforts to commodify the flow of distilled spirits in Ireland. The focus will be on the problems facing the colonial project that arose from the colonial power's own attempts to intervene in sociomaterial practices surrounding this class of substance, and alcohol more generally. The goal is to demonstrate the messy and contingent nature of colonization, which—like any human endeavor—could never hope to anticipate every implication of the changes it so desired to see in the societies it strove to re(-)form. These mitigating circumstances—which inevitably altered the course of change from those imagined in colonial commentary and official policy—were compounded by the conflicting motivations that drove the individual agents of colonization to personally engage in the material enactment of such high-minded colonial projects.

*A Need for Revenue, and the Consequences of Acquiring It*

By the 1620s it had become obvious to those in power in England that the standing army garrisoning Ireland was proving an unsustainable drain on the colonial metropole. As a result, soldiers in the colony were not being paid or maintained properly (Treadwell [1622] 2006:315-317). Similar concerns about the Irish revenue having diminished beyond the point of sustaining the soldiery in Ireland were brought up by lords justices and the Irish Privy Council some twenty years later, in 1641 (Mahaffy [1641] 1901:299). The fiscal realities of colonization had not lived up to the dreams of earlier colonial commentators.

As London grew increasingly tired of the financial strain that came from trying to maintain the military (re)conquest and further the civil re(-)form of Ireland, the new lord treasurer of England called for a formal commission to look into the matter of how best to finance ongoing efforts in its 'sister' kingdom (Gillespie 2006:64-65). Among other things, this Irish Commission of 1622 was deeply concerned with improving the Irish economy. In examining the previous seven years of Irish revenue, the commission concluded that Ireland's diminished export of grain and paltry importation of wine—both of which impacted the revenue from customs, which was supposed to support the Irish administration—were due to an increase in local *aqua vitæ* production and consumption. This growth, they believed, had been encouraged by the formal licensing of the sale of such locally made spirits by the administration in Dublin (Treadwell [1622] 2006:315; Russell and Prendergast [1623] 1880:424). The licensing process, when applied to unwanted alehouses, was understood to have only encouraged their superfluity across Ireland (Treadwell [1622] 2006:6,34; Horning 2009:124-125).

This should have come as no surprise to English administrators, as the first use of patents in England was to promote (not limit) new industry. Patents functioned by monopolistically restricting productive practices to those holding them, or to whomever they assigned such rights through license. This system was meant to defray the risk involved in introducing new sectors into the economy by ensuring that the investor would enjoy an initial market advantage. Licensing, on the other hand, gave the grantee an exemption to carry out some activity restricted among the general populace by the monopoly. The real crux of this system, and the reason it was so problematic, was that the patent-holders paid a fixed rent to the Crown, while being left free to collect as much revenue as they could from those to whom they sold licenses (Price 1906:6-7,9,14-17). Licensing had become—or so its critics claimed—an engine for generating revenue that rarely, if ever, made its way to the state (Russell and Prendergast [1620] 1880:282; Treadwell [1622] 2006:34,243-44).

A cost-conscious and under-bureaucratized state, hoping to re(-)form a troublesome colony, may have imagined that this system of patents could serve its administrative ends by appealing to the profit motive driving individual colonial settlers to invest their life and wealth in Ireland, but this apparent solution came at a price. The profiteering drive that underlay it worked against any curtailing of local practice. As more licenses brought more revenue to the patent holder, the system encouraged the unregulated proliferation of the very things it was meant to be suppressing and re(-)forming. Licenses for alehouses were, of course, being granted to all comers, without consideration for the quality of the proprietor or location of each establishment. It did not help that this system was very piecemeal. Town corporations were made responsible

for determining what constituted a “convenient” number of drinking establishments in urban spaces, as well as judging who was “fit” to open these businesses, and where (Treadwell [1622] 2006:6,12,23,34,99,160,243-244,766).

All of this was not lost on colonial administrators, who continued to complain about the contradictions inherent to the system, which led to the enrichment of those “farming” the licenses rather than the filling of state coffers or the re(-)forming of society (Mahaffy [1635-1639] 1903:310; Treadwell [1622] 2006:12,99). The colonial administration in Ireland attempted to redress these issues in the 1620s, but there simply was no alternative for the execution of licensing, barring a revolution in bureaucratic form (Treadwell [1622] 2006:12,34,90,94,99,151, 243-244,348). The licensing of alehouses and *aqua vitæ* thus continued as a source of irritation for Irish Catholics threatening rebellion in 1627 (Mahaffy [1627] 1903:108). At court, however, patents were a potent political tool for the Crown, which was reluctant to abandon the patronage that this system conferred (Price 1906:14). The patent system for granting licenses surrounding alcohol thus continued to be argued for as a lucrative source of revenue for the Crown, even if it encouraged retail, and thus increased the unnecessary consumption of strong liquor in Ireland (Brewer and Bullen [1611] 1873:207; Mahaffy [1641] 1901:299; Steele [1643] 1910:46).

### *A Riot of Alehouses and Taverns*

Alehouses themselves seem to have been an unintended consequence of the settling of English men and women in early modern Ireland. Early on in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, it was becoming clear that the powers-that-be in England did not particularly care for these commercial spaces at home, let alone in their colony. Within the first year of James VI and I’s ascension to the English

throne, legislation began being passed in England to curtail excessive drinking at such social venues. Landlords were held accountable for preventing “tippling,” as drinking to attain drunkenness was termed, within their establishments, in a practically unenforceable law. Next, drinkers themselves were fined for exhibiting drunkenness, or spending too long drinking in public. Licensing of properly constituted commercial venues for public drinking, opened only at “godly” times, was the next step in regulation. A scandal related to corruption in this licensing system saw the whole thing scrapped by the 1620s (Nicholls 2009:13-14).

While there was similar administrative interest in reducing the number of commercial drinking venues in colonial Ireland, their regulation proved difficult on the ground. The blurring of lines between commercial and domestic spaces of hospitality there in the 17<sup>th</sup> century no doubt contributed to this problem. Converting a portion of one’s dwelling into a place for the commodified consumption of alcohol was simply too attractive an economic prospect for those on the lower end of the social spectrum in this colonial world. It could be done without investing much time or material, making it quite attractive to poorer householders looking to boost their income in Ireland’s monetizing economy (Horning 2009:122).

It was precisely this phenomenon that Barnaby Rich was seeing and criticizing in early 17<sup>th</sup>-century Dublin. According to Rich, no matter what a householder’s primary profession, “hee will haue a blinde corner of his house reserued for a Tauerne.” To the commentator’s disgust, this made brewers and tavern-keepers out of most Dublin housewives—no matter how “loathsome, filthie and abhominable, both in life and manners” the woman and her household

might be. Rich ([1610] 1624:11,70-73) was surely exaggerating, however, when he wrote that every house in the city sold ale—making them all, at least in part, “alehouses” or “taverns.”

Not surprisingly, Rich did not hold a very high opinion of the alcohol brewed in such establishments, which was fit for no one “but for common Drunkardes.” Fitting, given that he deemed these places to be nothing more than “Nurseries of Drunkenesse, of all manner of Idlennesse, of whordome, and many other vile abominations.” This drunkenness was, to his mind, driven by the drinking of healths (toasting) that had become regular practice in Ireland in his time there. This was made all the worse, for the puritanical Rich ([1610] 1624:23,62-63,70-73), by the common custom in Ireland of keeping these drinking establishments open on Sundays, the Christian Sabbath.

Rich was not the only colonial concerned that the “idleness” once attributed to Gaelic(ized) hospitality, and associated professions, had transferred to the domestic-cum-commercial space of the Irish alehouse and tavern. In a memorandum that circulated among the colonial administration in the 1630s, “taverners and usquebagh-makers” were accused of entertaining “rebellious, idle, and disorderly vagrants and others whatsoever in their houses” (Mahaffy [1632] 1903:169). The Irish Commission of 1622 associated “rules of moderation in the number and good ordering of alehouses” in Ireland with “suppressing drunkenness and idleness” there. It went a little further, too, by attributing idleness to the unfit individuals making a living by running such ad hoc alehouses in undesirable places (Treadwell [1622] 2006:160,348).

The commission certainly would not have approved of the private English home, on the Mercers' Company's lands in Ulster, which the leatherworker John Browne and his wife had turned into a commercial drinking establishment by Christmas of 1615. They would, however, have supported those tenants living in the Drapers' Company town of Moneymore who, in 1618, went all the way to London to lodge formal complaint against the man in charge of those plantation lands. Robert Russel, the Drapers' agent on the ground in County Londonderry, had completely converted five of the town's homes into "alehouses" that were being supplied with alcohol that he was brewing from a public water supply that was meant to serve the whole community. By the late 1620s, an untold number of individuals settling on plantations in Ulster had opened some portion of their homes up as commercial drinking establishments. By that date the Englishman in charge of the Mercers' Company's lands at Movanager had even turned the settlement's castle into "a taphouse to sell aqua vitae etc." (Canny 2001:435; Horning 2009:123, 2013:234-235). Personal profit may have been what compelled individuals to risk their wealth and uproot their lives to settle in a foreign, often hostile, land as part of a colonial scheme (Delle 1999a:15). These profit motives could, however, turn agents of colonization toward private commercial practices that ran directly counter to the desires of colonial administrators and the ideological underpinnings of entire colonial projects.

It is curious that the documentary record of administrative anxiety over the profusion of commercial drinking establishments in Ireland fell comparatively silent throughout the 1650s. This was the decade of the Commonwealth and Protectorate, a time when the Puritan Oliver Cromwell ruled a theoretically unitary republic that spanned the entire British Isles. It was also a

period of extreme governmental moralizing in England, when theaters were shuttered and public drunken revelry was actively suppressed through the closing of unlicensed alehouses (Nicholls 2009:24-25). What the colonial administration in Ireland did get were instructions from Westminster to enforce English laws against “profaning the sabbath,” public drunkenness, and ill-kept alehouses (Barnard 1975:76; Horning 2009:128).

There was an abiding interest in re(-)forming Ireland during the Commonwealth period, but it focused more on education, the economy, and the landscape. The relative silence surrounding alcohol in Ireland at this time may simply be an artifact of the selective survival of documents, many of which would have been destroyed by the burning of the Public Records Office in Dublin in 1922. It is equally likely that this cesura reflects what was actually happening in and to Ireland under the colonial Commonwealth government. Apparent administrative disinterest may well have been due to the fact that the radical republican government in Dublin—which no longer included a local legislative body at all—was answerable more directly to a parliament in London that largely ignored Ireland, except as a source of land that could be used to pay off “adventurers” and soldiers (Gillespie 2006:182-211,319).

The puritanical zeal of the Parliamentary commissioners tasked with implementing English law in Ireland can be seen in Belfast as early as 1651. The *Town Book of the Corporation of Belfast* records these commissioners demanding a more rigorous “execution [of] all the acts & ordinances of Parliamt against drunkenness...and profanacion of the lords day by...frequenting Alehouses” in December of that year (Young 1892:71). As the decade progressed, it became clear that the Cromwellian regime in Ireland would have to learn to

compromise and work through the more moderate Protestant elites who had ruled the colony before the arrival of Parliamentary forces (Barnard 1973). Perhaps, however, the local gentry had more pressing concerns in this tumultuous time, or favored the social opportunities afforded to local people by public drinking establishments. From the records of the landed Perceval family—colonial magnates with properties in Cork—it appears that the Cromwellian dictates for suppressing alehouses and drink were negatively impacting the agricultural economy of the region, making it hard for tenants to pay rent (Historical Manuscripts Commission [1653] 1905:530; Malcolm 1998:62).

#### *A Need for Bureaucracy*

The means of enforcing licenses and collecting any revenue from within a kingdom was problematic throughout the British Isles before 1660. In 1655 the Commonwealth government ordained that an excise—or system for collecting internal revenue—should be enacted in Ireland, as it had been in England. This excise would include an impost on locally sold distillates, and details were given of standard measures that would apply, but little was said about how the “Commissioners of the new Excise” would operate on the ground (Mahaffy [1655] 1903:812). These plans came to naught, however, and it was not until after the Restoration in 1660 that a somewhat centralized and professionalized administration of excise was instituted. This bureaucracy strove for greater regularity in the execution of law, while ensuring that revenue actually made it into Crown coffers. A centralized excise office, with standing commissioners and mobile surveyors tasked with enforcement, was not established in Dublin until 1662 (Mahaffy [1641] 1901:299; Given 2011:23-30).

*Nostalgia for Gaelic(ized) Hospitality*

Ending on a lighter note, one of the unintended consequences of the commodification of drinkways in early modern Ireland appears to have been a certain nostalgia for bygone hospitality. Such practices may have filled earlier colonial commentators with anxieties of intimacy and entanglement that fueled commodifying policy. Whatever their high-minded concerns, the group of fictionalized young men soldiering in Ireland in the mid-17<sup>th</sup>-century poem “An Account of an Irish Quarter” (or “The Irish Entertainment”) had grown weary of paying what little they had for food and drink. They were more than happy to venture beyond the commercialized world of the “Ordinary” and “Tap-wife”—to escape into the Gaelic(ized) countryside where their bellies could be filled with *gratis* hospitality (Carpenter [1654] 2003:243-244).

## CHAPTER 6 | Conclusions

The appearance of an identifiably Irish spirit in such a wide variety of popular printed works promoted an association of Irishmen with spiritous liquor that became canon on the Elizabethan stage. None other than William Shakespeare played on this stereotype when stressing Master Ford's distrust of his own wife in *Merry Wives of Windsor* (2.2.259-261)—a wildly popular comedy in its day, thought to have been written at the behest of Elizabeth I in the decade before its first publication in 1602 (Cross and Brooke 1993:253). The Bard of Avon had Master Ford, a husband suspicious of being cuckolded, assert that he would “rather trust...an Irishman with my *aqua-vitæ* bottle...than my wife with herself.”

John Marston tapped into the same stereotype in his *The Malcontent*:

Mal. The Dutchman for a drunkard,  
Maq. The Dane for golden lockes:  
Mal. The Irishman for vsquebath,  
Maq. The Frenchman for the [pox]

John Marston, *The Malcontent* (1604a:5.1.1-4)

To a 21<sup>st</sup>-century reader, a line about an Irishman and “vsquebath” might seem like an odd choice to include in a seemingly throwaway drinking song wedged into an Italianate courtly satire written by an Englishman for performance in London (Cathcart 2006). But to a contemporary Londoner, the reference—however awkward its appearance in the written rhyme scheme—would have been quite current and apropos, particularly in a play offering veiled commentary on projects of political and social re(-)form. As this study has argued, usquebaugh played an important role in the hospitable politics that ensured survival in colonial Ireland.

Meanwhile, the promotion of its flow through specific economic forms was seen as essential to the colonial project of social re(-)form that England was undertaking in early modern Ireland.

Ireland was a place at the forefront of English thought in 1604, when this play was first performed by children at Blackfriars and then heavily revised—with the scene containing this drinking song expanded—for staging at Shakespeare’s Globe Theater (Marston 1604a:5.1.1-4, 1604b:5.1.53-56; Cathcart 2006). Officers and soldiers had only recently returned from nine years of suppressing what was just the latest rebellion in England’s ‘sister’ kingdom. The “vsquebath” specifically associated with Marston’s Irishman would have been equally well-known to those in the audience. While Holinshed’s famous *Chronicles*—from which Shakespeare drew inspiration for his plays (Kewes et al. 2013)—did not use this specific term to refer to the substance, it did mention a notable alcoholic drink in relation to Ireland—the kingdom’s *aqua vitæ* (Stanihurst [1586] 1808, 8). “Vskebeaghe” was, however, the term used to describe this substance in John Derricke’s *Image of Irelande*, which had been in circulation since its publication in London in 1581. “Vsquebath, or Irish aqua-vitæ” likewise appeared in contemporary receipt collections and housewifery manuals, such as Hugh Plat’s ever-popular 1602 *Delightes for Ladies*, which had gone into eight London printings by 1656 (EBO<sup>1</sup>).

The different paths to commodification that usquebaugh would take in Ireland and London reveal how contingent colonial developments could be. This colonization was never simply a matter of establishing preformed socioeconomic systems—borrowed wholecloth from the metropole—in the colonial periphery. Capitalism—whatever that may even have been at this

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<sup>1</sup> The database of digitized original printed works known as Early English Books Online.

early point—did not effortlessly spread to early modern Ireland as part of the inevitable rise of a modern world-system. The roots of some progenitors to capitalist forms may have been planted at this time in Ireland, but they were just as easily wiped out by the blight of rebellion. And the most capitalistic of entrepreneurial forms were often seen to run counter to the social project that was the avowed goal of colonization. The messy realities of colonial worlds—full of undesirable bodily intimacies and “degenerative” social entanglements—had to be negotiated as they were lived, whatever the desires of colonial powers. These worlds were also peopled with agents of colonization operating from their own situated sociocultural positions, and with their own understandings and interests in mind—however these did or did not align with the grand colonial projects in which they participated. This study has been an attempt to access such an emergent colonial world in early modern Ireland.

In early modern colonial Ireland myriad motivations operated on multiple scales at the same time. Once the Protestant Reformation had taken hold in the British Isles, the Crown needed to pacify and re(-)form Ireland to protect England from Continental Catholic threats, even if (re)conquest and colonization was a financial drain. Settler colonialism, or the introduction of model Crown subjects into Ireland, suited these grand goals. It, at least theoretically, minimized costs to the state while promoting, through the lived examples of “proper” settlers, a lasting re(-)formation of the troublingly intertwined politics, economy, religion, and social forms of Gaelic(ized) Irish life. Dreams of wealth were, of course, among the motivations that pushed colonists to migrate to Ireland, facilitating the state’s colonial project. These larger-scale and longer-term motives interacted with the generally ignored, but more

immediate bodily needs and social worlds that those materially and discursively engaged in the (re)conquest and colonization of Ireland encountered, lived with, and sought to re(-)form in England's 'sister' kingdom.

Distancing the colonizer from the entanglements of this world in need of re(-)form—especially those intimate entanglements inherent to hospitality—was a powerful colonial strategy. Commercial forms of hospitality mark a commodification of the goods and services otherwise embedded in the compulsory social practices that mediate guest-host relations (Lynch et al. 2011:11). A move from “traditional” to commercial forms of hospitality is often interpreted as economic imperatives taking over from social imperatives, marking the birth of “hospitality” as a modern industry (Lashley 2007:2-3). What the early modern Irish case makes clear, however, is that officials and private individuals involved in colonial projects had a vested, and not purely economic, interest in acting as midwives to the birth of this commodified form. A commercialized hospitality mitigates the vulnerability that travelers feel in relying on the generosity of unknown people and suspect cultures for their survival in alien lands. It also provides alternatives to forms of hospitality that colonials see as intemperate threats to what should be the dominant culture (i.e., that of the colonizer), threats heightened when alcohol is incorporated into liminal hospitable scenarios (Sheringham and Darnwalla 2007:36-38,42).

Social drinking, a key feature of Gaelic(ized) hospitality, involves socially acquired *techniques du corps* (“techniques of the body”). These distinctive ways of comporting one’s body are deeply embedded in political economies that extend from households to local communities to world-systems. As such, they are indicative of so much more than the ethnic

“proclivities” they are so often glossed as (Dietler 2006:240-241). Tastes for certain alcohol and styles of drink that are tied into a given social structure and its cultural understanding of alcohol do, however, become attached to “ethnic” or diasporic identity when groups come into contact and form ongoing, often exploitative, relationships through trade or colonization. The transformation of an alcoholic substance into a colonial commodity is thus a loaded process that plays into the creation and negotiation of social worlds ripe with conflicting identities and structural tensions, as seen in this study.

There was no guarantee that a study like the current one—focused on a particular consumable substance—would counteract the teleological assumptions embedded in Marxist critical arguments about the early modern world. Studies of colonial consumables—sugar, tea, coffee, chocolate, *yerba maté*—tend to be commodity chain analyses. They are, essentially, focused exercises in reasserting the economic ties and inequitable power dynamics linking cores and geographically remote peripheries. In them, distant consumption is connected to capitalist modes of production and forms of labor exploitation in metropolises and in the colonies, all within a modern world-system of assumed commodity exchange (Schivelbusch [1980] 1992; Mintz 1986; Wallerstein [1986] 2000, 2002; Coe and Coe 2000; Jamieson 2001).

As this study has shown, such a cut-and-dried commodity chain model could never fully account for the convoluted early modern history of usquebaugh. The approach that proved most fruitful had to start from consumption, which is where colonial commentaries often started their discourses on the substance. This was just one instance of listening to what the assembled archive was saying about the direction that the research needed to take. The resulting analytical

model—rather than being the arrow-of-time conveyed in the commodity chain approach—is more of a spiral that circles back again and again to the same thematic loci, tackling them each time from a different perspective. Each of the three main argumentative chapters takes up the same three subjects—guesting, feasting, and military hosting—each time deepening or expanding our understanding of how these forms of hospitality played into the colonial world of early modern Ireland. Imagine a single bead of whiskey tracing a spiral around and down the sloping sides of a funnel—time flowing through an hourglass, rather than along a linear chain. The tapering funnel being traced by that spiraling bead of usquebaugh analysis is actually inverted, though—the lower half of the hourglass. It begins with a narrow focus on the body, and expands outward as it circles back to revisit and expand on key themes.

By listening to the archive, and taking consumption as a starting point, this entire study became rooted in the body—an intimate, needful site of consumption; the original source of anxiety in the world. Do babies not cry to express their hunger fresh out of the womb? The historical body was a cultural product, however, and needed to be contextualized in terms of the theories—often glossed as medical—through which it was understood to physically relate to the wider world. After descending into the innermost workings of that enculturated body, analysis turned upward and outward to explore the social-self engaged in acts of entangling cross-cultural consumption. Encounter turned to othering as colonial communities expressed their identities and a desire to shield their members from the draw of sociocultural accommodation and change. In early modern Ireland this process played out under the weight of historical memory, with what was seen as a failed medieval colonization looming as an example of what had to be avoided.

The final analytical move of this study was then to take one last step up and away from the intimacies of the body and direct social interaction. Here analysis rose to the level of “colonialisms” and the systemic abstractions of legislative intervention. What this last move revealed were colonial powers grappling with local practice, trying to bend people and things into ideal forms and being met with all of the constraints—material, social, cultural—of the worlds they wished to reshape but of which they themselves were a part.

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*Originall, and Ofspryng, Their Descent and Pedigree: Also Their Habite and Apparell, is There Plainly Showne. The Execrable Life, and Miserable Death of Rorie Roge, That Famous Archtraitour to God and the Croune (Otherwise Called Rorie Oge) is Like Wise Discribed. Lastlie the Commyng in of Thyrlaghe Leonaghe the Greate Oneale of Irelande, with the Effecte of His Submission, to the Right Honourable Sir Henry Sidney (Lorde Deputie of the Saied Lande) is thereto Adioyned. Made and Deuised by Ihon Derricke, Anno 1578. And Now Published and Set Forthe by the Saied Authour This Present Yere of Our Lorde 1581. For Pleasure and Delight of the Well Disposed Reader.* Ihon Daie, London, England.

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## APPENDIX A | Brief Primary Source Author Biographies

### **BOATE, GERARD [GERRIT BOOT] (B. 1604 – D. 1650)**

A Dutch physician and the actual author of the *Natural History* of Ireland published by Samuel Hartlib. This work was written in 1645-1646 through knowledge gained from former plantation settlers driven out of Ireland by warfare. Boate's interest in Ireland stemmed from the money he had invested in it, via the Adventurers' Act of 1642, and the land there that he had been promised in repayment. In 1649 he finally traveled to Ireland, taking up a post as "Doctor of Physick to the State in Ireland." *Natural History* would have to be published posthumously, however, as Boate only survived a few months in the Irish capital. His improvement-oriented work was much longer-lived, however, seeing two editions published in Dublin in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century (Baigent 2007).

### **BODLEY, JOSIAS (B. 1550 – D. 1618)**

A university-educated, career military man—and brother to the benefactor for whom Oxford's Bodleian Library is named—Josias Bodley had previously served in Protestant armies on the Continent. He had come to Ireland around the time that the younger Essex was trying his hand at defeating Tyrone, at the height of the Nine Years War. Bodley went on to fought under the more successful Mountjoy, who eventually defeated the Spanish at Kinsale. He would live out his days as a colonial agent in Ireland, as both a surveyor and Director-General of Fortifications there from 1609 until his death in 1617. The erudite young Bodley penned an

account, in Latin, of Christmastide in Co. Down that circulated in manuscript among his friends in England as an amusing divergence and remembrance of good times (Falkiner 1904:326-7; Tedder & Brown 1911:553; McGurk 2008).

**BOORDE [BORDE], ANDREW (B. 1490 – D. 1549)**

During a period of relative quiet in Ireland—between the 1541 Crown of Ireland Act and subsequent rebellious stirrings in the 1560s—the English physician Andrew Boorde wrote (1542) and published (1547) *The Fyrst Boke of the Introduction of Knowledge*. A popular travel guide written largely from personal experience by a monk-turned-man-of-the-world, this book was among the first to include an English-language description of Ireland and its inhabitants. Each chapter included an abbreviated phrasebook for its respective country and information on local sites, customs, and currency. While it is not known whether Boorde ever personally stepped foot in Ireland, he did spend part of 1536 studying and practicing medicine in Glasgow, on the West coast of Scotland. It would have been but a short trip by sea from there to Ireland, either for Boorde himself or whomever he collected his account of Ireland from. Like many authors to come, he based much of what he wrote about Ireland on the works of Giraldus Cambrensis—the cleric and chronicler of the 12<sup>th</sup>-century Anglo-Norman conquest of the island (Bartlett 2006; Boorde [1547] 1870:131-5; Carpenter 2003:45; Furnivall 1870:36-7).

**CAMBRENSIS, GIRALDUS [GERALD OF WALES, GERALD DE BARRY] (B. C.1146 – D. 1220/23)**

The Welsh-born cleric, scholar, royal clerk, and chronicler of the Anglo-Norman conquest, whose 12<sup>th</sup>-century *Topography of Ireland* was the first colonial text to mention the watery landscape and digestive ailments common to Ireland. Gerald was the younger son of a Cambro-Norman family of knights, whose genealogy included Normans and native Welsh princes. Destined for an ecclesiastical career from a young age, Gerland received training in Paris, although his religious appointments were in Wales. Gerald de Barry's kin were among the first Cambro-Normans to settle in Ireland following Strongbow's invasion. The cleric himself visited Ireland on multiple occasions, once in the retinue of then Lord of Ireland, and future King of England, John Plantagenet (Bartlett 2006).

**CAMPION, EDMUND (B. 1540 – D. 1581)**

It was thanks to the hospitality and abundant reference collection of James Stanihurst—Recorder of Dublin, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, and father to Richard Stanihurst—that [Saint] Edmund Campion, native Englishman and future Catholic martyr, came to devote himself, during his time in Ireland, to a history and geography of the Kingdom. Campion—seeking refuge in Ireland between taking Anglican Holy Orders at Oxford in 1569 and becoming reconciled to the Catholic Church as an exile on the European Continent in 1571—hid himself from pursuing Protestants in the household of his friend. With the help of James's son Richard, Campion researched and wrote his *Historie of Ireland*. Campion's actual writing would remain

unpublished until 1633—long after the priest’s gruesome execution for treason at Tyburn in 1581, stemming from his Jesuit mission to England the previous year. It would live on quite famously (if contentiously) in Raphael Holinshed’s *Chronicles: Conteyning the Description, Conquest, Inhabitation, and Troublesome Estate of Ireland*, published in London first in 1577 and again, heavily censored and revised, in 1587 (Graves 2008).

Much like Boorde’s earlier work, Campion’s professed to be that of a traveler inquiring into the customs and antiquities of an alien land. Work on this *Historie* also gave scholarly meaning to his period of Irish exile. While Campion’s reason for being in Ireland was not explicitly colonial, he did write from a decidedly English perspective. However, his politico-religious leanings aligned, the xenophobic-cum-colonial overtones of his *Historie* prevailed. In describing “the mere Irish,” he commended the medieval Anglo-Norman conquest of Ireland for having cured the Gaelic Irish of some of the “enormities” of their manners, fervently hoping for a similar effect on the heels of the ongoing Elizabeth re-conquest of the island (Campion [1571] 1633; Preface, 15).

#### **CÉITINN, SEATHRÚN [GEOFFREY KEATING] (B. C.1580 – D. 1644)**

An Anglo-Norman-descended Irishman educated first in traditional Irish learning before pursuing counter reformation training as a Catholic priest on the European continent. Keating, now a doctor of divinity in the Church of Rome, returned to Ireland in 1610 to preach and compose theological tracts in his native Irish tongue. He became most famous, however, for *Foras feasa ar Éirinn* (*Compendium of wisdom about Ireland*)—a narrative history of his

homeland from the biblical creation of the world through the arrival of the Anglo-Normans. Written in Irish prose and verse, research for the volume drew on Gaelic manuscripts, Latin records, and printed English texts. Keating's history—which circulated from c.1634 in Irish, English, and Latin manuscript form—spoke directly to the unfavorable image of Ireland presented by earlier Anglophone writers. It sought, instead, to redeem Irish antiquity as a noble past, taking on a Counter Reformation (if not anti-colonial) tone in doing so (Cunningham 2009).

**DAVIES, JOHN (BAP. 1569 – D. 1626)**

Sir John Davies was a well-connected English poet, antiquary, and lawyer who served in the colonial administration in Ireland during the reign of James VI and I. Despite a wayward youth—which saw him expelled from law school and disbarred for a period from legal practice in London—Davies enjoyed career success, thanks in large part to the patronage of then secretary of state Sir Robert Cecil and the future Lord Deputy of Ireland, Lord Mountjoy. Davies would follow Mountjoy to Ireland in 1603, where he was appointed solicitor-general and received a knighthood from his patron. As well as actively engaging as an agent of colonization in Ireland—amassing some 5500 acres as servitor in the Plantation of Ulster—Davies penned a number of commentaries concerning the state of the English colonial endeavor there—including his 1612 *A Discoverie of the True Causes Why Ireland Was Neuer Entirely Subdued*. Unsurprisingly, Davies' political philosophy centered on the role properly constituted and executed laws would play in the subjugation and assimilation of the Crown's subjects in Ireland.

His re(-)forms took particular aim at Gaelic Irish Brehon law, especially local practices surrounding the ownership and inheritance of land (Kelsey 2008).

**DERRICKE, JOHN (FL. 1578)**

New energy would be injected into the colonial discourse on Elizabethan Ireland by the 1581 publication of John Derricke's *Image of Irelande*, which included woodcut prints and an epic poem chronicling the customs of the Gaelic 'wild' Irish. In his account of a Gaelic feast, affronts to English sensibilities abounded and set the precedent for those depictions of Gaelic hospitality that would follow. While certain aspects of Derricke's feast directly recall Boorde's "Iryshe man" (1547), the festal scene that he set unfolded in much greater detail, from meal preparation through post-prandial entertainments. Unlike Boorde, Derricke was definitely resident in Ireland during the period in which the events of the *Image* took place. He was, most likely, a customs official in Drogheda during Sir Henry Sidney's purview as Ireland's Lord Deputy, which ran from 1565 to 1571, and again from 1575 to 1578. As a member of Sidney's military-administrative camp he gained the knowledge and familiarity of Irish customs, or at least English opinions of them, which formed the basis for his poem and woodblocks (McCormack & Clavin 2014).

It is in the pages of his highly colonial text are found the famous (to some infamous) woodblock print of a Gaelic Irish feast—nestled within a polyptych of Gaelic rebellion and English administration. What garners less attention in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is the epic poem that originally accompanied these graphic depictions of the Elizabethan re-conquest of Ireland. The

second part of the *Image of Irelande*—preceded in the first by a mythologized history of the country—begins with a visceral account of a feast (one presumes the same as depicted in the woodcut), wherein Derrick bemoaned the rude manners—and rebellious ways—of Gaelic lords and their woodkern (foot soldiers).

**DYMMOK [DYMMOCK], JOHN (FL. 1600)**

An Englishman engaged in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Essex’s abortive 1599 campaign to subdue Ireland, who penned a manuscript “Treatice of Ireland” (c.1600) that was first published in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century (Brennan 2002:253).

**ELYOT, THOMAS (B. C.1490 – D. 1546)**

Tudor statesman and humanist scholar who wrote *Castel of Helth* (1536) (Lehmberg 2004; EEBO).

**GERNON, LUKE (B. C.1580 – D. C.1672)**

Not all of the Englishmen recording life in colonial Ireland had military backgrounds. Luke Gernon was a civilian experienced in law who served on the provincial council of Munster and was appointed a justice of that province around the time he wrote “A Discourse of Ireland, Anno 1620” (Falkiner 1904:345-347). His instructive depiction of Irish customs, unpublished until the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, may have been more sympathetic than many, but was still laced with

deeply enculturated English reactions to what he saw and experienced. Gernon wrote what has come to be known as his “Discourse” as an epistolary essay to a friend back in England. His stated aim was to draw his correspondent into life in Ireland as it was, or at least as he perceived and experienced it to be. Gernon ([1620] 1904:348-349) wished to compose as “plausible and delightful” an account as his talents allowed, to facilitate his friend in imagining the administrator’s life in Ireland. The “Discourse” not only captures English reaction to Gaelic customs, it demonstrates how colonials like Gernon negotiated the material and social realities of what was to them a new world.

#### **HARINGTON, JOHN (B. C.1560 – D. 1612)**

An Elizabethan courtier-soldier best known for his English-language translations of *Orlando Furioso* and portions of the *Aeneid*—and a tongue-in-cheek treatise on domestic sanitation, which included a design for the first modern flushing toilet. He served as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Essex’s commander of horse in Ireland in 1599, after which he composed the short poem, “Of the warres in Ireland” (Scott-Warren 2004).

#### **HARTLIB, SAMUEL (B. 1600 – D. 1662)**

An Eastern European Protestant émigré who was the chief early proponent of the ‘improvement’ movement in England was. His ‘Circle’ of learned correspondents, active from the 1630s through 1650s, presaged the Enlightenment. His research and writing on religion, education, agriculture, and industry earned him the favor of Oliver Cromwell, and a

parliamentary pension (Morfill 1891:72-3). Hartlib was personally responsible for the 1652 publication, dedicated to Oliver Cromwell, of what was the first *Natural History* of Ireland to suggest the altering of landscape to improve both the economic and health prospects of settlers there.

### **LANE, PARR (FL. 1621)**

Another English veteran of the Nine Years War who stayed on in Ireland and contributed commentary on the problems and potentials of colonial policy there. Lane shared a similar social background and religious persuasion with Barnaby Rich. Unlike Rich, who retired as a soldier, Lane transitioned from more soldierly work to provincial civil administration. He also took up residence in Munster, where he served on the Council, rather than remaining in the Dublin area. The work for which Lane is best remembered is a poem, “Newes from the holy ile,” which keeps with the tradition of advice literature designed to enlighten and direct policy pertaining to the reformation of Ireland. His perspective was a staunchly colonial and Protestant one, versed in both military and civil life (Ford 1999:115-16).

### **MORYSON, FYNES (B. 1565/66 – D. 1630)**

The more well known chronicler of Lord Mountjoy’s time in Ireland was Fynes Moryson, elder brother to the soldier-administrator Richard Moryson who featured in Josias Bodley’s Christmas recollection. The elder Moryson, who traveled Europe for six years as a Cambridge fellow, followed his brother to Ireland in 1600. There he found employment as Mountjoy’s chief

secretary, accompanying the Lord Deputy as he put down Tyrone's Rebellion, and following him back to England in 1603. He traveled back to Ireland once, to visit his brother, then Vice President of Munster, in 1613 (Thompson 2004).

Moryson had been working, since Mountjoy's death in 1606, on an account of all the countries to which he had traveled in his lifetime. He completed and published his three-part magnum opus, *An Itinerary: Containing His Ten Years Travel Through the Twelve Dominions of Germany, Bohemia, Switzerland, Netherland, Denmark, Poland, Italy, Turkey, France, England, Scotland and Ireland*, just before his death in 1617. The expansive, nearly 300-page volume featured an elegiac account of Mountjoy's tenure in Ireland, and included a description of Ireland and the customs of its inhabitants, Gaelic and Anglo-Norman alike. His geographical description of Ireland might have borrowed heavily from a discursive tradition first seen in print in Holinshed's *Chronicles*, but he drew connections that none before him had. His account of Irish life and English colonial engagements, however biased, was likewise reminiscent of earlier works while containing an abundance of novel detail that was entirely his own. His passages on Ireland would remain popular into the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, collected into the 1735 Dublin-published *A History of Ireland from 1599 to 1603* (Thompson 2004). As with so many Englishmen authoring tracts about Ireland at this time, Moryson was not shy in offering his opinion of the world around him, suggesting ways it could be more properly ordered.

**RICH, BARNABY [BARNABE] (B. 1542 – D. 1617)**

This prolific, self-educated soldier-turned-author first came to Ireland in the service of the 1st Earl of Essex, during the earl's early attempt to colonize Ulster in the 1570s. Despite having published *Rich his Farewell to Military Profession* in 1581, by 1584 the military-cum-literary man was back commanding troops in Coleraine in the wake of the Desmond Rebellion. He had slipped into retirement again by 1593, settling in the environs of Dublin, where lived off a military pension and died sometime after publishing what he boasted was his twenty-sixth book, the *Irish Hubbub*, in 1617. From 1574, when he first set pen to paper, right up until his death, Rich wrote and published as an everyman on a wide variety of subjects, including a number of tracts on Ireland. He composed romances, recounted past adventures, lambasted Catholics, and lamented the low morals of his age (Maley, 2004).

**SCOTT, THOMAS (FL. 1616)**

Possibly a Protestant polemicist, he penned “An Irish Banquet, or the Mayors Feast of Youghall,” contained among “Certaine Pieces of this Age paraboliz’d” in *Philomythie or Philomythologie: wherein outlandish birds, beasts, and fishes, are taught to speake true English plainely* (1616). The volume is a satire, published in London and intended for an English audience. “An Irish Banquet” would have struck a particular chord with those readers familiar with the tropes of Gaelic Irish feasting perpetuated in early modern Anglophone literature.

Though Roman gods were dining at the feast, pigs wandered the halls and defecated at will. The feast went on to take a decidedly Gaelic shape (Kelsey 2004; Scot [1616] 2003).

**SPENSER [SPENCER], EDMUND (B. C.1552 – D. 1599)**

Famed Elizabethan poet and author of a *View of the Present State of Ireland*, Edmund Spenser had likely first experienced Ireland in the 1570s as a courier for the Earl of Leicester, a powerful courtier and favorite of Elizabeth I. In 1580, the university educated poet accompanied Lord Grey to Ireland as the new Lord Deputy's secretary. He bore witness to the brutality with which Grey put down the earlier Desmond Rebellion in Munster. After years of service as a clerk to the Dublin administration, Spenser took up the post of clerk to the council of Munster, where he held some 3000 acres of 'plantation' lands forfeited in 1586. He reluctantly made old Kilcolman castle, in County Cork, his home from 1588, although his aspirations kept him hoping for preferment closer to the London court. Two years into Tyrone's Rebellion, Spenser completed his *View*—which provided advice on how English rule could best correct Irish barbarity—while on a foray to London in 1596 (Canny 2001:162; Hales & Lee 1898:384-398; Spenser [1586] 1809).

Acting as sheriff of Cork in 1598, Spenser experienced firsthand the wrath of discontented Gaeldom—urged on as they were by Catholic powers hellbent against Elizabeth I. As the rebellion spread into Ireland's southern province, his own home was burnt around his ears, with he and his family only narrowly escaping to the city of Cork. Spenser would die within the year, in London, while bearing news from the President of Munster to the Court regarding the

progress Tyrone had made in decolonizing Ireland. From the survival of his *View of the Present State of Ireland* in numerous manuscript collections, it appears to have seen some private circulation, despite plans for a 1598 London printing having fallen through due to state censorship—the work was highly critical of government. It would not see formal publication until 1633, and then in Dublin, when the antiquarian James Ware included it—despite objecting to the unabashedly derogatory tone it took towards the Gaelic Irish and native customs—in that same compendium of Irish histories containing the previously unpublished work of Edmund Campion (Canny 2001:160-162; Hales & Lee 1898:384-398; Vine 2010:72).

**STANIHURST [STANYHURST], RICHARD (B. 1547 – D. 1618)**

The Stanihursts (or Stanyhursts), another Old English family and prominent residents of Dublin from the 14<sup>th</sup> Century, left one of the most profound marks on the colonial discourse surrounding early modern Ireland. It was the son, Richard, who compiled and expanded on Campion's *Historie* for inclusion in Holinshed's *Chronicles*. Richard himself had been a close associate of Edmund Campion, both at Oxford and in Dublin, where he assisted his mentor in researching the *Historie of Ireland* (Lennon 2008). The impact of the *Chronicles* on contemporary understandings of the people and places of the British Isles—their customs and history—is hard to overstate, as can be seen in the discursive traditions surrounding Ireland that it generated. It was, after all, from the 1587 edition that Shakespeare drew inspiration for his history plays (Djordjevic 2016:1).

As an English-educated member of the Anglo-Norman community in Dublin, the younger Stanihurst was a keen proponent of the Elizabethan reconquest of Ireland. Towards this end, Stanihurst's "Plaine and Perfect Description of Ireland" kept with the overall tone and intent of Holinshed's *Chronicle*, which was designed as a didactic guide to governance for those directing the English—in this case colonial Irish—ship of state in the late 16<sup>th</sup> Century (Djordjevic 2016:28-29). His translation and expansion of Campion's *Historie* for the *Chronicles* included derogatory descriptions of Gaelic Irish and 'degenerated' Anglo-Norman lifestyles and manners, which he was quick to distance from those of the still civilized Pale that he called home (Stanihurst [1586] 1808:67; Canny 2001:120). In time, Stanihurst would follow his English mentor's lead, taking Roman Catholic holy orders on the Continent and working against the interests of the English crown through his contacts at the Spanish court. Whatever these historical eventualities, his depiction of the Gaelic Irish in Holinshed's *Chronicles* was dubbed prejudicial and malicious by later Gaelic and English authors alike—from soldier-turned-colonizer of Ulster, Barnaby Rich, to Irish priest-historian, Geoffrey Keating (Lennon 2008).

However prejudicial, certain tropes surrounding Ireland's watery landscape and climate—and its *aqua vitæ*—saw wide dissemination through the *Chronicles*. They soon found their way into geographies of the British Isles that would remain popular in England, at least enough to be revised and reprinted into the 18<sup>th</sup> Century (Camden 1637; Camden 1789; Speed 1662). While those authors publishing these tracts at the dawn of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century were keen to cite the Anglo-Norman chronicler Geraldus Cambrensis (Gerald of Wales) as their source for

descriptions of Ireland, their references to Ireland's *aqua vitæ*<sup>1</sup> betrayed the debt they owed to Campion-cum-Stanihurst (Camden 1610; Speed 1612). These tropes remained so popular that James Shirley, a renowned London playwright who fled to Dublin in 1636 to avoid the plague, began the Prologue to his play *The Irish Gentleman* with reference to “old Geographers” and what they had to say about the Irish air (Shirley [1638] 2003:212).

**WARE, JAMES (B. 1594 – D. 1666)**

Ireland produced its own learned scholars who remained active during the Commonwealth period, as well. Chief among these was Sir James Ware, Irish-born and Irish-educated son of an Elizabethan Englishman who had served the Lord Deputy in Dublin. Ware himself held the patent for Auditor-General of Ireland, which he had inherited from his father upon the elder's death. He served Wentworth during his tenure in Ireland, and represented Trinity College Dublin in the Irish Parliament before and after Cromwell's run as Protectorate. Ware played a variety of diplomatic roles during the wars of the 1640s, advocating for peace with the Confederation of Kilkenny and acting as Irish envoy to Charles I's court in Oxford. His association with the Crown led to him being held hostage and imprisoned, eventually spending two years in French exile (Parry 2004).

Things settled down upon his return to Dublin in 1651, where he resumed his antiquarian endeavors. Ware's passion, throughout, was collecting manuscripts from ancient Irish libraries,

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<sup>1</sup> Vske-bah in Camden's 1610 *Britain* (the first English-language printing of his 1586 *Britannia*), Vskebah in Speed's 1612 *The theatre of the empire of Great Britaine*, and usquebaugh in the 1789 edition of Camden titled *Britannia*.

both lay and religious. While he had a passable knowledge of written Irish, he did employ Gaelic scribes to translate the documents he collected. He also took advantage of his time in England to glean what he could from libraries there. With this accumulated knowledge, Ware wrote a thoroughgoing account of *The Antiquities and History of Ireland*, published in Latin in London in 1654 and in English in Dublin in 1705. It was also Ware who first published the famous Irish works of two Elizabethan Edmunds—with Campion’s *Historie of Ireland* and Spenser’s *View of the Present State of Ireland* printed by him in a single volume in 1633 (Parry 2004; Ware [1654] 1705:53). His passion for the Irish past thus joined him in scholarly pursuit with hereditary Gaelic ‘men of letters’ (poets and historians), as well as a Catholic martyr who was executed as a national traitor a decade before Ware was even born.

#### **WHITE, ROWLAND (FL. 1548 – D. 1571)**

Rowland White, scion of an Old English<sup>2</sup> family that had originally settled in Ulster in the closing decades of the 12<sup>th</sup> Century, began composing tracts encouraging the Anglicizing social reformation and material exploitation of Ireland during the reigns of Edward VI and Mary I (c.1547-1558). A merchant and sometime pirate hunter operating out of Dublin, White was well known by those active in late 16<sup>th</sup>-century English colonial endeavors in Ireland—including the queen’s chief advisor, William Cecil, to whom he addressed much of his writing. While defending the Anglo-Norman culture of the Pale, White lambasted the customs and

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<sup>2</sup> The term used to identify those individuals and families, long resident in Ireland, who were descended from medieval Anglo-Norman settlers.

practices of the Gaelic Irish, whose resurgence in Ulster had driven his family from the barony of Dufferin, though they maintained the title. This close contact exposed him, in an albeit biased way, to the enforced hospitality and culinary habits of early modern Gaeldom. Rowland White died quite suddenly in 1572, having caught the plague while arguing the case for Ireland's colonization in person in London, missing the 1st Earl of Essex's campaign to reconquer Ulster by a year (Berry 1906:123; Berry 1907:94; Brigden 2000:260-1; Canny 1979:148; Canny 1977:440-442).

## APPENDIX B | Receipts for an Irish Spirit

Plat, Hugh. 1602. *DELIGHTES for Ladies, to adorne their Persons, Tables, closets, and distillatories: WITH Beauties, banquets, perfumes, and Waters*. Peter Short, London, England. Pg. E5. [This book went into at least eight London printings from 1602 through 1656.<sup>1</sup>]

### 8. D. Steuens *aqua composita*

Take a galló of gascoign wine, of ginger, galingale, cinamó, nutmegs & graines, Annis seeds, fennell seedes and caraway seeds, of each a dram, of Sage, Mints, red Roses, Time, Pellitory, Rosemarie, wile thyme, camomil, lauender, of each a handful, bray the spices small and bruse the herbes, letting them macerate 12. houres stirring it nowe and then, then distill by a limbecke of pewter, keeping the first cleere water that commeth by it selfe, and so likewise the second. You shall drawe much about a pinte of the better sorte from euery gallon of wine.

### 9. *Vsquebath, or Irish aqua-vitæ.*

To euery gallon of good Aqua composita, put two ounces of chosen liquerice bruised, and cut into small peeces, but first clensed from all his filth, and two ounces of Annis seeds that are cleane & bruised, let them macerate fiue or sixe daies in a wodden Vessel, stopping the same close, and then draw off as much as will runne cleere, dissoluing in that cleare aqua vitæ fiue or six spoonfuls of the best Malassoes you can get, Spanish cute of you can get it, is thought better then Malassoes, then put this into another vessell; and after three or foure daies (the more the better) when the liquor hath fined itself, you may vse the same: some adde Dates & Raisons of the sun to this receipt; those groundes which remaine you may redistill and make more Aqua composita of them, & of that Aqua composita you may make more Vsquebath.



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<sup>1</sup> These minimum publication counts derive from editions available on EEBO.

Company of Distillers of London. 1639. *The DISTILLER OF LONDON. OR, RVLES and DIRECTIONS FOR Preparing, Composing, Distilling, Extracting and Making OF RICH-SPIRITS, STRONG-VVATERS, and AQUAVITAE, &c. Richard Bishop, London, England. Pp. 18 & 27-8.* [This book went into at least four London editions from 1639 through 1726.]

Vsquebach...The Irish appellation

XIII.

Rx    Strong prooffe spirit, e s.  
         Aniseseeds, y.  
         Cloves, n.  
         Nuttmeg,  
         Ginger,  
         Caruway seeds, ana, o.  
Distill them into strong prooffe spirit, S. A.  
Then add to the Distilled water  
         Licorice, spa. ana, n.  
         Raysins, sol. ana, n.  
Bruise the Licorice and Raysins,  
Dulcifie with browne sugar, c.  
Stirre them well together and so let it stand, y s. dayes, and then (being  
Fine) draw it off, and keepe it for use.



Culpeper, Nicholas. 1649. *A PHYSICALL DIRECTORY, OR A Translation of the LONDON DISPENSATORY Made by the Colledge of Physicians in London. Being That Book by Which All Apothecaries are Strictly Comanded to Make all their Physick with Many Hundred Additions Which the Reader May Find in Every Page Marked with This Letter A.* Peter Cole, London, England. Pp. 92-93. [This book went into multiple London editions from 1649 through 1718.]

*Ordinary Aqua vitæ*

Distill Ale and lees of Wine in an Alembick (whose worm runs through cold water) into small Wine, in ten Congies of which infuse a pound of bruised Annis seeds, for twenty four hours then still it again into strong water.

*Vsquebach*

Take of strong Aqua vitæ 24. pints, in which, for four daies infuse a pound of Liquoris, Raisons of the Sun half a pound, Cloves half an ounce, Mace, Ginger, of each two drachms, strain it and keep it for your use.

A. It strengthens the stomach, and helps indigestion coming of flegm and cold.



French, John. 1653a. *The Art of DISTILLATION, or a TREATISE of the Choicest Spagiricall PREPARATIONS Performed by way of DISTILLATION*. E. Cotes, London, England. Pp. 25-26, 45-6.

*How to make Aqua vitae, and spirit of Wine out of Wine.*

TAke of what wine you please, put it into a copper Still, two parts of three being empty, distill it with a worm untill no more spirit come off, then this spirit will serve for the making of any spirits out of vegetables: but if thou wouldst have it stronger distill it again, and half will remain behind as an insipid flegm: and if thou wouldst have it yet stronger, distill it again, for every distillation wil leave behind one moiety of flegm or thereabouts; So shalt thou have a most pure and strong spirit of wine.

*How to make Aqua vitae out of beer.*

TAke of stale strong-beer or rather the grounds thereof, pu it into a Copper Still with a worm, distill it gently (or otherwise it will make the head of the Still fly up) and there wil come forth a weak spirit, which is called low wine: of which when thou hast a good quantity thou mayest distill it again of it self, and there will come forth a good Aqua vitae. And if thou distillest it two or three times more, thou shalt have as strong a spirit as out of wine, and indeed betwixt which and the spirit of wine, thou shalt perceive none or very little difference.

*Vsque-bath, or Irish Aqua vitæ, is made thus.*

TAke a Gallon of smal Aqua vitæ, put it into a glass vessel; put thereto a quart of Canary sack, two pound of Raisins of the Sun stoned, but not washed, two ounces of Dates stoned, and the white skins thereof pulled out, two ounces of Cinnamon grossly bruised, four good Nutmegs bruised, an ounce of the best English Licorish sliced, and bruised, stop the vessel very close, and let them infuse in a cold place six or eight days, then let the Liquor run through a bag called Manica Hippocratis, made of white cotton.

This Liquor is commonly used in surfets, being a good Stomach water.



French, John. 1653b. *The London-Distiller, Exactly and truly shewing the way (in words at length and not in myste-sterious CHARACTERS and FIGURES) to draw all SORTS OF SPIRITS AND STRONG-WATERS: To which is added their Vertues, with Additions of many Excellent WATERS.* E. Cotes, London, England. Pg. 17.

*Vsquebach.*

*The greater quantity.*

Take strong Proof spirit 10 gallons, Aniseeds 1 pound, Cloves 2 ounces, Nutmeg, Ginger, Caraway seeds of each four ounces: distill them into strong proof Spirit according to Art. Then adde to the distilled water Licorice Spanish, Raisins solis of each 2 pound, bruise the Licorice and Raisins, dulcifie with brown Sugar 5 pound, stir them well together, and so let it stand ten dayes, and then (being fine) draw it off and keep it for use.

*The lesser quantity.*

Take strong Proof spirit what sufficeth, Aniseeds 1 ounce 5 drams, Cloves a dram and half, Nutmeg, Ginger, Caraway seeds of each 3 drams, distil them into strong Proof spirit according to Art; then adde to the distilled water Licorice Spanish, Raisins solis, of each 3 ounces a dram and half, bruise the Licorice and Raisins, dulcifie with brown Sugar 8 ounces, stir them well together, and so let it stand ten dayes, and then (being fine) draw it off and keep it for use.

Vsquebach cureth the infirmities of the lungs, warmeth the Stomach, and causeth expectoration.



M., W. 1655. *The Queens Closet Opened: Incomparable Secrets in Physick, Chyrurgery, Preserving, Candyng, and Cookery; As they were presented unto the Queen By the most Experienced Persons of our times, many whereof were honoured with her own Practice, when she pleased to descend to these more private Recreations.* Nathaniel Brook, London, England. Pp. 217 & 283-284. [This book went into at least ten London editions from 1655 through 1698.]

*To make Usquabath the best way.*

Take two quarts of the best Aqua vitæ, four ounces of Scraped Liquorice and half a pound of sliced Raysins of the Sun Aniseed four ounces, Dates and Figs of each half a pound, sliced Nutmeg, Cinamon, Ginger, of each half an ounce, put these to the aqua vitæ, stop it very close, and set it in a cold place ten days, stirring it twice a day with a stick, then strain or sweeten it with Sugar candy; after it is strained let it stand till it be clear, then put into the glass Musk and Ambergreese; two grains is sufficient for this quantity.

*The hearbs to be distilled for Usquebath*

Take Agrimony, Fumitory, Betony, Bugloss, Wormwood, Harts-tongue, Carduus Benedictus, Rosemary, Angelica, Tormentil, of each of these for every gallon of Ale one handfull, Aniseeds and Liquorice well bruised half a pound. Still all these together, and when it is stilled, you must infuse Cinamon, Nutmeg, Mace, Liquorice, Dates, and Raisins of the Sun, and Sugar what quantity you please. The infusion must be till the colour please you.

