

**"YOUNG NED OF THE HILL"
AND THE REEMERGENCE OF THE IRISH RAPPAREE:
A TEXTUAL AND INTERTEXTUAL ANALYSIS**

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The song "Young Ned of the Hill" by the Pogues resurrects an outlaw hero from Irish folklore and attempts to make sense of contemporary experience by appealing to a meaningful past. Through a close attention to text and intertextual references, this article considers why Ned of the Hill has reemerged as a symbolic figure, and what messages are conveyed by the song's representation of the outlaw. In particular, the song may provide commentary on the contemporary political situation in Northern Ireland. In the process of exploring how the song selectively draws from previous discourse, scholarship in folklore and linguistic anthropology help us explore broader issues in interpreting text, context, and tradition.

In 1989, the Pogues, an eclectic Irish folk/punk/rock band, included "Young Ned of the Hill," a song written by Ron Kavana and Pogues member Terry Woods, on their ironically titled album, *Peace and Love*. The song is somewhat remarkable as a political statement, fiercely condemning Oliver Cromwell and his ruthless seventeenth-century campaign through Ireland. However, the song's tone is also standard fare for this now defunct London-based band of mostly Irish expatriots, who cultivated an image of hard-drinking, blue-collar machismo. Perhaps more remarkable is Kavana and Woods' choice of the Irish outlaw and folk hero Ned of the Hill as their foil to Cromwell. Éamonn Ó Riain (Edmund O'Ryan), better known in Irish folklore as Éamonn an Chnoic or Ned of the Hill, was one of many Irish Catholic landholders forcibly dispossessed by English and Scottish Protestant settlers in the seventeenth century. Rather than fleeing to the continent, many like Ó Riain chose to remain in Ireland, hoping to frustrate their supplanters. Living the lives of political bandits – harassing British troops, robbing Protestant planters and landlords, and aiding the Irish poor – these men were outlawed and termed "rapparees" and "tories"¹ by Crown authorities. After the historical Ó Riain's death, ballads, chapbooks, and local legends immortalized him as a Robin Hood-like resistance fighter and proto-nationalist folk hero.

Given the infrequency of contemporary published references to the folkloric Ned of the Hill (and, indeed, other political bandits from the Irish past), one might think him a symbolic figure more relevant to a previous era. Yet he reappeared on a reasonably popular album produced during a period of heightened political tension in Northern Ireland. Through several centuries, media, and reworkings, elements of Ned of the Hill's story have continued to resonate with vastly different audience – Irish, Anglo-Irish, English, and now anyone who buys *Peace and Love* and enjoys this song. One reason may be the purely structural appeal of the outlaw's romantic story. In a context in which justice has been divorced from law, he seizes the opportunity to simultaneously be bad and do the right thing by breaking the law. Whatever the specific reasons for its appeal to contemporary audiences, the Pogues' "Young Ned of the Hill" is a recent innovation in a long, though admittedly waning, narrative and poetic tradition concerned with Irish outlaws and one outlaw in particular. It is not a revival of an old ballad or a recounting of a folksy oral history but a modern mass-marketed product that draws in part from a larger, threecentury-old discourse on Irish outlaws.²

Given the song's juxtaposition of Ned and Cromwell – resistance fighter and English invader – the song provides commentary on the role of republican paramilitary groups such as the Irish Republican Army (IRA) in contemporary

Northern Ireland, a commentary that draws on the aura of tradition for its authority. At stake is how a meaningful past is constructed and referenced in order to make sense of the present. In addition, we must ask how this is achieved given different audiences' varying levels of familiarity with the discursive traditions from which the text is drawn.

My purpose here is to contemplate, through a close attention to text and intertextual references, why Ned has reemerged as a symbolic figure and what messages are conveyed by the representation of the outlaw in "Young Ned of the Hill." I direct my focus more to potential interpretations of the song and their consequences, rather than to authorial intent. In the process, I will draw from scholarship in folklore and linguistic anthropology – especially the works of Richard Bauman, Charles Briggs, and William Hanks – to explore broader issues of interpreting text, context, and tradition. Before embarking on a textual analysis of "Young Ned of the Hill," however, I should first define my use of some key terms and discuss the central issues of context and contextualization, text and entextualization. Some of this discussion may be familiar to folklorists, but the story is worth rehearsing.

REVISITING CONTEXT AND TEXT

Context to Contextualization

In the 1960s and '70s, performance-oriented folklorists and linguistic anthropologists began to demonstrate how the form, function, and meaning of verbal art are grounded in and inseparable from situational contexts. However, identifying and delimiting exactly what constitutes context proved difficult, if not impossible, given the "infinite regress" of detail that could be included in any description of context. Further, considering context to be an amalgamation of relevant situational details that exist prior to or independent of performance allowed for a false dichotomy of text and context (Briggs 1988:12-15).

Realizing the interdependence of text and context, many scholars shifted their attention to how participants in performance constantly monitor each other and negotiate meaning (Goffman 1974), i.e., how meaning and interpretation is emergent in performance (Duranti 1994). This shift was, in part, from an untenable concept of context to contextualization – the process through which a performer embeds cues in his or her narrative that make the form and content meaningful to a specific audience (Bauman and Briggs 1990:66-72; cf. Duranti and Goodwin 1992). More than the successful communication of information relevant to an audience, the measure of a performer's competence is his or her ability to compose a narrative that resonates aesthetically with a specific audience. By extension, competence in performance can be understood as the use of language in creating and sustaining human communities (Briggs 1988:xv). Given the role of the audience in the myriad of choices made by a performer, the audience – whether present in face-to-face interaction or imagined by the author/performer – has been identified as a co-author (Duranti and Brenneis 1986; cf. Lord 1960).³

Text to Entextualization

As Bauman and Briggs remind us, the reason we need to focus on context and later on contextualization is "precisely that verbal art forms are so susceptible to treatment as self-contained, bounded objects separable from their social and cultural context of production and reception" (1990:72). If texts are understood to be bounded objects, then individual performers are merely vehicles for their expression; we are stuck with an antiquarian conception of folklore as "reified, persistent cultural items" rather than a performance-inflected conception of folklore as a "mode of communicative action" (Bauman and Briggs 1990:79; see especially Ben-Amos and Hymes in Paredes and Bauman 1972).

However, Michael Silverstein and Greg Urban point out that considering texts to be extractable, autonomous units of meaning, and culture to be a shared ensemble of such texts, is appealing for both scholars and the people they study.

Seen as the building blocks of culture, texts retain specific meanings regardless of their performance contexts, can be transmitted from one generation to the next helping to replicate culture, and create the image of a durable, shared culture. Such a conceptualization of text is too simplistic, and like context, text deserves a more nuanced treatment (Silverstein and Urban 1996:1-2).

A text "can be taken (heuristically) to designate any configuration of signs that is coherently interpretable by some community of users" (Hanks 1989:95), but a text does not necessarily preexist performance any more than context does. To understand the origins and boundaries of texts, we must turn our attention to entextualization – the process through which a text is extracted from previous and surrounding discourse. From this vantage point, a text is "discourse rendered decontextualizable" (Bauman and Briggs 1990:73).

Entextualization is the basis for an entirely new direction of inquiry. Whereas previous attention to contextualization emphasized how the meanings of texts are inseparable from performance contexts, attention to entextualization forces us to consider the flip side of the coin: that is, the propositions that texts "can function and mean as wholes that are abstracted from performance" and that we can speak of the "point" of a specific text and trace its transference to, appropriation in, or reinterpretation in other texts (Braid 1996:9). Seen as a dialogic process (cf. Bakhtin 1981), entextualization makes possible the extraction and decontextualization from previous and surrounding discourse, followed by the recontextualization and formalization of this discourse in a new situational context. It is the attempt to temporarily fix meaning using others' discourse. The resulting text is a temporarily encapsulated moment of discourse, supported by intertextual reference, which is itself subject to further decontextualization and recontextualization.

Implications for Interpreting "Young Ned of the Hill"

"Young Ned of the Hill" offers us unique material for a case study, not only in textual interpretation, but also in the process of entextualization. Mikhail Bakhtin reminds us that our mouths are full of the words of others (1981:293, 337), and any given performance "is tied to a number of speech events that precede and succeed it" (Bauman and Briggs 1990:60). Even though "Young Ned of the Hill" is a new song that is in its form and content unlike any previously published text commemorating Ned, it is prefigured in many ways by all previous articulations of Ned's story. Further, even the most recent entextualization "may well incorporate aspects of [previous] context[s], such that the resultant text carries elements of its history of use within it" (Bauman and Briggs 1990:73). Thus, contextualization cues in the text will lead us to previous entextualizations of Ned's story; I will attempt to construct a natural history of the text at hand, with reference to the many versions of Ned's story that precede and inform the present text. In returning to the text itself, we can see, simply put, what is old and what is new. Seeing how the text draws from or reframes tradition – how it depends on the authority of tradition and/or pointedly neglects elements of discourse that have come before – helps us better understand the possible meanings and social functions of "Young Ned of the Hill." In so doing, we also come to better understand tradition and the process of its construction: traditionalization (Hymes 1975; Bauman 1992).

The process of decontextualizing and recontextualizing discourse makes a new text like "Young Ned of the Hill" possible. It makes an old hero relevant to present concerns, bridges tradition and innovation. As Briggs observes:

Folkloric performances are not simply repetitions of time-worn traditions; they rather provide common ground between a shared textual tradition and a host of unique human encounters, thus preserving the vitality and dynamism of the past as they endeavor to make sense of the present. (1988:xv)

Understanding a text like "Young Ned of the Hill" as the product of entextualization

obviates debate over the text's traditionality, even authenticity (e.g., is it folklore or fakelore?); it helps us conceive of all texts as simultaneously traditional and innovative, of the past and of the present.

TEXTUAL ANALYSIS

To explore form-function-meaning interrelations in the song, I will begin with formal features of the text itself, working inside out from text to context and back again, realizing at the same time that text and context cannot be separated. As Hanks asserts, "the form of a text can give many clues to its . . . proper interpretation; but the interpretation arises only in the union between form and context" (1989:98). I take textual analysis, then, to mean the identification and exegesis of contextualization cues that make a text meaningful to an intended audience. Rejecting the notion that a text's meaning is ever completely fixed, Hanks observes that a text requires not only the cues of an author or performer but also the interpretation of a receiver to temporarily fix meaning (1989:104-107). This is one way in which situational contexts – which include the reception of an audience, whether face-to-face or imagined – have a constitutive role in the composition of texts.

Hanks terms this interaction of performer and receiver in the creation of temporarily fixed meaning "centering" (1989:103 ff). Certainly every text has multiple meanings, but the number of possible interpretations is not infinite; meaning is "partly inscribed in textual form, and partly contested by actors" (Hanks 1989:107). Thus, when searching for the meanings a text holds for the participants in its performance, we must begin with the formal elements of text, which hold clues to the negotiation of meaning. For example, "poetic parallelism; rhythmical, metrical, phonological integration; the structure of deictic terms . . . ; intertextual reference all help to regulate the centering of text" (Hanks 1989:107).

Management of Formal Features

In order to investigate formal features of "Young Ned of the Hill," we must have the text before us. The lyrics are:

- 1 Have you ever walked the lonesome hills
- 2 And heard the curlews cry
- 3 Or seen the raven black as night
- 4 Upon a windswept sky
- 5 To walk the purple heather
- 6 And hear the west wind cry
- 7 To know that's where the rapparee must die

- 8 Since Cromwell pushed us westward
- 9 To live our lowly lives
- 10 Some of us have deemed to fight
- 11 From Tipperary mountains high
- 12 Noble men with wills of iron
- 13 Who are not afraid to die
- 14 Who'll fight with Gaelic honour held on high

- 15 A curse upon you Oliver Cromwell
- 16 You who raped our motherland.
- 17 I hope you're rotting down in Hell
- 18 For the horrors that you sent
- 19 To our misfortunate forefathers
- 20 Whom you robbed of their birthright
- 21 "To Hell or Connaught" may you burn in Hell tonight

- 22 Of such a man I'd like to speak
- 23 A rapparee by name and deed

24 His family dispossessed and slaughtered
 25 They put a price upon his head
 26 His name is known in song and story
 27 His deeds are legend still
 28 And murdered for blood money
 29 Was young Ned of the Hill

30 You have robbed our homes and fortunes
 31 Even drove us from our land
 32 You tried to break our spirit
 33 But you'll never understand
 34 The love of dear old Ireland
 35 That will forge an iron will
 36 As long as there are gallant men
 37 Like young Ned of the Hill

38 A curse upon you Oliver Cromwell
 39 You who raped our motherland
 40 I hope you're rotting down in Hell
 41 For the horrors that you sent
 42 To our misfortunate forefathers
 43 Whom you robbed of their birthright
 44 "To Hell or Connaught" may you burn in Hell tonight

(Kavana and Woods 1989)

As you can see, "Young Ned of the Hill" has four stanzas and a refrain that appears after the first two stanzas and last two stanzas. The first two stanzas can be taken as a unit, consisting of seven lines each, as can the last two stanzas, consisting of eight lines each. Although the content of the song draws on traditional tropes and imagery (to be discussed), and the instrumentation identifies the musical style as specifically Irish, the structure of the song is not a traditional Irish lyric form.

As recorded on *Peace and Love*, the greatest musical transformation in mood is made during the first unit and refrain. The first stanza is given only the sparse accompaniment of tin whistle and accordion, cultivating the "lonesome hills" imagery of the text. Then in the second stanza the tempo quickens dramatically, and bass, guitar, and bodhrán (percussion) are added, complementing the introduction in the text of those "noble men" willing to "fight with Gaelic honour held on high." Once the "lonesome hills" have been populated in stanza two with these as yet unnamed rapparees, backup vocals join in the refrain, which pounds on in a frenetic pace to the third stanza. This orchestration and intensity is maintained until the end. Thus, given the management of tempo and instrumentation, the song follows a gradual crescendo toward the third stanza, in which Ned is finally mentioned by name, then maintains a sort of high plateau through the fourth stanza and final refrain.

Turning specifically to the content of the text, we should consider those "metalingual textual elements that refer to, describe, or otherwise characterize text itself" (Hanks 1989:107), because these signal how language may be interpreted. One form of metalanguage used throughout "Young Ned of the Hill" is deictic personal pronouns ("you," "us," "they," and "I"), which indicate who is speaking and signal shifts in who is being addressed by the narrator. Demonstrating the context-dependent nature of meaning, deixis not only anchors utterances in context (Levinson 1988:163), it also creates context (Hanks 1989:70).

Taking the different indexical uses of "you" as a guide, we see that deictics posit a narrator and a listener, suggesting an imagined narrative event as a frame for the song, and point us to the man responsible for Ned's downfall and Ireland's woes (a move that might be understood, after more explanation, as the purpose of the song as a whole). In line 1, "you" refers to an imagined listener in an imagined storytelling event, and we the audience of the song are the targeted

listeners. In line 22, “Of such a man I’d like to speak,” the imagined narrator (“I”) identifies himself in announcing his shift to speaking exclusively of Ned. The line as a whole is metanarration⁴ that further establishes the frame of the song as an imagined storytelling event. Through the narrator, Kavana and Woods ask us, the audience of the song, if we know Ned’s story. Asking the question admits the possibility that we do not, so the rest of the song tells us all that we need to know about Ned, according to the writers. This is the first indication that Kavana and Woods may be writing for contemporary audiences who are not familiar with Ned’s story or rapparee lore in general.

Positing a narrator (“I”) and a listener (“you”) – one who knows the story and one who does not – helps grant the narrator authority. The narrator asks the listener if he or she knows the desolation of the “lonesome hills” in the same way a storyteller would make a bid to begin a story about something he has experienced. The deictics “us” (lines 8 and 10) and “our” (line 9) in the second stanza identify a group of Cromwell’s victims, described as noble and brave in their resistance. By counting himself a member of the “us” with “wills of iron” who have “deemed to fight,” the narrator may be claiming to be a contemporary, even a colleague, of Ned.

Whether or not the narrator is literally Ned’s contemporary does not matter for the central message of the song, in which affinity is more important than temporality. In order to clearly define an “us” group and a “them” group, the narrator indicates that, “Since Cromwell pushed us westward” (line 8) – from the mid-seventeenth century onwards indefinitely – everyone who resists English colonization is effectively part of the same solidarity. As we shall see, positing an “us” and a “them” has important implications for twentieth-century audiences understanding the song as a commentary on political conflict in Northern Ireland. What is important for the narrator’s authority is his insinuation that his knowledge of the “lowly lives” (line 9) of men on the run is from personal experience. The narrator, then, is credible possibly as Ned’s fellow resistance fighter, and therefore a “gallant” man.

Although “you” in line 1 refers to an imagined listener, “you” in the refrain (lines 15-18, 20-21, 38-41, 43-44) and probably in stanza four (lines 30, 32-33) refers to Cromwell and signals a shift in attention from the characters of the imagined speech event (narrator and listener) to the antagonist in the story of Ned’s life. Not only is Cromwell addressed, in the third stanza he is cursed with, “A curse upon you . . .” and “may you burn in Hell tonight.” The narrator’s curse on Cromwell ironically appropriates and turns on its head a curse directed at the Irish, traditionally attributed to Cromwell – “To Hell or Connaught, “ i.e., “move westward or die.” The curse on Cromwell is performative speech. In doing social work, it has illocutionary force – the act of saying the curse accomplishes it, and therefore sends Cromwell’s soul to Hell. Its perlocutionary force is persuading the song’s audience of Cromwell’s unparalleled wickedness. The curse also has potential perlocutionary force in the wider socio-political world outside the song if it compels audience members to defy in some way the dispossession and colonialism that Cromwell stands for in the song.

One curiosity is that, for a song entitled “Young Ned of the Hill,” the protagonist is mentioned by name only twice, briefly, and not until the second to last stanza. In fact, only one of the four stanzas, the third, is entirely devoted to him, whereas Cromwell is introduced in the second stanza and remains the narrator’s addressee in the refrains and possibly in the fourth stanza. The lyrics provide meager information about Ned, although they establish that Ned was prompted to become a rapparee as a result of his family being dispossessed and slaughtered. Consequently, the English put a price upon his head for which he was murdered.

On one hand, the song depends on its audience’s familiarity with other texts and other genres that provide the details of Ned’s legend: “His name is known in song and story/His deeds are legend still,” (lines 26-27). Familiarity with these would provide a listener with a fuller appreciation of Ned’s cultural resonance and therefore of the significance of his appearance in Kavana and Woods’ song. In a way, this lack of narrative elaboration is typical of traditional Irish song, which “Young Ned of the Hill” emulates in instrumentation and imagery. Complemented

by a rich narrative tradition, Irish song tends not to tell a complete story; it tends to reference people and events through a few select details that cue one's memory of or pique one's interest in a longer narrative (Glassie 1982:275, 755 n. 5). On the other hand, Kavana and Woods give us only what we need to know about Ned in order for them to communicate their message about noble resistance and villainous aggression. As we shall see, too much knowledge of Ned's deeds in song and story might unravel the authoritative image of Kavana and Woods' song.

Whether Ned's brief treatment is the result of Kavana and Woods' emulation of traditional Irish song, their conscious decision to write for a relatively uninformed audience, their ignorance of Ned's legend, or some combination thereof; Ned's function in the song is minor in light of the song's significant preoccupation with Cromwell. The curse on Cromwell appears in the refrain, the only repeated part of the song. The refrains are the concluding remarks after the two structural units of stanzas one and two and stanzas three and four. The curse appears in the one section with an implied participatory structure. In face-to-face performance contexts, the refrain is the part in which the audience would feel most free to join in the singing; it is the section in which social accord is focused and achieved.

The choice of Cromwell as antagonist and the frequency and ferocity of his condemnation deserve consideration, for he is not necessarily the clear choice for Ned's foil. As an historic person, Éamonn Ó Riain was an active rapparee in late seventeenth and early-eighteenth century County Tipperary, long after Cromwell's death in 1658. William III, victor of the Battle of the Boyne and institutor of the anti-Catholic Penal Laws, was Cromwell's counterpart in Ned's day and would have served as an equally recognizable nemesis.

Kavana and Woods' choice of Cromwell may be intentional rather than the result of faulty historical research: the narrator does specify that Cromwell robbed his "forefathers ... of their birthright" (lines 19-20 and 42-43). Though somewhat jarring for the historian, the choice of Cromwell is appropriately resonant for Irish audiences given Cromwell's long-standing place in Irish popular imagination as the archetypal anti-hero and quintessential evil invader. Several historical tales depict him in league with the Devil. One tells of Cromwell leaving instructions to be buried in Ireland after the Irish seer Mac Amhlaoibh (Mac Auliffe) predicted Cromwell's power in Ireland would last as long as he remained in the country. After burial, the very soil of Ireland rejected Cromwell's body and cast it into the Irish Sea, which as a result is turbulent to this day (S. O'Sullivan 1976:479-80; Ó hÓgáin 1991:128-31). Twentieth-century scholarly works on Cromwell are hardly less partisan or exaggerated in tone (see, for example, Ellis 1975 and MacManus 1921, especially chapters 50-51).⁵

True, Ned is the song's namesake; he embodies the heroic resistance fighter who is martyred for a just cause and is clearly intended as the more sympathetic character. But the song fixates on the injustice Cromwell inflicts and embodies, and the overall point of this entextualization in the discourse on Ned of the Hill lies in the song's references to Cromwell. Once the irredeemable Cromwell is identified as the face of English conquest and oppression, it does not matter who Ned's individual adversaries are. Historical context is irrelevant in the shadow of Cromwell's singular infamy, and the authorities who would hang the rapparee are identified generically with the deictic personal pronoun "they" as in line 25, "They put a price upon his head." To whom "you" refers in lines 30, 32, and 33 of the fourth stanza is left ambiguous. "You" may refer to Cromwell specifically but may also refer to the same unnamed people "they" does in line 25.

Were the song simply a commentary on the political situation in seventeenth-century Ireland, we could interpret "they" in line 25 and "you" in the fourth stanza to mean the English army – all those murderous pillagers of whom Cromwell is the most infamous example. The song would personify both sides – the Irish as Ned and the English as Cromwell – and characterize only seventeenth-century conflict in rigid binary terms: Irish/English, good/bad. Yet by leaving the historical period in question open to any time "Since Cromwell pushed us westward" (line 8), Kavana and Woods allow "they" to mean any party that oppresses "us," those Irishmen at any time since Cromwell who "have deemed to fight" (line 10).

The most significant categories established are not necessarily Irish and English but “us” and “them.” These categories are ambiguous enough to include whoever fits these slots from the seventeenth century to the present. They are also rigid enough to establish only two sides and declare that any given historical actor – whether Young Irelander, Land Leaguer, or IRA volunteer in the nationalist/republican tradition, and whether Protestant yeoman, marching Orangeman, or UVF paramilitary in the unionist/loyalist tradition⁶ – is either on the right side or the wrong side. In this way, Kavana and Woods achieve in their song a decontextualized, uncomplicated, and clear-cut vision of blame in Anglo-Irish and Protestant-Catholic relations throughout Irish history. We will return to this point.

Intertextual References

As the brief discussion of Cromwell’s symbolic resonance for Irish audiences demonstrates, textual analysis can only go so far before extending into the wider social and historical contexts that shape a text in its present form. Any given text is necessarily heteroglossic and in many ways prefigured by preexisting texts. Explaining the literary term “heteroglossia,” derived from Bakhtin, James Diedrick observes that, “Whatever the artistic intention of a given author, he or she must make use of a pre-existing language that is already informed by the social intentions of other authors” (1993:552). No text is a closed, self-sufficient system, and all language contains traces of past discourse that bear upon its meaning. As such, we should consider previous entextualizations of Ned’s story to better understand “Young Ned of the Hill.”

The text itself points us to “song and story” that recount Ned’s deeds, so continuing for now in the same genre, we should consider previous songs commemorating Ned. Whereas other famous Irish outlaws such as William Brennan, James Freney, and Redmond O’Hanlon are represented in numerous songs and ballads, Éamonn Ó Riain appears in relatively few. The two extant published lyric texts concerning Ned are a folksong in Gaelic, “Éamonn an Chnoic” (with various spellings and versions), and a short literary ballad, “Ned of the Hill,” composed by Samuel Lover, the nineteenth-century Anglo-Irish novelist, painter, and amateur folklorist.

Like “Young Ned of the Hill,” “Éamonn an Chnoic” tells only a fraction of Ned’s biography as it is found in oral narrative traditions. The lyrics are framed as a conversation between Éamonn and his lover in which Éamonn seeks shelter from the inhospitable wilderness and bemoans his life as a wanted man. Here is a literal English translation of a representative version:

“Who is that without
With passion in his voice
That beats at my bolted door?”
I am Éamonn an Chnoic,
Drenched, numbed, and wet
From long walking mountains and valleys.”
My dearest, my treasure,
What should I do for you
But cover you with the skirt of my dress?
For black gunpowder
Will be thickly shot at us,
And we should perish together.”

“Long am I abroad
In snow and in frost,
Not daring to approach any man,
My fallow unsown,
My horses unloosened,
And they lost to me entirely.
Friends I have none (I grieve for that)

Who would harbour me early or late,
And so I must go eastward over the sea,
For it is there I have no kindred."

(D. O'Sullivan 1960:151)

As in "Young Ned of the Hill," wherein Ned has given a glimpse of the rapparee's miserable life with a "price upon his head," (line 25), here too, Ned can trust no one and is constantly looking over his shoulder for those who would betray him. In both songs, unjust dispossession is protested. In the above version of "Éamonn an Chnoic," Éamonn laments that his land is left uncultivated and his horses are confiscated. In other versions, he more directly laments being robbed of his birthright when announcing himself to his lover: "It is Éamonn an Chnoic, will you not let me in,/Who am seeking my own rightful land?" (D. O'Sullivan 1930:36) and "It is Éamonn an Chnoic you have here,/And proscribed is he now in his own country" (D. O'Sullivan 1930:41).

Being outside the law, the rapparee lives outside society and is identified with nature. In the wilderness, he is isolated from the comfort of human contact and the support of friends and family – "Friends I have none (I grieve for that)/Who would harbour me early or late." The "lonesome hills" and "windswept sky" described in the first stanza of "Young Ned of the Hill" are reminiscent of the mountains and valleys Éamonn wanders in the cold, damp, and frost. The themes of isolation from society and suffering in the wilderness are common in other rapparee songs, such as "The Wild Rapparee" from County Fermanagh attests:

How green are the fields that are washed by the Finn.
How grand are the homes that those Peelers live in.
How fresh are the crops in the valleys to see,
But the heath is the home of the wild rapparee.

Ah, way out on the moors where the wind shrieks and howls,
Sure, he'll find his lone home there amongst the wild fowl.
No one there to welcome, no comrade has he.
Ah, God help the poor outlaw, the wild rapparee.

(Glassie 1982:110)

Just as Young Ned of the Hill lives and dies in the "purple heather" (line 5), "The Wild Rapparee" makes his "lone home" in the heath, while his supplanters live in grand homes, tending their fresh crops in green fields and valleys. In addition to the desolate wilderness imagery, the soundscape is the same in "Young Ned of the Hill" and "The Wild Rapparee." The curlews and the west wind cry where Ned spends his days, and "out on the moors" where the Wild Rapparee feeds for himself, "the wind shrieks and howls." In using conventional themes and imagery of older rapparee lyrics, Kavana and Woods connect their song with those that have come before and appeal to the authority of tradition. They supply "Young Ned of the Hill" with elements of past discourse that are already meaningful and resonant, "already informed by the social intentions of other authors" (Diedrick 1993:552).

However, there are important and telling differences. In "Young Ned of the Hill," the rapparee's miserable life is recounted to highlight his bravery and sacrifice in contrast to Cromwell's wickedness. In "Éamonn an Chnoic" and "The Wild Rapparee," too, the rapparee's hardships are offered so that we may better appreciate his heroism. Yet in these two songs we are invited more explicitly to sympathize with the rapparee as an individual, or at least to pity him. In "Éamonn an Chnoic," he is drenched, pounding at a bolted door, and imploring for help "With passion in his voice." In one version of the song, his lover and only ally, actually rejects him:

"You are harder than steel or limestone
And your heart is a rock, fair lady;
You never come at night to lie down by my side

And relieve me of part of my pain!"
 "I would rather be lying for a quarter and a month
 On a hard, narrow bed, husbandless,
 Than to have your babe at my breast or on my arm at night,
 With you away courting your fancy!"

(D. O'Sullivan 1930:37)

"The Wild Rapparee" includes the line, "Ah, God help the poor outlaw, the wild rapparee," and ends with the following scene:

There's a stone-covered grave on the wild mountainside.
 There's a plain wooden cross on which this is inscribed:
 Kneel down, dear stranger, say an Ave for me,
 I was sentenced to death being a wild rapparee.

(Glassie 1982:110)

Laments and entreaties to pray for the dead or dying outlaw are also common in other rapparee songs.⁷ Solicitation of sympathy in "Éamonn an Chnoic," "The Wild Rapparee," and other songs fleshes out the rapparee's humanity and vulnerability, lending rapparee lore a sense of romantic quasi-defeatism.

In contrast, the thrust of "Young Ned of the Hill" is to vigorously condemn English oppression. Ned's defeat solicits anger and indignation, not commiseration. Ned functions in the song as little more than the face of heroic defiance against aggression and injustice. We only need the briefest outline of his biography – Ned was dispossessed, he fought back, and he was murdered – to appreciate "the horrors" Cromwell brought to Ireland and to join in the refrain, cursing Cromwell and all he stands for. Older rapparee songs flaunt boastful defiance,⁸ and I have argued elsewhere that all Irish outlaw lore in general provides commentary on social justice (Cashman 2000). But I have yet to come across any rapparee song from oral tradition or prenineteenth-century broadsides that, like "Young Ned of the Hill," singles out and curses to Hell an English governmental figure; reduces all parties opposing Irish resistance to "they," the "bad guys" (line 25); or directly addresses these "bad guys," claiming that they will never break the Irish spirit because of the iron wills of her gallant men (second stanza).

Although Samuel Lover's "Ned of the Hill" shares some themes with "Éamonn an Chnoic," it has almost nothing in common with Kavana and Woods' "Young Ned of the Hill." Nevertheless, it provides an interesting example of how differently the same discourse can be entextualized given the social and political intentions of an author. Even in its rejection of the ways in which a text such as Lover's "Ned of the Hill" is contextualized, "Young Ned of the Hill" is prefigured by previous entextualizations of Ned's story.

Published in 1839, "Ned of the Hill" post-dates and probably draws inspiration from the romantic and pastoral themes of "Éamonn an Chnoic." As an amateur folklorist, Lover was almost certainly familiar with "Éamonn an Chnoic," and given his flair for using folktales as frames for his literary sketches of stage Irishness (see Lover 1834), appropriation would have come naturally for him. "Ned of the Hill" appears in Lover's collection of mostly love songs, many collected and others composed by fellow Anglo-Irish antiquarians. The text follows:

Dark is the evening and silent the hour:
 Who is the minstrel by yonder love tow'r?
 His harp all so tenderly touching with skill
 Oh, who should it be but Ned of the Hill!
 Who sings, "Lady love, come to me now,
 Come and live merrily under the bough,
 And I'll pillow thy head,
 Where the fairies tread,
 If thou wilt but wed with Ned of the Hill

Ned of the Hill has no castle nor hall,

Nor spearmen nor bowmen to come at his call;
 But one little archer, of exquisite skill,
 Has shot a bright shaft for Ned of the Hill,
 Who sings, "Lady love, come to me now,
 Come and live merrily under the bough,
 And I'll pillow thy head,
 Where the fairies tread,
 If thou wilt but wed with Ned of the Hill

'Tis hard to escape from that fair lady's bower,
 For high is the window, and guarded the tower,
 "But there's always a way where there is a will,"
 So Ellen is off with Ned of the Hill
 Who sings, "Lady love, come to me now,
 Come and live merrily under the bough,
 And I'll pillow thy head,
 Where the fairies tread,
 If thou wilt but wed with Ned of the Hill
 For Ellen is bride to Ned of the Hill!

(Lover 1839:36-37)

As in "Éamonn an Chnoic," the setting of "Ned of the Hill" is the wilderness, but one transformed from the inhospitable margins of society into fantasy forests and glades "where the fairies tread." The imagery of desperation and danger, too, are transformed with romantic antiquarian language such as "If thou wilt" and "yonder love tow'r." Ned himself becomes a wandering minstrel.

Again as with "Éamonn an Chnoic," Lover's "Ned of the Hill" depicts Ned approaching his lover, but he has come to woo, not to seek shelter from his assailants. Lover's introductory note tells us: "Many legends are extant of this romantic minstrel freebooter, whose predatory achievements sometimes extended to the hearts of the gentle sex." Were it not for this mention of Ned as a "freebooter," we would know him from this text as simply a minstrel pursuing his "Lady love." Even the term "freebooter" skirts the political significance of his life as a seditious rapparee. Whatever extra-legal activities he engages in simply lend him more glamour. His "predatory achievements" can only be surmised to be the sort of apolitical adventures of English "gentlemen of the highway," such as Dick Turpin and William Nevison, which were popular in chapbooks and broadsides of the time (see Seal 1996:49-68).

Like sentimental stereotypes of attractive 'colleens' and servile 'Paddys,' "Ned of the Hill" reflects nineteenth-century English and Anglo-Irish attitudes towards the Irish as being of little political threat. Men such as Lover and Thomas Keightley depicted the Irish as childlike and compelled by their passions and harmless superstitions, very much like Whites in the United States portrayed Black slaves during this period. As the romantic loner-hero of the wild, Ned escapes childishness and servility in Lover's song, but Lover erases all politically controversial elements from Ned's story. He has no "spearmen nor bowmen," and the only shots fired are Cupid's. The collection in which "Ned of the Hill" appears includes no historical ballads and certainly no pro-Irish rhetoric, and it even offers one song in praise of Queen Victoria (who a decade later would be known by Irish nationalists as "the Famine Queen"). Lover's text demonstrates well that the way in which an author makes use of preexisting discourse – i.e., how an author decontextualizes and recontextualizes discourse – is an act of control and an exercise of social power. Entextualization is an instrument of authority (cf. Hanks 1989:119; Bauman and Briggs 1990:76).

The lyrics of "Young Ned of the Hill" state that Ned's "deeds are legend still" (line 27), so for details of his larger story that an informed audience might bring to this song we should turn to published, oral narrative traditions. As mentioned, Ned has a relatively minor function in "Young Ned of the Hill" as a foil to Cromwell. As such – and because probably no audience would be familiar with all entextualizations of Ned's story – there is no need to report the fullest account of

Ned's legend that can be gleaned from folklore. But identifying the themes or motifs cued in the text of "Young Ned of the Hill," and comparing them to those not cued, helps us better understand Kavana and Woods' recontextualization of Ned's story and Ned's function within their text. Those themes and motifs not cued in "Young Ned of the Hill" again suggest that either Kavana and Woods were uninformed authors, or that they were not writing primarily for a wellinformed audience and therefore felt free to take liberties with the contents of previous discourse as long as their text's image of traditionality and authority was maintained.

"Young Ned of the Hill" tells us that his family was "dispossessed and slaughtered" (line 24). Oral traditions and land records confirm that Éamonn Ó Riain was born into a relatively wealthy family at Knockmeoll Castle, Atshanbohy, County Tipperary, and that his family had lost a substantial portion of their estate during Cromwell's campaign (Freeman 1920-1922:285; Ryan 1930:52; D. O'Sullivan 1960:151). I have found no oral, lyric, literary, or historical accounts of his family being slaughtered, although this was certainly true for other Catholic landholders who resisted Cromwell. Perhaps this is a matter of conflation. Or, granting Kavana and Woods poetic license, we can accept that claiming Ned's family was slaughtered is a concise and convenient way to give Ned a good reason to become an outlaw without too much explanation in the one stanza allotted him.

Oral traditions refer to more complicated circumstances for Ned's career choice. Two texts from the Irish Folklore Commission archives tell roughly the same story (in Ó hÓgáin 1985:186 and Ó Catháin 1982:18). Ned is studying for the priesthood in France when his father becomes ill, prompting Ned to return home. During Ned's visit, the local sheriff seizes the only cow of a neighboring widow who cannot pay her rent. Ned and several neighbors help rescue the cow and drive off the bailiffs, and in the struggle, one of the bailiffs is killed. Ned shoulders the blame and takes to the hills. Soon he gathers a band of men, and together they harass the local authorities, stealing from the rich and giving to the poor. Ned and his band are also instrumental as irregular soldiers in Patrick Sarsfield's army, supporting James II in his war with William III. After 1691 and Jacobite defeats at the Boyne, Aughrim Hill, and Limerick, many Irish soldiers, known as "the Wild Geese," fled to the continent, joining Irish brigades in the Catholic countries of Europe. Ned and his band, however, remain in Ireland to continue their raids on Protestant landlords and the English military (Ryan 1930:52; Ó Catháin 1982:18; Ó hÓgáin 1985:186). Curiously enough, Ned's service in the Jacobite army is not alluded to in "Young Ned of the Hill," though this overtly political element of his biography could have lent more support to the nationalistic thrust of the song.

"Young Ned of the Hill" continues with, "They put a price upon his head" (line 25), and indeed, a proclamation offering a £200 reward for Ned's capture dates from 1702 (D. O'Sullivan 1960:151). What the song does not mention is that, at least according to folklore, Ned was eventually pardoned. Two stories, recorded in several variants, explain his pardon. The first depicts Ned guiding a hunt for two English army officers. Once the officers are out of ammunition, Ned reveals his identity and holds the Englishmen at gunpoint. Ned assures them that he does not intend to kill them, relieves them of their money and weapons, and writes them a note addressed to the other rapparees in the vicinity to guarantee the officers' safe passage. The two officers are so thankful for Ned's treatment that they secure his pardon (Ó Catháin 1982:2021; Ó hÓgáin 1985:186-87). The second explanation of Ned's pardon tells us that a "common robber"—or worse, one claiming to be Ned or one of his followers—robbed a substantial sum from a Mrs. Maude of Dundrum, the wife of an English landlord who is away at the time of the crime. Incensed that someone would tarnish his reputation for fairness by acting so unchivalrously to a lady, Ned tracks down the robber, punishes him, and returns the money to Mrs. Maude. Upon his return, the husband is so grateful that he procures a pardon for Ned (Ó hÓgáin 1991:344; D. O'Sullivan 1960:151-60; cf. Ryan 1930:57)

In both stories, Ned lives by a moral code that obliges him to defend the

underdog and to enforce that others not prey on the vulnerable. Living by his code guarantees that his actions are heroic as opposed to merely criminal, and his integrity gains him the respect, cooperation, and pardon of his enemies. In the first story, he is willing to take the money and weapons of men who are unjustly rich and armed to keep wealth from his constituents, but he cannot justify killing them. In the second, Ned judges the robber to be out of line not only in his imposture but especially in taking advantage of a member of "the weaker sex." Ned encounters English people in both stories and treats them fairly; he is not prejudiced against them simply because they are English. Through invasion and colonization, the English had divorced justice from law in Ireland, but Ned's fight is with injustice, not a nationality. In contrast to "Young Ned of the Hill," these stories offer commentary on social justice rather than a forum for blame or inspiration for gallant men to "fight with Gaelic honor held on high" (line 14).

Despite the pardon, the price on Ned's head is his downfall, according to both oral traditions and Kavana and Woods' song: "And murdered for blood money/Was Young Ned of the Hill" (lines 28-29). What the song does not mention—and what would make its message more complicated—is that oral traditions tell us that Ned was murdered by his own kin. A fosterbrother or cousin by the name of O'Dwyer (Ned's mother's maiden name) sheltered him, and once Ned was asleep, O'Dwyer chopped his head off with an axe. Hoping to collect the reward, O'Dwyer then took the head to the authorities in Clonmel but was disappointed to find that Ned had already been officially pardoned (Ó Catháin 1982:20; Ó hÓgáin 1985:187; Ryan 1930:5758). Ned's destruction is consistent with almost all Irish outlaw legends: the rapparee can only be defeated by foul or unfair means, most often through betrayal. This common motif of betrayal by confederates not only enhances the rapparee's quasi-martyr status in Irish folklore, but also prevents any clear-cut distinctions being made between "us" and "them" in rapparee lore. "Young Ned of the Hill," however, is invested in clearly defining the line between the solidarity of Ireland's gallant men and the homogeneity of Cromwell's villainous crew and their successors. Admitting betrayal by the very community Ned defends and supports would problematize the simplistic view of Anglo-Irish conflict offered by "Young Ned of the Hill."

Other elements of Ned's story in oral tradition that are not referenced in "Young Ned of the Hill" include his many daring escapes; his clever use of disguise; his taste for the finest clothes, horses, and weapons; and his various schemes for stealing from the rich and giving to the poor. Many of these are migratory traits and motifs attached to other rapparees in Irish folklore. Were "Young Ned of the Hill" to reference more of these traits and motifs, Ned would have a more important role in the song than that of a two-dimensional foil to Cromwell; the nationalistic message of the song would necessarily be subtler, as are the messages embedded in older songs and stories concerned with Ned and other rapparees.

Certainly, the rapparee's actions portrayed in older folklore have political implications that invite nationalistic interpretations, but explicit antagonism toward a specific English ruler is unique to "Young Ned of the Hill" (cf. Seal 1996:15, 78). In older Irish entextualizations of outlaw lore (late-seventeenth through the nineteenth centuries), the main function of Ned and other rapparees is to enforce social justice and embody a moral, even Christian, proposition: the last will be first, and the first will be last (Matthew 19:30, Mark 10:31). If the rapparee breaks his moral code, then he is defeated or humbled, as are Redmond O'Hanlon and William Brennan in their attempts to rob poor or younger tradesmen (Ó hÓgáin 1985:185; Seal 1996:74). The focus in the majority of older rapparee lore—and especially in prose narrative traditions—is not on the struggle between two nations or political affiliations but the struggle to redress inequality, to defend the vulnerable, and to elevate the lowly.

CONCEIVING A PRESENT, APPEALING TO A PAST

Entextualization involves the decontextualization and recontextualization of discourse, which is ultimately an act of control and an exercise of social power. Lover, for example, carefully made Ned an uncontroversial figure for his English

and Anglo-Irish audiences in his “Ned of the Hill” by excluding all references to dispossession and Ned’s political significance as a rapparee. Between the oral historical accounts summarized previously and “Young Ned of the Hill,” there is a shift in the interpretation of Ned as the enforcer of social justice to Ned as the nationalist anti-Cromwell. Like Lover’s appropriation of “Éamonn an Chnoic” (and unknown other texts), the decontextualization and recontextualization of discourse achieved in “Young Ned of the Hill” is also the result of a shift in who is in control of the discourse. Yet whereas Lover’s text reflects a shift in intended audience and author’s social intentions localized in the mid-nineteenth century, Kavana and Woods’ text—when compared to its precursors—reflects a gradual shift in the Irish political climate, even *zeitgeist*, from the late-eighteenth century to the present. “Young Ned of the Hill” bears witness to what Bauman and Briggs call “the nationalization of culture as it is appropriated in the service of [cultural] nationalist ideology” (1990:78).

Reconceiving Ireland as a cultural unity and as a nation with the right to independence required the reinterpretation of traditional texts, including rapparee stories and songs. These rapparee texts have a role to play in granting the IRA and other republican paramilitary groups the legitimacy of being part of a longer, heroic tradition of armed resistance to English colonization. When Henry Glassie recorded Theresa Rooney’s 1972 singing of “The Wild Rapparee” in County Fermanagh, he was aware that rapparee stories and songs were performed as thinly veiled commentaries on the just cause of the IRA in post-partition Northern Ireland (personal communication, 2/28/96). In her dissertation, Margaret Steiner noted how singers in Newtownbutler, County Fermanagh, avoided singing about rapparees in the company of Protestants for fear of seeming to support armed struggle now carried on by the IRA (1988:113). During my own fieldwork in County Tyrone, 1998-1999, a few people I spoke with made a direct comparison between the rapparees of history and the modern IRA. I asked an elderly man and a middle-aged man near Killeter about rapparees, and the first replied, “Well they were out of circulation by my time! But I heard them talking about Proinsias Dubh, singing on Brennan on the Moor in Segronan. There were always rebels in this country, you see.” The second man added, “Aye, well, it’s the same as the present day Troubles, you know. That Proinsias Dubh, he was the same thing as the present IRA.” This cognitive connection between rapparees and selfconsciously republican groups (e.g., United Irishmen, Young Ireland, Irish Republican Brotherhood, Irish Republican Army and Sinn Féin) may well have motivated the Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem to include a version of “Éamonn an Chnoic” on their album *Irish Songs of Rebellion* (1963). The conceptualization of the rapparee as a nationalist or protonationalist explains why a song with only limited political content beyond the mention of dispossession would be included on an album that contains other key rebel songs such as “The Rising of the Moon,” “The Minstrel Boy,” “Kevin Barry,” and “Men of the West.”

Since the United Irishmen of the 1790s, the nationalization of Irish culture has also been achieved through new entextualizations of previous and surrounding discourse (Thuente 1994), and “Young Ned of the Hill” can be read as a contemporary example of this process. On one hand, collecting folklore, for example, is a new valuation and interpretation of previous texts that can persuade people that they have a unique, durable, and shared culture and therefore a “natural” right to exist as a nation. On the other, new texts can provide more direct assertions of nationalist ideology than can reworked old texts, but they must appear to partake of and emerge from the durable and shared culture that cultural nationalism requires as a prerequisite to nationhood.

In order to grant a new entextualization like “Young Ned of the Hill” the authority of tradition, an author can employ what Bauman, after Dell Hymes, calls traditionalization: the “active construction of connections that link the present [text] with a meaningful past” (1992:136). As we have seen, Kavana and Woods make use of traditional characters, tropes, imagery, and even instrumentation in “Young Ned of the Hill.” In fact, their overtures to tradition are almost indiscriminate. The text of “Young Ned of the Hill” can be read as a sampler of lyrical styles

including the sentimentality of the folksong in the first stanza, the defiance of nineteenth-century Young Ireland song writers in the second, and the broadside tone of "Of such a man I'd like to speak" in the third. In this way, Kavana and Woods not only contextualize but attempt to authenticate their song by leaving bare the traces of its provenance— "His name is known in song and story/ His deeds are legend still" (lines 26, 27).⁹

"Young Ned of the Hill" can be "valued because of what you can use [it] for . . . or for [its] indexical reference to desired qualities or states" (Bauman and Briggs 1990:77). In 1970s Northern Ireland, "The Wild Rapparee" provided a nationalist community with a sense of legitimacy through the symbolic construction of continuity with a meaningful past. The same may be said of legends of Proinsias Dubh in contemporary southwest Tyrone. "Young Ned of the Hill" may well have the same function and provide the same commentary for nationalist communities today. In the 1990 film *Hidden Agenda*— the story of American civil rights investigators embroiled in the combat between the IRA and British security forces— "Young Ned of the Hill" features as the background music in an "authentic" Falls Road, Belfast IRA public house. Employing the song in this way reflects an identification made in popular imagination of Ned as a forerunner to the contemporary IRA gunman. It is an identification that appropriates the rapparee of folklore for a contemporary debate over the use of violence in politics; that wrests control of discourse about the IRA as a terrorist organization, recasting it as an organization of freedom fighters; and that grants the contemporary gunman or bomber a principled image and a legitimizing connection with tradition.

As a text, "Young Ned of the Hill" can be viewed "as a form of cultural capital, . . . as a mode of naturalizing and familiarizing social realities, as an instrument of authority, and as the medium (and the measure) of political debate" (Hanks 1989:119). Through its contrast of Ned and Cromwell, it has the potential perlocutionary force to further instill a "love of dear old Ireland" and to "forge an iron will" (lines 34-35). In addition to the aura of traditionality, one of the "desired qualities or states" (Bauman and Briggs 1990:77) the song affords is the simplistic vision of Anglo-Irish conflict that establishes only two opposing parties— a wronged but resilient Irish one and a villainous English one to whom all blame can be assigned.

In the contemporary context of Northern Ireland in which innocent people have lost their lives in a violent triangulation between various Catholic republican paramilitaries, Protestant loyalist paramilitaries, and British security forces, being able to confidently assign right and wrong to only two sides would certainly be a desired state for anyone attempting to choose a morally informed course of action. As an allegory for contemporary political conflict in Northern Ireland, "Young Ned of the Hill" is an attempt to provide that assignment of virtue and blame and to render the world in black and white. If the IRA volunteer can be equated with the rapparee of folklore, he, too, partakes of the transgressive power and appeal of one who can simultaneously be bad and do the right thing by breaking the law. He, too, is a heroic outlaw enforcing social justice and invoking laws higher than those legislated at the expense of the oppressed.

Formal features of "Young Ned of the Hill" have led us to both contextualization cues and the history of the process of its entextualization, and both have guided our understanding of the present text's potential meanings. "Young Ned of the Hill" is an attempt to fix— though inevitably temporarily— the meaning and significance of almost three centuries of discourse concerned with the life of Éamonn Ó Riain, rapparee. Expanding our focus to the social and historical contexts of which it is a part, we see "Young Ned of the Hill" as an attempt to make sense of contemporary experience and predicaments by appealing to a meaningful past through textual traditions considered relevant and authoritative.

Notes

1. Concerning the derivations of the terms 'tory' and 'rapparee,' the earlier term, 'tory,' comes from the Irish *tórai*, meaning "pursuer, raider." It first appears in print in 1645,

though it was most likely used in spoken language much earlier (Marshall 1927:11; Duffy 1982:11). The roughly synonymous term ‘rapparee’ was coined shortly after the English Civil War, 1642-1649, overlapping in usage with ‘tory.’ It was probably derived from the French word for a half-pike, *râpaire*, a common weapon of the time (Croker 1985:54). An alternate etymology explains that rapparee comes from *ropaire*, the Irish term for robber, itself borrowed from English (Ó Catháin 1982:7). By the end of the reign of Charles II, radical Protestants in English parliament who formed the Whig faction labeled the mostly Anglican supporters of the Catholic James II “Tories,” a derogatory term conjuring images of rebellion and subservience to Rome. Making a clear distinction between the Tories of English parliament and the Irish outlaws, the term rapparee became the more popular term by the time of the Williamite War of 1689-1691.

2. For recent considerations of the representations of outlaws in Irish folklore and popular literature see Cashman 2000, Ó Ciosáin 1998, Ó hÓgáin 1985, and Williams 1991.

3. Both the attention to context and the later shift to contextualization were correctives in a sense. For over a century, folklore collectors had extracted texts from the world of social interaction, archiving them in alien settings like items on “grocer’s bills,” as W. B. Yeats complained (1986 [1888]:viii). Historic geographic work and the scientific categorizations of type and motif indexes easily decontextualized texts, ignoring artistry and obscuring situated meanings. Worst of all for the humanist, understanding, revering, and conserving folklore texts as objects obscured the agency of individual performers and audience members, allowing us to conceive of “the folk” as merely anonymous, passive tradition bearers. Bearing witness to the construction of meaning in the social interaction of performance— in other words, focusing on contextualization— affirms the status of individuals as artful and reflective agents. Through a consideration of contextualization over the last twenty to thirty years, many folklorists have come to understandings such as the following: “Performers are not passive, unreflecting creatures who simply respond to the dictates of tradition or the physical and social environment. They interpret both traditions and social settings, actively transforming both in the course of their performances” (Briggs 1988:7).

4. Bauman describes metanarration as “those devices that index or comment on the narrative itself . . . or on the components or conduct of the storytelling event” (1986:98; drawn from Babcock 1977).

5. Even people with only the slightest investment in an Irish identity know Cromwell as *the* villain from Irish history. My grandfather— a second-generation Irish-American who didn’t know Daniel O’Connell from Darby O’Gill— made a point of spitting whenever anyone (usually himself) mentioned the name Cromwell.

6. Although it may be an over simplification, for our purposes republicanism can be understood as the militant subset of Irish nationalism. In other words, nationalists are the people, mostly Catholics, who are invested in a unified Ireland, and republicans are nationalists who have historically favored the use of physical force to achieve a united Ireland. In a similar dynamic, we can understand loyalism to be the militant subset of unionism. That is, unionists are those people, mostly Protestant, who are in favor of maintaining the union with Britain in the six counties of Northern Ireland, and loyalists are unionists willing to resist a unified Ireland through physical force.

7. See for example: “A Lament on the Execution of Captain Brennan” (Healy 1965:11819), “Bold Jack Donohue” (Glassie 1982:103-104), and “Captain Grant” (Seal 1996:77-8).

8. For example, consider the second to last stanza of “The Wild Rapparee”:

He has robbed many rich of their gold and their crown.
 He has outrode the soldiers who hunted him down.
 Alas, he has boasted, They’ll never take me,
 Not a swordsman will capture the wild rapparee.

(Glassie 1982:110)

9. Bauman's concept of traditionalization—drawn from Hymes 1975—has important implications for conventional understandings of tradition: "Tradition, long considered a criterial attribute of folklore, is coming to be seen less as an inherent quality of old and persistent items or genres passed on from generation to generation, and more as a symbolic construction by which people in the present establish connections with a meaningful past and endow particular cultural forms with value and authority" (Bauman 1992:128). The intellectual shift from tradition to traditionalization recapitulates in many ways the shifts from context to contextualization and text to entextualization. Tradition, context, and text have conventionally been granted authority, even authenticity, by appearing to be preexistent, external, and objectified. However, through interest in entextualization and contextualization, text and context have been recast as emergent and negotiable. In the same way, tradition can be better understood through traditionalization, a process of the active construction and mediation of meaning and value.

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