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Boggy Geography and an Irish Moose: Thomas Molyneux's New World Neighborhood

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The lattermost segment of Colum McCann's *Transatlantic* (2013) draws the novel's disparate times and histories toward a salty lough in Northern Ireland. Hannah Carson swims Strangford, remembering as she does her son, Tomas, shot dead while pulling his rowboat ashore in October 1978. He'd been nineteen, and a natural philosopher. His boat and his bedroom were his astronomic ateliers: "Drifting out on the water. It all came down to vectors and angles. He wondered if there was a way to chart the natural world."[1] Like the "migratory orbits" of his and his mother's ancestors, Tomas's death refuses neatly to account for itself: he might have been murdered for his hunting rifle, but Hannah is "still not certain whether it was UVF or IRA or UFF or INLA or whatever other species of idiot."[2] For all her defiance, Hannah appears sure imminently to lose her family home, and with it, the lough's touch, to creditors in Bangor. As she confronts the specter of displacement, she thinks a brackish stream of Troubles, kinships, and ancient Ireland: "The stolen gun never resurfaced. Who knows what history it served, or whether it was just thrown away and buried down in the bog to join the ancient elk, the bones, the butter?"[3]

Hannah is a recent contributor to a rich tradition of digging Ireland's earth for contact with its natural antiquities, and with the stories they might be made to tell. She is also a poet of that antiquity's mightiest symbols, bogland and the bones of the giant deer, extinct on Irish soil for over eleven thousand years.[4] This essay searches the boggy theories of Thomas Molyneux, doctor and antiquarian, who published "A Discourse Concerning the Large Horns Frequently Found under Ground in Ireland" in the *Philosophical Transactions* of England's Royal Society in 1695.[5] Molyneux claimed those horns for the Irish Moose Deer (*Megalogeras giganteus*), and believed they proved that Ireland was powerfully unlike England, and affined, no less powerfully, to relations on the far side of the Atlantic. For Hannah Carson and for Thomas Molyneux, Irish bogs are boneyards, repositories of fossilized Irish times, and Irish worlds; the direc-

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tions and magnitude of Irishness vectored from them in the late seventeenth century, and have done so ever since.

Molyneux's Irish Moose Deer reared its extensive horns at a changeful spot in Irish history. The island's demographic, political, economic, and religious formations were shifting tectonically. William III had won the River Boyne in the summer of 1690, and received the surrender of his Catholic and Jacobite adversaries at Limerick late the following year.[6] Irish Catholics had been expropriated of their lands, and an elite minority Protestant settler class had realized total political dominance.[7] British adventurers and migrants continued to plant and enlarge towns and industries, often over-capping older parishes and castles.[8] Schemes for improving the landscape, by draining bogs and building canals, were under consideration, if not underway.[9] Penal (or "Popery") Laws scoured the landscape of public or educational opportunity for most Catholics, and emigration swelled.[10]

This stark silhouette is not intended to trace the displacement of one integral ethnic, religious, or national structure by another. Settlers did not simply depart England with identities bound up safely in trusses and packs.[11] They risked falling from Englishness toward an Irishness that was neither static nor, for many, desirable. The hybrid natures of Irish settlement—the Anglicized Irish, and the Hibernicized English—were experienced diversely—as perilous, as empowering—but always undecidably.[12] Making the case for Ireland's inclusion in a unified Britain, Thomas and William Molyneux's nephew Samuel Madden complained in 1738 on behalf of those "Subjects of *Great Britain*," dwelling in Ireland, "who like Amphibious Animals, are envied as *Englishmen*, in *Ireland*, and malign'd as *Irish* in *England*."[13] Uncertain—and unpromising—was the political scope afforded British subjects in Dublin and the Pale of Settlement.[14]

The Parliament in Ireland was not the only institution occupied with establishing its identity independent of—but in intimate contact with—an English counterpart. The Dublin Philosophical Society was founded by William and Thomas Molyneux in the closing months of 1683 at Trinity College. It was relatively short-lived, it did not publish a journal, and its membership, even loosely defined, was modest. But it established early ties with the Royal Society (many D.P.S. members and associates would go on to become Fellows of the Royal Society, and to publish in its *Philosophical Transactions*), and with the Philosophical Society at Oxford.[15] And as William Molyneux demonstrated most vividly, the Dublin Philosophical Society was engaged in lively debates surrounding Ireland's political autonomy and its fundamental political identity. William's *The Case of Ireland's being Bound by Acts of Parliament in England* (1698) reimagined Ireland as a distinct kingdom, and not a colony, in order to impugn the absence of Irish representatives in the London Parliament. *The Case* is widely regarded as a tributary of home-rule theory that would run, changeful but strong, through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and up to Irish independence in 1921.[16]

For all his—and his brother's—disappointment at the state of learning in late seventeenth-century Ireland, Thomas Molyneux recasts the island from an object of curiosity, adequately considered from across the Irish Sea, to a potentially robust home for the production of original local knowledge. Like William's *Case*, but in a manner far subtler, Thomas's essay on an extinct deer argues that Ireland can only be responsibly accounted for in its multitudinous particularities by correspondents on the ground, and as part of networks that include Britain but also exceed it. The Irish moose is a powerful symbol, for Thomas, of not only the spectacular natural uniqueness of the country that produced it, but of Ireland's links with an alternative "Neighbourhood"—what we might today call a kind of transatlantic ecological circuit—and particularly with the northeastern coast of what would become the United States. Digging up the moose is tantamount, here, to uprooting Ireland from the walled gardens of Britain and the Old World—or, if that takes the thing too far, of expanding the kingdom's range of historical, and potential, relations.

Credit for these innovations must go not only to Thomas Molyneux, but also to Ireland's bogs, and to the odd things they contain. For it is precisely the inscrutability of bogs—their amphibious composition and the challenges they pose to antiquarians keen to interpret their contents—that makes them so narratively and imaginatively productive. They are rebellious participants in the drift of geologic time, and the ambiguities they spawn enable speculations that might wither on firmer ground. For Thomas Molyneux, they are ready contributors to a pattern of analogical thinking that identifies Irish fossils with North American moose, and Ireland with a precise counterpart—what is now Mount Desert Island, off the coast of Maine—in the New World. But they are also transgressive collaborators, responding to Protestant empiricist intervention with boggy geographies and narratives that threaten to undermine the integrity and authority of that very enterprise. Histories, cartographies, political affiliations, and identities issue from bogs in unexpected, and flexible, configurations. This made them mesmerizing for Thomas Molyneux, and for the vast and variegated ecosystem of artists and authors who turn the earth for the places they call Ireland.

THINKING BOGS, THINKING IRELAND

Like much "wild" space, Irish bogland is a privileged site for contemporary conservationists.[17] In recent decades, such landscapes have been partly "reclaimed," by artists and environmentalists, for the contact they appear to offer with older, richer, and perhaps purer pre-colonial Irish identities. Bogs, and the strange things they contain, make available a range of historical and ecological interpretations, and these interpretations have been of special significance to Irish identities and politics at moments when the knottiness of Irishness has been exceptionally apparent. The anthropologist Stuart J. McLean has de-

scribed bogs as "interstitial landscapes existing between clearly differentiated states of matter," home to "a materiality in which human cultural expressions necessarily participate but which, at the same time forever exceeds their determinations."[18] By thinking with bogs, by walking over and near them, and by touching them, one can imagine Irishness as inscrutable and messy, but also ancient, productive, and unique. For Thomas Molyneux, they enable access to Irish antiquity and, more importantly, to the interpretive and narrative license he requires to make his claims. They coauthor, in other words, Molyneux's visions of nature, history, and geography and cooperate in mobilizing the sundry implications thereof.

The British literary record mostly bequeaths us accounts of Irish bogs that emphasize their uselessness, their queerness, and even their evil. Seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century commentators noted that bogs prevented the expansion of agriculture, industry, and transportation; many of the most significant improvement schemes then undertaken in Ireland involved the draining, cutting, or repurposing of wetlands. A paradigmatic example, commenced in 1641 and finished just over a century later, proposed improving the Glin Bog in Ulster to open a coal route from Lough Neagh to the ocean at Newry.[19] So-called "improving" landlords, many of whom were then resident in Ireland, not only engaged in bog-draining but also required their tenants to do the same.[20] Agriculture and "civilization," in accounts celebrating such projects, are positively correlated. These twinned enterprises were largely unavailable to Ireland's Catholics, whose status as majority landholders had suffered a dramatic reversal by the end of the seventeenth century.[21] Thus, when bogs are seen as literal havens for barbarous, uncivil, and politically subversive persons, these associations take on special meaning: in Irish contexts, bog-dwellers were often identified as poor, Catholic, and revolutionary.[22] By converting bogland into arable pasture—so the reasoning often went—improvers would also destroy the habitats that violent elements needed to survive.

As bogs were explored and drained with increasing alacrity, they relinquished a variety of astonishing curiosities. These generated another, related response to bogs, which meditated on their queerly unpredictable tendencies and their epistemological oddness. Then more than now, bogs were seen to be doing subversive things to matter, time, and narrative. By yielding disparate objects that often resisted ready identification, categorization, and narratization, bogs insisted that would-be interlocutors stretch their interpretive frameworks to accommodate incongruous findings. Of course, this was not strictly a negative phenomenon: bogs and their contents became increasingly exciting for antiquarian collectors and spurred the careers of many a proto-ethnographer. Ireland appears to have been exceptionally well fitted for making signal discoveries: in 1781, Lord and Lady Moira ordered the excavation of "a small peat bog" near their estate in County Down. Their published discovery of a small female human skeleton remains the first officially acknowledged unearthing of

a bog body on record.[23] Bog objects and bog bodies contributed to a long-established sense of bogs as uncanny spaces which might generate objects from unfamiliar pasts, objects too well preserved to believe, objects that seemed to issue direct and strident challenges to extant systems of understanding.

These challenges intersected with broader, and pressing, currents of concern among late seventeenth-century scientists, many of whom strove to reconcile new information with received scripture. Landscapes throughout Britain and Ireland were responding to galloping agricultural development, natural resource extraction, and scientific exploration by yielding copious fossils; problematically, an unnerving proportion of these finds seemed to have nothing whatsoever to do with the environs that produced them. Over the course of *The Natural History of Lancashire* (1700), the English physician and scientist Charles Leigh repeatedly encounters boggy incongruity. When drained, the morasses of Leigh's home county yielded parts of fir trees, which, as Caesar himself had long since made clear, do not "grow naturally in any part of this Kingdom."[24] This phenomenon, Leigh explains, is explicable only if we understand it in terms of the Great Flood's environmental fallout. For Leigh, things are odder still in Ireland.[25]

Like Thomas Molyneux, Leigh was provoked by archaeological findings to ponder surprising associations between distant and obviously distinct places; for the latter, the Noachian Flood had been responsible for a great deal of global geological and ecological reshuffling. The precise nature of that flood (or floods, as the theoretical case might be[26]), and of its attendant redistributions, came in for intense debate at this time.[27] Bogs were prominent instigators of diluvian speculation, proffering weirdly integral specimens of species and cultures that sometimes appeared shockingly foreign to the parts where they were discovered. They were taken, in many instances, to contain holdovers from the Flood, things that would have ordinarily passed out of evidence, were it not for the bogs' preservative powers.

Scientists based in Ireland in the late seventeenth century hardly remained silent on bogs and the questions they raised. The Antrim-born philosopher and Anglican Archbishop William King published "Of the Bogs, and Loughs of Ireland" in the Royal Society's *Philosophical Transactions* in 1685. This moralizing treatise commented at length on the odd properties of bogs, and on the sanctuary they afforded Ireland's dangerous undesirables. King associates bogs with barbarity, laziness, and indigeneity, and describes how "a *Turf-Bog* preserves things strangely," transforming the objects it contains and exempting them from normal processes of decay.[28] His argument calls for mass draining of Ireland's bogs in order to evict those "*Torys*, and *Thieves*, who can hardly live without them."[29] At the same time King, like Molyneux, is skeptical of the diluvian theories that were often invoked to understand boggy specimens. He associates such notions with the "Natives," whose proclivity for superstition helps his reader identify them as Catholic:

> Trees are found sound, and intire in them, and those Birch, or Alder that are very subject to rot. The Trees are supposed by the ignorant vulgar to have lyen there ever since the Flood, but the truth is, they fell on the surface of the Earth; and the *Bog* . . . swelling by degrees, at last covered them.[30]

In order to set the record straight, King activates the bog as primary actor in the phenomena he explores. Thus, improvement promises to not only increase cultivatable acreage but also to reduce the space available for popish religion, misdeeds, and misinformation.[31]

In his “A Discourse Concerning the Large Horns Frequently Found under Ground in Ireland,” Thomas Molyneux dismisses the diluvian explanation as facile, “a ready and short way” to explain the appearance of the Moose Deer (499). The Great Flood, he believes, occurred “above Four Thousand Years” ago, and it’s clear from the integrity of his specimens that they could not have endured such a catastrophe, and at such a great temporal remove. Thus, the Irish Moose Deer must have been eradicated from Ireland more recently, perhaps “from a certain ill Constitution of Air in some of the past Seasons long since the Flood, which might occasion an *Epidemick Distemper*, if we may so call it, or *Pestilential Murren*, peculiarly to affect this sort of Creature, so as to destroy at once great Numbers of ’em, if not quite ruine the Species” (499–500).[32] If the plague didn’t annihilate the Irish Moose, Molyneux is confident that hunting must have finished the job. He is wistful as he considers an alternative denouement: “had those Barbarous Times been capable of taking Care for the Preservation of this stately Creature, our Country would not have entirely lost so singular and beautiful an Ornament” (501).

IRELAND ILLUMINATED

This spirit of singularity dovetails with Thomas Molyneux’s sense that Irish natural history, as discipline and as object of study, is unique in ways that extant scientists and scientific literature have not sufficiently acknowledged. We might understand him as rejecting a dominant analogy—Ireland and its nature are comprehensible in terms of England, and Northern Europe more generally—for a superior alternative. Of course, Molyneux’s strain of homegrown Irish natural history is, at least, an invasive species, a graft taken from the recently institutionalized bodies of the Oxford (1683) and Royal (1660) societies. And far from cutting the ties that bind Irish natural history and historians to their counterparts across the Irish Sea, Molyneux and his colleagues in the Dublin Philosophical Society looked to England for professional and practical exchange and support. But for these transactions to succeed, Ireland needed to be rightly acknowledged as the home of a distinct environment, eminently worthy of focused scientific study and of a group of learned men capable of conducting observations at first hand and productively interpreting their meanings.

Molyneux's vision of Irish illumination involves fidelity to first-hand observation, local networks of educated Protestant observers, and the positioning of Irish natural history in relation to the full and expanding spaces and times opened to view by classical, Renaissance, and contemporary sources. The Irish Moose Deer, and the other natural productions Molyneux treats, are ready to hand—"I have by me some of the teeth, and one of the lower Jaw-bones of this creature" (499)—thanks to the contributions of a *Who's Who* of late seventeenth-century intellectual and political elites in Ireland. Irish science, and the correct identification of the Irish Moose, have been stymied by reasoning from "hearsay" (503), and the negligence of primary evidence. Molyneux's "Discourse" connects the testimonies and material contributions of a learned clan to the main stream of natural history. The effect is not only to bolster his taxonomic claims but also to depict Ireland as a stable and complex system of gentlemanly improvers and correspondents cultivating an imminent efflorescence of practical and scientific knowledge of the country.

Bogs, and the Irish Moose Deer specimens they produce, are the entities in relation to which this system takes shape. They map Irish space and populate that space with leading figures of the new Anglo-Ireland. Examining this eco-political cartography in some detail demonstrates the power of antiquarianism and natural history to conjure a kingdom. Early in the essay, Molyneux deduces from his fossils' "*Palmed Hornes*" that they exhibit "a greater affinity with the *Buck* or *Fallow Deer*, than with the Stag or Red Deer"; this he "lately observed, having an opportunity of particularly Examining a compleat Head, with both its Horns entirely perfect, not long since dug up, given to my Brother *William Molyneux*, as a Natural Curiosity, by Mr. *Henry Osborn*, that lives at a place call'd *Dardistown*, in the County of *Meath*, about Two Miles from *Drogheda*" (490). It is notable that in the space of just five years, Drogheda had become comprehensible in terms of its proximity to archaeological findings, and not to the bloody Boyne. But we also recognize a significant character in Henry Osborne, or Osborn, who has offered the third of as many Irish Moose Deer heads he has "found by casual trenching" in his orchard (490). Osborne, an accomplished surveyor and amateur astronomer, had settled in County Meath after a career devoted to the rationalization of Irish land for settlement.[33]

Osborne's métier is a nice metonym for the cartographic work done by Molyneux's essay, plotting the palm-horned coordinates of establishment Ireland. Among his Moose Deer enthusiasts, Thomas Molyneux counts Henry Capell, who served on the Irish Privy Council before becoming Lord Justice in 1693 and Lord Deputy two years thereafter (495). More horns reside near Ballymacward, chez one "Major *Folliot*" (496), presumably John Folliott, who fought on the winning side in the Jacobite-Williamite Wars and sat in the Irish House of Commons from 1692–93.[34] Similar displays impress visitors to Turvey House, near Dublin, as well as to Portumny, in County Galway, and other stately homes in Newtownstewart, County Tyrone, and Stackallan, County Meath.

Not least of all, "Two extraordinary *Beams* of these Kind of *Horns*" adorn "one side of the Common Hall" of the Dublin residence of Michael Boyle, the Archbishop of Armagh (496). The horns and heads of the Irish Moose Deer lend coherence to a religiously and politically diverse network of aristocrats, church and military men, and improvers, and betoken—"as an ancient and lasting Curiosity to future Ages" (496)—the solidity thereof.

This is *not* a network of professionalized scientists nor, even, of amateur natural historians. Osborne's story—that he happened upon the remains of yet another Irish Moose Deer while doing some light digging in his orchard—is typical of the way Molyneux narrates the moment of archaeological discovery: a gentlemanly acquaintance (or acquaintance thereof), exploring or improving his grounds, comes by chance upon some bones. "What Discoveries we make of this Creature," he explains, "we can only have from those *loose parts* of it we find dug out of the Earth by Accident" (490). Contingency is a recurring trope in Molyneux's retellings, and in bog-findings in general.[35] It points up, in this case, a sense that Irish soil is so loaded with bits and pieces of Irish Moose Deer that any attentive observer is bound to find some. Furthermore, it confirms the claims of Molyneux and others that the professional circumstances necessary for intentional Irish Moose–seeking are sorely lacking.

At the same time, though, accident preserves an image of Molyneux's correspondents as genteel contributors to the development of a modern, predominantly Protestant Ireland which they inhabit and improve. Their *not* being explicitly men of science, unearthing horns in the course of an expedition from elsewhere, is emphasized. Specimen-finding is the happy byproduct of other forms of rational and virtuous engagement with Irish soil, such as surveying and gardening. This impression of apparent informality is not an eccentricity, but a defining characteristic of late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century natural history. Among the most prominent popularizers of this style was the Irish-born Hans Sloane, who served the Royal Society, as secretary and as president, and whose correspondence with William Molyneux, facilitated by John Locke, was abetted by the Moose Deer.[36]

The economics of the Irish Moose Deer further attest to the gentility of the enterprise: specimens move from hand to hand as gifts, the most remarkable of which land in the grasp of the most remarkable beneficiaries. In a passage which neatly synthesizes several of our themes, Thomas Molyneux relates one fossil's extraordinary ascent from muck to marvel: taken from "a sort of *Marle*" at the home of Giles Vandeleur,[37] one-time high sheriff of Clare, it was conveyed thence to James Butler, lately Duke of Ormond and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and onward to King Charles II's Horn Gallery at Hampton Court Palace (495). Gift-giving, which would long remain fundamental to naturalists' work, also suggests the Irish Moose Deer's potential membership in international circuits of prestige and spectacular display.[38] Moreover, this example strengthens our sense that Molyneux's Ireland is inhabited by interlinked gen-

tlemen of learning, whose awesome contributions to Britain issue from local land and local social bonds. This and the other accounts of Moose Deer discovery represent specimens as the fruits of rationally managed soil, the dazzling produce of the stability and integrity of Molyneux's version of Ireland.

What's more, on the walls of the Horn Gallery, we glimpse the moose's capacity for subversion. The head and horns from Vandeleur's estate—Ralahine Castle, perhaps—in Clare

may still be seen among the rest of the large Heads both of Stags and Bucks that adorn that Place, but this so vastly exceeds the largest of them, that the rest appear to lose much of their Curiosity by being viewed in Company with this. I am lately informed, these with the other Heads are since removed to the *Guard-Room* out of the *Horn-Gallery*. (495–96)

We might be tempted to read this in terms of Irish wildness, or savagery, and that interpretation may carry some truth. But it is beside the point, for bigness, in Molyneux's view, signals an animal's elevated spot in the hierarchy of Nature. Generally speaking, Nature is more scrupulous to observe "exact Symetry [*sic*], and due Proportion of Parts . . . in the Formation of all the larger and perfecter sort of Animals" (504). As for the Irish Moose Deer, "Nature her self seems by the *Vast Magnitude* and *Stately Horns*, she has given this Creature, to have singled it out as it were, and shewed it such regard, with a design to distinguish it remarkably from the common Herd of all other smaller *Quadrupeds*" (512).

It is worth pausing for a moment to acknowledge that *Megaloceros giganteus* was truly marvelous: seven feet tall at its shoulder, its antlers stretched to a length of twelve feet from end to end and weighed up to ninety pounds. That's more than twenty pounds heavier than the heftiest antlers on an *Alces alces* bull: the Irish Moose Deer is, if anything, grander than the very North American moose that Molyneux takes such pains to align with his fossils.[39] Stephen Jay Gould has put the thing in terms that Molyneux would approve: the Irish Moose Deer's antler span, Gould writes, has "never been exceeded, or even approached, in the history of life."[40] Molyneux's lionizing treatment resembles a seventeenth-century instance of what contemporary conservation biologists and cultural anthropologists might call the cult of charismatic megafauna.[41]

For a writer endeavoring to assert the uniqueness—not to say superiority—of his natural surroundings, and of the intellectual and social formations rooted thereupon, stature counts. Molyneux's understated and indirect style—"I am lately informed"—seems proleptic of a more openly disputatious exchange between one of the most influential naturalists of the eighteenth century and the primary author of the United States's Declaration of Independence. Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, notoriously observed in his *Histoire Naturelle* (1749–1804) that American nature, being degenerate, produces no stately quadrupeds. Thomas Jefferson devoted part of *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1784) to

disproving Buffon's theory, and tasked Meriwether Lewis and William Clark with collecting the traces of grand American animals on their transcontinental expedition of 1804–6. When Jefferson sent material testimony of his nation's natural majesty to Buffon and the French Cabinet du Roi, the gift he made them comprised the skin and bones of a moose.[42] Having browbeaten its punier relations from the Horn Gallery, Molyneux's Irish Moose Deer imposes a double symbol upon its viewers: in one sense, it testifies to the vigorous presence of Ireland within Britain, and under power of its monarch. In another, it advertises the awesome exceptionalism of Irish fauna, and of the various ecosystems—soily, intellectual, and Anglo-Irish—which conspired to mount it on the wall.

BOGGY GEOGRAPHIES: ONE HOOF IN THE NEW WORLD

The "Discourse" prepares its reader for the classificatory reveal by methodically exploding the past's ostensible errors. These are commonly committed, Molyneux explains, by those who play fast and loose with identification without making firsthand observations. Correct knowledge, for him, proceeds from comparing specimens—and, in lieu thereof, eyewitness accounts—on the basis of "*Figure* and *Size*" (505). By attending to form, we understand that the palm-horned Irish Moose Deer shares its kind, but not sort, with "the Stag or Red Deer" (490)[43]; categorical discrepancies of scale and proportion trouble any comparison with the Scandinavian *Elche* (504). For a suitable candidate, Molyneux looks far beyond the British Isles, and even Northern Europe.

Or, to put the case more precisely, he looks immediately about himself, to books, which stretch his vision to the west, and beyond an ocean. John Josselyn, whose brother Henry became deputy governor of Maine in 1645, visited New England in the late 1630s, and again from 1663 to 1671. His *New England's Rarities Discovered* (1672) trumpeted the curious contents of the New World, and collaborated with another text to direct Thomas Molyneux's conclusions.[44] This was *New World or Description of the West Indies* (1625) by Johannes (John) de Laet, the prolific collector of natural curiosities and governor of the Dutch West India Company. That de Laet never visited the New World does not prevent Molyneux from borrowing from a 1640 French translation of the *Description*.[45]

In Josselyn, Molyneux discovers the moose, that "*Lofty Horned Beast*" which, though regrettably neglected by science, seems "next the Elephant, to be the most remarkable *Quadruped* for its largeness in the World" (504–5):

> if we compare the several Parts of those Descriptions, with the Beasts whose heads are found here in *Ireland*; we shall not have the least Reason to question but these vastly large *Irish Deer* and the *American Moose*, were certainly one and the same sort of Animal, being of the *Deer Kind*, carrying the same sort of *Palmed Horns*, which are of the same *Size* and *Largeness* as well as *Figure*; and the *Bulk* of their *Bodies* corresponding exactly in Proportion to the wide spreading of their *Horns*.

> So that we may securely assert, that *Mooses* formerly were as frequent in this Country, as they have them still in Northern Parts of the *West Indies*, *New England*, *Virginia*, *Maryland*, *Canada* or *New France*. (505–6)

And de Laet is called in to preemptively temper a possible habitative objection:

> And least we may think this Animal peculiar to the *Continent*, and not to be found in *Islands*; I lately met with a remarkable passage in *John de Laet*'s *French Description* of the *West-Indies*, that clearly shews the contrary. . . . *There is a certain sort of Beast common in this Country*, *which the savage Indians call a Moose*, *as big as a Bull* (he had not seen I suppose those of the largest Size) *having the Head of a Buck*, *with broad Horns*, *which they cast every Year*, *and the Neck of a Deer*: *there are found also great Numbers of these Animals in an Island near the Continent call'd by the English*, Mount Mansell. (506)

It is important to contemplate these paired propositions side by side, for they emblematize the imaginative power of Molyneux's analogical thinking. As the "*Irish Deer*" is to the "*American Moose*," so is Ireland to "Mount Mansell" (known nowadays as Mount Desert Island), the largest island off the coast of Maine.[46] Mount Mansell's moose enable Thomas Molyneux to collapse the extraordinary variance between that island's distance from the North American shore and Ireland's separation from the same. Because Mount Mansell "must of necessity had some Communication with the Main Land of *America*, to have been thus plentifully stockt with" moose, so Ireland must have communicated with it, as well.

Thus begins a process of imaginative affiliation—and disaffiliation—more radical than anything that has preceded it. Molyneux's article redraws the ties that bind land masses—and whole continents—together, in ways that threaten to cut Ireland loose from its moorings:

> *Ireland* . . . must in the many past Ages, long before the late Discovery of that *New World*, had some sort of Intercourse with it . . . (though 'tis not easy, I acknowledge, for us at present to explain how) for otherwise I do not see, how we can conceive this Country should be supply'd with this Creature, that for ought I can yet hear, is not to be found in all our Neighbourhood round about us, nay, perhaps in any other Parts of *Europe*, *Asia* or *Africa*: And then 'tis certain as *Ireland* is the last or most Western part of the *Old World*; so 'tis nearest of any Country to the most Eastern Parts of the *New-Canada*, *New-England*, *Virginia*, &c. the great Tract of Land, and the only one I yet know, remarkable for plenty of the *Moose-Deer*. (506–7)

Since the 1746 discovery of fossilized remains in Yorkshire, in northern England, *Megaloceros giganteus* has been known to have resided beyond Ireland's borders.[47] But for Thomas Molyneux and his readers, the Irish Moose Deer was a singular anomaly which provided a legitimate basis for describing Ireland as constitutionally distinct from the rest of its "Neighbourhood," and as vaguely—

but surely—linked to North America. The implications of this rearranging for Anglo-Irish settlers in search of a deep historical connection to their new home are complicated and colossal.

In fact, Molyneux's use of the term "Neighbourhood" shifts, over the course of the "Discourse," in ways that suggest an alternative geography, one founded not in contemporary spatial arrangements so much as in natural features, or what today we might call ecology. In the foregoing passage—"all our Neighbourhood round about us"—the former sense is clearly implied. But later, as Molyneux's litany of Irish-American correspondences expands, he refers to Ireland's "Neighbourhood with the *Northern America*" (509), a proximity that only makes sense if we project it backwards in time—"in the many past Ages"—or if we understand it as predicated on environmental similarity. This might suggest a quasi-ecological theory of global organization that underlays—and has the potential to undermine—extant spatial and geopolitical formations. At the least, it opens the door to an appreciation of the potential for transformative change in the earth's surface over time. And if these processes may have produced a present that differs tremendously from the past, then the current status quo cannot be regarded as immutable.

If all Ireland is drawn into sure, if ambiguous, association with "the *West-Indies*," its Atlantic coast manifests this "Intercourse" most abundantly:

> For as they on the Coast of *New-England* and the Island *Bermudas* gather considerable Quantities of *Amber-greese*; so on the Western Coast of *Ireland*, along the Counties of *Sligo*, *Mayo*, *Kerry* and the Isles of *Arran* they frequently meet with large parcels of that precious Substance, so highly valued for its Perfume. (507)

In terms of geographical distance, the dislocation from Molyneux's Dublin to Connacht and West Munster is not great. But by framing the west of Ireland within the Atlantic's New World periphery, he establishes it as the western frontier of Europe, and perhaps the eastern frontier of a zone of prehistoric "Intercourse."

The congruities do not end there. Ambergris derives from the gastrointestinal tract of the adult male sperm whale, or *Physeter macrocephalus*, and while this was not explicitly understood by seventeenth-century English writers, a vague understanding of the pungent substance's provenance registered widely.[48] So it is perhaps unsurprising that Molyneux turns from ambergris to a note about sperm whales, the "kind of *Whale-Fish*" that he names, following Walter Charleton, *Cetus Dentatus*. Common "in *New England*," three have been "taken . . . in the Space of Six Years, all on the Western Coast" of Ireland. (He makes a firm point, too, of distinguishing them from the baleen whales found "stranded . . . on the *Eastern Coast* of this Country that regards *England*.") One of these three, secured near Ballyshannon in 1691,[49] is reported to have been "Seventy one Foot long" (508), and thus grander than any of the

Cete, aliud admirabile mentioned by one of Molyneux's primary sources, the Flemish doctor and botanist Carolus Clusius, in the latter's *Exoticorum libri decem* (1605).

In the course of describing yet more ecological parallelism, Molyneux takes special care to emphasize indigeneity:

> [We] may likewise add some of our more rare *Spontaneous Plants*, because they are found growing only in those Western Parts of *Ireland*, and no where else in this whole Country, or any of the Neighbouring Kingdoms about us. (509)

Spontaneity, in this sense, refers to the quality of arising naturally, or wildly, without improvement or agriculture.[50] Molyneux calls up the "*Strawberry Tree*" (*Arbutus unedo*) and the "*London Pride*" (likely *Saxifraga spathularis*, or St. Patrick's Cabbage) and locates them, in all their native robustness, in Kerry. Intriguingly, the former tree is seen to correspond, in its elevated stature, to specimens in Pierre Belon's description of Mount Athos, and in an account of Arabian foliage contained in Pliny (Molyneux, 510). These examples reinforce a globalizing view of Irish natural history, but they do not illustrate Molyneux's occidental thesis: "Whether both the foregoing *Plants* are truly *American*, I cannot at present determine," he admits (511). It makes for an odd moment, a citational spill that the author cannot quite clean up, but that does contribute, if messily, to the general distancing of Ireland from England.

It would be imprudent to understand Molyneux as detaching Ireland altogether from the "Old World." Instead, we ought to regard him as establishing the island as an environmental frontier, particularly its western, coastal reaches: it is "the last or most Western part of the *Old World*," and the "nearest of any Country to the most Eastern Parts of the *New-Canada*, *New-England*, *Virginia*, &c" (507). Or it might be more accurate to interpret Molyneux's Ireland as the meeting of two frontiers, an island literally divided between dual geographical and temporal identities. Whether we would do better to understand Ireland as the westernmost part of Europe or the easternmost part of North America is not immediately clear. What *is* apparent in this telling is that Ireland is fundamentally, naturally distinct from England, not to mention the rest of Europe, and that is best contextualized as part of the Atlantic littoral.

In isolating Ireland, and further distinguishing its westward space—a west within a west—Molyneux lends his pen to a long and variegated mythology of the Irish occident. Connacht, Donegal, Kerry, and the rest have frequently been imagined in terms of nature, a tendency not unrelated to the west's association with wildness, refractory Catholics, Irish speakers, and anti-imperial militancy.[51] In the west as at Osborne's estate in Drogheda, Molyneux's natural history obscures as it illuminates, looking past harsh realities to cast Ireland in prehistoric time and New World nature.

STAGING BOGGY IRISHNESS IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

The Irish Moose Deer is imaginatively productive because it is uncontrolled by testimony, text, and tradition. It is uncontained by the "Memory of Man," which Molyneux elsewhere commands to assert, for instance, "that the *Red Deer* in these our Days, is much more rare with us in *Ireland*, than it has been formerly" (502). For the story he seeks, Molyneux has recourse only to palimpsestic bog-memory, written upon a "Soil that had been formerly the *Outward Surface of the Earth*, but in process of Time, being covered by degrees with many Layers of Adventitious Earth, has by lying under Ground a certain Number of Ages, acquired a peculiar *Texture*, *Consistence*, *Richness*, or *Maturity*" (498). Molyneux lacks the means to narrate the lives of bogs and the things in them in terms of anaerobiosis and its effects on decomposition. Still, he is activated by a boggy logic of preservation: because the Irish Moose Deer has eluded characterization, its narrative potentialities are limitless. Molyneux makes the Irish Moose Deer speak, but he's only capable of doing so because of Irish bogs, and of what Karin Sanders calls their "contradictory powers": their "fuzzy morphologies," she claims, are readily "co-opted by historical, cultural, and psychological anxieties."[52]

Anxieties and enthusiasms surrounding boggy powers made Irish wetlands singularly useful for exploring and asserting "interstitial" identities and sociopolitical formations. For example, Charles Macklin's satirical play, *The True-born Irishman* (perf. 1761), advertises no contradiction in heroizing a landlord figure whom the audience could only have identified with the propertied Anglo-Irish, yet whose name is Murrough O'Dogherty, and who is given to declamations of the proceeding sort:

> O'Dogherty!—there's a sound for you—why they have not such a name in all England as O'Dogherty—nor as any of our fine sounding Milesian names—what are your Jones and your Stones, your Rice and your Price, your Heads and your Foots, and Hands and your Wills, and Hills and Mills, and Sands, and a parcel of little pimping names that a man would not pick out of the street, compared to the O'Donovans, O'Callaghans, O'Sullivans, O'Brallaghans, O'Shaghnesses, O'Flahertys, O'Gallaghers, and O'Doghertys,—Ogh, they have courage in the very sound of them, for they come out of the mouth like a storm; and are as old and as stout as the oak at the bottom of the bog of Allen, which was there before the flood.[53]

For Desmond Slowey, O'Dogherty's politics partake of "economic patriotism," and place him within a constellation which also includes Arthur Young, Maria Edgeworth, and Jonathan Swift.[54] By explicitly associating this litany of venerable names with a bog oak, O'Dogherty abstracts these archetypally Irish appellations from his immediate surroundings, rendering them as antique—and

as collectible, we might say—as a piece of bog oak. The names appear, here, as romantic emblems, rather than as referents through which we might imagine real Catholic peasants, who continued to suffer, in the second half of the eighteenth century, under the extraordinary strictures of Penal Laws that had subjugated them for two hundred years. Another of O'Dogherty's proclamations—a rebuke against his Anglophile wife, Mrs. Diggerty—articulates a highly specific and exigent theory of right language:

> I hope I shall never have any more of your London English; none of your this here's, your that there's, your winegars, your weals, your vindors, your toastesses, and your stone postesses; but let me have our own good plain, old Irish English, which I insist upon is better than all the English English that ever coquets and coxcombs brought into the land.[55]

"Irish English" is a deceptively innovative formulation, a grafting on of some appropriate degree of Irishness after the fact of the Anglicization of Ireland's linguistic profile.[56] O'Dogherty, in other words, does not implore his audience to *speak* Irish (which language remained widespread, if under duress, at the time), but to "Irish" their English tongue in a manner commensurate with the principles of Anglo-Irish restraint and respectability. Macklin patches together an ideal and hybrid Irishness from a range of source materials, including bogs; his play's variegated reception history testifies to the differential suitability of this new breed in various environments. Intriguingly, *The True-born Irishman* was a catastrophic failure at Covent Garden but a smash hit in New York.[57] Through Irish bogland, Macklin can narrate his home in a way that celebrates its antiquity and native nature without calling Anglo-Irish hegemony into question. He sought and found a discursive space in which Englishness and Irishness might both be remade in a progressive and outward-looking vision.

Crucially, Irish bogs provided such a space, disruptive as they were to easy comprehension and amenable as they proved to innovative narratization. Similarly, Thomas Molyneux's analysis cannot function without its ambiguities, which spring from Irish bogs as though they were another kind of spontaneous plant. For the "Discourse," diverse and undecidable sources represent productive limitations, authorizing the analogical thinking that brings New World Ireland into view. They clear the way for new narratives, new chronologies, and even new cartographies. These amount to a new mythology for Ireland, a generous resource for avant-garde Irish aesthetics and identities. A Protestant Irish settler consciousness might draw its sense of history and place, not to say its basic raison d'être, from a mythology such as this. Molyneux's cutting-edge intellectual and political network could ground itself in an antiquity that was Irish, Atlantic, and significantly New World.

CONCLUSIONS

They've taken the skeleton
Of the Great Irish Elk
Out of the peat, set it up
An astounding crate full of air.[58]

It would be reckless to transmute Thomas Molyneux's science directly into covert polemic, but by considering his relationship to late seventeenth-century home rule discourse, we begin to recognize the potential power of the Irish Moose Deer within the amphibious ecosystem of Protestant Irish political thought. William Molyneux outlined his political inclinations more boldly, but Thomas's unpublished tract, "Some Observations on the Taxes Paid by Ireland to Support the Government" (wr. 1727), suggests that we regard him as sympathetic to his brother's views. For the Irish-Canadian writer and politician Thomas D'Arcy McGee, Thomas Molyneux "was as national as William, though more politic in his patriotism."[59] The brothers Molyneux, and their political sympathizers, did not pretend to represent Ireland's population in any comprehensive way; they were advocating for the interests of a mostly non-Catholic population of educated and relatively well-to-do persons who felt they should be able to govern themselves via a parliament in Ireland, as opposed to being under the sway of a London body. Anglo-Irish commentary sometimes addressed social issues explicitly, as would Swift in his *Drapier's Letters* (1724–25) and *A Modest Proposal* (1729). But the main stream of Anglo-Irish nationalism in this period is better understood as a reaction to perceived exploitation under British statutes, which kept Ireland from flourishing as it ought.

Through Thomas Molyneux, an extinct animal and an Irish bog interact in ways that call established political and epistemological systems—the hierarchical relationship between England and Ireland, the distinction between the "Old" and "New World"—into question. This might have proven expedient for Molyneux; it certainly highlights bogs' potential to answer scientific inquiry in ways that problematize the structures upon which that inquiry erects itself. In the Horn Gallery, the Irish Moose Deer exemplifies Irish ecological exceptionalism, an exceptionalism which has direct ramifications for the symbolic economy of British sovereign display. By disrupting understandings of nature, history, and time, as Sanders contends, bogs have the potential even to "destabilize a sense of national space."[60] Her sources operate at a great remove from late seventeenth-century Ireland, but the relevance of her thesis for Molyneux's "Discourse" indicates a creative power belonging to bogs that transcends the vagaries of anthropogenic politics, institutions, or aesthetics.

As we have seen, Molyneux's Ireland is distinguished, in part, by a frontier mythology distantly related to the one that broke out legendarily—and

notoriously—two centuries later, in the United States, in Frederick Jackson Turner's *The Frontier in American History* (1893). Turner decreed that inside "the crucible of the frontier, the immigrants were Americanized, liberated, and fused into a mixed race, English in neither nationality nor characteristics."[61] Molyneux did not take the thing as far, but bog-led as he was, backwards in time and westward in space, he compounded the hybridization of his settler fellows and the kingdom they claimed. They were not simply something more or other than English. They were pioneers. Describing the long eighteenth century's "Green Atlantic," Kevin Whelan has shown that as Britain's authority over Irish politics, peoples, and land consolidated itself, Ireland entered the flow of the British Atlantic.[62] What Molyneux shows us is the power of bogs to conjure alternative, "Irish" terms for this entry, and perhaps to imagine another ocean altogether.

Thomas Molyneux's essay has had significant afterlives. The awesomeness of the Irish Moose Deer and the question of its identity made Molyneux a perennial footnote, and his specimens recurring objects of wonder: "Among the fossils of the British Empire," wrote the surgeon-apothecary and radical political writer James Parkinson, "none are more calculated to excite astonishment than the enormous stags' horns which have been dug up in different parts of Ireland."[63] Parkinson explains, further, how Georges Cuvier, the great eighteenth-century French comparative anatomist and academic, rebutted Molyneux's argument in order to bolster his own claims regarding extinction.[64] As recently as 1992, Gould felt himself compelled to devote a chapter of his *Ever Since Darwin: Reflections in Natural History* to disentangling the real animal—"neither exclusively Irish, nor an elk," but "the largest deer that ever lived"—from its many character studies.[65]

Twentieth-century literature's greatest encounters with *Megaloceros giganteus*—and with Irish wetlands more generally—come from Seamus Heaney, who wrote in "Bogland" (1969) that "The bogholes might be Atlantic seepage, / The wet centre is bottomless."[66] Heaney's bottomless center is an apt image for re-evaluating the position of bogs in the Irish literary imagination, and for considering the long eighteenth century's contributions thereto. The stories we use bogs to tell—about Ireland, nature, identities, and origins—have always been planted on mythic soil.[67] Bogs have often been seen to emblematize Irishness, and the comparison has, more often than not, been uncharitable.[68] By expanding the field of actors who dreamed Ireland through bogland, a lusher and more variegated array of Irishnesses—new Irish worlds, we might say—begin to show through. We recognize a diverse field of possibilities for the stories of Enlightenment Ireland, and we credit bogs and bones with some share in their authorship.

NOTES

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1. Colum McCann, *Transatlantic* (New York, 2013), 262.

2. McCann, 249, 254.

3. McCann, 262.

4. See Stephen Jay Gould, *Ever Since Darwin: Reflections in Natural History* (New York, 1992), 82.

5. Thomas Molyneux, "A Discourse Concerning the Large Horns Frequently Found Under Ground in Ireland," *Philosophical Transactions* 19 (1695): 489–512.

6. See Jim Smyth, "'Like Amphibious Animals': Irish Protestants, Ancient Britons, 1691–1707," *The Historical Journal* 36, no. 4 (Dec. 1993): 785–97, 785.

7. See Jill Marie Bradbury and David A. Valone, introduction, in *Anglo-Irish Identities, 1571–1845*, ed. Valone and Bradbury (Lewisburg, 2008), 11–29, 21–22.

8. See Bruce M. S. Campbell, "Economic Progress in the Canal Age: A Case Study from Counties Armagh and Down," in *Refiguring Ireland: Essays in Honour of Louis M. Cullen*, ed. David Dickson and Cormac Ó Gráda (Dublin, 2003), 63–93, 69.

9. See Campbell, 65.

10. See J. O. Bartley, introduction, in *Four Comedies by Charles Macklin*, ed. Bartley (London, 1968), 3–33, 3–4.

11. Smyth has powerfully rendered the identificatory quagmire that late seventeenth-century Ireland was for its contemporaries, and remains for scholars working today (786–87). Kevin Whelan has argued persuasively that Protestant Ireland was no more monolithic in the long eighteenth century than it has been since ("The Green Atlantic: Radical Reciprocities Between Ireland and America in the Long Eighteenth Century," in *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire 1660–1840*, ed. Kathleen Wilson [Cambridge, 2004], 216–38, 221).

12. See Declan Kiberd, *Inventing Ireland: The Literature of the Modern Nation* (London, 1996), 10.

13. Samuel Madden, *Reflections and Resolutions Proper for the Gentlemen of Ireland* (Dublin, 1738), 121.

14. New laws such as the Bill of Rights of 1689 buttressed London's power to legislate for Ireland. Developments which tended toward economic independence for Ireland, such as the Treaty of Limerick in 1697, were not warmly received by the English Parliament. English-Scottish Union in 1707 and the Declaratory Act of 1720 would continue to pour absolute parliamentary authority into a central pool. See Bradbury and Valone, 16; and Jeffrey R. Wigelsworth, "Fashioning Identity in Eighteenth-Century Politics: The Case of John Toland," in *Anglo-Irish Identities, 1571–1845*, 59–83, 62

15. See Theodore K. Hoppen, "The Royal Society and Ireland: William Molyneux, F.R.S. (1656–1698)," *Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London* 18, no. 2 (Dec. 1963): 125–35, 127–29.

16. See Hoppen, 133.

17. These days, observes Ian G. Simmons, "we find much of the 'waste' land prized as open space, and it is clear that some changes in the cultural valuation of heaths, moors and mountains have taken place" (*An Environmental History of Great Britain* [Edinburgh, 2001], 130). Ian D. Rotherham and David McCallam have commented on the twentieth century's "belated recognition that wetlands were to be valued and conserved as unique

natural wildernesses—ironically in the same way that the late eighteenth century had aestheticized and valorized the once dreaded wastes of mountain landscapes" ("Peat Bogs, Marshes and Fen as Disputed Landscapes in Late Eighteenth-Century France and England," in *Histoires de la Terre: Earth Sciences and French Culture 1740–1940*, ed. Louise Lyle and McCallam [Amsterdam and New York, 2008], 75–88, 87).

18. Stuart McLean, "Black Goo: Forceful Encounters with Matter in Europe's Muddy Margins," *Cultural Anthropology* 26, no. 4 (Nov 2011): 589–619, 592.

19. See Campbell, 65.

20. See Campbell, 73.

21. Bradbury and Valone trace the "almost complete dispossession of the Catholic population" in Ireland to the reprisals carried out at mid-century by Oliver Cromwell's forces upon the actions of the Confederate Catholics. "The final blow to Catholic hopes," they continue, "came in 1690, when William defeated James II at the Battle of the Boyne. The end of the seventeenth century saw a dramatic intensification of anti-Catholic legislation" (14–15).

22. Rotherham and McCallam argue that eighteenth-century British "observers of bogs and fens often imputed the abhorrent nature of the physical environment to the moral character of its inhabitants" (76)

23. See P. V. Glob, *The Bog People: Iron-Age Man Preserved*, trans. Rupert Bruce-Mitford (New York, 2004), 103–4.

24. Charles Leigh, *The Natural History of Lancashire, Cheshire, and the Peak, in Derbyshire* (Oxford, 1700), 59.

25. "To these," Leigh continues, "may be added that remarkable Mountain call'd *Naphat* in the Province of *Conought* in the Kingdom of *Ireland*, which is several hundred Fathom above the surface of the Sea, yet at the top of this Mountain ten Yards within it are vast Beds of all sorts of marine Shells . . . which doubtless, considering the immense height of the Mountain, could not be deposited there by any means but by a Deluge, and that an universal one. Parallel to these are those vast Mountains of Oyster-shells in *Virginia*, and other parts of the *West-Indies*; likewise the vast quantities of marine Shells found several Yards deep in firm Marle in Lands remote from the Sea, in which five Yards within this Marle I saw the Skeleton of a *Buck* standing upon his Feet, and his Horns on its Head, which are yet preserv'd at *Ellel-Grange* near *Lancaster*" (62).

26. Exploration and imperialism complicated matters significantly, and drove many writers to a theory of universal deluge (as opposed to many, local deluges), in hopes of reconciling their theories with odd, and increasingly common congruencies between specimens discovered in far-flung places.

27. Don Cameron Allen explains that "during the latter half of the seventeenth century, the attempt to prove that the Flood was universal became an obsession of scientists, but reason, rather than supernatural revelation, was the great instrument of this attempt" ("Science and the Universality of the Flood," in *The Flood Myth*, ed. Alan Dundes [Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, 1988], 357–82, 358).

28. William King, "Of the Bogs, and Loughs of Ireland," *Philosophical Transactions* 15 (1685): 948–60, 954.

29. King, 952.

30. King, 954. Bruce Nelson describes a recurring trope of the "indolent, irrational, childlike" Irish, a perception widespread not only in the British Isles but in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century North America (*Irish Nationalists and the Making of the Irish Race* [Princeton and Oxford, 2012], 9).

31. Rotherham and McCallam explain that "religion and public morality" were regularly cited, by eighteenth-century British and French improvers, to justify the drainage of wetlands (85). It is not my intention to typecast King as a wholesale reactionary; as Bradbury and Valone have argued, he, like the brothers Molyneux, "provoked disdain and ire from the English" after voicing support for Irish parliamentary home rule (16).

32. This explanation nods in the direction of Thomas Sydenham, the English physician whose studies of disease outbreaks in London in the 1660s and 1670s led him to develop the theory of epidemic constitution, which would retain a powerful influence over British science throughout the eighteenth century and beyond. See Dorothy Porter, *Health, Civilization and the State: A History of Public Health from Ancient to Modern Times* (London, 1999), 54–55.

33. In 1654, Henry Osborne published a surveying manual, *A More Exact Way to Delineate the Plot of Any Spacious Parcel of Land*, from Dublin. See T. C. Barnard, "The Hartlib Circle and the Origins of the Dublin Philosophical Society," *Irish Historical Studies* 19 (1974): 56–71, 61.

34. See Anthony Begley, "The Folliotts, Wardtown Castle and the Colleen Bawn," *Donegal Annual* 43 (1991): 61–75, 67–68.

35. Karin Sanders observes that "because bog bodies . . . are always accidentally discovered," they "disrupt the conventional archaeological three-step process—*excavation*, *classification*, and *interpretation*" (*Bodies in the Bog and the Archaeological Imagination* [Chicago, 2009], 9).

36. In a note to John Locke, William Molyneux expressed his relief that his and Thomas's identification of the Moose Deer—"the largest Quadruped that moves on the Earth, except the Elephant"—had provided him a curiosity worthy of a correspondence with Hans Sloane (William Molyneux, letter to John Locke, Dublin, March 16, 1696/7, in *Familiar Letters Between Mr. John Locke, and Several of his Friends* [London, 1742], 144–49, 146). On Sloane, see Richard Drayton, *Nature's Government: Science, Imperial Britain, and the 'Improvement' of the World* (New Haven and London, 2000), 36–37.

37. This reference to Giles Vandeleur involves some speculation on my part: Thomas Molyneux cites "one Mr. *Van Delure* in the County of *Clare*," whom I take to be the aforementioned Dutch Protestant surveyor and sheriff. See Ronald George Garnett, *Cooperation and the Owenite Socialist Communities in Britain 1825–45* (Manchester, 1972), 103.

38. For a useful discussion of the relationship between gifts and natural-historical inquiry, see Daniela Bleichmar, "A Visible and Useful Empire: Visual Culture and Colonial Natural History in the Eighteenth-Century Spanish World," in *Science in the Spanish and Portuguese Empires, 1500–1800*, ed. Bleichmar et al. (Palo Alto, 2009), 290–310, 307; and Louise E. Robbins, *Elephant Slaves and Pampered Parrots: Exotic Animals in Eighteenth-Century Paris* (Baltimore, 2002), 49. For representative instances of the intersection of natural history and practices of exhibition and display, see Richard D. Altick, *The Shows of London* (Cambridge, 1978), 20.

39. See Rebecca Stefoff, *Deer* (Tarrytown, 2008), 34–35.

40. Gould, 79.

41. For example, in her study of the Frozen Ark seed bank, anthropologist Tracey Heatherington alludes to cloning and preservation projects' habit of "[focusing] exclusively on 'charismatic megafauna,' including the South Asian guar, the Sardinian mouflon, the Banteng cow, the South African wildcat, the Chinese panda, the Asiatic cheetah, and the extinct Tasmanian tiger. As key symbols of national histories and identities, with aesthetic and emotional appeal cultivated by pre-existing discourses of wildlife protection, these mammals command the focus of the social imagination and incite sympathy for nature conservation" ("From Ecocide to Genetic Rescue: Can Technoscience Save the Wild?," in *The Anthropology of Extinction: Essays on Culture and Species Death*, ed. Genese Marie Sodikoff [Bloomington and Indianapolis, 2012], 39–66, 44).

42. See Matthew Wynn Sivils, "Doctor Bat's Ass: Buffon, American Degeneracy, and Cooper's *The Prairie*," *Western American Literature* 44, no. 4 (Winter 2010): 342–61, 354.

43. Thomas Molyneux's taxonomy operates by organizing creatures into "Kind" and "sort," which terms he generally prefers to "Genus" and "Species" (490).

44. See "John Josselyn," in *Reading the Roots: American Nature Writing Before Walden*, ed. Michael P. Branch (Athens, Ga., 2004), 72–78, 72–73.

45. See Eric Jorink, "Noah's Ark Restored (and Wrecked): Dutch Collectors, Natural History and the Problem of Biblical Exegesis," in *Silent Messengers: The Circulation of Material Objects of Knowledge in the Early Modern Low Countries*, ed. Sven Dupré and Christopher Lüthy (Berlin, 2011), 153–84, 172–73.

46. The island was deeded to Robert Mansell, the former vice admiral and glass magnate, in 1622. See "Mansell-Mansfield, Sir Robert," in *The Genesis of the United States*, ed. Alexander Brown, vol.1 (Boston, 1890), 941–42.

47. See Gould, 80

48. In "Upon Appleton House" [1651], Andrew Marvell's plotting, "subtle" nun tempts the young Isabel Thwaites with "clothes" of "sea-born amber" (see "Upon Appleton House, To My Lord Fairfax," in *The Poems of Andrew Marvell*, ed. Nigel Smith [Harlow, 2007], 210–41, lines 94 and 179–80). See also Holly Dugan, "Oiled in Ambergris: Ambergris, Gloves, London's Luxury Markets," in *The Ephemeral History of Perfume: Scent and Sense in Early Modern England* (Baltimore, 2011), 126–53.

49. According to Hugh Allingham, "whales were so numerous in [Donegal Bay in the eighteenth century] that a scheme was set on foot in 1736 for establishing a whale fishery" there (*Ballyshannon: Its History and Antiquities; with Some Account of the Surrounding Neighbourhood* [Londonderry, 1879], 120).

50. It was in this spirit that the planter and politician Robert Beverley, Jr., wondered about the source of the "Indian corn" he observed in Virginia, which he thought not "spontaneous in those parts" (*The History of Virginia, In Four Parts* [Richmond, 1855], 115).

51. See Eamonn Wall, *Writing the Irish West: Ecologies and Traditions* (Notre Dame, 2011), xvii.

52. Sanders, 7.

53. Charles Macklin, *The True-born Irishman; or, Irish Fine Lady* [1761] (Dublin, 1783), 46–47.

54. Desmond Slowey, *The Radicalization of Irish Drama 1600–1900: The Rise and Fall of Ascendancy Theatre* (Dublin, 2008), 152.

55. Macklin, 46.

56. In Slowey's telling, Macklin's life and career represented a similar kind of process, as the long-lived actor and playwright "managed to hold simultaneously the status of insider and outsider, and kept his Irish duality permanently in the balance" (151).

57. In his Covent Garden curtain speech, Macklin was driven to grovel: "Ladies and Gentlemen, I am very sensible that there are several passages in this play which deserve to be reprobated and I assure you that they shall never offend your ears again." Later, he would muse: "I believe the audience are right. There's a geography in humor as well as in morals, which I had not previously considered" (quoted in William Appleton, *Charles Macklin: An Actor's Life* [Cambridge, 1960], 141–42). However, the entry in *American Bibliography* reporting the New York printing of *The True-born Irishman* remarks that it followed the play's performance "at the theatre, New York, with universal applause." *The True-born Irishman* was produced at John Street a total of four times in 1787, once during each of the 1788 and 1789 seasons, and three times in 1794. See Charles Evans, *American Bibliography Volume 7 1768–89* (Chicago, 1912), 131.

58. Seamus Heaney, "Bogland," in *Door into the Dark* (Oxford, 1969), 55–56, lines 9–12.

59. Thomas D'Arcy M'Gee, *Gallery of Irish Writers: The Irish Writers of the Seventeenth Century* (Dublin, 1857), 237, 237n.

60. Sanders, 12.

61. Frederick Jackson Turner, *The Frontier in American History* (Mineola, 2012), 22.

62. Whelan, 217.

63. James Parkinson, *Organic Remains of a Former World: An Examination of the Mineralized Remains of the Vegetables and Animals of the Antediluvian World; Generally Termed Extraneous Fossils* (London, 1820), 314.

64. Parkinson, 317.

65. Gould, 79.

66. Heaney, lines 27–28.

67. "Today," explains Dianne Meredith, "the bogs are perceived of as one of the last Irish wilderness areas but in fact, when humans first colonised Ireland, there was very little bog. The first farmers cleared woodland, not bogland. This woodland clearance is believed to be one of the chief causes for the development of bogs, along with the change in climate from drier to wetter conditions. As the bogs expanded, farming was forced to retreat. The bog had free rein to become wild, uninhabitable land" ("Landscape or Mind-scape?: Seamus Heaney's Bogs," *Irish Geography* 32, no. 2 [1999]: 126–34, 132).

68. For but one example, we might turn to Henry David Thoreau's description of an Irish acquaintance, in *Walden* [1854]: "Poor John Field! . . . thinking to live by some derivative old-country mode in this primitive new country . . . a poor man, born to be poor, with his inherited Irish poverty or poor life, his Adam's grandmother and boggy ways, not to rise in this world, he nor his posterity, till their wading webbed bog-trotting feet get *talaria* to their heels" (quoted in Helen Lojek, "Thoreau's Bog People," *The New England Quarterly* 67, no. 2 [Jun. 1994]: 279–97, 290).