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Towards a regional understanding of Irish traditional music

David Kearney, B.A., H.Dip. Ed.

Thesis presented for the award of

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

National University of Ireland, Cork

Supervisors:

Professor Patrick O'Flanagan, Department of Geography

Mel Mercier, Department of Music

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Abstract

The geography of Irish traditional music is a complex, popular and largely unexplored element of the narrative of the tradition. Geographical concepts such as the region are recurrent in the discourse of Irish traditional music but regions and their processes are, for the most part, blurred or misunderstood. This thesis explores the geographical approach to the study of Irish traditional music focusing on the concept of the region and, in particular, the role of memory in the construction and diffusion of regional identities.

This is a tripartite study considering people, place and music. Each of these elements impacts on our experience of the other. All societies have created music. Music is often associated with or derived from places. Some places construct or reinforce their identity through the music and musicians through which they are associated. The thesis challenges conventional discourse on regional styles that construct an imagined pattern of regions based on subtle musical differences that may, though are not always, shared by people in that region and focuses on the social networks through which the music is disseminated. The thesis also challenges the abandonment of regional styles and the concept of regions in understanding the complex geographies of Irish traditional music (Morton, 2001). It seeks to find a middle ground between discourse analysis, musical analysis, the experience of music and place, and the representation of music and place.

The dissertation is divided into three parts. Part one considers the development of music geography, noting and critiquing the abandonment of useful paradigms in both geography and ethnomusicology in search of new ways of understanding. Of particular interest is the concept of the region but it also considers the study of landscape and the humanist approach in cultural geography. The second part focuses on the discourse and study of regions in Irish traditional music and the various agents and processes that shape the concept of the region in Irish traditional music. The final part presents a case study of the Sliabh Luachra region combining and applying the various perspectives and paradigms drawn from geographical, ethnomusicological and anthropological sources. It attempts to generate an understanding of Sliabh Luachra as a region in the Irish traditional music narrative that is based on a combination of musical, socio-cultural and locational/environmental factors.

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation is the result of my own work, except as acknowledged by appropriate reference in the text.

……. ……..

David Kearney Date

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My introduction to Irish traditional music, song and dance came from my mother and was nurtured by the encouragement by both of my parents, Vincent and Breed. Further encouragement came from the wonderful teachers that I have had. Jim O'Connor in C.B.S. Primary School Clounalour provided me with an excellent introduction to music. Reneé Fitzgibbon provided me with a more formal education on piano and theory. My earliest tunes were 'picked up' from the music tapes played by Patricia Hanafin at Irish dancing classes.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In this thesis, I propose a re-evaluation of the concept of the region in Irish traditional music. I begin by presenting an argument for the use of geographical approaches in the study of music, outlining the inter-disciplinary possibilities offered by both geography and ethnomusicology in an understanding of the inter-relationship of music and place. The concepts of the region and a regional understanding of culture are at the core of my research and I examine the use of the concept of the region in both geographical and ethnomusicological discourse. In both disciplines the region is identified as a process, requiring an understanding of the evolution of culture and the contexts in which culture develops. I focus on the use of the concept of the region in the discourse on Irish traditional music and the concept of regional music styles in Ireland. Acknowledging the existing discourse on regional styles in Irish traditional music, I consider the region in conjunction with other non-musical aspects of regional identity, noting in particular the role of social, political and economic change in the evolution of culture. I am also concerned with how regions are represented and the filters of mediation through which regions are experienced. The thesis focuses on ways of understanding the role of place in the evolution of music and the role of music in the creation of identity for a place.

This study has three distinct sections. In the first section I review the paradigmatic development of cultural geography and ethnomusicology and explore the opportunities for interdisciplinary approaches to the study of music. In the second section I examine the developing discourse on Irish traditional music and the changing contexts for the performance, transmission and consumption of Irish traditional music in the twentieth century. In the third section I examine the Sliabh Luachra region in the south west of Ireland. The study of the Sliabh Luachra region is largely dependent on negotiating between the texts, representations and fieldwork experiences that I examined during the course of my study.

It is important to also consider my location and positionality as a researcher and the ethical and methodological considerations for the development of my study. Though long term residence or immersion within the community being studied is often promoted in the development of ethnographies (Shurmer-Smith, 2003; Herbert, 2000), I am situated on the edge of and moving between regions, interacting as an outsider to local communities but also as a musician and part of a wider Irish traditional music community.

My role as researcher reflects the wider deterritorialized community of Irish traditional musicians and their audience and examines the relevance of regional identity for those with little attachment to a bounded location. My role as researcher also both informs and shapes the development of this study and I present a different approach to researchers who engage primarily with the local communities. Instead, the wider networks of social relations, national identity and uneven economic and technological development are considered in this dissertation as being factors in the distinctiveness of a regional music tradition.

While I am primarily located geographically at the periphery of the Sliabh Luachra region, I am very involved in the Irish traditional music community and my research has involved some ethnographic methods. The role of the researcher becomes particularly relevant in the development of ethnography (Stoeltje *et al*., 1999). Morton thus argued:

> There is currently concern within Geography, surrounding the intrusion of academic research performances on lay social practices and performances. There is a worry that the lay practices may change due to the influence of academic research. However, recognising that research is a performance in its own right, allows better critique of how we undertake our research, accumulate and understand our geographic knowledge, and relate to our research participants (2001: 67).

Shurmer-Smith notes a need for the researcher to be "open about positionality – their background, status and power – and context" and the essential requirement to include personal experiences and emotions through writing the "I" (2003: 251). Lambek refers to a person's uniqueness as "historicity" and states: "Every ethnographer brings his or her historicity to bear on the way he or she approaches the subject, conducts fieldwork, and resolves the interplay between the universal and the particular" (1997: 35; see also Hyndman, 2001). The acknowledgement of the self is necessary and often beneficial. Stoeltje states: "Reflecting on one's own identity and the relation of the self to the other heightens the awareness of the ethnographer and helps to bring into focus the relationship between the researcher and the researched" (1999: 160). My position echoes that of Scottish geographer and flute player Frances Morton who is also concerned with the geography of Irish traditional music (see Morton, 2001; 2005). While much of my research is concerned with periods in which I entered the field with particular research questions and motives, I have had prior and subsequent interaction with the field. Many of

the people I meet are not passive strangers to me. My relationship with these people shapes both the communicated and expected questions and answers (Stoeltje *et al*., 1999).

I am conscious of the role of my ethnographic self in the development of this study (see Coffey, 1999). I grew up in Tralee with familial connections to north Kerry and west Limerick. I began playing music and dancing at an early age and was accepted to the *Teach Siamsa* training centre in Finuge, Co. Kerry in September 1990. In 1993 I became part of the *Siamsa Tíre* cast at The National Folk Theatre of Ireland based in Tralee. During these years I was tutored by, amongst others, Patricia Hanafin and Nicholas and Anne McAuliffe who, as teachers, have nurtured and influenced the performance and expression of culture in both Kerry and Cork for the past number of decades. I also befriended Fr. Pat Ahern, the founding artistic director of *Siamsa Tíre*. Through these people I first became acquainted with the concept of the cultural regions in Ireland. Tunes, through their names and stories told by teachers, were linked to people and places. The ethos of *Siamsa Tíre* emphasises the importance of learning and performing the style of dance taught by the dancing masters of north Kerry for over a century. Through my father I learned about some of the musicians and dancers that played in my grandparent's public house on Church Street, Listowel, and of the many *fleadhanna cheoil* organised by *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in the town. The linguistic and singing traditions of west Kerry were also evident and a natural divide between members of the community cast who trained at Finuge in north Kerry and Carraig in west Kerry highlighted the regional variations in culture of the county. A particular narrative of the Munnix tradition, from the dancing master Jeremiah Molyneaux, remains prominent in the work of the company and its history (Ó Cinnéide, 2002; Seavor, 2007).

I was also involved in the local branch of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, *Craobh Trá Lí* under the guidance of Máire Bean Uí Ghríofa. Originally from Cappawhite in Co. Tipperary, Máire's father was a travelling Irish teacher or *Timire* with *Conradh na Gaeilge*. He later held the position of President of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. Máire herself won a number of awards on the fiddle including the All-Ireland title for fiddle slow airs in Buncrana 1980, coincidentally the same day that the senior *Grúpa Cheoil* from *Craobh Trá Lí*, featuring Máire, John Mason and a number of young musicians who have also been prominent in *Siamsa Tíre* achieved first place in their competition. Bringing with her tunes from her native Tipperary and influenced by the *Comhaltas*

movement, Máire also introduced us to the music of Sliabh Luachra as well as maintaining an interest in unusual tunes that she sourced from various books in her possession. Máire would also comment on style, intimating that though she admired the style of the musicians from Sliabh Luachra with whom she occasionally played, she could only play in that style while playing in their company.

As my interest in Irish traditional music and dance developed, my mother told me about her own experiences of dancing in a place called Sliabh Luachra to music played by Johnny Leary, an accordion player from near Gneeveguilla who is often represented as one of the principal characters in Sliabh Luachra society. It was difficult to define where Sliabh Luachra was located. When my mother spoke of Sliabh Luachra, it was close to her family home in Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick and the homes of relations near Firies, Co. Kerry, where she spent much time. It was closer still to a home in Killarney, Co. Kerry where she worked for a number of years. All of these places were 'on the edge' of the Sliabh Luachra region. As a child, I could never find a map that pointed to musical differences between places. The Sliabh Luachra region was constructed for me through the relation of memories and stories, references to musical sounds and descriptions of characters and events.

The death of Johnny O'Leary in 2004 during the early stages of my research further motivated my desires to understand the region as an evolving entity. My curiosity in the concept of the region remains to this day, enhanced by my study of geography at University College, Cork and the opportunities I have availed of to perform Irish traditional music around the world. As a banjo player, I do not believe that I perform in a particular regional style but rather, like many musicians of my generation, I play in a musical style influenced by the global forces of available recordings and competitions such as *fleadhanna cheoil* and the local forces of influential teachers and local musicians. As a dancer, I believe I express more explicitly a regional tradition that does not conform to the expectations of competitions or mass consumption. As a dancer I have attempted to present the steps of Kerry dancing masters in the style in which they performed them, as well as using elements of dance and dance style to create new steps that reflect the traditions that are unique to parts of Kerry. My performance of Irish dance is thus both an act of antiquarian reference and an expression of identity. The desire to preserve regional

distinctiveness and express identity are two aspects of performance inherent to a regional understanding of Irish traditional music proposed in this thesis.

As well as my own cultural context, a significant factor in the development of my research has been the integration of both geographical and ethnomusicological approaches. The interdisciplinary nature of my research is crucial to the development of this thesis. My research on Irish traditional music has become informed by my background in the study of geography and my lifelong involvement with Irish traditional music. Traditionally dominated by the visual, geographical research has seen a shift in recent years to the consideration of a sonic and aural awareness of the world around us (Smith, S., 1994; 1997). Ethnomusicology also demonstrates an awareness of the connection of music and place and recognises the importance of understanding interconnected processes of change in musical and non-musical cultures (Cooley, 2009). A regional understanding of Irish traditional music provides a framework for a greater appreciation of the diversity of musical traditions on the island of Ireland and the relationship between musical and non-musical regional processes.

The connection between music and place and the desire to understand Irish traditional music as a culture of regions is challenged by what Mac Laughlin identifies as a shift from a 'space of places' to a 'space of flows' (1997: 200). Technological developments have impacted on both the contexts for the diffusion of music and the development of musical sounds. The concept of regional musical styles in particular is challenged by "the advent of new technology and communication systems, affecting the mode of transmission of Irish music and song" (Morton, 2001: 49). The mediation of Irish traditional music is integral to the processes that create regional identities (Keegan, 1997). Filters of mediation have influenced the performance of Irish traditional music and the diversity in styles and approaches amongst Irish traditional musicians. Thus, it is important to consider both the music and context in which a musical tradition has evolved and been diffused (Myers, 1993). Despite the impact of technological advancement on the evolution in Irish culture, the evocation and identity of places remains an integral part of the narratives and stories of Irish traditional music.

1.2. Chapter outline

This dissertation is divided in three sections. The first section is concerned with the development of both geographical and ethnomusicological paradigms and the possibilities for interdisciplinary research that may be used for the study of Irish traditional music. In Chapter Two I present a review of the development of the geography of music and outline the key themes developed in other international and interdisciplinary studies. It is important to note the role that the history of the field of cultural geography plays in shaping the geographical study of music. Though Sauerian cultural geography is sometimes heavily criticised, the legacy of this tradition and that of French geographer Vidal de la Blache informs this study. The cultural turn in geography that emerged in the 1980s is also significant, particularly in relation to changing attitudes to the role of music in geographical studies (Crang, 1998). This thesis borrows from both pre- and post-cultural turn geographies, primarily using texts from American and British geographical traditions. Informed by writers who seek to define the field of ethnomusicology, I also examine the various approaches in ethnomusicology that contribute to the development of my research. Noting the importance of memory and the relationship between folk music and folklore, the approach presented is significantly influenced by human geography and the examination of stories and other forms of representation. The thesis also demonstrates an awareness of other disciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches to the study of music and culture.

In reviewing the development of music geography, I borrow heavily from the work of George Carney, located in an American geographical tradition still influenced by Sauer. Carney was considered "the 'guru' of geomusicology, [and] has encouraged geographers for the past quarter-century to explore a facet of cultural geography long overdue in the plethora of North American folk and popular culture topics" (Nash, 1996). However, the use of Carney's work is problematised by allegations of plagiarism (Bartlett and Smallwood, 2004). Acknowledging the difficulties in the authorship of Carney's work, the theories presented by him in a number of publications remain relevant and influential for my work. Aspects of Carney's geographical framework presented in this dissertation are very similar to Nettl's (1964) outline of historical and geographical approaches to the study of music in culture. The similarities between ethnomusicology and music geography, in particular the frameworks presented by Nettl and Carney,

highlights the necessity of an interdisciplinary approach to a regional understanding of Irish traditional music.

Amongst the ethnomusicological approaches explored in Chapter Two, Merriam's definition of ethnomusicology as "the study of music in culture" (1960: 109) and later "the study of music as culture" (see Myers, 1993) is integral to the approach developed in this thesis. Myers notes the increasing emphasis on cultural and social factors in Merriam's approach (1993: 7). The development of distinctive musical styles and regional traditions is understood in the context of social, economic and political factors in and impacting upon the region. Noting the inherent social significance of musical styles, Shepherd argues that "it should be possible to demonstrate that significance by carrying out musical analysis in terms of the social reality which gave birth to and is articulated by a particular musical style" (1991: 12). Shepherd (1991) proposes a sociology of musical styles that engages with the coded meanings inherent in music, the social construction of reality and an acknowledgement of the significant role of the media in the development of musical styles.

Another approach, sometimes presented in contrast to that of Merriam (1923-1980), is that of bi-musicality, led by Hood (1918-2005) and influenced primarily by musicological approaches (Myers, 1993). Noting the evolution of ethnomusicology, Myers identifies changes in the 1970s and 1980s as "interest shifted from pieces of music to processes of musical creation and performance – composition and improvisation – and the focus shifted from collection of repertory to examination of these processes" (Myers, 1993: 8). More recent issues in ethnomusicology relate to gender, urban music, the music of refugee populations, film music, the impact of tourism and the international music industry (Myers, 1993), all of which are encountered, if not fully explored in this study.

The reconciliation of geographical and ethnomusicological approaches requires an examination of the terminology used in an interdisciplinary approach. The concept of the region is at the core of this thesis and is explored further in Chapter Three. The popularity of the concept of the region has waxed and waned through the course of the last century (Paasi, 2003). Integral to the work of both Sauerian and Vidallian cultural geographies, the concept of the region has been resurgent in recent geographical studies (Cloke, 1997). The concept of the region is also problematised in ethnomusicological literature, particularly in relation to the delimitation of music regions and the examination of

differences in musical styles (Nettl, 1964, 2005). Underpinning the understanding of the concept of the region is the interpretation of a region as a process. Regions are shaped and defined by human activity. Music is one such human activity. The criteria by which regions exist are selected in a process of inventing place and relate to ideologies of identity, empowerment and territorialisation. Regions are represented in various ways and these representations further shape the imagination of regions, motivated by different social, political and economic factors. Representations are part of, shaped by and make reference to the culture of a region. Regions and landscapes are understood in this thesis as constantly evolving, inter-related entities shaped by numerous agents and social groups. Other terms considered in the development of an interdisciplinary approach include 'culture', 'heritage', 'landscape' and 'soundscape'.

The second section of this dissertation concerns an analysis of the discourse of Irish traditional music with particular focus on the concept of the region and regional styles (Chapter Four), and the processes involved in the evolution of Irish traditional music (Chapter Five). The presence of geographical concepts in the discourse is important in constructing a bridge between the two disciplines at the core of this thesis. The discourse analysis focuses in particular on the growth of interest in regional styles in the latter half of the twentieth century. The discourse on regional styles in Irish traditional music is dominated by an examination of the musical styles of individual musicians such as Michael Coleman (1891-1946), Padraig O'Keeffe (1887-1963) and John Doherty (d. 1980). Individuals are crucial to understanding the development of regions, regional identity and regional traditions. Daniels and Nash (2004) have outlined the relationship between biography and geography noting the role of pilgrimage or migration in historical texts and the use of experiences in the development of geographical theories by geographies own 'gallery of heroes'. Dowling (1996) also considers the 'gallery of heroes' in relation to Irish traditional music while Cranitch (2006) is more specific in identifying the role of Pádraig O'Keeffe in the Sliabh Luachra region. Biographies of musicians and other key individuals in Irish traditional music are part of the accumulation of stories that construct places and regional identity. In many ways the stories of people and place become intertwined and fused beyond redivision. Daniels and Nash (2004) also outline the promotion of places by tourism development authorities in England through the association of places with certain individuals with particular reference to poets and painters. The process is replicated in Ireland through the promotion of 'Yeats Country' in

Sligo and increasingly through associations of places with Irish traditional music. Though most evident in the celebration of festivals that commemorate individuals in their 'homeplace', increasingly tours of regions such as 'Coleman Country' and 'The Carolan Trail' (O'Hara, 2008) are becoming more popular.

In Chapter Four, there is a particular focus on the work of Seán Ó Riada (1931-1971), who is identified as an important influence on the emergence of a discourse on regions in Irish traditional music. Ó Riada's *Our Musical Heritage*, first broadcast as a radio series in 1962, is an important historical reference for the discourse on musical styles in Ireland. The basis for understanding regions in Irish traditional music presented by Ó Riada and many others, continuing to the present, focuses on the concept of regional styles and often subtle differences in musical style. These concepts and discourses become institutionalised and the complexities of the region are neglected. In Chapter Four, I present a critique of conventional conceptualisations of the region in Irish traditional music and the emphasis on regional music styles.

In Chapter Five I examine the processes involved in the construction of regional identity in Irish traditional music. I examine the role of collectors, including George Petrie (1790-1866), Captain Francis O'Neill (1848-1936) and Breandán Breathnach (1912-1985) in providing written evidence of regional diversity within the tradition. Evidence of regional diversity in Irish traditional music may also be investigated through a study of commercial recordings. Through the work of Ó Riada, Séamus Ennis (1919-1982) and Ciarán MacMathúna (1925-2009), the radio influences the development of a regional awareness amongst their audience. *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, the largest organisation involved in Irish traditional music and founded in 1951, is identified as a significant agent in the development and diffusion of regional identities. The role of the organisation also changes over time, as well as the aspects of the organisation that impact on a regional understanding of Irish traditional music.

In Chapter Five I also examine the role of monuments in the construction and expression of regional identity. The shift towards sound in the development of a geography of music is redirected in the course of this thesis to the reconsideration of the visual in the landscape. Monuments and public statuary have become an integral part of the study of landscape. Duffy notes: "A recent theme in post-colonial urban studies is the symbolic meanings encoded in the urban landscapes, reflected in Ireland, for example, in

the iconography of street plans, placenaming, erection of monuments and public buildings" (2007: 195). In recent years a number of monuments have been created that recognise the contribution and legacy of Irish traditional musicians in their local area. Monuments, statues and plaques are the result of choices made by those who occupy or are in control of that landscape. Monuments are not exclusive to urban landscapes and are an important part of the rural landscape of Ireland. The development and display of monuments and public statuary involve choices similar to those made in relation to the content of cultural displays in museums and heritage centres as outlined by Kelly and Ní Laoire (2005). Recent studies by Johnson (1994; 1999a) and Whelan (2002; 2003; 2005) on monuments in the Irish landscape have noted the power of the spaces that these monuments create and their role in the reinforcement of identity and power. The spaces created by these monuments shape and contribute to the narratives of the tradition and are integral to the construction of place in these narratives.

Understanding the role, use and mediation of memory and history is crucial in understanding the actions and processes that shape the region. Graham notes: "As is true of any society, all social groups in Ireland draw upon the past to legitimate and validate both their present attitudes and their future aspirations" (1997: xi). Regional musical traditions celebrate historical figures and the connections between these musicians and place. In the context where places are devalued by the desire for brand names (Mac Laughlin, 1997), places too can become brand names. Ireland itself becomes a brand that must be understood (Williams, 1998; Ó Cinnéide, 2002). Regions and regional identities are part of a commercial market that seeks to present unique products in a variety of industries including tourism and music. Regional music styles become imbued with a commercial as well as aesthetic value (Vallely, 1997). The names of the regions are part of the branding and imagery of the products associated with that region, including music. Regional representations make use of musical activity and build on aspects of history and music that are unique. Regions are thus a process shaped by a number of agents including the use of musical heritage as an economic resource.

The third section of this dissertation consists of a case study of the Sliabh Luachra region and is primarily concerned with my fieldwork in Kerry and Cork. Fieldwork was conducted in conjunction and contemporaneous with reading and discourse analysis and my experience of the Sliabh Luachra region is influenced by my experience of other

regions. In chapters six and seven I concentrate on the existence, location and performance of Sliabh Luachra culture and identity, as specifically related to Irish traditional music. The material is dominated by the experience of place through both fieldwork and the examination of aural and textual documents. Sliabh Luachra is one of a number of regions in Kerry with strong musical traditions that are part of the identity and distinctiveness of the region. The changing contexts and spaces for music in Sliabh Luachra, the evolution of a local narrative and soundscape, and the institutionalisation of a Sliabh Luachra musical identity are explored in Chapter Six, contributing to an understanding of the concept of the region in Irish traditional music. Integral to the understanding of Sliabh Luachra is the relationship between people, music and the cultural landscape that has been created. The processes that have shaped the geography of Irish traditional music are examined in the context of Sliabh Luachra. In particular, the role of the radio, *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and the changing spaces for performance are outlined.

In chapter seven I examine the role of the past in the construction, imagination and representation of Sliabh Luachra in the present. The development of a landscape that celebrates the musical traditions of the area and commemorates individual musicians is examined in the context of constructing and promoting a regional narrative. The use and impact of memory is crucial in the development of regions. Regions do not exist in isolation and their connection with other regions, particularly regions that create a sense of boundary, is important in understanding the motivation for and processes involved in creating a regional identity. The representation of regional identity and difference is crucial in constructing a regional understanding of Irish traditional music.

1.3. Methodological considerations

While fieldwork is stressed as an integral part of ethnomusicological study (Merriam, 1960; Nettl, 1964; 2005; Myers, 1992), this study seeks to strike a balance between deskwork and field-based research that considers an insider perspective. Indeed Nettl (1964) and Myers (1992) note the diminishing distinction between deskwork and fieldwork, partially due to the development of a literature review prior to activity in the field and partially due to trends whereby deskwork is carried out as part of a field trip. McCarthy (2002) also notes changes in the methodologies used by historical geographers

in Ireland, highlighting the increased use of archival sources in contrast to the reliance upon ethnography and landscape artefacts by the first generation of Irish historical geographers such as E. Estyn Evans. The development of my research has echoed Tuan's (2001) definition of life as fieldwork. Much of the deskwork research presented in this dissertation has been carried out at a distance from the Sliabh Luachra region, which is the focus of the chapters six and seven. Instead, I am located in an institutional setting that, in itself, highlights some of the processes inherent in generating a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. Researchers bring a particular perspective influenced by their positionality in an academic institution that may seek to teach aspects of and select from various regional traditions.

In the context of this thesis, the field is not defined as a localised setting but rather a deterritorialized community in which concepts of regional distinctiveness are promoted or neglected depending on the context of a musical performance. The inclusion or exclusion of markers of regional identity in a musical performance is integral to the concept of regional identity within the tradition. However, it is first necessary to understand and identify the musical codes and practices that contribute to a regional musical style. The main methods and sources for this examination of the concept of regions in Irish traditional music are written texts and recorded music. I propose that regions in Irish traditional music, while dependent on local music making and local stories, are often constructed from the outside and by those on the periphery (see also Quinn, 2008). It is necessary to understand how these texts and recordings are interpreted and understood by those outside, as well as those belonging to regional communities. I am conscious of the value of ethnographic research in shaping my reading of these texts. Participant observation and oral histories have informed my experience of Irish traditional music. Often these participants have led me to locations in the landscape that further inform the geography of Irish traditional music and the concept of place in the tradition.

Defining the location of the region for study or 'the field' presents a number of challenges for fieldwork. The field may be determined spatially and temporally. The field is experienced and may be subsequently represented as text. The field is a process that may be performed through social action, including through the performance of music. The fieldworker may be part of this performance and thus impact upon the culture being studied. The motives of the fieldworker in attempting to collect, observe, experience,

understand or shape the field have consequences for the texts produced and the interpretation of those texts. Another approach presented involves the use of historical ethnomusicology. Though Widdess notes that ethnomusicology "is often represented as a discipline concerned mainly, or even exclusively, with the present", he presents music as "the temporary result of continuing historical processes, processes that may or may not be important to the performer, but are arguably important to the outside observer" (1992: 219). Fieldwork is primarily linked to understanding the present but can also be used to explore the past through an examination of memory and narrative "and also through a revisiting of the spaces in which the past and its music lived" (Bithell, 2006: 3; see also Bohlman, 1997). The importance of fieldwork in historical geography is outlined by Duffy, who notes that, while documentary records "are the preferred sources for historical research" (2007: 242), this evidence is often only partial and selective and fieldwork plays an important role in developing a fuller understanding of a place, landscape or region. Historical approaches in both geography and ethnomusicology that focus on processes of migration, conquest and inter-cultural relations can contribute to the general history of a region (Widdess, 1992).

Ethnographic methods provide an approach to explore the principal concern of this thesis: the connection between music and place. Writing from the perspective of popular music studies, Jarviluoma emphasises "the need to develop ethnographic methods in the study of connections between identity, music and place" (2000: 102). Writing within a popular music discourse, Cohen states: "The term 'ethnography' generally refers to data derived from direct observation of behaviour in a particular society" (1993: 123). Similarly, Flick states: "The interest in everyday activities, in their execution and beyond – in the constitution of a locally oriented context of interaction in which activities are carried out – characterize the ethnomethodological research programme in general" (1998: 20). The investigation of the social interaction of humans in shaping culture and place is integral to the geography presented in this thesis. Herbert notes that humans "create their social and spatial worlds through processes that are symbolically encoded and thus made meaningful" and it is through ethnography that the researcher can begin to understand these processes and meanings and "illuminate the relationships between structure, agency and society" (2000: 550). Herbert also outlines the importance of ethnography when other methodologies are used, stating: "Ethnography is also different from surveys and interviews because it examines what people do as well as what they

say" (2000: 552). Music making exists as an activity and an event. In the context of popular music studies, Cohen similarly asserts:

> An ethnographic approach to the study of popular music, used alongside other methods (textual decoding, statistical analysis, etc.), would emphasis that popular music is something created, used and interpreted by different individuals and groups. It is human activity involving social relationships, identities and collective practices (1993: 127).

Echoing the concerns of human and cultural geography and an acknowledgement of the role of social networks in the construction of regions and regional identities, Cohen continues, stating: "The focus upon people and their musical practices and processes rather than upon structures, texts or products, illuminates the ways in which music is used and the important role that it plays in everyday life and in society generally" (1993: 127). Throughout the following chapters, Irish traditional music is presented as a sociospatial process and a manifestation of human interaction in space.

Ethnography is particularly useful when considering a phenomenon such as music as ethnography considers not only what people *say* but also what they *do* (Cloke, 1997). Ethnography allows for the consideration of music as social practice and process (Frith, 1982). Writing in *Progress in Human Geography*, Herbert states: "ethnography is a uniquely useful method for uncovering the *processes* and *meanings* that undergird sociospatial life" (2000: 550). Considering the role of ethnography in the study of popular music, Cohen states: "The focus upon people and their musical practices and processes rather than upon structures, texts or products, illuminates the ways in which music is used and the important role that it plays in everyday life an in society generally" (1993: 127). Despite highlighting the benefit of ethnography to geographical research, Herbert (2000) acknowledges that ethnography remains a peripheral methodology in geographical studies. If, as Herbert states: "Ethnography uniquely explores lived experience in all its richness and complexity" (2000: 551), then ethnography is integral to understanding the geographical complexity of Irish traditional music.

The ethnography of sound is developed from Schafer's (1977) concept of soundscapes and is described by Stephen Feld as the "study of sound as a symbolic system, an acultural system" (2003: 225). Seeger notes that ethnography of music is a "privileged approach to the study of music" (1992: 89). Seeger's model involves a study of performers, audiences and sounds though he recognises that some studies of music

"have sometimes completely ignored the sounds produced and appreciated" (1992: 89). The study of a musical event provides an insight into a culture. Seeger notes: "A localized musical event is also part of large economic, political, and social processes that it may protest even as it reproduces them" (1992: 106). The economic, political and social processes are an integral part of the construction of diversity and difference in music that may relate and construct regional identity and difference. Feld (2003) recognises his own growing concern in the 1970s with place, poetic cartography and every day meanings of the sound worlds he is investigating. Thus, he examines the production of sounds, the acoustics of spaces and the use of placenames in music and song. Feld (2003) further develops his methods to what he terms acoustemology, described as the exploration of the reflexive and historical relationships between hearing and speaking, listening and sounding. Integral to the ethnography of sound and acoustemological approaches presented by Feld are an understanding of the context in which music is produced and consumed and the codes that are contained in those actions.

Fieldwork focused on the study of music is influenced by the concept of bi-musicality as proposed by Hood, which argues for the importance of the musical abilities of the researcher in the investigation of musical cultures (Hood, 1960; 1971; see also Myers, 1992). Blacking (1973), Konig (1980) and Morton (2005) have also stressed the importance of performance as a research technique. Shurmer-Smith notes that fieldwork requires ethnographers to "establish viable roles for themselves, something which is normal within the society (and this rarely includes tape-recording interviews or writing notes in public)" (2003: 252). Participant observation as a musician allows for a greater interaction with the culture being studied. Music contains many meanings that act as a language in communicating aspects of a culture and cultural differences. Glassie suggests:

> Ethnography is interaction, collaboration. What it demands is not hypotheses, which may unnaturally close study down, obscuring the integrity of the other, but the ability to converse intimately. It is vain to attempt ethnography without a knowledge of the language of everyday life (1982: 14).

Part of the interaction achieved in fieldwork is facilitated through participation in the activities and culture of the community being studied using the language, in this instance musical practices, of everyday life. Writing about ethnomusicology, Chiener states: "Participant-observation is undoubtedly the fundamental fieldwork method in

ethnomusicology" (2002: 456). Chiener notes the initial need of Western scholars to explore other communities and the later development of fieldwork by researchers studying their own music cultures. Atkinson suggests that ethnography achieves added value when it concerns performance (2004: 111). Performance methodologies adopt post-structuralist perspectives of the world as being constantly in process. Thus performance methodologies are a useful way of exploring the processes that this thesis seeks to understand. In consideration of performance methodologies, as outlined by Morton (2005), the perspective presented in this theory does not assume that the weight of history is irrelevant and relates the experience of Irish traditional music performances in the present to the historical baggage that it carries.

In the context of studies in Irish traditional music, Konig argues: "while other forms of social participant observation may be as fruitful as active musical performance by the fieldworker, and should support the latter technique, musical performance is emphasized in many ethnomusicological curricula as a most important research tool for fieldwork" (1980: 417). It is useful in the social context of Irish traditional music to study the music from a musician's perspective. In her engagement with spaces of Irish traditional music, Morton outlines this importance of participatory research stating: "The researcher must be part of the performance, and engage with the experiential aspects of the performance" (2001: 58). Throughout her work Morton examines and presents a performer-researcher methodological approach that attempts to 'enliven' geographies of music through the communication of lived experiences. In a later article, Morton (2005) reiterates the importance of participation by the researcher and the role of emotion and experience. Morton's engagement with session spaces provides a limited insight into the spaces of Irish traditional music, of which there are many, by focusing on a particular performance type in a public house space. However, the concept of experiencing the performance of Irish traditional music is critical to an informed understanding of the concept of regions in Irish traditional music. Participation in musical performance can also create space or opportunity for discussion and interviews (Cranitch, 2006).

The transmission process is an important element in understanding the evolution of musical cultures (Nettl, 1983; Shehan Campbell, 2001). Shehan Campbell (2001) recognises differences between acquired and learned culture and different processes of transmission in various musical cultures. The role of memory, including that which is

generated by the cultural landscape, in the transmission of tradition and culture, must also receive attention (Rowlands, 1993). A particular aspect of performance methodology outlined by Atkinson (2004) and adopted in the development of this thesis is the study of pedagogy as performance. In an analysis of the development of the concept of regional styles in Irish traditional music, the role of the teacher and the transmission process is crucial. Atkinson sates:

> The performance of culture, through spoken, theatrical, musical or spectacular actions, and display has pedagogic functions entirely beyond the classroom – embodying collective identities of history and heritage, nationhood and ethnicity, place and region, personhood and gender. The ethnography of performance, and performance ethnography, should therefore be fundamental to a sociological understanding of cultural and social reproduction (2004: 112).

I have engaged with the performance of Irish traditional music in various settings including classroom spaces, sessions and stage performances in an attempt to greater appreciate the various elements of the tradition being communicated. The following chapters present an interdisciplinary approach to a regional understanding of Irish traditional music, focusing in particular on the construction and representation of regional identities within the tradition.

A number of spaces and agents that shape the geography of Irish traditional music require particular consideration in developing an approach to a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. Irish traditional music festivals represent a particular type of space for social interaction in which music and the interrelationship and representation of music and place is prominent. Traditionally, Irish traditional musicians in rural Ireland travelled to fairs and markets where they shaped the atmosphere and soundscape of the town or village. Ballad sheets were sold and musicians, singers and dancers had an opportunity to meet, see and hear other musicians, singers and dancers. Many of these fairs were linked to the agricultural year with major festivals and times of celebration at harvest time. These rural, largely agricultural events have been replaced by festivals of a different nature, many of which are supported by the tourist industry that has replaced agriculture as the main sector of the economy in parts of rural Ireland. Festivals become part of the representation of place and are part of the branding and selling of many towns and villages. They continue to be a space where musicians, singers and dancers meet and where music is diffused. A global network of Irish traditional music events has emerged

which creates links between regional and local culture and the wider power geometries of the tradition.

Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann and the related network of *fleadhanna cheoil* organised by *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* are a particular type of festival in which competitions often dominate. Competitors compete on a range of instruments at county, provincial and All-Ireland levels in particular age categories. The competitions are also organised in other countries and competitors qualify through regional finals. The competitions at All-Ireland level, which include competitors from around the world, are highly regarded and many winners have gone on to become the most recognisable names in Irish traditional music. From the first *fleadh cheoil* in 1951, the idea has evolved and grown. *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* is one of the biggest annual events held in Ireland today. Workshops and classes are also held in the week preceding *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann*. *Scoil Éigse* provides students with access to a range of teachers from around the world allowing the diffusion of styles, repertoires and techniques. Regional styles, repertoires and identities can come to the fore or capitulate to homogeneity in these contexts. Attendance at festivals and fleadhanna cheoil provide opportunities to interact with the social networks of Irish traditional music and to examine the relationship between the soundscapes of festival spaces and the representation of these spaces through various filters of mediation.

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann is a particularly prominent agent in the geography of Irish traditional music. The structure of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* consists of a branch network, a series of local organisations that together form the national organisation. Chapter Five does not attempt to analyse the full geographical implications of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* but highlights the influence of the organisation on the geography of Irish traditional music, particularly in terms of attitudes and patterns of diffusion. Poor record keeping by the organisation (though this is improving), and a lack of provisions for accessing existing data in their archives inhibit the development of maps tracing a historical diffusion of the organisation and the location of branches and events in particular places. A series of maps referencing other located aspects of the organisation are used to highlight the changing geographical incidence of Irish traditional music as presented and represented by *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and the related discourse and narrative that is promoted. The development and diffusion of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí*

Éireann and the ideology of the organisation is studied through an analysis of articles in the organisations periodic journal, *Treoir*. *Treoir* was first published in 1968 and it presents a variety of articles on the organisation itself as well as various aspects of Irish culture and identity. An analysis of the aims, objectives and activities of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* is considered in relation to the location of the regional centres of the organisation and the impact of the organisation on the geographical narrative of the wider tradition. Despite some criticism of the organisation that portrays *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* as being negative towards or damaging for regional diversity in Irish traditional music, the organisation has also played a role in highlighting and celebrating the musical heritage of different places.

To summarise, in the following chapters I examine the geography of regions in Irish traditional music through an examination of the processes involved in the creation and evolution of regional diversity in Irish traditional music. The approaches are developed from an understanding of the development of geographical and ethnomusicological paradigms (Chapter Two and three). An examination of the developments in Irish traditional music that have shaped and influenced the construction and knowledge of regional diversity in Irish traditional music provides an historical perspective on the sociospatial processes involved in a regional understanding of Irish traditional music (chapters four and five). The principal themes of a regional understanding of Irish traditional music are then examined in the context of the Sliabh Luachra region, developing an historical and contemporary understanding of the region (chapters six and seven).

Chapter 2

Geographical perspectives in the study of music

2.1 Introduction

Geographical research on musical practices and traditions is primarily concerned with issues of space, place, region and identity. The use of the term 'geographical approaches' in the title does not relate specifically to the discipline of geography but rather recognises the strong role of geographical approaches in ethnomusicological research (see also Nettl, 1960, 1983, 2005; Bohlman, 1988, 2004; Myers, 1992; Ivey, 2009). As outlined in Chapter One, one of the core aims in my research is to develop a geography of Irish traditional music. In developing this geography, it is important to recognise the strong geographical fundamentals in ethnomusicology and also reflect on other ethnomusicological approaches that may strengthen this geography. The following chapter considers the various geographical and ethnomusicological approaches to research and the evolution of geographical paradigms in the twentieth century.

The chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section I explore the evolution of geographical and ethnomusicological paradigms. I consider the influence of American and French geographical traditions, the cultural turn in cultural geography and the development of a humanist approach, all of which influence the development of this research. In the first section I also consider the focus on urban contexts and the role of stories in understanding geographies of culture. Recognising the concern in ethnomusicological studies to define the paradigms of the discipline, I focus on paradigms that seek to recognise and understand regional diversity in musical styles, as well as contexts for performance and transmission. Engaging with the emergence of a geographical interest in music in both geography and ethnomusicology, the second section explores the principal themes and approaches to a geographical study of music. Throughout the chapter, I acknowledge the evolution of musical traditions and the importance of understanding musical change.

A difficulty encountered by many who begin to study geography is the sheer scope of the discipline (Nolan, 2000). Wagner and Mikesell (1962) acknowledge the variety of phenomena that may be studied but highlight the importance of shared theoretical concepts within the discipline of geography. The themes explored in the following chapters are not unique to geography but “it is the geographer’s concern with place and the often-contested meaning attached to it” (Graham, 1997a: 2), which provide my thesis with a particular focus. Irish identity, regional identities and concepts of identity

associated with Irish traditional music are constantly changing, influenced by the acceleration of cultural processes in the twentieth century. Graham notes that "geographers study spatial relationships; geographers study the relationships between people and environments; geographers study landscapes; geographers study regions or localities" (1997a: 11). Each of these criteria appears in the geographical study of music. Spatial relationships are evident in the production and consumption of music (Carney, 1995; 1998; Whiteley *et al*., 2004). The relationship between culture and the environment in which it is formed, performed, developed and transmitted, is integral to geographical thought. Geographers are also concerned with the economics and politics of identity, as well as ways of living. Smith reinforces the possible role of music in understanding society, stating: "music can express and reinforce the status order, challenge some of the more stifling aspects of the economic hierarchy and help make sense of the political geography of identity" (1997: 505). The role of music in the formation of regional heritage, identity and economy is an integral part of a regional understanding of Irish traditional music.

2.2 Geographical and ethnomusicological paradigms

Geographical studies that focus on music are relatively recent (Carney, 1995, 1998; Nash, 1996; Smith, 1994), though some earlier studies of music are closely related to geographical discourse (Lomax, 1959a; Nettl, 1960). The development of music geography, still relatively young and evolving, borrows from existing paradigms of geographical research. Geographical curiosity seeks to understand the world around us from both physical/scientific and imaginative/cultural perspectives. It becomes clearer, through an understanding of the core values and interests of geographers, how music becomes an important focus of the discipline of geography. Through a review of the relevant literature, it also becomes apparent how geographical thought can shape and inform the study of music. In this section, I first summarise the way in which music has become an area of study in geographical research and then examine the geographical approaches evident in ethnomusicological research.

Two schools of geographical thought, the French Annales School and the Berkeley School are influential on the development of my research. The increasingly urban based approach of the Chicago School, which developed in the 1970s and 1980s

from the work of urban sociologists, presents urban contexts and concerns for geographical research (Crang, 1998: 10). The shifting location of Irish traditional music from rural to urban settings requires a consideration of urban geographical studies. The humanist approach in geography, informed by the cultural turn of the 1980s presents the concept of 'place as stories'. Stories, as explored in this thesis, are integral to the construction and dissemination of the concept of regions in Irish traditional music. There is also an appreciation for ethnographic methodologies in the discipline of geography (Cloke, 1997) and this presents another perspective in the understanding of regions in Irish traditional music. The development of new approaches does not imply the abandonment of older methods, perspectives and terminologies. Stories are communicated through the cultural landscape, the media and various social networks that exist within a culture. Developments in Irish geography that focus on Irish culture and identity influence the development of this thesis in which Irish traditional music is the focus of geographical study. Critically, geography is not merely a descriptive litany about various places but rather an analytical discourse "concerned with the interrelations of spatial phenomenon" (Nolan, 2000: 137). Geography is not simply a description of a place, environment or landscape but rather it asks analytical questions of how they came to be and how places relate to each other.

Cultural geography is influenced by two great geographical traditions that existed from the early twentieth century on either side of the Atlantic: the French school of Vidal de la Blache (1845-1918) and the Berkeley School which was led by Carl Sauer (1889-1975). Both focused heavily on the concept of the region and the description of the region. Gradually, description required analysis as to why regions and regional cultures existed as they did. Early twentieth century studies in cultural geography appear to focus on the physical impacts of culture on the landscape, such as agriculture and architecture (Crang, 1998). Other aspects of culture, such as the development of social networks and the performance of music, have gradually received more attention. Culture was considered important by geographers because it aided geographers in attempts to divide the earth's surface into significant parts (Russell and Kniffen, 1969: 6). These parts are described as regions.

Graham (1997a) notes the role of French geographers in influencing the approach of Irish geographers such as Estyn Evans to regions and landscapes in Ireland. Reflecting

on the ideology of the Annales school, Graham states: "Vidal de la Blache emphasised the significance of ordinary people and their environment: to him, the region was not simply a convenient framework, but a social reality indicative of a harmony between human life and the milieu in which it was lived" (1997a: 10). For Vidal de la Blache, human activity or *genre de vie* was central to understanding the region (Buttimer, 1971). *Genre de vie* encompasses spatial and social identity but instead of examining the internal organization of the cultural group as would an ethnographer, de la Blache examined how the economic, social, spiritual and psychological identity of groups had been imprinted on the landscape.

The lives and actions of ordinary people in local and regional settings influence attempts to "map and explain the complex reality of human life" (Graham, 1997a: 10). The concept of *genre de vie* was an important element of Vidal's approach and was "one of the most widely used concepts in the classical period of French geography" (Buttimer, 1971: 53). Buttimer notes that *genre de vie* was originally defined as "that unified, functionally organized pattern of living which characterized certain livelihood groups, e.g. the pastoral-nomadic and agricultural *genre de vie*" (1971: 53). The way of life of a group was the basis for the development of a whole network of physical, social and psychological bonds. *Genre de vie* encompasses the integration of place, livelihood and social organization in a group's daily life. Vidal placed an emphasis on exploring the history and places of origin of *genres de vie* when attempting to classify them, a practice that he noted was difficult (Buttimer, 1971). As French geography evolved, four approaches began to inform an historical understanding of the region: the importance of the natural environment, the importance of social organization, the importance of economics and the situation of the region (Table 1).

Table 1 Four themes from French cultural geography.

1.	Natural environment
2.	Social organization
3.	Economics
4.	Situation/location of region

Source: Adapted from Buttimer (1971).

As well as influencing the development of Irish geography, the French school influenced the cultural geography promoted by Carl Sauer at Berkeley, which was to influence the paradigms and evolution of cultural geography through much of the twentieth century. Carl Sauer (1889-1975) is the central figure in the development of American cultural geography at Berkeley (Kenzer, 1985; Haggett, 1988). Based in Berkeley from 1923, Sauer and his students applied the idea of culture to geographic problems (Wagner and Mikesell, 1962) and examined "the role of human activity in altering the natural environment to create the cultural landscape" (Kenzer, 1985: 258). The focus of the Berkeley School was on the ways in which "people shaped and reshaped the landscape, how cultures travelled and changed, how immigrant peoples set about reshaping the landscape of the Americas and the artefacts that embodied their efforts" (Crang, 1998: 10). Writing within the paradigms of the Sauerian tradition, Wagner states:

> Cultural geography compares the changing distribution of 'culture areas' with the distribution of other features of the earth's surface, in order to identify environmental features characteristic of a given culture and if possible to discover what role human action plays or has played in creating and maintaining given geographic features (1962: 1).

The contribution of geography to the study of culture lies largely in the connection of culture with location, space and place. Wagner and Mikesell (1962), doctoral students of Sauer, outlined four principal themes that "define the work of the Berkeley School within cultural geography" (Haggett, 1988: 40; see Table 2). These four themes form part of the framework for the study of Irish traditional music developed in my thesis.

Table 2 Four themes of the Berkeley School of Cultural Geography.

1.	Diffusion of cultural traits
2.	Identification of culture regions
3.	Role of natural environment
4.	Regional specialization

Source: Adapted from Wagner and Mikesell (1962).

The first theme of the Berkeley School outlined by Wagner and Mikesell (1962) concerns the diffusion of cultural traits. The diffusion of cultural traits is affected by patterns of migration, colonisation and trade. In the context of the Berkeley School, patterns of diffusion were interpreted through a reading of evidence in the landscape. A revision of the geography of culture in the context of Irish traditional music presents a number of other possibilities for the study of diffusion, linked into other social, geographical and musical processes. A geographical study of Irish traditional music requires an examination of the role of individual music teachers, the impact of published collections of Irish traditional music, the role of radio and television programming and in particular the outside broadcast unit used by *Radió Éireann* from 1947, and the development of organisations and communities around Irish traditional music in various locations. The development of monuments and festivals in recent decades allows the geographer to return to models of the Berkeley School to examine the diffusion of cultural traits through a reading of the landscape.

Migration and diffusion are important aspects in the conceptualisation of a nation, national identities and cultures. Geography, like ethnomusicology, has been concerned with exploring the production and dissemination of national and diasporic identities through music – the association of particular musical sounds with places and communities (Attali, 1985; Cohen, *et al*., 1991, 1995; 1998; Whitley *et al*., 2004; Bohlman, 2004). Processes of diffusion challenge the study of regional cultures and musical traditions. Stillman notes:

> Global flows of people, capital and ideas in the late 20th century have challenged scholars of culture to acknowledge that cultural practices do not remain anchored to either places or people of origin. Movements of groups of peoples away from homelands continue to provide one means by which cultural practices are spread (1999: 57).

In an Irish context, Marie McCarthy acknowledges the role of Irish traditional music as "an important marker of cultural identity in communities all over the world" (2004: 59), while the relationship between music in Ireland and America is the theme of the television series and subsequent book by Nuala O'Connor entitled *Bringing it all back home* (2001). O'Connor presents examples of how Irish music evolved in America. The differences now evident in the performance of music highlight the influence of place and society on the evolution of music.

The geographical movement of Irish people and Irish culture has shaped the narratives, sounds and meanings of Irish traditional music. Cohen notes:

> Irish traditional music has developed through continual movement between Ireland (the 'home country') and the more distinct countries adopted by Irish emigrants. Irish music has influenced and blended with different musical styles in America, for example, and some of the resulting hybrid styles and sounds were reimported to Ireland and treated as authentic, traditional expressions of Irishness (1998: 284).

The influence of non-Irish musicians on the development and evolution of Irish music and the emergence of Irish traditional music as part of a mass-mediated global culture challenges the correlation of Ireland and Irish traditional music. As Sommers-Smith asserts:

> When a tradition suddenly becomes wildly popular – as has Irish traditional music – many will immediately and understandably assume it has been changed to suit modern sensibilities, and will suspect that the tradition has somehow been damaged in the process (2001: 111).

The global network of Irish traditional music performers, spaces and events thus creates a complex geography of sounds and identities. A regional understanding of Irish traditional music that engages with the historical narratives of the region creates a context in which changes in musical style may be understood and appreciated.

The second theme of the Berkeley School focuses on the identification of culture regions. This involves the generation of maps outlining the location of various cultural traits including farming methods, animals and architectural designs. The identification of culture regions requires an acknowledgement of shared cultural traits within those areas being studied. Nettl (2005) also acknowledges a desire in ethnomusicology to generate maps indicating areas of musical traditions. A critique often levelled at the Berkeley School relates to the development of litanies of description that attempt to identify particular regional traits without investigating the processes involved in producing, shaping and diffusing these culture traits and elements of diversity within that region (Crang, 1998). However, the understanding of landscape as a construct of human action and the investigation of these actions is at the heart of Sauer's work. Butzer (1989) recognises specific cultural processes at the heart of the Berkeley school including domestication, diffusion and landscape change. It is imperative, in identifying culture

regions, to develop an understanding of how they came to be and how they have changed over time.

The third theme within the Berkeley School focuses on cultural ecology and the historical impact of the environment on the development of culture. Holmen notes: "Traditionally, geography – especially regional geography – has emphasized contextuality and man/land relations, and the discipline's ambition to present a bridge between physical and social sciences has often been presented as geography's *raison d'être*" (1995: 57). Climate affects human decisions relating to house types and agricultural practices, as well as sociospatial practices. Communities in warm, dry climates often congregate in open spaces where music is part of their social activity. In wetter and colder climates, it is necessary to adapt or construct comfortable spaces in which social gatherings may be housed. Private homes and later public houses were important spaces for social activity in Ireland, with some activity also taking place at rural crossroads. Lifestyle, often inextricably linked with climate and landscape in rural Ireland, presents a context for the performance of Irish traditional music that is evident in narratives of the tradition. Rural lifestyles present settings and contexts for the performance of music just as new urban settings and contexts have presented new challenges and opportunities that shape the production, consumption and perception of Irish traditional music. In addition, some, often fanciful, connections have been made between reels and jigs and the rugged Irish landscape of the west of Ireland. There is a romanticised link between the aesthetics of landscape and music.

The fourth theme of the Berkeley School was the development of regional specialisation. For Sauer himself, and a number of his students, Latin America was the focus of much attention (Haggett, 2001). Regional specialisation in the case of Ireland is most obvious in the development of Irish Studies (Matthews, 2005). The concept of regional specialisation is challenged by new debates concerning identity and boundaries. In an Irish context, a discourse has emerged surrounding the Irish diaspora and the renewed contextualisation of Irishness that is "no longer co-terminus with the geographic outlines of an island" (Kearney, 1997: 99). Rather, Irishness is a globalised, transnational phenomenon (Gray, 1997: 209). Such a debate returns to the first theme, the diffusion of culture traits, and studies such as *Bringing It All Back Home*. The debate includes a post-*Riverdance* discourse that has dominated Irish traditional music in recent years

(O'Connor, 2001; Vallely *et al*., 1996; Foley, 2001; Ó Cinnéide, 1996, 2002, 2005). The challenge to a regional geography of Ireland is an understanding of communities that display regional traits linked with Irish identity that exist outside the borders of the state and the island of Ireland.

The geographic paradigms pioneered by Sauer and the Berkeley School have been widely critiqued by geographers. Much of Sauer's writings and those of his students focused on rural areas and generalisations regarding the identification of regions and the results of processes being studied (Crang, 1988). Reflecting on critiques of the Berkeley School, Crang states:

> Principally, Sauer is charged with treating culture as a 'super-organic' actor. That is, culture was treated not just holistically but as a single entity, as the region became too easily equated with a single actor without internal differentiation (1998: 21).

The relationship between different aspects of culture is important in understanding how that culture, and the contexts for performing culture, have changed over time. Irish geography has developed an integral awareness of "the island's regional diversity and cultural heterogeneity" (Graham, 1997a: 10; see also Horner, 1993, 2000, 2001). Differences in agricultural practice, religious observation, language use and styles of music create inter-related patterns of difference across the island, even when considered in small geographical areas.

Influenced by both Vidal de la Blache and Carl Sauer, E. Estyn Evans (1905-1989) is a particularly influential figure in Irish geography (see Crossman and McLoughlin, 1994). Evans focused in particular on the north of Ireland and regional diversity on the island of Ireland was a principal theme in his work. Commenting on the physical geography of Ireland, Evans stated:

> No other country has such a fragmented peripheral arrangement of mountain land, and if this has given her a diversified scenic heritage which is an abiding asset, it has also brought many social, economic and political problems (1973: 25).

Evans also highlights the longstanding regional divisions in Ireland relating to heritage and culture. Critiquing the nationalist arguments for a united island nation, Evans (1973) refers to mythology and in particular the tendency of people in the north and the province of Ulster to form a distinct cultural region or group of regions. Evans (1973) also notes

the regional diversity in burial sites, farm types and methods, settlement patterns and house types. Evans called for an interdisciplinary approach to understanding regions in Ireland involving habitat, heritage and history. Evans states: "By habitat I mean the total physical environment, and by history the written record of the past. I would define heritage in broad terms as the unwritten segment of human history, comprising man's physical, mental, social and cultural inheritance from a prehistoric past, his oral traditions, beliefs, languages, arts and crafts" (1973: 3). In understanding the personality of Ireland, a term borrowed from the work of Sauer, Evans (1973) focused on the literature, language and history of Ireland but not music.

The role of Tom Jones Hughes, who along with Evans is considered to be integral to the development of geography in Ireland prior to the 1980s, must also be considered. Like Evans, the historical geography that he practised had a strong emphasis on the cultural landscape and was influenced by the French tradition of Vidal de la Blache that empahasised the study of regional diversity (McCarthy, 2002). Hughes worked at University College, Dublin, from the 1950s to the 1980s and influenced a number of the new generation of Irish geographers at that time. McCarthy notes: "In contrast to Evans, Jones Hughes's work focused on researching the documentary evidence of past societies" (2002: 544). McCarthy (2002) likens Hughes to Sauer, such is his influence on the development of Irish geography.

New approaches to cultural geography in the 1980s created a tension between US and UK geography. In contrast to the largely rural focus of the Berkeley School, British geography was influenced by urban sociologists of the 'Chicago school' (Crang, 1998). Developments in the 1980s were termed the cultural turn in geography. Mitchell argues that a motivation for the cultural turn was the fact that 'culture' was "radically undertheorized in Sauer's own work" (2000: 29). In examining the change that occurred, Norton proposes: "Modern cultural geography is moving toward more rigorous definitions of culture and toward closer links with both sociology and anthropology, a development evident in both conceptual and empirical analysis (1987: 21). Mitchell (2000) also argues that Sauer examined the results left by cultural processes but was less concerned with the processes themselves. The super-organic approach of the Berkeley School militated against an understanding of a culture region full of diverse cultural traits and histories (Crang, 1998; Mitchell, 2000). The cultural turn in geography utilises a

broader definition of culture. Reflecting on cultural geography from a perspective informed by the cultural turn, Crang notes:

> […] cultural geography is about the diversity and plurality of life in all its variegated richness; about how the world, spaces and places are interpreted and used by people; and how those places then help to perpetuate that culture (1998: 3).

Given the diversity in cultures, cultural geography proposes that the region should be studied through inter-relationships between different aspects and manifestations of culture. Barnett (1998) contends that the cultural turn signifies a greater awareness within geography of other disciplines. In this respect, Mitchell (2000) emphasises the role of the development of cultural studies in shaping geographical thought in the 1980s. The cultural turn led to a greater awareness of cultural politics and processes and the context of culture in multi-cultural societies (Jackson, 1989). Lomnitz-Adler outlines the study of regional culture as the attempt to demonstrate "how different kinds of cultural *interaction* map out in a regional space, and from there to explore the spatial dimensions of cultural *understanding*" (1991: 196). Cultural geography abandons attempts to find a common regional culture and recognises the occupation of regions by a number of different culture groups.

Another development in cultural geography was that the focus of much study was transferred to the city and cultural geographers began to "consider how cities and nations may contain a plurality of cultures" (Crang, 1998: 5). The development of more urban focused studies, on spaces where tensions between cultures are often more apparent due to greater proximity and the sharing of space, is a prominent feature of recent music geography (Kong, 1995, 2006; Jazeel, 2005). Arguably, the study of culture has become dominated by questions of identity that surround issues of gender, race and civil liberty and the process of 'territorial segregation' (Myers, 1992; Smith, S., 1997; Crang, 1998; Levy, 2004; Jazeel, 2005). In the context of Ireland and Irish traditional music, issues of identity are evident in the post-*Riverdance* global Irishness discourse mentioned previously (O'Connor, 2001; Vallely *et al*., 1996; Foley, 2001; Ó Cinnéide, 2002, 2005). Ó hAllmhuráin's (1998) 'pocket history' of Irish traditional music makes references to the development of an urban context for Irish traditional music and the changing spaces in which Irish traditional music is performed and consumed (see also, Kearney, 2007).

The industrial revolution and large-scale urbanisation involving migration to urban centres in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has impacted greatly on the cultures of both urban and rural areas (Gross, 1992). In a country previously dominated by agriculture, as Ireland was, the changing economic foundations of society and the workplace reshape our imagination of regions in Ireland. Noting the importance of agriculture to the British economy in the past, Cloke points to the emphasis on rural areas in traditional regional studies and the trend to define regions in terms of "physical features of landscape and the agricultural responses therein, or on the characteristics of rural life in its broadest sense" (1997: 368). Horner's (1993; 2000) regional division of Ireland concentrates on physical features of the landscape and agricultural practices noting relatively few large urban areas. New regional geographies, like geographies in general, are more open to the role of the city and regions within urban spheres (see Kearney, 2007). The development of interest in urban studies led to the demise of rural and regional geography (Cloke, 1997). The resurgence of interest in recent years in rural and regional geographies, highlighted by some as a response to increased globalisation (Haggett, 1988; Gill, 1995; Mitchell, 2000; O'Brien, 2000; Newman, 2006), is considered by Cloke (1997) to benefit from increased research that considers questions of duality such as global/local and urban/rural. The focus of geography since the cultural turn has been on social spaces that overlap previous divisions in geographical space. Thus, there is a blurring of boundaries, even in the urban/rural divide (Cloke, 1997).

The use of culture to divide and segregate people and areas of the earth's surface highlights both the human processes through which spatial awareness is produced and the importance of stories in the understanding of place (Ryden, 1993; Massey, 2005). The development of the humanistic turn in geography emanates from the work of Yi-Fu Tuan (b. 1930) and Anne Buttimer (b. 1938) in the 1970s (Crang, 1998). The humanist approach places people's experience of space and place at the centre of geographical thought. Tuan provides one of the most complete discussions of space and place in his seminal study *Space and Place: The Perspective of Experience* (1977). Tuan (1977) notes that we live in space and experience the space in which we live. The space in which we live and move about has meaning and associations and thus we identify places, often through association with experience or stories. We may then tell of our experiences or diffuse stories about places. Our experience of space and various places changes through life and is shaped by our experiences. There is also a social element involved in the

experience of space and culture. Massey notes that "precisely because it is the product of relations […] practices which have to be carried out, space is always in a process of becoming" (1999: 283). The process of creating space must be examined to infer the meanings entrenched in that process (Massey, 1984). The context for constructing a space, the meanings attributed to and by that space and the social relationships that occur in that space shape and are shaped by the culture that exists in that space.

Theories of space have been complicated in recent years by the changing nature of time and space as a result of telecommunications (Kirsch, 1995). Duffy presents the concept of 'timing the landscape': "Associated with the development of transport and communications was a fundamental transformation in the way time and distance were perceived in local communities" (2007: 153). Advances in road building, as well as the role of the horse, car, bus and train all presented opportunities for a renegotiation of the landscape and a reconceptualisation of place and region, as well as transforming the soundscape (Schaffer, 1977). Leyshon considers the notion that space is being annihilated through modern developments in communications, cyberspace and transport:

> People and places that barely knew of each other's existence one hundred years ago now regularly exchange materials and information with one another. Space-shrinking technologies have enabled people to be more mobile and to have access to a far wider range of information sources than ever before (1995: 12).

Changes in the nature of space have impacted enormously on the evolution and consumption of music. Music is exchanged and consumed on a global range through world tours by artists, international record deals and the increased role of the internet in the consumption of music. Despite fears of cultural homogenisation, Bohlman presents an alternative argument:

> Far from homogenizing folk music style, modernization emphasises diversity by bringing it together and concentrating it. By collapsing time and space, modernization encourages new ways of looking at older styles and different repertories and sets the stage for revival and revitalisation (1988: 124).

Bohlman outlines a paradox that is present in the study of local and regional cultures in the technological age. Local cultures are both destroyed and celebrated by processes of mass-mediated culture industries. Modernisation and technological advancement is a

process that shapes the contexts for the performance, transmission and consumption of music.

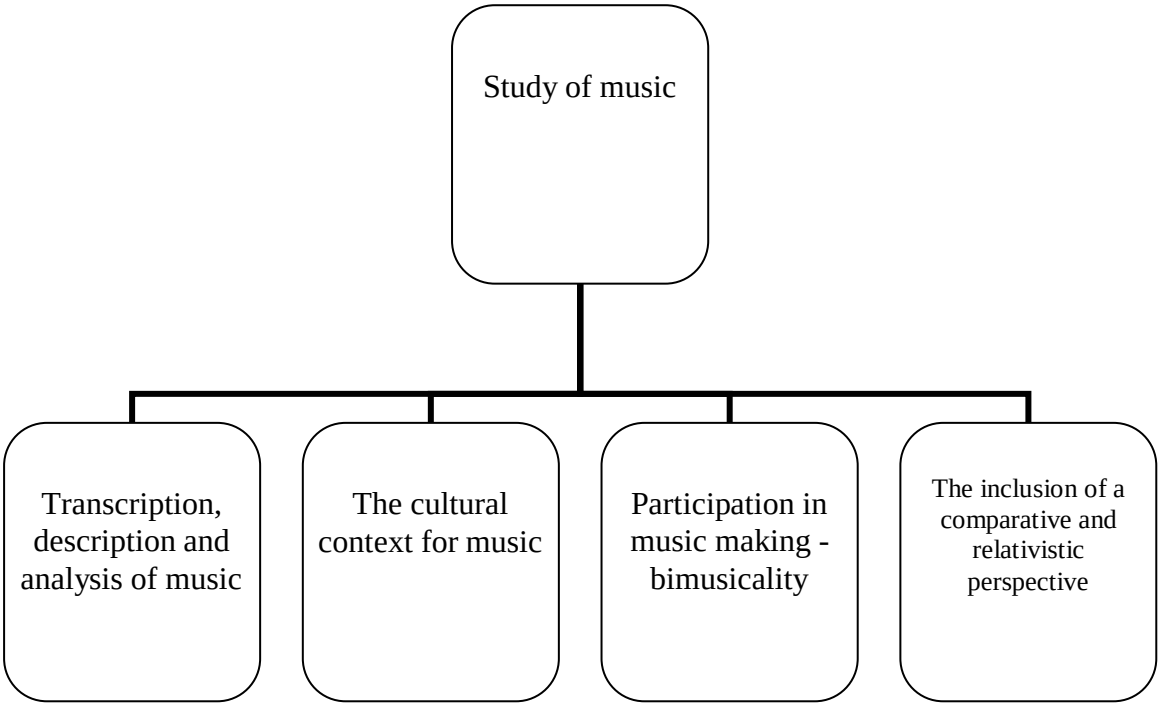
Ethnomusicology has also developed as a discipline through the twentieth century but, as noted by Cooley in relation to the regular articles with the theme, the issue of understanding what ethnomusicology is remains "a fundamental and persistent question" (2009: np; see also Reyes, 2009; Ivey, 2009). In *The Study of Ethnomusicology* (Nettl, 2005), a recent reflection on the discipline of ethnomusicology and a revision of an earlier edition (Nettl, 1983), Nettl presents the issues and concepts at the heart of ethnomusicology as well as a critique on the evolution of the discipline. Nettl (2005) remarks on the diversity in the material studied by ethnomusicologists and various approaches used in these studies (see Table 3). Amongst the descriptions of material studied in ethnomusicological research most prevalent in the context of this thesis are the study of "all music of a given locality" and the study of "the music that given population groups regard as their particular property" (Nettl, 2005: 4). In both contexts, the study of music has locational and spatial implications that resonate with geographical discourses. In consideration of the music in a region, it is important to note the diversity of music present, the various representations of music and the narratives of the musical traditions that link music and place. The identification of a musical tradition as the property of a region is often motivated by the assertion or consolidation of identity.

Table 3 Aspects of ethnomusicological study.

1.	Music as a product of human society
2.	Acknowledgement of change and the processes of change in music
3.	Emphasis on fieldwork
4.	Consideration of all of the musical manifestations of a society

Source: Adapted from Nettl (2005).

Figure 1 Four approaches to the study of music.



Source: Adapted from Seeger (1992), Nettl (2005) and Ivey (2009).

A number of approaches to ethnomusicological research may be derived from a review of ethnomusicological literature (Fig. 1). Two approaches presented by Nettl that are of particular relevance to this thesis are "the comprehensive analysis of the music and musical culture of one society" and "the study of music in or as culture, or perhaps music in its cultural context" (2005: 5). Despite the separation of approaches as suggested by Nettl (2005), Seeger (1992) suggests that few studies of music exclusively adopt one approach or the other. In contrast to the two approaches outlined by Nettl (2005) and Seeger (1992), three approaches are implicit in Ivey's (2009) commentary on ethnomusicological approaches. The first involves transcription, description and analysis of music. A second approach involves the observation of music as and in culture and a consideration of the cultural contexts for musical activity. Reyes states: "ethnomusicology is now receptive to the idea that music is not only a human creation, but a social act. It implies human interaction." (2009: 13). There is a need, as previously identified by Seeger (1992), to understand both the cultural context for the performance and evolution of music and the music itself. A third approach returns to the concept of bi-musicality or

the active participation of a researcher in the act of making music. Noting the divisions between schools of thought presented by Merriam and Hood in the 1970s, Ivey (2009) identifies a toolkit that comes from formal ethnomusicology training, the development of a set of descriptive and analytical skills that distinguish ethnomusicologists from others who can also enjoy the music they listen to. A fourth approach, derived from Nettl's (2005) definition of ethnomusicology is the inclusion of a 'comparative and relativistic perspective'.

Both ethnomusicological and geographical studies acknowledge that music is an integral part of everyday life (Nettl, 1975; Connell and Gibson, 2002; Whitely *et al*., 2005). Holloway and Hubbard acknowledge that "geography has always been connected with documenting the things that people do on a day-to-day basis, noting variations across space in the way that people work, rest and play" (2001: 1). In the humanist tradition, geography is concerned primarily with the construction and perception of space and place (Tuan, 1977; Cohen, 1991, 1998). Solomon notes: "Recent research in ethnomusicology and popular music has drawn attention to the close relationships between music, place, and identity" (2000: 257). Nettl identifies music "as a product of human society, and while many pieces of research do not directly address the problem, we (ethnomusicologists) insist on this belief as an essential ingredient of our overall approach" (2005: 12). The identity of places and regions are determined and defined by the societies and communities that live in and are aware of them.

One of the principal recurring cultural processes in this study is that of memory. Roach identifies culture as the "social processes of memory and forgetting" (1993: xi). Memory and the expression of the past are an integral part of understanding the process of performing music. In contrast to her earlier emphasis on social interaction and relations (Massey, 1993), Massey's more recent work emphasises the role of stories in the construction of place (Massey, 2005). Places trail histories and stories that contribute to the identity of that place and are communicated in the construction of group identity. These stories reflect the culture of a place (Ryden, 1993; Massey, 2005). The subject matter of these stories can reflect upon musical traditions and characters of a place that helped shape and disseminate the regional tradition. Often these characters are associated with particular spaces within the place or region, such as buildings or paths that they used and inhabited. Emotion is a key element of the actions of people. Recognising the

importance of emotion in the context of humanist, feminist and non-representational geographies, Bondi recognises criticism of humanistic geography as an approach that is "overly concerned with individual experience" (2005: 435), which also relates to Jones's (2003) concerns with the subjective nature of a storyteller. In the context of non-representational theories, Bondi notes developments in cultural geography that consider "the myriad of transient and unarticulable practices that constitute everyday lives in ways that exceed representation" and focuses on what people do rather than what they say they do. It is important not to abandon the study of "everyday modes of articulating emotion" (Bondi, 2005: 438). Emotion is a crucial element in understanding the stories that people tell of their lives and the sometimes seemingly irrational connection to place in the expression of identity.

Memory can also shape the way in which a society presents and uses music in the formation of identity. Nettl presents ethnomusicologists as "interested in the way in which a society musically defines itself, in its taxonomy of music, its ideas of what music does, how it should be, and also in the way a society changes its music, relates to, absorbs, and influences other musics" (2005: 12). Composers and performers often seek to represent the world around them in their works and can play a role in distinguishing the cultural identity of a place, region or country (Smith, S., 1997). Discussing the relationship between music and place in Finland, Jarviluoma states that "music and music-making construct, rather than merely reflect, places" (2000: 103). Music and the act of making music is a powerful marker of culture and place. As Stokes suggests: "The musical event […] evokes and organizes collective memories and present experiences of place with an intensity, power and simplicity unmatched by any other social activity" (1994: 3). Similarly, Coleman (2002) considers the role and use of music as dialogue and the importance of local traditions in the national and international sphere. However, the connection between music and place may also be a marketing construct motivated by a desire for commercial success (Vallely, 1997; Connell and Gibson, 2004). Connell and Gibson (2004) critique the association between music and place in the commercial music industry and examine the process of deterritorialization in music. Connell and Gibson acknowledge that "musicians are situated in multiple cultural and economic networks – some seeking to reinvent or revive traditions, others creating opportunities in musical production to stir national political consciousness or contribute to transnational political movements, and some merely seeking to achieve commercial success" (2004: 343). The

connection between music and place and the identification of musical regions is thus a complex geography that requires an understanding of social and economic networks in which the music is created and the interpretation of the music by audiences outside the region.

The inclusion of a comparative and relativistic perspective highlights the diversity between musical traditions. Comparisons in ethnomusicological literature are both historical and intercultural in nature and often concern "observations of change and its processes" (Nettl, 2005: 12). Both music and society are subject to change and Nettl stresses the understanding of musical change, "less in terms of the events than in the processes" (2005: 12; see also Bohlman, 1988). Regions in Irish traditional music are, in part, created through processes of comparing and contrasting various aspects of the tradition. In comparing and contrasting examples of music, musical performances and spaces for performance and consumption of Irish traditional music, two aspects are considered, namely temporal and regional. How musical traditions have changed over time is an integral element of ethnomusicological studies. As editor of *Ethnomusicology*, Cooley notes that the articles in the final issue under his stewardship as editor suggest that "if ethnomusicology was ever the study of traditional musics, it is now clearly the study of change" (2009: np). Cooley's observations again emphasise the importance of understanding the processes of change in music and society. Through performances, changes in a musical tradition may be identified, shaped by both musicians and listeners and memory can play a role in shaping these performances. Writing on the importance of memory, Roach states: "To perform […] means to bring forth, to make manifest, and to transmit. To perform also means, though often more secretly, to reinvent" (1993: xi). Thus there is a constant sense of change in the performance of culture. Regions, identified by the culture performed by the people inhabiting spaces therein, must therefore be understood as constantly evolving entities whose distinguishing features and boundaries are constantly evolving.

The work of Alan Lomax (1915-2002) is important in shaping and promoting concerns of place and regional difference in the study of music. Neither a geographer nor an ethnomusicologist, Lomax is categorised as many things but in his own writings depicts himself as a 'folklorist' and a 'collector' of songs and stories from oral traditions (Lomax, 1960). Blacking (1977) acknowledges the culture-based theory of musical

change presented by Lomax but questions his methods of analysis and conclusions. Nettl (2005) notes the influence of Lomax on the development of ethnomusicology but also notes that, with the evolution of the discipline, his work has perhaps become obsolete. However the influence of Lomax on the study of folk music and his collaboration with Irish music collectors including Séamus Ennis renders his work worthy of consideration here. Perhaps his most outstanding legacy is the concept of cantometrics. Lomax's concept of cantometrics is a study of global singing styles that has deep geographical undertones (1959a; 1968; 1977). Cantometrics was the term coined for a rating system that describes the main character of recorded song performance so that song may be "statistically compared and classified" (Lomax, 1959a, 2003: 143). Invented by Alan Lomax and Victor Grauer in the 1960s, it was used to analyse and categorise musical regions (Lomax, 1972). The cantometrics project demonstrates geographical and ethnomusicological attributes by creating a link between music and place.

In an introduction to a collection of papers published by Lomax, Averill notes that despite Lomax's conviction that his 'metrics' were his most important legacy, they "have been highly controversial among scholars" (2003: 234; see also Seeger, 1992). Lomax categorised very large areas as regions of a particular musical style based on limited samples of recorded material (Lomax, 1959a). The scale at which Lomax approaches his study is influenced by what he aims to achieve but his model and approach is challenged by studies within cultures that identify internal stylistic differences (Corcoran, 1997). Studies of regional styles and regions in Irish traditional music exemplify the challenge to Lomax's model within an Irish context (Ó Riada, 1962, 1982; Feldman, 1979; Hickey, 1999). Lomax did concern himself with Irish traditional music and, influenced greatly by Séamus Ennis, whom he held in high regard (Lomax, 1959b), he focused on the west of Ireland (Lomax, 1960). Lomax thus became part of a geographical process in Irish traditional music that privileged and institutionalised particular aspects and attitudes to Irish traditional music that are the focus of Chapter Four.

From an early stage in his writing it is evident that Lomax understood music as part of folklore and considered folksong and folklore as "living, growing and changing thing[s]" (1941, 2003: 64). Lomax also acknowledged the role of the phonograph as a "voice for the voiceless" and noted how music could be used for political purposes (1960, 2003: 174). Music can be used as a mode of communication to draw attention to a place

or issue. In the context of highlighting various issues, the regional distinctiveness of a folk music tradition becomes more decisive in communicating other differences. McCarthy identifies music as "a cultural practice that is an integral part of a nation's identity" (1998: 73). Writing in an Irish context, McCarthy also notes: "In certain historical periods, when the political ideology of a country is contested and an alternative ideology is advanced, the resulting tensions are visible in cultural practices, such as music, and social institutions such as education" (1998: 73). Through education, regional variations in folk music can then become institutionalised for political as well as aesthetic purposes. The consideration of music as a tool for identity in political struggle relates to Graham's model for a cultural geography of Ireland, and themes of empowerment, the contestation of place, the influence of nationalism and the representation of place (Table 4).

Table 4 Four themes in a cultural geography of Ireland

1.	Empowerment and the contestation of place
2.	Transformation and reproduction of official representations of place
3.	Legitimisation of official culture
4.	Development of alternative identities

Source: Adapted from Graham, 1997.

The cultural geography of Ireland edited by Graham entitled *In search of Ireland: a cultural geography* presents four themes that influence the framework of this thesis. The first concerns "empowerment and the contestation of place" and examines how power structures shape representations of place and the role of representation in supporting dominant ideologies (Graham, 1997a: 12). Music and the representation of musical traditions are connected to the representation and construction of place and identity. The second theme presented by Graham concerns "the endless transformation and reproduction of the representations of identity that are constructed to underpin official texts of place" (1997a: 12). The concept of place as a process and the existence of cultural

diversity are part of the second theme. The third theme is influenced by nationalism and the concept of otherness, criteria for inclusion or exclusion and the legitimisation of power structures. The influence of nationalism has also been an integral part of ethnomusicological study. Commenting on the impact of Soviet politics on music in Bulgaria where regional idioms were "harnessed in creating a more 'collective' national style emphasizing musical unity", Porter notes how music was "fed back to the villages through the media and began to affect deeply rooted traditions of performance" (1993: 220). In an Irish context, authors have also recognised how political ideology can have a direct effect on the aesthetics of traditional music (Schiller, 1991; McNamee, 1992; Vallely, 2008). The fourth theme addresses the parallel existence of other dimensions to identity, "which help produce popular representations of place that contradict and subvert the official versions of state-imposed ideology" (Graham, 1997: 12). Graham's approach is weighted by the principal concern with power influenced by the over-riding presence of Northern Irish politics but his approach is strengthened and made relevant by the consideration of plural Irish identities and regional diversity in Ireland. In particular, as music cannot be examined without consideration of politics (Smith, 1994), an acknowledgement of issues concerning empowerment and ideologies relating to place are essential.

The themes presented by Graham (1997) relate to Ryecroft's (1998) assessment of the aims of music geography. Ryecroft states: "geographers of music are influenced and defined by a series of discourses surrounding politics, social order, and culture" (1998: 224). However, Ryecroft identifies these discourses as "structuring frames" that can be used to study "localised music genres" (1998: 224). Localised music genres occupy particular spaces that help shape the sounds produced. The geographical importance of music lies in its role in reflecting and shaping geographical processes and, simultaneously, the role of geographical processes in shaping the music that is produced. Noting the many contexts for music with clear geographical implications, Lovering states:

> Music is not just a hobby indulged at the end of the working day, an aspect of 'entertainment consumption,' or even a personal door to the sublime – although it can be all of these things. It is often also a profound influence on the way we see our world(s) and situate ourselves in relation to others (1998: 32).

Music performs a number of different roles in society. Music is connected to power (Attali, 1985); it is an economic resource, part of the heritage of a place or society and integral to the identity of social or political groups (Herbert, 1998; Sweeney-Turner, 1998). Micheál Ó Suilleabháin, a figure at the centre of much discourse and debate in Irish traditional music and a performer of note, has outlined seven dimensions of music that may be applied in an analysis of music in Irish society (Table 5). Ó Suilleabháin recognises the economic importance of music, which suggests the powerful forces of the culture industry in the development of Irish traditional music and its various spaces, identities and sounds but he ignores the subversive attributes of music and the use of music to undermine official, national or institutionalised culture.

Table 5 Seven dimensions of music.

1.	a form of cultural expression which is a defining national characteristic;
2.	an internationally traded service;
3.	a provider of employment for 10,000 people in Ireland at present;
4.	part of a technological revolution in all forms of data diffusion;
5.	based on intellectual property – creativity;
6.	it impacts heavily on other sectors of the economy, particularly tourism;
7.	entertainment

Source: Ó Suilleabháin, 1994: 335.

Music has been transported around the world as both a commodity and a marker of identity for migrant communities (Connell and Gibson, 2002). Connell and Gibson note: "Music has been transformed through spatial mobility. Simultaneously, music has influenced the manner in which wider global economic and cultural change has occurred" (2002: 10). The division within and diffusion of the culture and community of Irish traditional music further complicates a geographical investigation of Irish traditional music that must consider the various dimensions outlined by Ó Suilleabháin (1994; see Table 5). As Irish traditional music has become a global phenomenon, concepts of

authentic locations and regions have emerged that require a new conceptualisation of regions in Irish traditional music informed by new geographies of music.

2.3 Developing a framework for music geography

In this section I highlight the shared interests of ethnomusicologists and music geographers with the purpose of developing an interdisciplinary approach to the study of the geography of Irish traditional music. I examine the development of music geography as a sub-discipline of cultural geography but I also outline developments in ethnomusicology that demonstrate a geographical perspective. The roles and importance of music in society are investigated and I explore the ways in which music shapes and reflects geographical processes. The principal themes and approaches in music geography are explored through a review of the extant literature. The recent development of the sub-discipline that is music geography requires me to rely on a small number of sources. These sources serve to highlight two paths of development in music geography – an American dominated field heavily influenced by the Berkeley School of Cultural Geography and a more recent British led focus on music and place informed by the 'cultural turn', a crucial re-evaluation of geographical theory in the 1980s. The concerns of the American School of music geography are considered through the work and anthologies of George Carney (1979; 1995; 1998). The themes and approaches of the British geography of music are presented primarily through the work and influence of Leyshon, Matless and Revill's anthology, *The Place of Music* (1998), as well as the work of Susan Smith (1994) and Lily Kong (1995; 1997; 2006). The influence of Jacques Attali's work, *Noise* (1985), must also be considered, particularly in relation to the development of interest amongst British geographers in the 1990s.

Despite the strong awareness of geographical concepts and approaches in ethnomusicological literature throughout the latter half of the twentieth century, music is largely absent from geographical studies. In spite of this, many of the central themes of geographical thought, some of which echo or mirror themes in ethnomusicological studies, have been refocused to consider the role of music in understanding the world. The emergence of specific discourses on the geography of music has occurred in the past forty years. In reviewing the geographical literature concerned with the study of music, I am

indebted to the American music geographer, George Carney. In an article written for a special issue of the *Journal of Cultural Geography*, for which he served as guest editor, Carney presented an overview of the first thirty years of geographical writing on the subject of music.

> More than thirty years have elapsed since Peter Hugh Nash (1968) of the University of Waterloo authored "Music Regions and Regional Music", the first scholarly article on music authored by a professional geographer. Two years later, Jeffrey Gordon (1970), a graduate student at Pennsylvania State University, completed the first Master's thesis in geography on music – "Rock-and-Roll: A Diffusion Study". The first full-length article on music geography in an American journal appeared in 1971 with the publication of Larry Ford's (1971) "Geographic Factors in the Origin, Evolution and Diffusion of Rock and Roll Music". In 1971, the eminent cultural geographer, Wilbur Zelinsky (1973), who called for studies on folk music to better understand the spatiotemporal processes in American culture, supported further research on music geography. A 1974 article, "Bluegrass Grows All Around: The Spatial Dimensions of a Country Music Style", was selected for a Journal of Geography award by the National Council for Geographic Education (Carney, 1974). At the first Society for the North American Cultural Survey (SNACS) meeting in 1974, music was designated as one of the chapter topics for This Remarkable Continent: An Atlas of United States and Canadian Society and Cultures eventually published in 1982 (Rooney, Zelinsky and Louder). With this rather inauspicious debut, a new subfield of cultural geography was born (Carney, 1998b: 1).

Carney goes onto note that special sessions on music have been arranged for a number of conferences since, leading up to the "Place of Music" conference in London in 1993. The work detailed by Carney is almost entirely focused on American folk and popular music. In many of his own works, Carney seeks to present the divisions between themes and approaches to the geography of music.

In *Sounds of People and Places*, Carney (1987) divides the work into four sections (Table 6). The first considers largely historical perspectives on the roots and development of American music. The second section focuses on regional studies of country music and the development of cartographic representations of musical traditions. Carney notes: "Historians, sociologists, and folklorists have claimed for some time that there were regional patterns in the origin of music styles and that preferences for types of music varied from place to place" (1987a: 55). The second section, including contributions from Crowley and Lornell, as well as Carney, attempts to locate musicians, festivals and events and briefly analyse the patterns presented. The third section focuses on cultural hearths,

identified as places from where musical traditions are diffused. The fourth section concerns the perception of place in music. Carney thus seeks to analyse a type or genre of music, the music of a place, the diffusion of a musical style and the role of music in the perception of place.

Table 6 Approaches to a geography of music.

1.	History of musical traditions and their development.
2.	Regional studies and the production of cartographic representations of the location of musical traditions and spaces.
3.	Examination of cultural hearths and patterns of diffusion.
4.	The perception of place in music.

Source: Adapted from Carney (1987).

In *Fast Food, Stock Cars and Rock'n'Roll: Place and Space in American Pop Culture* (1995), Carney outlines a methodology for the geographical study of music. In it, Carney acknowledges that there are four fundamental questions that relate to the study of place. Carney outlines these questions as: "*What* is it (Phenomenon)? *Where* is it (Pattern)? *Why* is it there (Process)? *When* did it happen (Period)?" (1995: 13, author's emphasis). In the context of music, the phenomenon may be identified as a particular musical style or genre. In the case of each 'musical phenomenon', a variety of processes may be identified that may related to a particular historical context (Table 7, 8).

A prominent process in the work of Carney is that of diffusion. Cultural traits are diffused, evolve and adapt in different settings. In relation to music, Waterman states:

> Music develops continuously over space and through time, stimulating, absorbing influences and constantly changing. As with other cultural artefacts, music – genres, instruments, performing styles – spreads from various points of origin and is adopted and adapted by other cultures. The music of any given provenance metamorphoses, a process augmented and amplified in the contemporary world as sounds of different provenance

> meld. There is nothing particularly unusual about this: adaptation is part and parcel of the diffusion of cultures and the globalisation of music has never been a one-way process but multi-channelled (2006: 1).

The complexity of patterns of diffusion of musical traditions relates to other aspects of society influenced by politics, economics and the environment. Music travels with emigrants and migrants often perform their identity through the performance of music (Hall, 1994; Stillman, 1999; Gibson and Connell, 2002). Other processes of diffusion, including those shaped by the commercial music industry affect the location of music communities and the existence of local or regional musical styles or genres. Bohlman (2002) acknowledges the geographical and historical dimensions of the globalization of world music and the continued existence of the local in globalised music forms. The diffusion of music does not necessitate the abandonment or extinction of older locations, places or regions in a musical tradition.

Carney identifies ten categories of processes and nine categories of phenomena that feature in the geographical study of music (Table 7, 8). The first three phenomena concern musical style, structure and lyrics. These involve analysis of the language of music. The style with which this thesis is concerned is Irish traditional music and the identification of regional traditions that exists therein. The structures of Irish traditional music are relatively straightforward and help identify the style. Much of Carney's work makes reference to an analysis of the lyrical content of the music being studied, the relevance of which is negated by the focus in this study on instrumental music. The idea of style as referred to by Carney might be better termed genre when considering the discourse on musical style within particular musical traditions (Burman, 1968; Burman-Hall, 1975; Ó Riada, 1982; Goertzen, 1985; 1996; Vallely, 1999b; Keegan, 2006; Thompson, 2006). The musical styles that are focused on within the literature referred to by Carney involve Country Music, Bluegrass and Rock'n'Roll (1987; 1995; 1996b, 1998a, 1998b). Instrumentation is integral to the study of style and the role of individuals in the study and development of musical traditions is also stressed. Carney also creates a spatial awareness, evident also in his concerns with the cultural landscape. The media, music industry and ethnic identity are important factors in the representation of musical traditions and their connection to place.

Table 7 Geographical phenomena in the study of music.

	Phenomena	Description
1.	Style	Irish instrumental dance music.
2.	Structure	Limited tune types dominated by reels and jigs. Tunes are usually structured in eight bar parts, usually two parts in length. Some tune types are associated with certain regional traditions.
3.	Lyrics	Tune names often make reference to people and place and can vary between regional traditions.
4.	Individuals	Performers, composers and teachers contribute to regional identity and the evolution of regional soundscapes.
5.	Spaces	Spaces for performance and consumption including private homes, public houses, dance halls, theatres and festivals.
6.	Media	The construction of representations, often for tourist markets, shapes the identity of regions of music. Link between music and popular culture.
7.	Ethnicity	Historically, Irish traditional music has been associated with a rural, Catholic identity primarily associated with Gaelic Ireland. Less evident as Irish traditional music becomes performed and consumed by people with little or no connection with Ireland.
8.	Instrumentation	Primarily fiddles, flutes and accordions. Some instruments are specifically associated with particular regions. Group playing is a relatively recent development and more pronounced in some areas. Older traditions in Irish music are connected to the harp and uilleann pipes.
9.	Music industry	Creates a paradox as regional music traditions are preserved and diluted by the products of the music industry.

Source: Adapted from Carney (1998b).

Table 8 Geographical processes in the study of music.

1. Delimitation of music regions
2. Evolution of style with place
3. Identification of cultural hearth
4. Migration, transportation, communication
5. Psychological / Symbolic association of music and place
6. Development of cultural landscape
7. Location of music industry
8. Impact of environment
9. Role of national and nationalist politics.
10. Relationship with other cultures

Source: Adapted from Carney (1998b).

The various processes presented by Carney (1998b) relate the music to more established geographical themes such as location, diffusion and spatial organisation. The categories in Carney's study may be grouped. Six of the processes relate directly to the location of music and musical spaces, the association between music and place, and the origin and diffusion of a musical tradition. It is important to consider all of the processes outlined by Carney, and examples of studies that are identifiable as fitting these categories, as the processes may not be studied in isolation. A critique of Carney's model identifies a lack of clarity in the boundaries between the various themes and approaches that he presents. It is difficult to separate some of the issues as many are interrelated, shaped by other aspects of the context and processes in which music exists.

Carney identifies the role of performers and composers, the individual creators within a musical culture, as significant in the geography of music. Interestingly, ethnomusicologist Philip Bohlman (1988) has noted with regret the neglect of individuals

in ethnomusicological research. The role of individuals and the recognition of the contribution of individuals to music traditions are complicated. Myers notes that nineteenth century scholars were "preoccupied with the historical dimension of folk song, particularly its origin, with opinion divided between 'communalists' and 'individualists'" (1993: 37). Communalists considered folk music as "a natural, instinctive, and spontaneous expression of the peasant soul" and composed collectively. Individualists argued that folk ballads were inventions of individual composers, not themselves necessarily of the folk. Later, the theory of communal recreation was consolidated, "whereby ballads are individually composed by singers who voice in their composition sentiments of the community; then as the song enters oral tradition and is enhanced by variants, it achieves the status of genuine ballad" (Myers, 1993: 37). The celebration of individuals and the acceptance of aspects of an individual's performance by a community or in the process of institutionalisation highlight the importance of considering individuals within a regional tradition. In relation to Irish traditional music, Goan (1992) highlights the role of the individual in Irish traditional music and the value placed on having a tune or a song that nobody else might have. Individuals also shape music in highly individualistic ways (Ó Suilleabháin, 1996). Blacking notes the role of individuals in musical change and the challenge presented by attitudes to folk music that seek to preserve rather than accept change. Blacking also notes the paradox of those termed as "purists", members of community that seek to preserve a tradition, and states:

> The "purists" have been curiously ambivalent in their attitudes to continuity and change in music. They have lamented departure from what they conceive to be traditional practices and have invoked concepts such as authenticity to distinguish between what is and is not good and worthy of study; but they have also applauded the creative musicianship of outstanding individual performers, whose originality must, by definition, threaten the stability of any "authentic" tradition (1977: 7, 8).

Individuals are considered as part of a social network and they impact greatly on the concept of region. In an Irish context, figures such as Michael Coleman, Pádraig O'Keeffe and John Doherty have left influential legacies that are an integral part of the geographic narrative of Irish traditional music, which is explored further in Chapter Four. Coleman, O'Keeffe and Doherty were part of the evolution of Irish traditional music, integrating new elements to the regional traditions with which they are associated.

Geographical studies also demonstrate an awareness of individuals. People are crucial in the study of culture and place. People are the characters of the stories that define and construct places. In a book entitled *Homo Geographicus*, Sacks recognises that "humans are geographical beings transforming the earth and making it into a home, and that transformed world affect who we are" (1997: 1). The role of individuals shapes the development of appropriate methodologies and the thesis structure. Many of the narratives of the Irish music tradition focus on the principal characters involved in the development and performance of music (Feldman, 1979; Mac Aoidh, 1994; Hickey, 1999; Herlihy, 2003, 2007). The narrative has been written and shaped by figures such as Séamus Ennis (1919-1982), Ciarán MacMathúna (1925-2009) and Seán Ó Riada (1931-1971) through their ability to negotiate space and time through travel and broadcasting – presented again in the categories concerning the media and the music industry. The music continues to be performed and transmitted by individuals within the tradition whose actions continually reshape the tradition, musically and geographically.

The spatial element of Carney's framework concerns those spaces that are created or used for the performance and consumption of music. Small (1998) outlines the impact of particular spaces, their architecture and meaning on the narratives, status and contexts of music. Spaces shape and are shaped by music. Ó hAllmhuráin (1998) has noted the changing spaces in which Irish traditional music has been performed and the historical contexts of these spaces. Music can be performed and consumed in the home, public house or concert stage. The variety of spaces used or occupied by a musical tradition or community can determine the geographical complexity of the tradition. Festivals have been identified as important spaces for the performance and consumption of music (Aldskogius, 1993; Goertzen, 1996; Duffy, 2000; Gibson and Davidson, 2004). Festivals create another geographical layer at which to consider the role of music in the lives of people and the construction of place. Aldskogius outlines the importance of analyzing the spatial distribution of festivals and "the social and environmental characteristics of localities or regions where they take place" (1993: 55). The inhabitants of a place hosting a music festival play an important role in shaping the festival. Duffy examines "the relationship between music and place by focusing on participation in [a] community music festival" (2000: 51). Duffy differentiates between the different forces that lead to the development of a festival, focusing in this study on the community music festival as understood in an Australian context. Also working in an Australian context, Gibson and

Davidson (2004) explore the role of music festivals in transforming rural places and the attachment of meaning to place, which echoes Jarviluoma's (2000) assertion that music and music-making can construct as well as reflect places. Gibson and Davidson (2004) also acknowledge the role of strategic place marketing undertaken by a range of groups, which plays a role in the conceptualisation of place through its association with a musical tradition. Another important aspect of festivals is the role of music competitions. Goertzen's (1996) study of American fiddle contests is useful in understanding the politics and dynamics of competition on musical style. The appreciation of musical styles is a subjective experience and competitors may choose to perform a particular style influenced by the requirements of the competition.

Carney acknowledges the role of the media as influential in our understanding of music and the geography of music. Several geographers have highlighted the role of the media in our understanding of place (Tuan, 1977; Ryden, 1999; Gibson and Davidson, 2004; Thompson, 2006). Stereotypical images, sounds and ideas of space and place are communicated through various media forms to the extent that a people of conceive of places without ever being present in that place (Ryden, 1993; Thompson, 2006). Through the media, people can also make assumptions connecting particular musics and places (Lovering, 1998; Thompson, 2006). As previously stated, individuals such as Ciarán MacMathúna and Séamus Ennis were part of the process of moulding an understanding of the geography of Irish traditional music amongst Irish people through radio broadcasts. The role of the media in the creation of stereotypes of place is, particularly in consideration of the importance of the Irish tourism industry, played out to a large driven by a number of economic agents. Tourism advertisements utilise the meanings already attached to sounds to enhance images in the sale of a particular product such as the west of Ireland. The media is also significant element of the music industry. In a modern capitalist society, a study of music must consider the role of the music industry in the sounds and geographies of music (see also, Connell and Gibson, 2004). The music industry places particular demands on musicians relating to style, structure and lyrics and rewards individuals who generate success in the market place. The music industry also exerts control over some spaces in which music is performed and consumed and feeds the media with stories that are motivated by desires for financial profit. Thus, music is a commodity, the style of which is shaped by consumers whose tastes are influenced by the way in which music is sold and represented.

Carney also recognises the importance of the role of ethnicity in connection between music and place. Myers (1993) notes the role of nationalism in Europe as a motivating factor in ethnomusicology of the late nineteenth century. Recent ethnomusicological studies that focus on ethnicity include Stokes' anthology *Ethnicity, Identity and Music* (1994) and elements of Bohlman's *Music of European Nationalism* (2004). The concept of "Celtic music", with or into which Irish traditional music is often, for a variety of reasons, incorporated, is explored by Porter (1998) and derided by Ó hAllmhuráin (1998). Ethnic and other minority groups often use music to attract attention for a particular cause (Langlois, 1996; McCarthy, 1998). The use of music by particular political groups creates particular geographical associations that may outlive the political cause. As noted in consideration of nationalistic emblems in the landscape as presented by Zelinsky (1984), sounds can also become emblematic and subject to the same semantics of semiotics normatively applied to the visual.

Jazeel (2005) presents a different approach, emanating from a more recent British geographical discourse. Recognising musicological interests in the politics of musical form and content, Jazeel considers how "musical practice carves spaces of performance, expression and culture, and how it shapes social spaces of identity, belonging and community" (2005: 233). Thus, he echoes the concerns of Jarviluoma (2000) and Smith (2000) that music and musical practices constructs as well as reflects places. Jazeel (2005) concentrates on the expression of British-Asian identity through the creation of British-Asian soundscapes. His study involves the musicological study of musical forms and styles and engages geographical discourse on context and otherness. Jazeel considers the musical development of the soundscape in tandem with the development of segregated spaces in which this music is produced, performed and consumed. In the context of Irish traditional music, the apparent post-post-colonial confidence of groups such as Afro-Celt Sound System, Kila and The Sharon Shannon Band, who incorporate a variety of "foreign" sounds and structures in the performance of "Irish traditional music" may be contrasted with the post-colonial limitations of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, an organisation that seeks to limit the development of Irish traditional music or at least steer it along a nationalist agenda. Thus, similar to the invention of céilí dancing at the end of the nineteenth century by the Gaelic League to satisfy desires and ideologies of Irish nationalism (Brennan, 1999), Irish traditional music is shaped by a number of forces that include those concerned with the musical sound and identity of the nation.

Carney's geographies of music are deeply embedded in Sauerian Cultural Geography which was challenged in the 1980s by the cultural turn emanating in particular from a British geographical community. Human geographers began to consider the role of aesthetics and politics of art (Smith, S., 1997). In the mid-1990s, a number of British geographers began questioning geography's fascination with the visual at the expense of a sonic experience of the world (Smith, S., 1994, 1997; Kong, 1995, 2006; Waterman, 2006). Music became an important factor in understanding the world. The geography of music is not only concerned with the sound of music but utilises music in an effort to understand space, place and landscape (Smith, S., 1997). It is influenced by the concepts surrounding sound as presented by Jacques Attali in a wide-ranging multi-disciplinary work, *Noise: The Political Economy of Music* (Attali, 1985; Leyshon *et al*., 1998). Attali greatly emphasises the connection between music and society and culture, in particular the role of politics and economics on the evolution of music. Recognising music as "a mirror of society", Attali notes: "Music is more than an object of study: it is a way of perceiving the world" (1985: 4). Music is organised noise that is shaped by a number of social, political and economic forces. Thus the various roles of music in society and in shaping the actions of that society must also be outlined. For Attali, music is a commodity and object of consumption, shaped by economic forces and aesthetic tastes of society that may be shaped by other forces including the associations between music and class or power. The role of music, as derived from Attali's writing, is creative of order, influencing the construction, perception and maintenance of power hierarchies in society. Music is a simulacrum of decentralisation of power and thus plays a role in the construction of regions.

Attali divides his work into five chapters with the thematic titles Listening, Sacrificing, Representing, Repeating and Composing (Table 9). Each of the actions presented in the titles have geographical significance. Attali critiques the silence in conventional Western knowledge noting: "It has failed to understand that the world is not for the beholding. It is for the hearing. It is not legible, but audible" (1985: 1). Through listening to the sounds of the world in which we live we can begin to understand that world. Music, as organised sound, presents an audible mirror of society. Music is part of the construction and consolidation of power and community. Attali explores the development of festival from sacrifice and penitence, noting the unique sounds of the festive space and the ritualistic meaning of music. Music is a code that reflects and

communicates the meaning and constitution of society. The codes of music are communicated through tools (the voice, instruments), stockpiling points (master musicians, records), and distribution networks (a set of channels connecting the musical source to the listener) (Attali, 1985). Music is like a myth, which Attali describes as "the production of a code by a message, of rules by narrative" (1985: 28). The concept of music as myth is particularly useful in the study of regions in Irish traditional music that are a combination of narratives and sounds.

Table 9 Themes in the study of music presented by Jacques Attali.

1.	Listening	Identity. Way of understanding
2.	Sacrificing	Music as ritual / a part of life
3.	Representing	Create distinctive sounds, images, texts.
4.	Repeating	Process of transmission and communication primarily through recording and broadcasting
5.	Composing	Music for individual enjoyment

Source: Adapted from Attali (1985).

Attali recognises the social distinction between nature and culture, the process of localising and commodifying sound, the ability of groups to mobilise and give meaning to particular sounds as universal globalising aesthetic, political, and economic forces (Attali, 1985; Leyshon *et al*., 1998). Attali also recognises the role of music in the expression of identity, and the practice of conformity and statement of difference. The statement of

difference in and through music can have strong implications for the understanding of place. Music performs a role in the identification of place and provides a motive for social interaction.

The performance of live music, by necessity a local experience, helps define the characteristics of a place and create a sense of community (Street, 1993: 54; see also Kong, 1996). The sounds produced may be contrasted to represent differing social groups inhabiting the same or neighbouring spaces. Jazeel, a music geographer who cites the work of Susan J. Smith as groundbreaking in the development of music geography, stated:

> The analysis of music in the social sciences raises inherently geographical questions, particularly around how musical practice carves spaces of performance, expression and culture, and how it shapes social spaces of identity, belonging and community (2005: 233).

The space of musical performance helps create the context in which the music is experienced and interpreted. Small has outlined the meanings conveyed through the design and nature of musical spaces such as a concert hall. Other spaces of meaning are constructed through the construction of a landscape of memory by the creation of monuments and statuary. The meanings invested in the visual landscape and the sounds of that landscape, when combined, can offer perspectives about the people, society or organisation that designed, composed and constructed them.

The social structuring of music is examined through four types of networks that distribute musical sounds and meanings. The first is through the ritualistic use of music at the local level which is "centralized on the level of ideology and decentralized on the economic level" (Attali, 1985: 31). Music is a collective experience shared by all members of a localised community as part of a local culture from which local identity is derived. It has a mythical value, explored by Attali (1985) in relation to the Greek sirens encountered by Ulysses, or the Germanic tale of the Pied Piper of Hamelin. The value of music in rural Ireland as a pastime and, in some cases, an aid to physical labour, is part of the first network of music.

Attali identifies a new network that emerges with *representation*: "Music becomes a spectacle attended at specific places: concert halls, the closed space of the simulacrum of ritual – a confinement made necessary by the collection of entrance fees" (1985: 32). The dancehall changes the context for musical performance and the role of the music and

musician in society. Thus, the spaces of music connect and disconnect music with communities and society at large, segregating space and intensifying difference. Integral to understanding music as spectacle is the role of patronage and the commodification of music in shaping the sounds produced that, in turn, communicate meaning to and help shape society (Attali, 1985). The commodification of music led, in turn, to the development of music organisations that seek to control the economy of musical representation through limiting the performance of music and enforcing monetary transactions (Attali, 1985). Thus the power hierarchies that shape and seek to control the performance and production of music must be examined as part of the study of music in society.

The third network presented by Attali, repetition, is evident from the end of the nineteenth century through the advent of recording. The experience of music is individualised and may be removed from the social, economic or political contexts in which it was produced or for which it was intended. Attali suggests that in this context, music is "no longer a form of sociality, an opportunity for spectators to meet and communicate, but rather a tool making the individualized stockpiling of music possible on a huge scale" (1985: 32). Attali notes that:

> Recording has always been a means of social control, a stake in politics, regardless of the available technologies. Power is no longer content to enact its legitimacy; it records and reproduces the societies it rules. Stockpiling memory, retaining history or time, disturbing speech, and manipulating information has always been an attribute of civil and priestly power, beginning with the Tables of the Law […] Possessing the means of recording allows one to monitor noises, to maintain them, and to control their repetition within a determined code. In the final analysis, it allows one to impose one's own noise and to silence others (1985: 87).

The role of recording in shaping the development of Irish traditional music is crucial in understanding the changing role and meaning of place in Irish traditional music. The recording industry, the radio, television and internet broadcasting are part of globalisation process that allows people access to performances of Irish traditional music from beyond their immediate locality. Recording has also fed myths concerning place, privileging individual performers who are used in the myths and stories of place and regions.

Repetition also impacts on the economic value of music (Attali, 1985). Attali notes that the initial idea for recording was the preservation of representation but it has led

to the deritualisation of music and the delimitation of barriers to the diffusion of music and the meaning that it incorporates. As a method for stabilising music, recording led to the increased transformation and development of music. The development of mass reproduction challenged the ability for audiences to interpret the codes inherent in music, if they could still be found. The role of music in identity changed and the relationship between music and place is altered. The emphasis of music production changes to involve the desires of youth culture and the desires to avoid the powerlessness of the individual in the modern world. Music, in the popular 'pop life dream' of youth culture, bestows power. Attali suggests: "The music of repetition becomes both a relation and a way of filling absent meaning in the world. It creates a system of apolitical, nonconflictual, idealized values" (1985: 110). Consumers produce a market for music and the music and musicians are secondary (Attali, 1985). Attali presents mass music as "a powerful factor in consumer integration, interclass levelling, [and] cultural homogenization" (1985: 111). The intensification of music production in Irish traditional music in recent years, challenges localised music communities and presents an opportunity for consumer integration that challenges conventional concepts for regions in Irish traditional music. There is a delocalization of power but, as argued in this thesis, there is a reciprocal relocalization of power in conflict with the mass production of music and the deritualisation of music.

The fourth network outlined by Attali concerns composition and the performance of music for the musicians own enjoyment:

> […] as self communication, with no other goal than his own pleasure, as something fundamentally outside all communication, as self-transcendence, a solitary, egotistical, non-commercial act (1985: 32).

The performance of music for the enjoyment of the musician is, when performed in public space, a social act that impacts on the geography of the musical tradition. Composition, as one of Attali's four social networks, abandons codes and reinvents the language of sound with each performance. Composition abandons power hierarchies that exist in previous social networks and challenges the role of consumer. Composition challenges stability and the ability to control, organise and understand music. Composition can also reinforce the need for geographical perspectives in the study of music. Attali notes: "When Cage opens the door to the concert hall to let the noise of the street in, he is regenerating all of music" (1985: 136). Thus, there is a need to understand the space in which the

composition – as disorganised and uncontrolled as it may be – is shaped by the space in which it is performed. The highly structured nature of Irish traditional music is in contrast to the consideration of composition as outlined by Attali, though the individualistic musical practices of Tommy Potts (Ó Suilleabháin, 1996) and, perhaps, Martin Hayes relate to Attali's description of free jazz. It is difficult to conceptualise and perhaps distinguish the fourth network as music may continue to communicate meaning and identity, even without the intention of the performer. Each of the four networks exists simultaneously in Irish traditional music.

Table 10 Framework for the study of popular music.

1.	Music and society	
2.	National conditions and national identity	
3.	Political economy of music	i) unions and licensing
		ii) Personal economics of performers
		iii) Opportunities for live performance
		iv) Recording industry and marketing
		v) Social encouragement

Source: Adapted from Robinson, *et al*., 1991.

The study *Music at the margins: Popular music and global cultural diversity* (Robinson, *et al*., 1991) provides an interesting framework for the study of music in context (Table 10). Though Irish traditional music is more generally termed folk music, it is a popular form of music, learned, performed and consumed by a large segment of the Irish population and an awareness of popular music studies is useful. The study is influenced by Wallis and Mahm (1984) and Attali (1985). The first section concerns popular music and society, noting the social aspects of the performance and consumption

of music. The second section examines national conditions and links are made to the expression of national identity. The main themes concern issues of modernisation, musical change, links to and the role of 'ancient' music. Though Irish traditional music does not feature, these themes resonate with the contexts and discourse of Irish traditional music explored in this and later chapters. The third section presents a framework for examining popular music, influenced by the concerns of the political economy of music.

The first element examining the political economy of popular music concerns unions and licensing. In the context of this study, it relates to an examination of institutionalisation and the central role of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in the development of Irish traditional music. The second concerns personal economics including the ability to purchase instruments and can relate to the economics of and employment opportunities in a region. The third concerns live performance and considers opportunities, venues and festivals. The fourth concerns the recording industry and marketing, one of the processes examined in the changing geography of Irish traditional music in Chapter Four of this study. The fifth considers social encouragement, which stems from family, school, lifestyle and status of the music. The concept of heritage and belonging to a community is integral to the imagination of a musical region. The role of instruments is also considered, with particular reference to the social and political meanings attached to instruments (see also in relation to Irish traditional music, Smith, 1997; Comerford, 2003). The role and influence of various processes such as globalization, economic change and socio-political structures are also considered. The focus of the work is very much on the context for music and though it intends to study the perception of musicians on the periphery, it does so from a perspective defined by the centre (Frith, 1991).

Developed in part from a natural interest in and enthusiasm for music amongst geographers, a conference entitled "The Place of Music" was held in 1993 at University College London. That was followed in 1995 by a theme issue of *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* concerning music and in 1998 a book entitled *The Place of Music*, edited by Andrew Leyshon, David Matless and George Revill. In the preface, the book sets out a desire for the exploration of the geographical imagination in a transdisciplinary approach without suggesting that one discipline should 'colonise' others. Indeed, it states: "Many of the contributors to this volume would not style themselves as

geographers and may have been surprised to be approached by those who do" (Leyshon, *et al*. 1998: ix). The relationship between music and place and the development of a geographical awareness of the existence and implications of musical practice underscores this and subsequent works. The interdisciplinarity of *The Place of Music* highlights the integrated approach to the study of music that is particularly apparent in geography. It is influenced to a significant degree by the work of Attali (1985).

Scottish geographer Francis Morton has outlined how *The Place of Music* provides researchers with an insight into the opportunities for the geographical study of music and "the benefits of music to the spatial imagination" (Morton, 2001: 22). In contrast to the Sauerian influenced American geographies of music that focused on regions, location and diffusion, the British School of 'the geography of music' presents further opportunities for the study of dislocated musics and music spaces. Indeed in the introduction the editors reject the "deliberately restricted sense of geography" of previous studies in favour of examining the spatiality of music (Leyshon *et al*., 1998: 4). The political economy of music is acknowledged in many of the articles and an emphasis is placed on local music spaces. Lovering asserts: "Local live music, while not necessarily producing an alternative sound, may enable people to experience music in distinctive, localised ways" (1998: 15). *The Place of Music* is an important reference text in recognising the various and increasingly diverse approaches to the geography of music.

In spite of the editors apparent rejection of older geographies of music, a number of phenomena, processes and patterns are studied by the authors in *The Place of Music*, though where Carney is primarily concerned with processes, authors in *The Place of Music* are, like Attali, concerned with networks. Farrell (1998) examines the role of recordings of local music in an Indian context, aware not only of the music on the recordings but also of the spaces in which the recordings were made, aspects of diversity not represented by a catalogue of recorded music and the use of images that become associated with the music. A number of authors recognise the importance of music, social and spatial networks in the political economy of music that may be linked by a number of processes including the sharing of memory, stories, radio, and print media. Music can act as a mode of communication or representation of social and political identity or struggle. Herbert (1998) notes the development of brass bands in Victorian England as a reflection of the social change of the era. Sweeney-Turner (1998) acknowledges the use of language

and the role of singers in influencing political change in Scotland. Stradling (1998) acknowledges desires for a national music. Berland (1998) focuses on the role of the radio in the mediation of space, recognising also that the radio creates new spaces as space is made active. These spaces, though often highly personal, are controlled to a degree by the political economy of music. The role of the media in negotiating space is part of processes of globalization and localization, identified by Hollows and Milestone (1998) as elements in the politics of identity bound up in the identification of regions. Hollows and Milestone (1998) also identify the importance of pilgrimage in the spatial geography of music.

Highlighting the importance of understanding the social context for music, Lovering states: "Music is a collective experience" and "[s]patial proximity is a prerequisite for all sorts of creative musical activity" (1998: 47). Live music is, by necessity, a local experience (Leyshon, *et al*., 1998). Leppert (1998) identifies the sonoric landscape, which is both heard and seen, that acknowledges that sound is all around us and helps to locate us. Leppert also acknowledges that "sounds produced or manipulated by humans result from conscious acts, and hence carry a semantic and discursive charge" (1998: 292). Leppert asserts that all sounds may be read and interpreted and may be used to account for a sense of reality. Music is identified by Leppert as a lived experience, emphasising the need to understand the contexts and spaces in which music is experienced.

Writing about the importance of understanding the local spaces, Meegan (1995) emphasises the role of social relationships in constructing a place. Social relationships are also integral to understanding the evolution of musical traditions and the connection between music and place. Ó Suilleabháin highlights the importance of a social context and the "meeting of bodies in space" for the development of traditional music (see O'Connor, 2001: 9). Though music is an integral part of the social environment of Ireland, Gibbons states that "though much valuable work has been done on Irish society from the point of view of economic development, political mobilization, and administrative structures, very little has focused on culture as a set of material practices informing and constituting the social environment" (1996: 10). Bohlman highlights the importance of understanding the social context of music as a performed practice:

> Because folk music is inevitably a performed genre, it is essential to consider its social basis. Who performs? To whom are performances directed? Is folk music shared broadly throughout a community? Or is it maintained by a small group of specialists (1988: 53).

Bohlman's questions are related to particular approaches in ethnomusicology that can inform a geographical approach to the study of music. People, community and society are emphasised but consideration must also be given to the location of cultural performances. Spaces for the performance, transmission and consumption of Irish traditional music are key elements of Ireland's social environment, not only in rural Ireland but also in urban centres.

Music and the political economy of music are related to social order and the reality of space. Interaction with spaces is based on local cultural norms. The behaviours of compliance and non-compliance with local cultural norms are of immediate interest to geographers. Whitley asserts in the context of popular music:

> […] the search for social and cultural meanings in popular music texts inevitably involves an examination of the urban and rural spaces in which music is experienced on a day-to-day basis. As well as providing the socio-cultural backdrop for distinctive musical practices and innovations, urban and rural spaces also provide the rich experiential settings in which music is consumed (2004: 2).

The development of new spaces for Irish traditional music, such as the dance hall, the public house and the university, and their impacts on the production and consumption of that music is, as yet, not fully explored from a geographical perspective. Spaces for the production and consumption of music are part of the cultural landscape. As Duffy points out: "The most ubiquitous examples of human modification of the environment are found in buildings and constructions which accompanied the course of settlement in the area" (2007: 101). As geography becomes more aware of the different senses, having focused on the visual for much of its development, it becomes more aware of music (Smith, 1994, 2000; Jazeel, 2005; Waterman, 2006).

Music can be understood as a social action that involves the expression of identity. Music exists in and shapes various spaces that make up the landscape. As well as musical uniqueness, often explored through the concept of musical style, the stories concerning musical traditions are integral in understanding and constructing place, region and tradition. The existing literature presents two concurrent yet conflicting paths in the

geographical study of music – the connection of music and place and the deterritorialization of music. The connection between music and place may be examined both historically and in the present. The historical connections between music and place may involve the celebration of historical narratives concerning music and musicians or the construction of music as heritage. As Graham notes, heritage is a social construction that is "imagined, defined and articulated within cultural and economic practice" (2002: 1003) and "capable of being interpreted differently within any one culture at any one time, as well as between cultures and through time" (2002: 1004). Thus it is the interpretation of the meaning in music as heritage that is central to the study. Drawing on the paradigms of human geography, the stories and representations of heritage are central to understanding the geography of Irish traditional music. The construction of heritage and performance of music are part of the everyday lives of people in the present.

2.4 Conclusion

Music geography has emerged and evolved informed by two traditions of cultural geography. While Carney's geography of music, influenced by Sauer and other primarily American studies, concentrates on patterns of location and diffusion, a British based discourse on music geography is more concerned with spaces, networks and contexts for the performance and consumption of music and identity. Both approaches consider the role and representation of landscape. Understanding the process of representation is important in understanding the geography of music. Music is itself a representation but is also the subject of representations. When music as a representation is translated it takes on additional meaning and connection to place and landscape. Individual performers, composers and teachers contribute to the soundscape of the area in which they perform. The spaces in which the music is performed and consumed shapes the sounds of the music and influences choices concerning instrumentation and the use of music. The media and music industry contribute to regional identity and the imagination and representation of regions in Irish traditional music. Influenced by Attali (1985), the British based discourse is influenced by the political economy of music and the role of economics and politics in the development and interpretation of music.

Irish traditional music is a rich tradition that references many people and places. The relationship between people, place and culture constructs a geography that is largely

unexplored in the context of Irish traditional music. The disciplines of geography and ethnomusicology can both be applied to enhance an understanding of the relationships between people, place and music. While geographers are primarily concerned with place (Graham, 1997), ethnomusicology is also concerned with concepts of place and location (Nettl, 1964, 2005). The concept of the region is a shared element of geographical and ethnomusicological studies of music. The literature and development of both disciplines demonstrates an openness towards interdisciplinary approaches.

Chapter 3

Terminology and context

3.1 Introduction

A principal challenge in my research is the reconciliation of geographical and ethnomusicological approaches and perspectives. Despite the shared themes and approaches in geography and ethnomusicology outlined in the previous chapter, a number of differences in the use of various terms and concepts present an impediment to an interdisciplinary study. This chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, the use of terminology such as 'place' and 'region', which are central to geographical discourse and the development of my research are explored and developed. Other terms and discourses relevant to the development of my research are also examined including 'landscape' and 'soundscape', with particular emphasis placed on understanding the 'cultural landscape'. The concept of culture is also explored with particular consideration of the role of culture as heritage. A recurring aspect in this chapter is the role of economic factors in shaping places, regions, boundaries, culture, heritage, landscape and soundscape.

The content of the second section focuses on the contexts for the geographical study of music and the connection between music and place. Identifying an approach to the study of music that focuses on music as culture, the concept of culture is further complicated by the transformation or use of culture to or as heritage. An important element in understanding the regional geography of Irish traditional music involves an understanding of the role of memory and the creation of representation. Economic and political factors create a context for the development of heritage, of which music can be a part.

3.2 Place, region and boundaries

An understanding of regions in Irish traditional music must consider the role of spaces and places in contributing to the identity of the region and the various forms of space in which Irish traditional music is heard, performed and transmitted. Spaces and places are part of the landscape of a region. Describing the geography of society as a mosaic, Massey (1984) highlights the importance of understanding how different elements of society and culture interact in particular spaces to create a complex geography of human life and activity.

Table 11 The meaning of place.

Place is the concrete setting for human lives, activity and movement – an amalgam of spaces.
Place is a socially constructed entity, always involved in a process of becoming.
Histories, the sense of the past, and the historical emergence of place meanings inform the understanding of a place.
Places are multicoded and may be constructed at both the personalised and collectivised levels.
The construction and interpretation of place is shaped by the power of "ordinary" people who interact with places and by the power of others.
Places are reinterpreted and reconstructed by various social groups over time.
The existence of communities, both as territorial and symbolic constructs, influences the meaning and significance of place.
Identity and place are interconnected: each place has an identity and people identify with a place.

Source: Adapted from Kong and Yeoh (1995).

The understanding of place and the differentiation between space and place is fundamental to the development of the geographic imagination. Space may be considered as an extension of the physical world. According to Harrison and Dourish, space is a "three-dimensional environment, in which objects and events occur and in which they have relative position and direction" (1996: 2). In contrast, places are spaces that have acquired or been ascribed meaning. Everybody lives in a place and time that is unique. Carney notes: "All places possess individual physical (e.g. landforms and climate) and cultural (e.g. religion and music) traits that make them different from other places" (Carney, 1995: 12). People are essential to understanding place. Highlighting the multitude of ways of explaining or interpreting 'place', Holloway and Hubbard argue that a place may be defined as: "a bounded location, a space of flows (i.e. open to variable external social, economic and political influences), as a locale defined through peoples' subjective feelings, as the context for social and political relations or as a place created through media images" (2001: 7). The complexity of place requires consideration of the

various agents, including residents of a place and the media who construct images of place, as well as time and political governance. Kong and Yeoh (1995) provide a framework for understanding the meaning and making of place (Table 11).

Noting the role of people as "active participants in the historically contingent process of the making of place" (1995: 2), Kong and Yeoh recognise place as a process. Places are a combination of concrete settings of the present, memory and imagination, as well as simulations and iconographies. Place is not determined at one point in time but rather reinterpreted and reconstructed by both those who interact with that place and others outside that place. Noting the uniqueness of a place, Massey argues: "what gives a place its specificity is not some long internalized history but the fact that it is constructed out of a particular constellation of relations, articulated together at a particular locus" (1993: 66). Place is, thus, a process, shaped by complex power geometries that involve the interaction of people and space. The events that occur in a particular place happen only in that place at that time and contribute to the specificity of that place. These events are remembered through stories and other representations. Exploring the connection between place and history, Kong and Yeoh note: "Place is also explored as a repository of both individual and collective memories, and while such memories may evolve spontaneously, they may also be imposed by the state" (1995: 5). Music acts as both a social action and an expression of memory and identity, supported by social institutions and motivated by social, political and economic contexts and ideologies that reinforce the identity and construction of place.

Spaces and places that exhibit common traits may be grouped under the term 'region'. The difficulties in the terminology used in the discourse on regions are acknowledged by Holmen, who notes:

> The first thing that strikes a reader is that the very term 'region' presently seems to be perceived as so contaminated that concepts like 'place', 'locale', 'locality' and 'territory' are preferred. However, this is often done without specification of the scale of the region we are dealing with and uses of the terminology are often inconsistent and contradictory (1995: 52).

Glassie defines a region as "a section of a geographical whole established by an analysis of comparable material found throughout the whole" (1971: 34). It is important to outline, examine and understand the development and existence of culture at the core of the cultural region and examine the various processes that shape and diffuse that culture.

The region is regarded as one of geographies "central objects of study" (Allen and Massey, 1998: 1). The importance of the concept of regions in geography is outlined by Grigg, who states: "In the last half century there have been great changes in the aims and methods of academic geography yet in spite of these changes geographers have remained concerned with the idea of the region and have used regional methods of investigation not only in regional geography but also in the systematic branches of the subject" (1968: 461). Three approaches may be identified in the study of regions. The first concerns the use of the concept of regions as a way to examine and organise information about the world. The motivation and rationale for this division, the characteristics used in determining the region and the methods used to examine the region are important in understanding the importance and usefulness of the region. The second approach, which is influenced by the humanist paradigms in geography, concerns how people develop a sense of place and express that sense of place through stories, as well as music, song and dance. The articulation of regional identity by a group or society, often with political or economic motives, contributes to the process of regionalism. The third approach concerns an examination of the representation of regions.

Regions may be understood as a human construct. A region is defined by those who write about their experiences or tell stories demonstrating shared cultural traits in an area. Influenced by Tuan (1991), Graham states: "Regions may have no existence outside the consciousness of geographers" (1997a: 3). Regions are constructed and created by the work and eloquence of geographers (Tuan, 1991; Graham, 1997a). The concept of regions provides a useful framework for organising information. In an attempt to outline the role of regions in the development of a geographical understanding of Ireland, Horner suggests:

> At its most basic, Geography, as a discipline with a strong interest in space and place, finds itself challenged to describe Ireland, past and present, in an accurate, effective manner. One way to do this is to divide Ireland into regions, and to use regions as a framework for organising information (1993: 5).

The focus on regions of Ireland has been a fundamental part of Irish geography. The rhetoric of the region is overtly present in the work of influential Irish geographers such as Estyn Evans's work on the north of Ireland (Graham, 1994). Attempts to develop an understanding of Irish traditional music have also sought to divide Ireland into regions

and use regions as a framework to understand differences within the musical tradition (Ó Riada, 1962; Mac Aoidh, 1994; Ní hUallacháin, 2003). Cultural geographers use culture as they seek to find "a rational and fundamental basis for dividing the earth's surface into its most significant parts" (Russell and Kniffen, 1969: 6). Regions exist on a variety of scales, dependent on the decisions of those who define the region.

A region may be identified by the shared cultural elements practised by the people in the spaces of that place or region, termed a 'culture region'. Outlining the region as the basic unit of geographical study, Carney defines the region as:

> […] an area that displays some degree of unity in terms of selected criteria. The criteria chosen to define a particular region determines the usefulness of the concept. Regions may be based on either cultural or physical characteristics, or a combination of both. The chosen characteristics set this area apart from others surrounding it (2001: 263).

In a critique of the approaches of Sauer, Hartshorne argues that cultural geography should not be limited to the study of visible or material features as:

> Our thoughts are expressed not only in the things which we make but also in the manner and content of what we speak, sing, or dance, in what we write, vote, or tell the census collector […] The student of cultural geography who permits an arbitrary rule to forbid him from studying these observable expressions of culture is depriving himself of the possibility of achieving […] the interpretation of cultural geographic regions (1939: 235).

Despite Hartshorne's concerns, music remained peripheral to the study of regions until late in the twentieth century. However, echoing Hartshorne and highlighting the complexities of studying the interpretation of cultural geographic regions through music, Erlman suggests that "music is particularly suited to the construction of local communities because it is itself one of the most powerful and yet most poorly understood means of producing a sense of locality and local identity" (1998: 12). The concept of the region is integral to ethnomusicological theories on a cartography of music (Collaer and Merriam, 1958; Nettl, 1960; Nettl, 1964). Stylistic differences in the performance of music are important cultural characteristics in the identification of regional difference.

The core of a region is that area where the culture is deemed to be strongest, where the culture evolves most quickly and from where culture and ideas are diffused. Having identified the core of a region and the various processes that shape the culture of the

region, it is necessary to develop an understanding of and identify boundaries and borders. Grigg states: "The boundaries of regions have always presented problems to geographers. If a region is thought to be a real entity then it must be presumed to have clear and determinable limits" (1968: 478). The understanding of regions based on culture and heritage and the processes of diffusion of culture challenge the clear definition of boundaries in regions and demand a qualitative understanding of regions.

The need for a qualitative understanding of culture regions is not new. In the 1960s Weiss noted: "Culture areas are not only spatially determined by their centre, core and areas of radiation, but they are also, as seen cartographically, qualitatively stamped by certain cultural dominants like religion, speech, and political, economic or natural unity that carry a mass of cultural symbols" (1962: 73). Geographical interest in the study of regions declined through the latter half of the twentieth century but the concept of the region has been revitalised in recent years. When writing about a resurgence in regional interest, Paasi suggests that 'this old idea has gained new importance, not only in geography but also in such fields as cultural/economic history, literature, anthropology, political science, sociology, psychology and musicology" (2003: 475). There is a need in new cultural geographies to focus on the qualitative aspects of the cultural region, recognising that regions are constructed through social relationships (Meegan, 1995), a perspective that equates with new geographies of music outlined in the previous chapter. With the increasing interest of geography in musical cultures, and the desire of ethnomusicologists to consider concepts of place and region, an understanding of the concept of the region is crucial to further study in the field of music geography.

Aware of critiques of regional geography relating to studies that appear to focus on topography, agriculture and the natural environment and the possibility that they are imbued with the discredited values of environmental determinism (Cloke, 1991, 1997; Holmen, 1995; Crang, 1998), Lomnitz-Adler focuses on topography as one of three criteria for the study of regions. However, he contests the importance of defining a region topographically, stating:

> Although spatial organization always involves geographic space in one way or another, it is important not to define the notion of region topographically, since the relationship between topography and region will depend entirely on the nature of the system of interaction that is being investigated (Lomnitz-Adler, 1991: 212).

The role of agriculture in the history of Ireland and Irish traditional music, the real and imaginary role of rivers such as the Shannon as dividing forces, and the real and symbolic role of mountains in the narratives of place in Ireland are present in the narratives of Irish traditional music. What is crucial is the way in which these topographical elements are considered in the examination of musical culture. These characteristics and phenomena are subject to change and these changes further impact on the development of the region. The changing role and nature of agriculture and settlement patterns presents a challenge to the contexts in which Irish traditional music is performed and shaped, thus impacting on the nature and development of regions within the tradition.

Regional geography has increasingly moved away from documenting the phenomena of regions and focused increasingly on the processes involved in the construction of regions. Gill notes that 'neo-regional' geography is "focused on specific questions and is informed by theory, rather than regional description" (1995: 20). The phenomena that are examined become part of the explanation of process. It is also important to recognise diversity within a region. As Hagerstrand states: "Everything which is present in a bounded part of the world has to be recognized as playing a role there" (1983: 378). Regions may also be recognised as a process, which is dependent on a number of other processes. Recognising the importance of history on the evolution of a region, Paasi states: "Regions are historically contingent processes, related in different ways to political, government, economic and cultural practices and discourses" (Paasi, 2003: 481). Hollows and Milestone (1998) note the importance of stories, legends and traditions in maintaining a sense of regional identity during periods when the cultural traits and activities are not prominent. The process of change is itself of interest to geographical study. As Massey states: "a locality […] may be selected as being exemplary of particular sets of forces or changes" (Massey, 1993: 148). Regions, whether based on physical or cultural characteristics, are subject to the moulding force of human culture.

The study of regions is not simply about studying a particular region in isolation. When developed as an analytical discourse, the study of regions can "enhance a person's understanding of and empathy with the wider global context" (O'Brien, 2000: 202). Thus regions cannot be studied independently – studies should be informed by the wider global forces, particularly those emanating from within a cultural whole (Lomnitz-Adler, 1991;

Massey 1993; O'Brien, 2000). Neither can general rules be applied to regions as regions must be considered on their own distinctiveness (Holmen, 1995; Paasi, 2003). The distinctiveness of cultural regions is dependent on a study of the culture and heritage of the region and an understanding of the factors that shape culture and heritage in a region.

Table 12 Seven aspects for the study of regions.

1.	Identification and examination of the principal cultural traits at the core of the region.
2.	Identification, creation and nature of regions, borders and boundaries.
3.	The economic, political and social contexts for the existence of regional difference.
4.	The elimination of boundaries and regional difference.
5.	The representation of regional identity and culture.
6.	Patterns of diffusion of regional culture and identity.
7.	Processes and agents of change in regional culture and identity.

Source: Author.

Understanding the concept and complexities of a region is integral to a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. Seven interconnected aspects of the region are considered in this chapter (Table 12). The first aspect of examining the region concerns identification and examination of the principal cultural traits at the core of the region. The second aspect of regions considered involves the identification and nature of borders and boundaries and their importance to understanding the region. The third considers the economic, political and social contexts for the existence of regional difference and the dichotomy that exists between discourses on regions and globalization. Economic, political and social contexts provide the motivation for regional identities to emerge and be celebrated. The fourth aspect concerns the representation of regional identity and

culture. The fifth aspect concerns the processes and patterns of diffusion of regional culture and identity. The sixth examines the changing nature of the region and regional culture. The seventh aspect emanates from modernisation theory and the prediction of homogenized global culture as a result of globalization. Regions exist as processes dependent on social networks, the representation of regional identity and systems of diffusion. It is the second aspect, that of identifying boundaries, that is often the most difficult in defining the region. The technological advancements such as the phonograph and radio have had enormous impacts on both the sound and geography of music, particularly in relation to the delimitation of both musical and geographical boundaries. The creation of boundaries, technological developments, the representation of culture and patterns of diffusion of culture are influenced by economic, political and social conditions.

In the context of competing discourses related to the concept of globalization, the concept of a borderless world has emerged. In a critique of the concept of a borderless world, Newman (2006) notes two approaches to the concept of borders – the notion that borders constitute 'process' as opposed to simply 'pattern', and the concept of borders as 'institution' which must be managed and perpetuated. The presentation of borders as institution contrasts with the "physical lines which are simply the static and locational outcoming of the social and political decision-making process" (Newman, 2006: 148). The contrast between boundaries as a fixed political entity and an evolving cultural creation is explored and critiqued in relation to state boundaries in the United States of America by Ryden (1993) and in relation to national boundaries by Agnew (2007). The different processes in boundary making can also be examined where cultural boundaries differ from political demarcations (Hudson, 2006). Borders create and reflect difference between people and places but must be perpetuated and their existence and meaning transmitted to future generations. Newman (2006) suggests that it is the process of 'bordering', through which borders are demarcated and managed, to which scholars should turn their attention.

In a study of international boundaries, focusing on the historical evolution of Macedonian and Greek spatial identities, Agnew (2007) notes the importance of different historical processes in the construction of borders. Agnew is conscious of the conventional understanding of borders as "boundary lines between self-evident states

whose existence was presumed to reflect physical features or international treaties and which, in a somewhat later conventional wisdom, served various economic or social 'functions'" (2007: 399). Similarly, Newman states: "As geographers, we have traditionally understood borders (or boundaries) as constituting the physical and highly visible lines of separation between political, social and economic spaces" (2006: 144). Newman (2006) recognises the recognition of bordering as a process that affects people's lives on a daily basis at all scales of sociospatial activity. Agnew also points to a more recent understanding of borders as "socio-territorial constructs reflecting the discourse and practices of national identity and bordering under conditions of globalization" (2007: 399). Music can be used as an integrating component in the development of national identity, as outlined by Scruggs (1999) in relation to Nicaragua and as a mirror of national debates, as outlined by Bastos (1999) in the context of Brazil. People from disconnected communities on either side of the Nicaragua with different histories were presented with a new national identity that included elements of previously distinct musical traditions (Scruggs, 1999). The evolution of Brazilian music reflects and allows people to connect with changes in Brazilian society (Bastos, 1999). The concept of regions and identities as processes and the new understanding of boundaries outlined by Scruggs (1999) and Agnew (2007) allow for movement, evident in the discourse surrounding the Sliabh Luachra region as explored in chapters six and seven.

The role of social networks and human interaction in the imagination and representation of boundaries is crucial to understanding the development of regions as processes. As noted in relation to cyberspace and ideological constructions of borders, geography must consider a new understanding of the term border, which carries connotations for our understanding of regions. Borders can be both territorial and non-territorial. The ideological borders that are developed by society impact on the construction of physical borders while territorial borders can similarly impact on the way people think and act. In all cases, borders are processes that are continually reshaped. Newman notes:

> While many geographers are unable to grasp the idea that a border can be a non-territorial construct, many sociologists and psychologists are equally unable to fathom why territory should play such a dominant role in our contemporary understanding of borders, as though the only unit of societal ordering which requires categorization and compartmentalization is the physical space in which we reside. Hardcore geographers understand

> borders as constituting the physical lines separating States in the international system and, in some cases, the administrative lines separating municipalities and planning regions. Sociologists and anthropologists understand borders as being the abstract lines of separation between the 'us' and the 'them', the 'here' and the 'there', and as constituting the very essence of difference (2006: 154).

Newman highlights an opportunity for interdisciplinary understanding of the terminology involved in the study of borders and regions. Borders divide communities of people. Developing a discourse within social anthropology but useful to regional cultural geographies, Cohen attempts to define the concept of boundaries:

> By definition, the boundary marks the beginning and end of a community […] the boundary encapsulates the identity of the community and, like the identity of an individual, is called into being by the exigencies of social interaction. Boundaries are marked because they are, or wish to be, distinguished. The manner in which they are marked depends entirely upon the specific community in question. Some, like national or administrative boundaries, may be statutory and enshrined in law. Some may be physical, expressed, perhaps, by a mountain range or a sea. Some may be racial or linguistic or religious. But not all boundaries and not all the components of any boundaries are so objectively apparent. They may be thought of, rather, as existing in the minds of their beholders. This being so, the boundary may be perceived in rather different terms, not only by people on opposite sides of it, but also by people on the same side (1985: 20).

If borders exist in the mind of the beholders, they must be communicated in some form to those who do not recognise them. In communicating information about borders, the border is reshaped and given new meaning.

In an examination of the concept of state boundaries in America, Ryden (1993) attempts to interpret the visual signs that point to the abstract geographical, legal and political constructs despite the limited difference in lived realities. Ryden notes the dual existence of boundaries as imagined entities and lived identities. It is important to note the difference between a border imposed on a community and those constructed by forces within that community. Commenting on the concept of borders and boundaries in geographical discourse, Ryden states:

> Borders and boundaries usually tend to be thought of more as abstract geographical, legal and political constructs than as lived realities, as arbitrary lines inked onto the map but not reflected on the land. Nevertheless, boundaries - not those drawn by surveyors and cartographers and marked by fences and signs but those superimposed on the land and inscribed in the mind through the daily experience of inhabiting a locality;

> not those erected fiercely from without but those pushed out gently from within - are frequently an important component of people's lived sense of place. Such borders, more than political demarcations, give geography order and meaning and help carve a place out of undifferentiated space (1993: 68).

Ryden emphasises the role of boundaries in the everyday lives of people and the importance of boundaries in this context in geographical study. Newman also proposes an understanding of boundaries as transition zones, "straddling the line on both sides and constituting a place of contact where difference is diluted and reconstructed as a sort of borderland hybridity" (2006: 151). However, Newman also recognises that these transition zones can become spaces where notions of difference and borders are reinforced.

Though challenged by theories of globalization and modernization the concept of borders and boundaries are critical to our understanding of the geographical patterns. Thompson argues: "Like the rest of space, regions are now conceived as multiple, shifting, and contingent, with porous boundaries if they are 'bounded' at all" (2006: 67). Borders are part of society's everyday interaction with space. Newman presents a thesis of a renaissance in the concept of boundaries. Introducing a paper considering borders in a 'borderless' world, Newman states:

> We live in a world of lines and compartments. We may not necessarily see the lines, but they order our daily life practices, strengthening our belonging to, and identity with, places and groups, while – at one and the same time – perpetuating and reperpetuating notions of difference and othering (2006: 143).

Thus Newman recognises bordering as a process. Newman is also conscious of the discourse of globalization and modernization theory and concepts of a borderless world but claims "it is not possible to imagine a world which is borderless or deterritorialized" (2006). Newman instead interrogates the understanding of the concept of borders and boundaries and the rigidness that is sometimes implied.

Cyberspace presents a new challenge to the imagination of boundaries, viewed by some as the "ultimate proof of the borderless and deterritorialized world" (Newman, 2006). Newman also notes that, despite an opening of many boundaries and greater mobility amongst the human population, most people retain strong ethnic or national affiliations or loyalties. Indeed, Newman states:

> The global access to cyberspace and the unhindered spatial dissemination of information and knowledge has, paradoxically, engendered a national identity among diaspora populations which have previously been remote and dislocated from their places (or parents' places) of origin, but who are now possessed with more information, and greater ease of access, to the ancestral (sic) homelands, and identify with the causes and struggles of the ethnic or national groups in faraway places (2006: 147)

In a historical appreciation of the effects of migration and distance on Irish traditional music, understanding the role of the Irish diaspora in the development of Irish traditional music is critical (Hall, 1995; Ó hAllmhuráin, 1998). A number of agents and processes in Irish traditional music impact upon and facilitate global membership of an Irish traditional music community. Migration helped to overcome the impact of musical boundaries within the tradition but highlighted geographical boundaries and distance. The links between Irish traditional music around the world are highlighted by the organisation *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, its premier festival *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann*, its periodic journal *Treoir*, and its website with WebTV programming www.comhaltas.ie and Comhaltaslive. Paradoxically, websites highlight and institutionalise regional differences and present regional differences to a global audience.

Globalization, a process relating to the elimination of boundaries around the world, has been a prominent theory in geographical discourse in the latter half of the twentieth century. Jackson points out that globalization is "held responsible for the erosion of local difference" (2004: 165), yet a number of studies highlight the renewed interest in regional and local studies in response to the discourse (Applegate, 1999; Kong, 1999; O'Brien, 2000). Just as general interest in local identities is flourishing, academic curiosity in local studies has also been revitalised. As O'Brien states: "It may seem a contradiction in this era of globalization, with the world reduced to the click of a 'mouse', that interest in and promotion of local studies should be flourishing" (2000: 202). A number of scholars have argued that the fascination with globalization in academic discourse has led to the generation of localised studies and 'countervailing moves towards localization' (Haggett, 1988; Gill, 1995; O'Brien, 2000; Newman, 2006). Predictions relating to globalization from the mid-twentieth century have been declared, at least for the moment, over zealous. Mitchell points to the strengthening of some religious sects in the face of globalization and their impact on world politics as an example of the growing importance of the acknowledgement of difference and the need to develop greater understanding between cultures (Mitchell, 2000:7). Similarly Newman (2006) notes that

while some borders are indeed being eliminated through processes of globalization, other borders are being constructed. Newman presents the example of 9/11 as an occasion when boundaries become more apparent and rigidly controlled. As a result of the 9/11 attacks on The World Trade Centre and other locations, security levels on international flights increased with more rigid border controls. Through news reporting relating to events such as the invasion of Afghanistan and the development of 'the war on terror', often including images from reporters in the field, cultural differences between groups of people from around the world became more evident and more widely diffused.

Table 13 Aspects of modernization theory that challenge the existence of regions.

1.	Regional economies to be absorbed into nationally based markets, regulated by national economic institutions, and homogenized by the effects of labour and capital mobility
2.	Development of control by the central institutions of the nation-state
3.	Development of national cultures, expressed in a common language, disseminated through educational and artistic institutions, and represented in all manner of central monuments, rituals, and common experiences.

Source: Applegate (1999).

In a study outlining the interest in regions within Europe, Applegate (1999) presents a critique of modernisation theory, focusing on regions of nationalism within Europe. She presents three distinct aspects of the theory for consideration that describe the economic, political and cultural disappearance of the region (Table 13). Applegate notes that "regions were slated to disappear as economic entities, their distinctive economic strengths and weaknesses gradually attenuated when they became absorbed into nationally based markets, regulated by national economic institutions, and homogenized by the effects of labor and capital mobility" (1999: 1163). There is a need for local economies to compete in a global system in a process that impacts upon regional identity and culture (Swyngedouw, 1989; Lomnitz-Adler, 1991; Narotzky, 2000). Tourism is an

integral and sometimes essential element of regional economies that can sometimes utilise and even exploit local culture for economic gain in the name of tourism (McLeod, 1999; Hiwasaki, 2000). Music and musical heritage can become part of local tourist products and the representations created for the tourist market.

The second element of modernisation theory critiqued by Applegate is the development of control by the central institutions of the nation-state. Nationally based political parties dominate legislative and electoral processes and concerns over boundaries are considered in the national context. Agnew (2007) recognises the influence of Western European concepts of statehood on the development of international borders around the world. Examining the conflicting Greek and Macedonian identities within the Greek state, Agnew notes: "The model of statehood has had as its central geographical moment the imposition of sharp borders between one state unit (imagined as a *nation*-state, however implausible that usually may be) and its neighbours" (2007: 398). The development of identities within these boundaries is not without influence from the local. Agnew points to the opposite, noting: "A wide array of locally-specific practices and influences invariably enter into the process [of nation-state making], from fighting wars, drawing maps, and organizing ministries to forming alliances, issuing decrees, and building schools" (2007: 398). The development of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, further explored in Chapter Five, is an example of a dominant body within the Irish traditional music world that was involved in the modernisation and subsequent revision of the narratives of Irish traditional music. The presentation of a national tradition of Irish traditional music transcends local traditions, as explored further in subsequent chapters.

The third element of modernisation theory outlined by Applegate relates to the "development of national cultures, expressed in a common language, disseminated through educational and artistic institutions, and represented in all manner of central monuments, rituals, and common experiences" (1999: 1163). The process outlined by Applegate is further explored by Scruggs (1999) in relation to the use of music in Nicaragua and Feldman (2002) in relation to Irish traditional music. McCarthy (1999, 2004) and Moloney (1995; 2000) also make reference to attempts by Irish nationalists and political powers to develop the use of music to express national identity or affiliation. Applegate notes that nationalism and national identity are at the core of each of the three elements of modernisation theory, thus challenging the role and development of regions

and regional identity. The thesis presented here considers the development of regional cultures and identities that are, in direct conflict with Applegate's consideration of national culture and identity in modernisation theory, the distinctive musical styles and sounds, disseminated through local educational and artistic institutions, and represented in all manner of local monuments, rituals and experiences.

At the core of Applegate's (1999) study of regions is the construction of regional identity, which is a process related to social, political and economic development. In the context of economics and consumer culture, Jackson notes: "While the pace and intensity of social change is impressive, its geographical impact is far from even" (2004: 165). Similarly, Cox notes "the stakes for some localities / regions / countries have been intensified as a result of increased geographically uneven development" (2004: 188). Applegate notes the construction of difference, particular in places that have not benefited from uneven social and economic development. McCarthy's (1999) study of music education in Ireland also notes geographically uneven development of education structures, linked in part to the role of music in local narratives and contemporary economic pressures. Other aspects of the tradition that demonstrate uneven distribution are examined further in chapters four and five. Agnew (2007) also notes, in reference to national identity, the constant reinvention of identity through the mobilization of population. When people move they often bring their traditions with them but these traditions are often changed, or maintained without the possibility for evolution, in the new contexts and spaces in which they exist (Gross, 1992). New spaces for the diffusion of Irish traditional music, facilitated by technology in cyberspace, must also be considered as they challenge conventional constructions of regional identity.

In spite of processes of globalization and increased connection between members of the Irish traditional music community, boundaries still exist within the tradition, be they social or geographical. The boundaries that exist in the music tradition are not independent of political boundaries, geographical distance and social attitudes (McNamee *et al.*, 1992). Influenced by the discourse of globalization, Newman states:

> It is passé to continue to spend our time discussing whether or not the world is becoming borderless or not. Globalization has had its impacts on some cross-border flows, such as cyberspace and the flow of capital, but it is clear to all scholars of borders that we live in a hierarchical world of

> rigid ordering and that borders – be they territorial or aspatial – are very much part of our daily lives (2006: 156)

The study of regions in Irish traditional music requires an understanding of the territorial and aspatial borders that exist within the tradition. The question inherent in much of the discussion in subsequent sections of this chapter considers whether Irish traditional music has, in the context of regional styles, been subjected to the powers of globalization or has survived and developed in the modern world. It may be argued that the traditional notions of regions and their locations have changed and exist in a new manifestation and context. However, regions and regional styles remain inherent in the discourse of Irish traditional music. In geography, and other disciplines besides, the concept of the region and the role of boundaries remain prominent.

The representation and communication of regional identity and difference is integral to the identification and recognition of regions. Human geography proposes that places and regions as processes that are lived and told. As Massey states in relation to places:

> One way of seeing 'places' is as on the surface of maps […] But to escape from an imagination of space as a surface is to abandon also that view of place. If space is rather a simultaneity of stories-so-far, then places are collections of those stories, articulations within the wider power-geometries of space. Their character will be a product of these intersections within that wider setting, and of what is made of them. And, too, of the non-meetings-up, the disconnections and the relations not established, the exclusions. All this contributes to the specificity of place (Massey, 2005: 130).

Similarly, Allen and Massey acknowledge that people tell stories of their histories that contribute to their identity and the identity of the places where they are and have been located. Emphasising the role of history in the identity of spaces and places Allen and Massey state:

> Spaces/places are constructed both materially and discursively, and each modality of this construction affects the other. Moreover, every place or region 'arrives' at the present moment trailing long histories: histories of economics and politics, of gender, class and ethnicity; and histories, too, of the many different stories which have been told about all of these. The complex ways in which a region is constructed and read at any time is the result of these histories and of what is made of them (1998: 9).

Thus, to understand a region, it is necessary to understand the historical evolution of the region. Rundell notes that social narratives "provide the temporal connection between

past, present and future and thus constitute our historicity […] all societies, whether they understand themselves as civilisations, nations or communities, from the most primitive to the most putatively postmodern, create, recreate and draw on narratives in order to make sense of the basic existential questions of origins, identity and history" (2003: 102). Stories are a manifestation of people's attempts to communicate ideas of time, space and place. Stories also exclude or write out elements of the regional narrative, landscape and tradition (Hobsbawn, 1983; Massey, 1991, 1993, 2005). The humanist approach does not abandon the physical spaces of culture. It recognises that places also have recognisable physical features. Geographers, influenced by the humanist approach, aim to recognise and analyse both the physical and cultural characteristics of a place communicated through the stories of the people in that place.

Stories are told and retold through various texts and media and stories of place can emanate from within or from outside a particular region. Tuan (1991) proposes a "narrative-descriptive approach" to examine the role of language in the 'making of place'. Stories are often told through conversation and speech is thus integral to the construction of place (Tuan, 1991; Jones, 2003). Tuan notes:

> Although speech alone cannot materially transform nature, it can direct attention, organize insignificant entities into significant composite wholes, and in so doing, make things formerly overlooked – and hence invisible and nonexistent – visible and real (1991: 685).

The context in which speech occurs – the political, economic or social motives that may exist - is also important to understand the process in which place is constructed. Speech and increasingly written texts are a form of empowerment for people and place.

The ability to interpret stories is built up through the cultural meaning acquired from social networks (Ryden, 1993; Massey, 1993; 2005). A particularly important aspect of the construction of place through social interaction is the process of naming that place (Tuan, 1991; Jones, 2003; Duffy, 2007). The process of naming draws attention to a place and makes it familiar (Tuan, 1991). Duffy states: "Naming place is a primary act of geographical appropriation, a demonstration of control over nature, the landscape and everything in it. Names create landscapes" (2007: 64). Combining the landscape as text approach of the Berkeley School and the narrative-descriptive approach present by Tuan, stories and landscape combine to present an understanding of place. Names, stories and histories are communicated through a number of 'texts' that include landscapes and, as

recognised more recently, soundscapes. It is the ability of music to communicate cultural values that leads to increased geographical interest in music (Attali, 1985; Leyshon *et al*., 1998; Whitley *et al*., 2004). Music, like a story, communicates the values of the place in which it is formed. The humanist approach in geography is concerned with the stories and experiences of people and places. The development of the humanist approach has allowed a greater appreciation of music as a geographical phenomenon. Music, like stories, communicates memories and cultural meaning. As Moore notes:

> The meanings the sounds have appropriated give them a reverence beyond their acoustic structures. They become, in effect, echoes of the sacred, passed without words from generation to generation, underpinning the notion that for communities united against a perceived threat, hearing as well as seeing is believing (2003: 274).

Stories as told from one generation to the next are an important part of many societies. Processes of transmission are also important in understanding the development and importance of musical traditions. I propose that regions are stories in the process of being told and retold. The story is told from a number of perspectives and influenced by a wide range of factors. An understanding of the dual role of memory and history is crucial to understanding regions as 'historically contingent processes' (Paasi, 2003: 481). The past manifests itself in a number of different forms. Photographs, stories, melodies, monuments and memorials are all influenced by both memory and history. These manifestations of the past are experienced in fieldwork. Tuan (2001) notes that while life itself is a field trip, we must differentiate between fact and experience. Different people have different experiences of the world and, in retelling or narrating these experiences, they shape the understanding of these experiences. Similarly, Hyndman (2001) notes that the past is not necessarily what happened but that which is narrated. In order to understand the processes of regional identity it is necessary to examine the development of culture, heritage and, in the context of recognising the role of economics in the development of regions, tourism.

3.3 Culture, heritage and tourism

'Culture' is a complex term. Reflecting on the development of cultural geography, Crang has noted more than 150 definitions of culture and suggests that, rather than a

definition, a number of principles may be used (1998). In *Cultural Geography*, Crang suggests that the guiding principal should be that "cultures are sets of beliefs or values that give meaning to ways of life and are produced (and are reproduced through) material and symbolic forms" (1998: 2). Culture is a set of patterns that have developed to set people off from one another by indicating membership of a group (Kearney, 1984; MacAloon, 1984; Wright, 1998). Culture also plays a role in the construction of the nation and national identity (Anderson, 1983; Billig, 1995). Geography has been associated with patriotism and the identity of nations and national boundaries (Bassin, 1997). Bassin notes the contribution of Russian geographers to the articulation of Russian national identity, as well as the various interpretations of the work of Friedrich Ratzel and the use of his theories in the rhetoric of World War II. In the process of constructing a place, a group lays out their position on the physical landscape through the farm systems, building patterns and streetscapes and later the development of a landscape of memory using monuments and other material constructions. Music can also be an important part of the processes of creating a sense of place and identity (Nettl, 1975; Cohen, 1993; Scruggs, 1999; Bastos, 1999).

Culture is embedded in imaginative creations such as art and music that have a social meaning within a community and may also be linked to the various social, economic, political and religious situations of their place and time. Cultural geography requires the ability to interpret the meaning in cultural performances and the various modes of communication used in a society. Anderson argues that culture refers to "shared codes of understanding, communication and practice that set one of the many contexts for human thought and action" (1999: 4). These codes are apparent in language, accent, fashion, food and music (Cohen, 1985; Carney, 1995, 1998a). Smith notes that human geography and the social sciences in general have "become sensitive to the politics and pleasures of art" (1997: 502). The arts are a reflection on and the product of the society and culture in which they are created. The distribution of these phenomena may be studied to create cartographic representations of cultural regions.

A crucial element in the study of culture is the opinion that culture is not static (Russell and Kniffen, 1969; Miller, 1987; Anderson, 1999). Culture changes over time at differing speeds, causing places and spaces to evolve differently, with differing interpretations of their identity, at different points in time. Part of that change may be

examined through the diffusion of cultural traits. Maintaining a connection with the concept of place, Russell and Kniffen suggest:

> Cultures are dynamic, always in a state of modification, evolution and substitution. Any individual culture trait has its place in time as well as its identification with a locale or people. Culture traits may spread far beyond the world in which they originate (1969: 4).

Both aspects of Russell and Kniffen's theory, namely the importance of understanding the evolution of culture over time and understanding the movement and diffusion of culture over space are critical in generating a regional understanding of a culture. In consideration of the first aspect concerning time, Miller notes:

> Culture […] is always a process and is never reducible to either its object or its subject form. For this reason, evaluation should be of a dynamic relationship, never of mere things (1987: 11).

Specifically considering the relationship between culture and the identification of regions, Horner asserts: "Any attempt at regionalisation must try to take account of this kaleidoscope of continuity and change, seeking to portray regional contrasts in terms that have contemporary relevance" (2000: 143). Regions, as much as culture and landscape, are a process shaped by human activity and the human capacity to construct, imagine and represent place.

The concept of culture as a process is developed further by the theory that people construct culture and, in the process construct geographies (Sack, 1997; Anderson, 1999). Part of the construction of culture is the production of representations of that culture. Anderson notes:

> In constructing cultures [...] people construct geographies. They arrange spaces in distinctive ways, they fashion certain types of landscape, townscape and streetscape; they erect monuments and destroy others; they evaluate spaces and places and transform them accordingly; they organise the relations between territories at a range of scales from local to global. In direct and indirect ways, both wilful and unintentional, people construct environments, regions and places (Anderson, 1999: 5).

The study of culture is defined as the interactions of people with and within space. As Anderson (1999) points out, cultures have built themselves on the past; they create and destroy monuments to create a simpler or more acceptable formula. With the development

of Irish traditional music, a concurrent geography has emerged shaped by a variety of agents. These agents affect the landscape and the sound of the music.

The evolution of culture involves a number of inter-related processes that shape both the culture itself and the spatial and geographical contexts in which it is performed. The space or context in which a culture exists is shaped by that culture. The performance of culture is also shaped by the space or context in which it is performed. The relationship between the performance of culture and the context in which culture is performed impacts on the geographical patterns of culture regions. Massey insists that:

> Spatial distribution and geographical differentiation may be the result of social processes, but they also affect how those processes work. The 'spatial' is not just an outcome; it is also part of the explanation (1984: 4).

These spatial relationships concern not only patterns of migration and cultural spread but also the impact of particular spaces including cyberspace and spaces with attached meaning. Different spaces and contexts for learning or performance shape the way in which music is transmitted and performed. Spaces are integral to the evolution of a soundscape. Echoing Massey but in the context of the geography of music, Leyshon, Matless and Revill state:

> Space and place are here presented not simply as sites where or about which music happens to be made, or over which music has diffused, but rather different spatialities are suggested as being formative of the sounding and resounding of music. Such a richer sense of geography highlights the spatiality of music and the mutually generative relations of music and place. Space produces as space is produced (Leyshon, *et al*., 1995: 425).

The spatialities include people and the experience of space. When examining the role of space in the context of Irish traditional music, it is necessary to consider the relationship between performer, audience and setting (Fairbairn, 1993; O'Shea, 2006). The performers and audience manipulate the space they occupy and the sounds of that space. It is also important, however, to examine the distribution and diffusion of spaces and places as located sites where and about which music is made.

The elements of culture have been divided into three categories in a model proposed by Julian Huxley: artefacts, mentifacts and sociofacts (Haggett 1975; 2001). The

use of these terms aids understanding when dealing with such a wide-ranging concept. Haggett argues:

> Mentifacts are the most central and durable elements of a culture. They include religion, language, magic and folklore, artistic traditions, and the like. They are basically abstract and mental. They relate to the human ability to think and to forge ideas, and they form the ideals and images against which other aspects of culture are measured (1988: 208).

Music is a mentifact. It exists in a social context that moulds physical spaces and is in turn moulded by these social contexts and physical spaces. The discourse surrounding culture, that communicates ideas about and images of a culture, is also a mentifact. Folklore plays an important role in the identification of place (Ryden, 1992; Duffy, 2007) and is closely related to Irish music traditions. In an Irish context, place lore or *dinnseanchas* is part of the oral tradition that is intertwined with music and is related to processes of naming places.

The social contexts, the creation of links between individuals and groups such as families or political and education systems, are termed sociofacts in the Huxley model (Haggett, 1975; 2001). Modes of transmission, whether based within a local community or in a formal education system and whether oral or literate, may be studied as sociofacts of the tradition. The institutionalisation of culture, including political and education systems, is also the development of sociofacts of a culture. In this thesis *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, the radio and other agents that create links between individuals and groups are examined as agents that shape the culture of Irish traditional music.

The material manifestations of culture and the ability of man to shape a landscape create the artefacts of culture. These may be present in the context of music geography as monuments to musicians or buildings in which music is played. Musical instruments are artefacts of musical traditions that inform our understanding of those musical traditions. Artefacts are often preserved in museums that seek to present a physical link to a culture. Noting the role of past cultures in a museum context, Olsen states: "historical processes are systemized, frozen for inspection and represented for museum-goers, thus creating a new polysemics of interpretations of the past in the present" (2000: 140). Despite the desire to create museums and representations of culture that present elements of culture as things of the past, Olsen acknowledges that the past is important in understanding the present. Many instruments played today have evolved from earlier versions and have

affected their meaning, the way that they are played and the style of music performed upon them (see for example Smith, 1997; Lanier, 1999; Schiller, 2001). As traditions evolve, the processes that shape their evolution must be examined and understood. In the context of geography, the relationship between culture, process and place is central.

Time is integral to the study of cultural regions. It is important to explore the interconnections between culture, memory, history and heritage. Kong outlines differences and connections stating:

> Memory is often personal and hence idiosyncratic. It is borne out of experience or shared through narratives. It is important as an anchor and a point of reference as we carry out our daily lives. History, on the other hand, is necessarily constructed – it is deliberately written as a 'text' for specific purposes, such as nation-building and identity construction. When the past is collectively and collectively recognised as 'belonging to a people, then it becomes heritage. The importance of history, through its translation into heritage, is evident, for example, when its present relevance is in binding multifarious groups through shared pasts. For this reason, it is often in the interest of particular groups to attempt to construct history and invent heritage (1999: 21).

For Kong, heritage implies ownership and the development of a sense and identity of place. Musical traditions, developed as heritage, can be integral to the construction of place and reinforce history (Bastos, 1999; Scruggs, 1999; Moloney, 2000).

Examining the creation of heritage, Graham notes that heritage is "a social construction, imagined defined and articulated within cultural and economic practice" (2002: 1003). Though heritage and tradition are often associated with the past, Graham notes: "heritage does not engage directly with the study of the past. Instead, it is concerned with the ways in which very selective material artefacts, mythologies, memories and traditions become resources for the present" (2002: 1004). Graham also notes that heritage "is capable of being interpreted differently within any one culture at any one time, as well as between cultures and through time" (2002: 1004). The development of heritage is motivated by various political and economic factors including the exploitation of heritage in the tourism sector. Musical heritage is an important element in the examination of regions. Sounds, monuments and stories reflect aspects of musical traditions that are selected by various agents and inform the development of regional identities.

In her studies of popular music in Singapore, Kong (1999) has developed the concept of the invention of tradition (Hobsbawm and Ranger, 1983), motivated by the increased interest in heritage worldwide, epitomised by the proliferation of international organisations including the International Council of Museums (ICOM), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and the Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM), the International Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Architectural Works (IIC), and the World Heritage Convention. The list presented by Kong highlights aspects of heritage that draw attention. One of the reasons identified by Kong for such an interest in heritage is centred on the argument that "globalization intensifies trends towards localisation" (Kong, 1999: 1; see also, Bohlman, 1988; Featherstone, 1993; Kong 1997; O'Brien, 2000; Horner, 2001). Another significant factor identified by Kong is the economic power of heritage-based tourism. The influence of tourism on the identity of place and the evolution of culture is a recurring theme throughout this thesis.

Tourism has impacted greatly on the identity and imagination of some spaces, communities and regions in Ireland. Tourism is a form of consumption and involves as social element. As people travel they move through spaces and though some tourists seek solitude they invariably interact with other people. There is often a divide between locals and visitors, particularly in intensely marketed tourist areas. Urry (1995) suggests that the trends in tourism have moved away from the preference for mass tourism and towards a desire to experience something different, to get away from the beaten track and engage with a community. Urry labels this the "end of tourism" (1995: 147). Tourism involves people, technology, finance, images and ideologies, each of which can impact on the music, traditions and identity of a region.

In an analysis of the role of heritage in the tourism industry, Urry acknowledges a process of signposting particular elements of history and culture whereby the tourist gaze is focused on "a few selected sacred sights" (1995: 145). These sights are part of the identity of a place and relate to the identities of the people in that place. Social identities are crucial to understanding the identity of a musical region. As Urry states: "Social identities emerge out of imagined communities, out of particular structures of feeling that bind together three elements, space, time and memory, often in part in opposition to an imagined 'other' such as a neighbouring country" (1995: 166). Memory is a vital aspect

of this. Urry notes a number of problems with the presentation of history, heritage and memory, stating:

> Whose history should be represented and whose history should be package and commodified? Visitors are likely to see a brief comprehensible history that can be easily assimilated – heritage rather than history as it is normally conceptualised. However, it should be noted that social memories are in fact *always* selective and there is no real memory to counterpose the supposedly false memory of the visitor (1995: 166)

The selection process relates to the political economy and the power geometries in play. Urry also notes: "The memories of 'locals' will be as selective as those of visitors" (1995: 166). The selected memories are motivated by feelings towards and rewards from the tourist industry. Spaces can become overwhelmed by visitors and lose meaning for locals who feel they no longer own it. There may be a juxtaposition of time to attract a tourist market. In attempting to attract a tourist market, tourism also plays a role in "the resurgence of locally oriented culture and politics especially around campaigns for the conservation of the built and physical environment" (Urry, 1995: 153). The future of regional music traditions in Irish traditional music is, in part, motivated by the prospect of attracting a share of the tourism market. Monuments and other spaces become part of the tourist product and can be signposted for the tourist gaze.

3.4 Landscape and physical manifestations of culture

The concept of landscape is integral to the conceptualisation and representation of place. Landscapes may also be represented in a variety of forms. Focusing on rural issues, Cloke notes the fascination in geography with a variety of 'imaginary texts' including novels, paintings, photographs, films, television and radio (1997a: 3). These representations of landscape communicate concepts of place and culture that must be interpreted and which inform the reader about particular aspects and values of both the place and the artist (Duffy, 1997). Despite the critique by some geographers that the discipline is overly concerned with the visual to the neglect of the other senses (Smith, 1994), the landscape is an important element of geographical studies.

Wylie (2007) presents two perspectives acknowledging the existence of landscape as something that is observed, studied and at a distance or landscape as something that is

lived in and close. Landscape is both something that is seen and a way of seeing. The landscape is shaped by the culture of the people who occupy it through agricultural practices, building practices and the creation of monuments. The processes and the development of these processes are told and retold in story and history. The landscape itself acts as a mirror of the past for the people and cultures that have occupied it (Evans, 1942, 1973; Duffy, 2007). The landscape with which the cultural geographer is concerned is termed the cultural landscape. At a basic level, the landscape can present boundaries to regions such as deserts, mountains, rivers and oceans. Cultures have developed to negotiate the natural boundaries, particularly in times of war, such as the Vandals or Alexander the Great crossing the Alps; Laurence of Arabia crossing the desert and the concept that Britain once ruled the seas. Landscapes are more than just picture postcard images of mountains, rivers and lakes that prevent easy modes of transport and migration between two places. Mitchell states:

> Landscape is more than a way of seeing, more than a representation, more than ideology – though it was very deeply all of these. It was a substantive, material reality, a place lived, a world produced and transformed, a commingling of nature and society that is struggled over and in (2003: 792).

The landscape has physical and cultural dimensions. Landscapes are at once both real and imagined. Mitchell's definition of landscape points toward the work of Tuan and concepts of experiencing place (Tuan, 1977). Mitchell is attempting to understand the complexity of landscape and in particular the cultural landscape. The discourses on landscape and regions contain many shared concepts and processes.

The cultural landscape is fundamental to the Berkeley School of Cultural Geography. Sauer wrote:

> The cultural landscape is fashioned out of the natural landscape by a culture group. Culture is the agent, the natural area is the medium, the cultural landscape is the result (1925: 46).

Jones notes the difficulties that emerge from varying usages of the term 'cultural landscape' (1991; 2003) and presents a critique of the Berkeley approach (2003). Jones presents the 'classical' definition of the cultural landscape as emanating from the work of Ratzel as "landscape modified by human activity". Humans created new landscapes by clearing forests and draining marshes to create space for the development of agriculture

(Jones, 2003). The rural landscape dominated geographical discourse in the early twentieth century (Jones, 2003) and concepts of the cultural landscape revolved around the concept of taming the wilderness (Duffy, 2007). As cultural geography developed, there was an increased awareness of the urban landscapes (Crang, 1998).

Table 14 Definitions of the cultural landscape.

1.	as an areal category (contrasting with natural landscape and sometimes urban landscape);
2.	as a chronological stage of development;
3.	as the human components in any landscape;
4.	as countryside;
5.	as heritage;
6.	as scenery with aesthetic qualities;
7.	as elements in the landscape with meaning for human activities.
8.	*Landschaft*.
9.	as Art.

Source: Adapted from Jones (2003: 30).

Jones (1988; 2003) presents a multi-faceted definition of the cultural landscape, outlining seven principal definitions or usages of the term (Table 14). In addition to the seven definitions provided be Jones, I have added two more, referring to the German concept of *Landschaft* and the role of landscape as art. Jones further categorises his usages of 'cultural landscape' into three categories, defining the cultural landscape as landscape modified or influenced by human activity, as valued features of the human landscape that are threatened by change or disappearance, and as elements in the landscape with meaning for a human group in a given cultural or socio-economic context (Jones, 2003: 31). Jones also acknowledges the existence of managed landscapes and "beliefs and traditions associated with particular localities" (Jones, 2003: 31). There are few landscapes in Ireland that have not been altered by human activity (Duffy, 2007). The

Irish landscape is subject to planning laws and its development is managed. The Irish landscape is also imbued with much folkloric meaning. Folklore and customs link people and place (Ó Giolláin, 2000; Duffy, 2007). Through human action and the attachment of meaning to landscapes Kockel argues that "we turn the landscape into part of our heritage" (1995a: 5). Different concepts of and approaches to the cultural landscape are evident in the Irish geographies of Evans (1957), Johnson (1994; 1996), Whelan (2002; 2003; 2005) that reflect the evolution of geographical paradigms and Irish culture.

The different definitions of the cultural landscape emerge from different schools of thought in cultural geography. From the late 1970s, a sustained critique of the Berkeley School of Cultural Geography emerged that presented closer links with a humanist approach to geography (Cosgrove, 1978; Price and Lewis, 1993). In a defence of Sauer and the approaches of the Berkeley School, Price and Lewis state:

> The leaders of the new cultural geography depict the scholarship of the Berkeley School as static, empiricist, and obsessed with relict landscapes and material artifacts, when in fact it was, and is still, a dynamic, predominantly historicist, and interested primarily in the relationships between diverse human societies and their natural environments (1993: 1).

While the approaches of Sauerian geography and humanist geography appear to share little in common, it is possible to borrow from both (Price and Lewis, 1993). Certainly the critique of the Berkeley School as "a celebration of the parochial" (Gregory and Ley cited in Price and Lewis, 1993), suggests an enduring relevance of the Berkeley School of Cultural Geography in the context of this thesis on regional difference in Irish traditional music. The cultural turn in geography presents new perspectives on the study of landscape. Wylie identifies the effect of the cultural turn in geography on the understanding of landscape, whereby "landscape was defined less as an external, physical object, or as a mixture of 'natural' and 'cultural' elements, and more as a particular, culturally specific way of seeing or representing the world" (2007: 13). Geography is traditionally a very visual discipline in contrast to the aural awareness of the study of music.

Jones (2003) identifies four distinct discourses that have emerged on the subject of the cultural landscape, which he presents as coming closer together towards a common discourse (Table 15). The first focuses on the agricultural sector and the cultivated landscape. The second concerns nature conservation and biodiversity. The third focuses

on the cultural heritage sector and is particularly relevant to the development of this thesis. Jones identifies this discourse as that which defines cultural landscape "in the classical geographical meaning as all landscapes that have been modified or influenced by human activity, although with an emphasis on ancient monuments, historic buildings and other built structures" (Jones, 2003: 32). Similarly, Graham notes: "a cultural landscape can be visualised as a powerful medium in expressing feelings, ideas and values, while simultaneously being an arena of political discourse and action in which cultures are continuously reproduced and contested" (1997: 4). There is a need within this discourse to acknowledge the meanings attached to the landscape and associated 'mental landscape' (Jones, 2003: 32) as well as the processes involved in shaping both the landscape and the culture. The fourth discourse outlined by Jones associates the cultural landscape with local physical planning. I propose that the planning of a landscape of memory and the subsequent design, location and erection of monuments and public statuary is part of this discourse.

Table 15 Discourses relating to the cultural landscape

1.	Agriculture and the cultivated landscape
2.	Nature conservation and biodiversity
3.	Cultural heritage
4.	Local, physical planning

Source: Adapted from Jones, 2003.

The development of a discourse concerning monuments and public statuary, in Irish geographical discourse (Johnson, 1994; 1999a; Whelan, 2002; 2003; 2005), informs another dimension to the consideration of the landscape in this thesis. Buildings, monuments and streetscapes are part of the landscape that is being studied. Recognising the complexity that may be found in the monuments and buildings in landscapes, Wylie notes:

> The study of such landscapes of conflicted memory, heritage and identity has of course proved fertile for cultural and historical geographers in North America and the UK, in the latter finding expression through the mid-1990s in a sequence of studies of iconic landscapes of national identity (monuments, war graves, etc.) (2007: 192).

The expression of memory and identity in the landscapes is explored further in Chapter Four of this thesis. Monuments and buildings that are part of the cultural landscape of Irish traditional music are studied as elements that infer the narrative of the tradition. As Crang notes:

> It should be apparent that we cannot see landscapes as simply material features. We can also treat them as 'text' that can be read, and which tell both the inhabitants and us stories about the people – and their beliefs and identity […] Reading the landscape is not a matter of finding a typical 'cultural area' […] but of seeing how landscapes come to mean different things to different people and how their meanings change and are contested (1998: 40).

The context in which the landscape is shaped through the creation of monuments and other structures is important in understanding the process of creating or constructing landscape. The context in which the geographer experiences and interprets landscapes in relation to the culture being studied, impacts on the nature and understanding of those landscapes.

Some cultural geographers note the importance of investigating the human perception of space and place and suggests that the "cultural approach focuses on mental spaces in their relation to external spaces" (Claval, 2004: 8; see also Tuan, 1977). Many of the representations of place presented in the previous section are also representations of landscape. The processes and influences that shape the identification of place also shape the representation and symbolic meaning of landscapes. Politics, art and economics are interrelated influences that shape the construction and interpretation of meaning in landscapes.

Political ideologies play a role in shaping the landscape and motivate the construction of images of landscape. Writing on the link between folklore and nation-building, Ó Giolláin notes: "It is possible to identify a number of 'mythical landscapes' in nineteenth- and twentieth- century history, 'mythical' in the sense of foundational, sacred and ideal since these landscapes were not objectively delineated historically, geographically or socially" (2000: 77). Landscapes are, in this manner, part of the process

of developing national identity. According to Cloke: "The recognition that environmental, territorial and other geographical myths have been and remain very significant in the construction of alternative nationalist ideologies has led to a recasting of a cultural studies interest in landscape and environmental relations" (1997: 369). O'Sullivan notes: "Since the 'Celtic revival' of the late nineteenth century, Irish nationalists in particular have argued that the Irish identity was essentially rooted in the landscape, preferably that of the wild and purer west of the island" (2001: 87). Through O'Sullivan's consideration of landscape it is noted that there is a mental perception of what places are like, which includes images of the landscape and the culture that may exist in that place. Images of the west of Ireland are part of "an enduring view of Irish identity" (Kennedy, 1999: 98). The west of Ireland is represented by artists and nationalist ideology as rugged, economically poor but culturally rich.

Maps are a particularly important representation of the landscape. Like literature, they are created by people and are selective in what they represent. Maps also have political resonance related to nation building and identity. Duffy notes:

> Maps are probably the most appropriate and promising sources that provide readable spatial representations of the landscape. They use the same language of distance, direction and elevation (that is, three-dimensional scaled-down renditions) as the landscape itself (2007: 184).

Maps have, historically played a role in colonial conquest and territorial division in Ireland (Smyth, 2006: Duffy, 2007). The construction of maps that represent the link between music and place or regional variations in the musics of the world is a desire inherent in ethnomusicology (Nettl, 2005). The concept of a cartography of music was previously presented in the mid-twentieth century (Collaer and Merriam, 1958; Nettl, 1960) and may be closely linked to the cantometrics project pioneered by Alan Lomax (Lomax, 1956; 1959a; 1972). Cartography provides a methodology through which to represent areas of distribution of a culture but is subject to the detail used in creating these representations and the systematic analysis of the culture. Maps may be interpreted and read as textual documents of landscape and place at a particular point in time.

The process of interpreting the landscape as a visual representation of place makes that place emblematic. Zelinsky outlines the dual role of an emblem as being "a label for specific objects" but also communicating emotive values (1984: 277). The imagination of

place through representations of landscape is advanced through the development of the media.

> It is now widely acknowledged that understandings and experiences of place are mediated by a range of everyday texts through which landscapes are represented. This most obvious in locations that have featured heavily in television and film, whether urban spaces subject to negative stereotyping in news reports or rural locations in mythologized in drama series and motions pictures (Gibson and Davidson, 2004: 390).

Music festivals make an overt link between music and place. Sound performs a dynamic role in the construction of place. Smith notes: "sound, especially in the form of music, has a social and political significance which, if it could be heard, might influence, change or enrich the interpretation of particular scenes" (1994: 236). The role of sound is explored further in a subsequent section that interrogates Schafer's (1977) concept of a soundscape.

In the context of the cultural landscape, geographers are increasingly examining the role of monuments and buildings in shaping and binding communities to places (Troyansky, 1987, Crang, 1998; Whelan, 2002, 2003, 2005; Johnson 1994, 1996, 1999a; Duffy, 2007). Claval suggests that material realities are actually representations within the human world (2004). Despite the richness of the Irish cultural landscape in relation to music, it is largely unexplored from a geographical perspective. Influential Irish works that focus on monuments include Nuala Johnson's study of 1798 War Memorials that seek to nationalise space through monumental landscapes and public statuary and her work on the concept of the Big House and its links with heritage tourism (1994; 1996); Yvonne Whelan's study of Dublin streetscapes and the legacy of Anglo-Irish politics (2001; 2002; 2003; 2005); and Patrick Duffy's exploration of the history and heritage of Irish landscapes (2007). When examined together, the monuments designate the cultural landscape as something of an outdoor museum (Ryden, 1999). Stories, histories and cultural landscapes are part of the process of generating a collective memory (Assmann and Czaplicka, 1995; Confino, 1997; Crane, 1997). In reference to the study of place, Ryden states: "Since places are fusions of experience, landscape, and location, they are necessarily bound up with time and memory as well" (1993: 39). Similarly, in the study of music, Bithell (2006) emphasises the role of the past in music and the existence of the past in the present through repeat performance. Crane (1997) outlines the difference between historical memory and collective memory, emphasising the role of social experience in the development of the latter. Crane notes that lived experience and

collective memory are continuous: “There is no break between awareness of the past and its presence in the present, and nothing can be lost in this continuum” (1997: 1377). In contrast, historical memory “begins when social traditions are broken and living contact with the past has been lost; all that remains are fragments as artifacts” (Crane, 1997: 1377). Lived experience, collective memory and historical memory are all present in this thesis through the various methodologies employed in conjunction with my own biographical narrative. Music and monuments present different ways in which the past can be represented, referenced and carried forward.

There is a need for interpretation of the landscape. For interpretation there must be understanding. The landscape character assessment of Co. Clare conducted by Environment Resources Management (ERM) and published in 2004 notes the increasing significance of tourism in interpreting the landscape, specifically identifying high profile sites such as Bunratty Castle as being “so deeply ingrained on the tourist trail that they are no longer regarded simply as archaeological or historical ‘monuments’, but are promoted as individual commercial and tourist attractions” (2004: 2-6). Through the development of the cultural landscape that locates fixed physical artefacts, specific locations are identified that relate to narratives of musical traditions. A regional understanding of Irish traditional music must consider the role of the visual through the monuments and public statuary associated with music and the role of the visual in the development of memory, history and the representation of regional space.

3.5 Soundscape and the auditory experience of place and society

Highlighting the importance of listening to the world, Smith states: “knowing the world through sound is fundamentally different from knowing the world through vision” (2003: 129). However, an understanding of the world through sound requires an understanding of the different aspects of the soundscape. The soundscape is a term coined by Murray Schafer (1977) to describe “the auditory terrain in its entirety of overlapping noises, sounds and human melodies” (Bull and Black, 2003: 11). Outlining the multi-faceted role of soundscapes and auditory culture in the study of society, Feld states:

> Soundscapes, no less than landscapes, are not just physical exteriors, spatially surrounding or apart from human activity. Soundscapes are

> perceived and interpreted by human actors who attend to them as a way of making their place in and through the world. Soundscapes are invested with significance by those whose bodies and lives resonate with them in social time and space (2003: 226).

Thus soundscapes must be understood in relation to those people who hear and perceive them and the socio-political networks through which they are promoted and diffused.

Schafer divides the soundscape between the natural soundscape, which includes the sounds created by water, wind and earth; and the sounds of life, which includes animal sounds. He contrasts urban and rural soundscapes and notes the influence of societal structure on musical form. Schafer challenges the limited definitions of music and argues for an understanding of the world as a "macrocosmic musical composition" (2004: 5). He notes the pioneering work of John Cage as well as the expansion of percussion instruments in orchestras that often produce nonpitched and arrhythmic sounds. Schafer acknowledges the "conscientious imitation of landscape in music" and the imitation of nature in the works of many composers. The naming of pieces of music with reference to nature, events or emotions can influence how the performer hears and interprets that piece of music. In the context of this study, it is useful to note Breathnach's assertion that, in Irish traditional music, "tunes and titles are not related musically" (1981: 151). That is not to deny the existence of tunes or pieces in Irish traditional music, such as 'The Foxchase', that evoke both the natural soundscape and the soundscape of life.

Integral to understanding the role of music in understanding the world is recognising how humans attach meanings to the sounds that they hear (Moore, 2003). Moore notes that the cultural meanings attached to sounds are "identified and learnt as we develop and grow within a society" (2003: 266, 267). Moore notes the prominence of understanding the cultural meanings of sounds in divided societies such as Northern Ireland where cultural memory and identity is reinforced through sound. Moore outlines how sound is "heard and perceived as events, with particular sound perceptions being used as a means of constructing frameworks of understanding" (2003: 267). These sounds or events then contribute to what Moore terms 'geographies of cultural memory'. Boundaries are imagined by the different groups in society and, in Northern Ireland, Protestant marching bands walk and play their tunes right up to the limit of their perceived territory. It is "a symbolic boundary cemented by a sound event" (Moore, 2003; 267). While Moore identifies the construction and representation of sound events in

Northern Ireland as binary opposites, the study of Irish traditional music generally reveals a much less definitive and much more blurred sense of boundary and difference.

The production, consumption and diffusion of music and musical difference have been greatly affected by technological advancement. Schafer recognises the telephone, the phonograph and the radio as the three most revolutionary sound mechanisms of the Electronic Revolution. Schafer notes: "With the telephone and the radio, sound was no longer tied to its original point in space; with the phonograph it was released from its original point in time" (1977: 89). Both of these advancements have significant geographical consequences. Bull and Black (2003) highlight the importance of listening to music, noting how listening to music offers new opportunities to address issues of globalization, place, identity, belonging, history and memory. They note how, through hearing a particular piece of music, vivid memories are invoked or "how a record collection can act as a kind of jukebox of remembrance, each piece of music associated with a particular time and place" (2003: 14). Tacchi (2003) also focuses on the role of the radio, distinguishing between visualising memory and the mood or feelings evoked by sound. The evocation of memories and the relationship between music, people, time and place are integral to a sonic geography of regions in Irish traditional music.

Music plays an important role in understanding time. Different sounds perform a role in society at different points in history. Music is performed in a particular space and context but the performance of music can also juxtapose time and space. The performance by a céilí band such as The Kilfenora Céilí Band of tunes also performed by previous generations in a manner that reflects the music of those generations creates a link across time. When this performance takes place at a festival, such as The Milwaukee Irish Festival or on television, it creates a spatial awareness that differs but also reflects performances by the band in rural parish halls or the dancehalls of London in the 1950s. It is the music that remains both constant and evolving. The sounds and the stories attached to those sounds evoke memories and exist as representations of music making in the past. Filmer (2003) highlights how the consumption of and engagement with musical performances is affected by electronic broadcast reproduction that separates music from time and place. The identity of both musician and audience and the space in which the music is performed is important in understanding the relationship between music and place.

The role of space remains central to a geographical understanding of music. Recognising the critiques of Sauerian geographies, in which the region is often viewed as homogenous, and traditional regional geographies, which are often criticised as being overly descriptive, Lomnitz-Adler (1991) presents the concept of the region that includes reference to "zones" or spaces within regions that maintain difference within themselves but are connected with other zones or spaces in the region. These zones are central to Gill's (1995) framework for the study of regions in musical genres. Focusing on rock music, Gill notes: "While the music has been primarily commercial entertainment, it has also served as a symbol of rebellion, collective consciousness, and subcultural and regional identity" (1995: 17). Influenced by Giddens' structuration theory, Gill recognises the importance of "zones" or spaces for the performance and production of culture within the region to the study of a region. Gill acknowledges the desire amongst musicians to achieve recognition in various markets but also suggests that "the various trends and styles of rock derive initially from conditions specific to particular regions, with local dance and bar bands often being the principal sources of innovation and change" (1995: 17). The various spaces within the region contain a multitude of soundscapes and local forces that are all part of a regional identity.

Outlining concepts for the study of regional culture, Lomnitz-Adler (1991) argues for a need to understand the hierarchies involved within a region between different spaces and social groups. The examination of spaces for the consumption of music in which social groups are segregated is inherent in recent musicological literature (Whitley, *et al.*, 2004; Jazeel, 2005). Gill argues for a "reconstituted" regional geography that focuses on questions related to structure and agency. Both sounds and regional identities are shaped by power structures and social forces. Focusing on creating a framework for the regional study of music in geography, Gill states:

> […] the most instructive elements of the concept are that the production and reproduction of social life are a result of a dynamic process of conflict between individuals or groups and the structural elements that constitute society. In reconstituted regional geography this process is revealed through analysis of *locale* – a specific setting for interaction such as a job site, a nightclub, or a defined spatial unit such as a neighbourhood – and *regionalization* – the means by which differentiation occurs within or between locales. Of interest here are the power relations between center and periphery, particularly the control of *authoritative resources* that influence the social production of everyday life, leading to *time-space*

> *distanciation* –the extension and stretching of social systems across time and space (1995: 21).

A number of important markers lie within Gill's statement. Gill is referring to a reconstituted regional geography, referred to elsewhere in this text as 'new regional geography', a sub-discipline that has evolved alongside the cultural turn in cultural geography (Hudson, 2006). Gill focuses on the importance of social interaction and the inherent power struggles that shape that society, a theme to which I will return in the examination of region as process. He also recognises the role of globalising forces, an element explored through a critique of modernisation theory. In acknowledging regions as a process, Gill also recognises the malleability of boundaries across time and space.

Sounds and identities can also be institutionalised. Connecting concepts of region and place with music and identity, Hudson (2006) notes the role of political, economic and social networks in providing support and finance for the development of music and arts spaces and the role of these spaces in shaping the perception of the place and region. Even when considering the development of national identity, Bennett (2004) advocates a focus on the spaces in which music is experienced on a day to day basis. Thus, two types of spaces are recognised in the study of the music region: those formally created by institutionalised powers (top down) and those created less formally or organically (bottom up) by social forces.

Emphasising the role of sound in society, Schafer (2003) proposes three questions: who is listening?; what are they listening to?; and what are they ignoring or refusing to listen to? In developing an understanding of the construction of regions in Irish traditional music and the complex power geometries of the social networks through which the music and debates about the music are diffused, these questions are central. Changes in sounds are related to changes in society. The presence, popularity and interpretation of particular sounds located in particular places inform a study of that place and society.

3.6 Representation, memory and power

The study of both landscape and soundscape highlights the role of representation, memory and power in understanding the world and divisions in society. Representations create an alternative perspective for the study of place. Representations exist in visual

(maps, paintings, photographs, film), imaginative or descriptive (literature, poetry, stories) and aural (music, song, spoken word) forms. Representations create layers of meanings that add to the understanding of place (see also Cloke, 1997; Duffy, 1997). Representations are shaped by different motivation and may be influenced by varying power geometries including national identity and economic development, as well as aesthetics (Smith, S., 1997). Representations perform an important role in constructing, moulding and diffusing the identity of a region. This section considers the invention of place, the construction of regional identity and the role of representation in the study of regions.

Two approaches are necessary to understand a place through an interpretation of the representations of that place. The first approach concerns an understanding of the representations as created within a community for a community motivated by the need to establish or reinforce the identity of that community. The second approach considers the representation of the place or region beyond the boundaries of that place or region and the imposition of identity by outside agents. Stories, the imagination of identity and the interpretation of human action are implicitly at the core of the work of Benedict Anderson (1983; 2002). Anderson refers to the imagined community as an entity bound together by shared beliefs, spread amongst a group of people too large to be involved in socially engaging spaces to share thoughts and mould culture. Communities construct myths that contribute to the sense of identity and belonging in a place (Kinsman, 1995; Wright, 1998). As Kearney (1984) notes, myth can be an agent of association or disassociation with a place or community. Inhabitants of a region develop images and representations of that region that have meaning for themselves. Images can also be imposed upon a region by various forces including literature, tourism and film. The history of migration and patterns of diffusion of a culture influence the audience for and consumption of images and stories of place and identity. The role of the media in communicating concepts and images of place must also be considered. In his examination of the role of literature and art in the representation of Irish place, Duffy notes the role of the artist and the experience of representations of landscape in "territorial identity and geographical understanding" (1997: 64). The role of the artist may be examined through visual art, literature, film and music.

An integral part of understanding places and regions and the representations of places and regions is the concept that places, regions and representations are created and interpreted by humans. In an examination of what Ireland and Irish identity are, Graham states:

> Places are invented, a myth of territory being basic to the construction and legitimation of identity and to the sanctioning of the principles of a society. Thus place is inseparable from concepts such as empowerment, nationalism and cultural hegemony (1997: xi).

Territory and identity are central to Graham's definition of place. The processes in constructing place and identity are both material and discursive. Memory and history are important elements of both stories and musical traditions. Ryden (1993) acknowledges the role of stories in preserving and communicating memory and knowledge about place. Shelemay notes the differences and blurred boundaries between memory and history, particularly as experienced in fieldwork (2006). In an "exploration of the interactive relationship of memory and history in musical contexts and in the process of musical ethnography", Shelemay states:

> Memory is first and foremost an individual cognitive faculty in which reside traces of one's personal and autobiographical experiences; some of these traces reside close to the surface of consciousness and area easily recalled, while others remain out of everyday awareness but still vulnerable to recall in response to various types of stimulation. Memory is at the same time a social phenomenon, shaped by collective experience. What is often termed 'collective memory' is knowledge that is shared with others through various forms of expression, including speech, music, dance and other expressive media, and that emerges in part from a common expectation that the moment or event is, in fact, memorable (2006: 18).

The role of social context in the formation and communication of memory reinforces the role of social networks in the construction of regional identities. In contrast to the often subjective stories of memory, history constitutes narratives of the past "that are constructed and/or acknowledged by virtue of institutional sanction, scholarly hypothesis or broad-band social acceptance" (Shelemay, 2006: 18). Histories may be revised or rewritten and, as the old saying goes, history is written by the victor.

Power hierarchies within a society or community are integral to the creation of histories and representations of regions, including the music of the region. Lomnitz-Adler states:

> […] power hierarchies are created both between and within identity groups, and a proper analysis of social boundaries therefore requires a historical understanding of the interplay between shared cultural experience (intimate culture) and the ideological construction of identity groups (localist ideology). The rhythms of transformation of intimate culture are not the same as the politics of identity: new intimate cultures can emerge and old ones can decline within an identity group which, nevertheless, retains its boundaries (1991: 207).

It is important to understand the role of the musician and music within the social networks and the influence of social networks on the evolution of musical heritage and regional identities.

Representations are shaped by ideologies and power geometries that invoke memory and difference. In his framework for studying regions, Lomnitz-Adler notes: "the conformation of new meanings depends on how the symbolic exchanges produced in these relationships are perceived and understood (culture, ideology, identity)" (1991: 200). Ideology is an important element of the study of regions. Recognising the cultural differences that exist between groups in regions and the challenges to communication and coherence, Lomnitz-Adler recognises that certain elements are "synthesized, systemized, or ordered in various ways, and related to the interests of a group" (1991: 206). He notes:

> Ideology is the ordering of one or several systems within a culture by arguing (often by omission) the primacy of one cultural principle over another. Ideology is accepted only if the appeal to the principles in question lends meaning to the receiver's experiences. Ideology is always drawing on past experience and reconstituting it into meaningful and coherent systems (1991: 206).

Ideology is readily related to the nationalist forces of modernisation theory previously identified in relation to modernisation theory. Kearney states:

> Ideology expresses the need of a social group, state or nation, for a set of images whereby it can represent itself to itself and to others. In some societies - usually deemed 'traditional' – this ideological need involves the invocation of a distinct heritage of ideals or myths. One of the aims of such an ideological project is to provide a particular society with a stable and repeatable order of meanings which founds its sense of communal identity and thereby distinguishes it from other societies (1985: 5).

Ideology, thus, is integrally present in the communication of identity. In the context of national agendas, it may also be related, in part, to Barthes' (1957) theory of 'mythification' and Anderson's (1983) imagined communities. Barthes (1957) outlined

mythification as “a social class’s appropriation, recontextualization, refunctionalization, and resignification of a sign or of statements” (cited in Lomnitz-Adler, 1991: 202). Ideology attempts to write out difference and present a clear understanding of a place and culture. However, ideologies become frozen in time, stale and ignorant of the present. Kearney notes that:

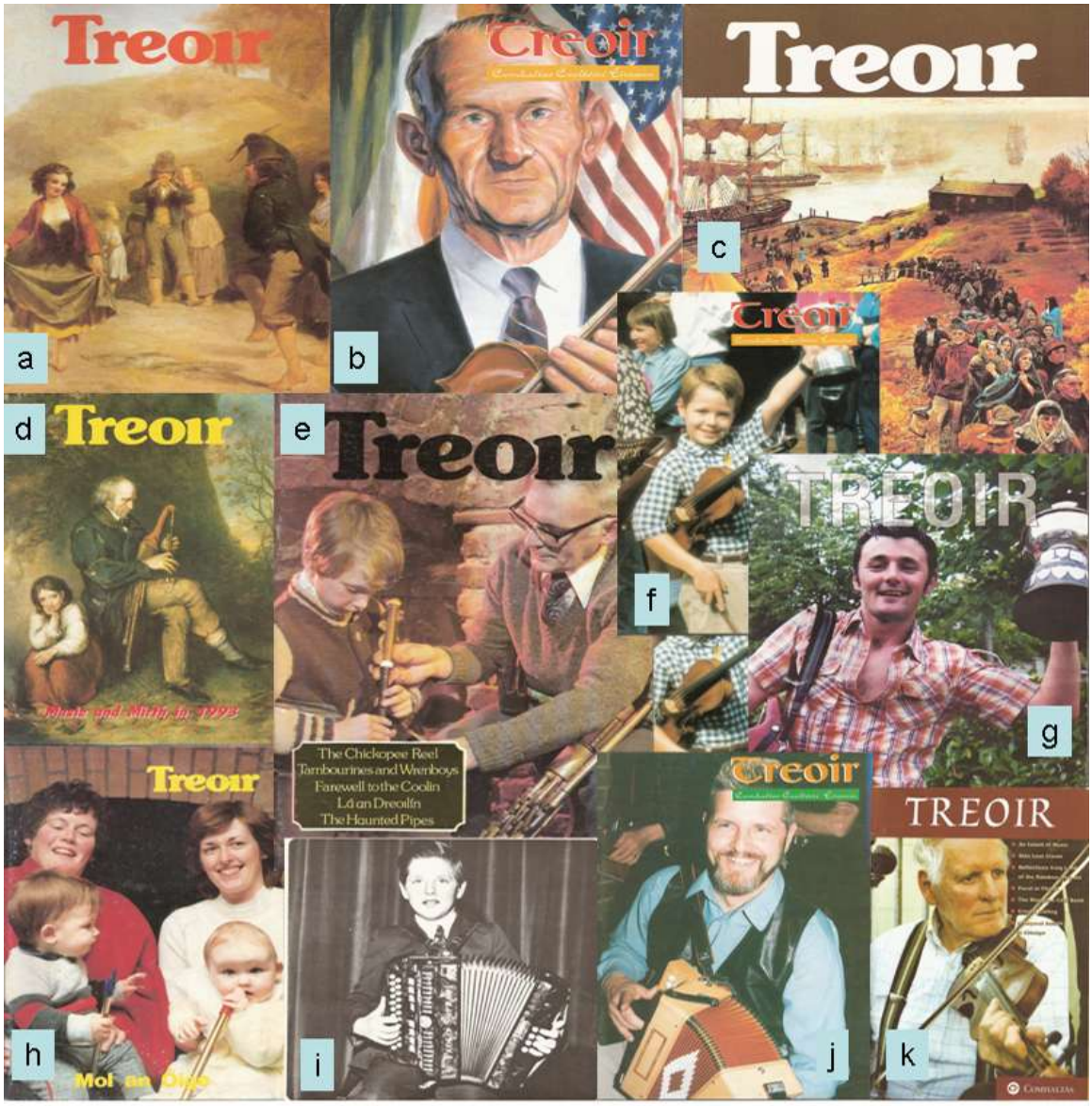
> The term 'ideology' can be understood in two distinct, if not always unrelated sense, one negative, the other positive. The negative sense refers to the ways in which certain social and cultural institutions serve specific interests of domination by i) a distortion of the underlying structural realities which condition the life of a society, and ii) a dissimulation of these realities behind myths of consensus which seek to conceal social conflict (1985: 5).

It is imperative, therefore, that a study of regions includes an acknowledgement of accompanying ideologies that change or distort narrative and interpretation of the region. In the context of Irish traditional music, the images presented by *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* reflect the communication and diffusion of representations of culture, heritage and identity as well as reinforcing the ideologies of the organisation. Through the journal *Treoir*, different aspects of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and Irish traditional music, as well as the cultural contexts in which they exist may be examined (Plate 1, 2).

The covers featured in plate one and two reflect attitudes and ideologies of the organisation and parts of the Irish traditional music community. Covers a (1991, Iml. 23, 4) and d (1993, Iml. 25, 1) are artistic representations of music in Ireland. Cover c (1982, Iml. 14, 1), presents an emigration scene creating a connection with North America, as does cover b (1996, Iml. 28, 3), an image of Bill McEvoy, North America Chairman of CCÉ. Covers e (1980, Iml. 12, 6) and h (1986, Iml. 18, 4) highlight the sense of family and transmission promoted by the organisation. Cover f (1996, Iml. 28, 2), featuring Patrick Mangan of New York, is echoed by cover g (2008, Iml. 40, 4), featuring Darren Breslin from London highlights both the involvement of overseas musicians and the importance of competitions. Covers i (1972, Iml. 4, 2) and j (1999, Iml. 21, 3), both featuring John Whelan of Luton, highlights the sense of time communicated through the images. Cover k (2006, Iml. 28, 1) features Paddy Cronin, one of a number of important musicians in a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. The covers of Treoir also reflect the connection between music and politics, in particular the relationship between Irish traditional music and national identity as promoted by the organisation, the sense of

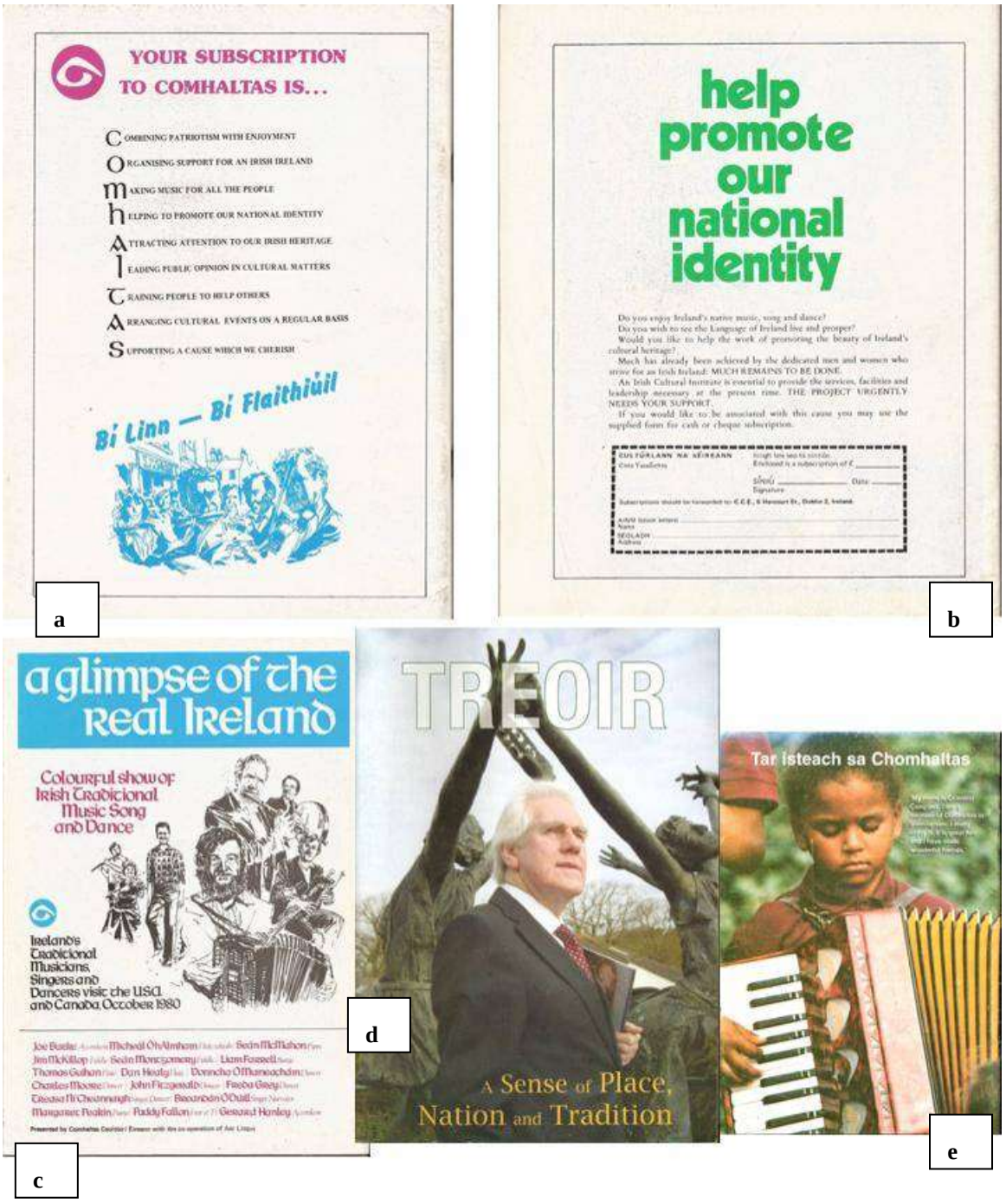
authenticity and power presented by the organisation and the globalisation of Irish traditional music. Labhrás Ó Murchú (bottom centre plate 2), Ard Stiurtheoir (Director General) of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann is also a member of Seanad Éireann representing the Fianna Fáil political party.

Plate 1 A collage of covers from *Treoir*, the journal of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*.



Source: a (1991, Iml. 23, 4); b (1996, Iml. 28, 3); c (1982, Iml. 14, 1); d (1993, Iml. 25, 1); e (1980, Iml. 12, 6); f (1996, Iml. 28, 2); g (2008, Iml. 40, 4); h (1986, Iml. 18, 4); i (1972, Iml. 4, 2); j (1999, Iml. 21, 3); k (2006, Iml. 28, 1) .

Plate 2 Connecting music, identity and politics.



Source: a (1982, Iml. 14, 5/6); b (1975, Iml. 7, 3); c (1980, Iml. 12, 4); d (2009, Iml. 41, 1); e (2001, Iml. 33, 3).

As well as examining the ideology of organisations, institutions and political groups, the importance of the locale, zone and individual person must also be considered. As McMenamin states:

> Ideology, being an attempt to create a structure of universal ideas or general principles, abhors the particular and the local. In the play of great national and supra-national forces there is little place for the idiosyncratic or the individual. Yet individuality is a predominant national characteristic; local and parochial identity a strong a vibrant force, and a certain distrust of the alien and the foreign inherent in our nature (1985: 43).

In contrast to McMenamin's rhetoric, elements of the local can inform and become part of the wider cultural identity as the greater identity seeks to include or integrate diversity within its boundaries.

The role of individuals and the expression of individuality can inform and challenge the concept of a shared culture in a place or culture. Individuals are characters of a story, their activities shape a culture. Individuals also tell and shape the stories of a culture, people and place. In the context of ethnomusicological studies, Bohlman (1988) acknowledges the important role of the individual in shaping musical traditions and the paradoxical absence of the individual in many ethnomusicological texts. Daniels and Nash (2004) note the geographical significance of individuals and the role of biography in geographical research. As Martin indicates: "Identity is formed and continually reinforced via individual practice within culturally defined spaces, which are themselves, in turn, continually constituted out of these same practices" (1997: 92). Thus, even within the study of regions in which the focus is on the shared elements of culture that convey meanings of regionality, the individuality of human beings must be considered and used to inform the concept of the region. However, Jones (2003) presents a critique of the use of personal narratives in research:

> Personal stories involve remembering, but also reconstructing the meaning of past events in the light of the present. Stories are subject to reformulation in the light of new stories. Narratives help give form to experience. However, they have clear limitations as a research strategy. One aspect is the narrator's subjectivity, biases and beliefs, influencing what the narrator remembers or chooses to remember (Jones, 2003: 28).

Recognition must be given to the context in which a story is told, particularly the age and experience of the storyteller. Jones also notes the role of a researcher's personal narrative

in shaping the research choices made, a critique I have alluded to in my introduction when presenting my own biographical details and how they have shaped this thesis.

Stories and images of place may be imposed on places and regions. Stories shape our imagination of places to which we have never been. Media images communicate information about places that shape our understanding of those places (Duffy, 2000; Holloway and Hubbard, 2001; Thompson, 2006). People can know of a place though they may never have been to that place (Tuan, 1977; Ryden, 1993; Crang, 1998). William's (1998) notes the economic desires that influence and motivate the construction of images and narratives of place to attract tourists. Fáilte Ireland, the Irish National Tourism Development Authority, operate five regional tourism development boards (www.failteireland.ie, accessed 9th September 2008). The marketing agendas of these tourist boards attempt to influence the public's perception of places in Ireland. Perceptions of place may also be forced as part of a national agenda as in Anderson's theories of 'imagined communities' (Anderson, 1983; Scruggs, 1999). In developing stories of place, various 'myths' are constructed and communicated both within and outside a place or region. The various agents that shape the stories of place are influential in the existence and construction of regions.

National and nationalist politics act as agents in shaping the stories and images of place. Cultures are sometimes invented or created with the purpose of constructing a historical narrative for a place or nation (Anderson, 1983; Hobsbawn, 1983). Foley (1988; 1997) explores the role of cultural nationalism and desires for a cohesive national identity on Irish step dance and the subsequent evolution of that tradition. The processes of constructing the nation, the creation of power hierarchies, and the communication of national identity are useful to understanding the processes of constructing and communicating regions and regional identity. Politics shaped the work of artists who presented desired landscapes that excluded undesired elements (Duffy, 2007). These representations of landscape contributed to the development of myth. Kearney acknowledges the role of myth in the narratives of the nation, recognising that:

> Myth is a two way street. It can lead to perversion […] or it can lead to the projection of genuine utopias whereby individuals, communities and indeed the community of nations as a whole, can identify with the goal of universal liberation (1984: 23).

When discussing Ireland in the context of a different political atmosphere at the end of the 1990s, Kearney notes that: "Most contemporary nations and states invoke myths which provide a sense of original 'identity' for their 'people'" (1997: 108). Myth is part of the discourse of the imagination and invention of nations, states and places, central to the works of Anderson (1983; 2002) and Hobsbawn (1983).

Graham's (1997) cultural geography of Ireland is influenced by the contestations of Irish identity that emanate from and influence political identities in the north of Ireland. Graham suggests that many aspects of Irish culture, identity and the imagination of place are "subsumed within the national conflict" (1997a: 2). Kearney's work is also influenced by the political divisions in the north of Ireland (1984; 1988; 1997). Moore (2003) notes the prominence of music in communicating identity and reinforcing the sectarian divide in Northern Ireland, particularly in relation to marching bands and the use of the lambeg drum. There is an acknowledgement in this thesis of the role of national and nationalist politics in shaping the contexts for and discourse relating to Irish traditional music. The imagination of the nation also develops politics of inclusion and exclusion. Cohen (1993) notes the role of music in creating a sense of belonging. Smith asserts that music "is no more isolated from politics than any other cultural form" (1994: 236). The study of music can inform our understanding of imperialism and desires for emancipation. Music is part of the identity of a nation that can play a role in unifying a group of people (McCarthy, 1998; Bastos, 1999; Scruggs, 1999; Bohlman, 2004). Noting the role between music and national identity McCarthy states:

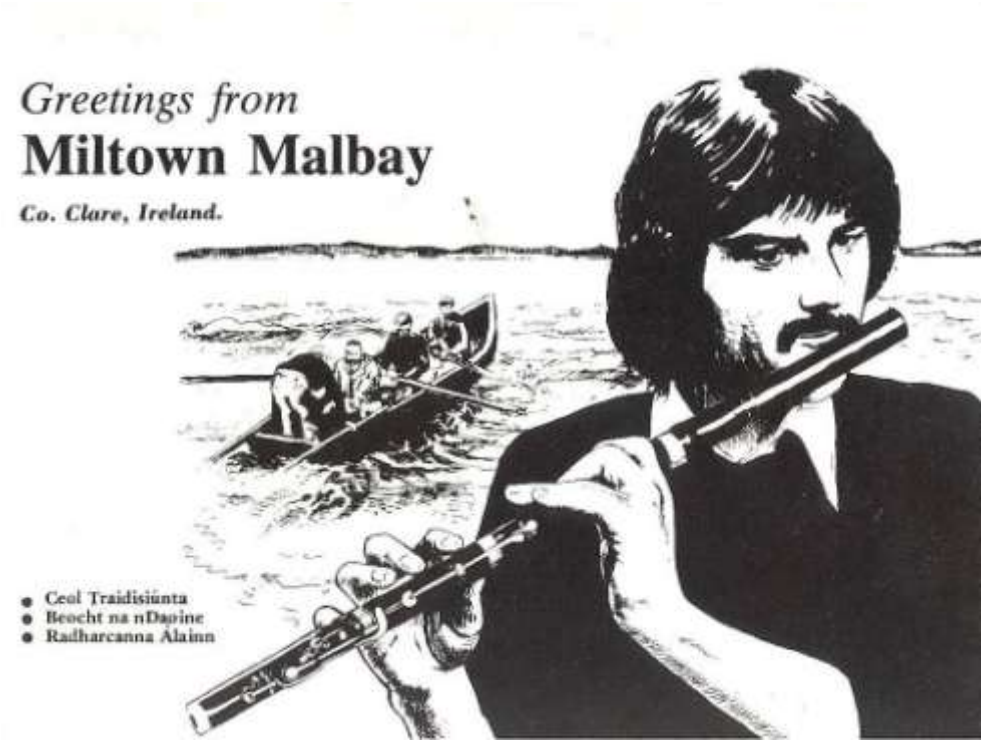
> Music is a cultural practice that is an integral part of a nation's identity. In certain historical periods, when the political ideology of a country is contested and an alternative ideology is advanced, the resulting tensions are visible in cultural practices, such as music, and social institutions such as education (1998: 73).

McCarthy notes the role of music "the important role of music in advancing the essential ideals of the emergent nation state" through a study of music in Irish national schools between 1921 and 1950 (1998: 73). Bohlman (2004) has outlined the role of music in ideologies of European nationalism. In a study on Nicaraguan national identity, Scruggs (1999) highlights the development of a national music culture in Nicaragua motivated by a desire to negotiate geographic distance through cultural, and in this case musical, proximity. The population of Nicaragua is divided between two principal areas of

inhabitation, located on the west and east coast of the continent. The geographic distance between the population groups challenges the imagination, development, and dissemination of a national identity and culture. In a Brazilian context, Bastos (1999) notes how the evolution of Brazilian music and the discourse on music provides an opportunity for discourse debating national issues. Outlining the role of 'national musics', Leyshon, Matless and Revill note: "Music has always been implicated in the social and political world. Its power to affect, disturb, rouse and subdue has been used to great effect by monarchies, armies and governments throughout history" (1995: 426). In the history of Ireland, it must be acknowledged that pipers were outlawed in Ireland during the reign of King Henry VIII (Ó hAllmhuráin, 1998: 29), while the marching traditions of Northern Ireland continue to create particular soundscapes that promote concepts of difference (see also Comerford, 2003; Vallely, 2008).

Tourism plays a very influential role in the creation and dissemination of regional identities. When commercial pressures such as those placed on traditions by the tourist industry are exerted, the traditions become subject to unnatural processes of change that are removed from the communities or folk to whom they are believed to belong. In his study of tourism from a geographical perspective, Williams states: "Sanitized, simplified and staged representations of places, histories, cultures and societies match the superficiality of the tourist gaze and meet tourist demands for entertaining and digestible experiences, yet they provide only partial representations of reality" (1998: 179). Tourism and tourists shape the identity of a place and imposing identity upon a host community through expectations (Urry, 1995; Williams, 1998; Johnson, 1999). Williams states: "in the most extreme forms of this phenomenon, places actually begin to lose their sense of identity - they become placeless and quite indistinct from other tourist places, and quite unrepresentative of the realities of indigenous places" (1998: 178). The tourist gaze impacts on both the construction and interpretation of symbols related to place and identity (Cloke, 1997; Williams, 1998; Johnson, 1999). O'Connor notes that "Tourist imagery has been instrumental in constructing Ireland and the Irish people as other to the modern industrial metropolitan centres" (1993: 76). Focusing particularly on heritage tourism in relation to the Big House in Ireland, Johnson states that heritage tourism "poses questions about authenticity and about the representation of geographical and historical knowledge" (1996: 551). Irish traditional music has traditionally been an integral part of the tourist imagery and commodified representations of Ireland (Plate 3).

Plate 3 Postcard image of Ireland



A postcard purchased in and representing Miltown Malbay, Co. Clare. Many places are represented with reference to music, such as this postcard, highlighting the musical traditions of the area in an attempt to target a particular audience. The representation of place is motivated by economic desire to attract tourists to the region. Source: Author's collection.

Irish traditional music is often exoticised by the tourist industry as an *other* culture. The representations of Irish traditional music presented by the tourist industry often do not conform to the reality experienced by many Irish traditional musicians. Mac Aoidh points out the displeasure that may develop within a community when asking: "How many times have you cringed at the sight of harp-bearing green-gowned lassies cavorting with lads in knee britches in 'cultural displays' for tourists? For the larger portion of practising traditional musicians this is not Irish traditional culture, but a Frankenstein-like nightmare" (1994: 36). Similarly, in a study of globalization and the tango, Goertzen and Azzi note: "Much of the modern support of the tango in its birthplace comes from outsiders, especially tourists, whose images of the tango must therefore be accommodated" (1999: 69). There are two aspects to the simplification of a complex

narrative for popular and/or tourist consumption. Soundscapes are simplified, promoting particular musicians and their styles but at the same time ignoring others. The context in which Irish traditional music is performed begins to change and, with it, the geographical meaning of the music.

Festivals are a particularly important part of the culture and tourist industries and can act as or promote representations of place or region. Duffy outlines how festivals, located in a particular place, shape the identity of that place even though the festival often does not include all people who inhabit that place (2000). Gibson and Davidson (2004) present a study of the representation of the Australian town of Tamworth and its association with country music. The representation of Tamworth as Australia's country music capital is the result of "strategic place marketing, undertaken by tourism authorities, promotional companies and local council representatives" (Gibson and Davidson, 2004). The growth in popularity of Irish traditional music festivals has added another dimension to the link between Irish traditional music and place that influences the concept of regions in Irish traditional music.

Cultural geography, informed by the humanist approach, seeks to understand place and identity through the study of material constructs, including buildings, streetscapes and monuments, and discursive constructs such as myths and stories (Allen and Massey, 1998). The representation of place and regional identity is integral to understanding the region and the culture of that region. The processes of constructing the region, performing regional identity and the process of constructing and telling the story of the region all combine to a complex understanding of the region. We must also consider who is telling the story and those elements in the story that are not told (Roach, 1996; Allen *et al*., 1998; Massey, 2005). These stories may be read from various cultural components which may be physical (artifacts), abstract and mental (mentifacts) and learned social behaviour (sociofacts). Literature, film and tourism are amongst the forces that shape the representation of place, often with explicit reference to or use of music.

3.7 Conclusions

Regions are not stable entities fixed in time and may contain cultural diversity within malleable boundaries. Appreciation must be given to the emergence of cultures and

their evolution over time. Spaces also change as new performance spaces, events such as festivals and monuments create new contexts for the consumption of music. Carney promotes the use of cultural hearth theory and the study of networks of migration and communication. Applegate (1999) identifies three aspects to the study of regions that focus on economic factors, the role of institutions of the nation state and the development and transmission of cultural difference. Regions must be understood in relation to other regions and in consideration of the role of the nation state.

The theoretical framework developed in this chapter outlines an understanding of regions as culturally diverse and constantly evolving. However, there are many shared cultural and sometimes topographical features across zones and spaces within the region. This understanding depends on communication. Lomnitz-Adler represents regional culture as:

> […] the internally differentiated and segmented culture produced by human interaction within a regional political economy. The various "cultural spaces" within a regional culture can be analyzed in relation to the hierarchical organization of power in space: within a given region one can discover similarly constituted identity groups, whose sense of themselves (their valued objects and relationships, their boundaries) are related to their position in the power region. Likewise, a regional culture implies the construction of frames of communication within and between the various identity groups, and these frames also have their spaces (1991: 198).

The frames of communication presented in this dissertation focus on both the sonic and visual worlds of Irish traditional music – the performance of musical styles and the promotion of regional narratives in the cultural landscape. The difficulty in Lomnitz-Adler's statement lies in the understanding of boundaries. While Lomnitz-Adler echoes the theories of othering and the construction of different identities for peoples from other places that emanate from Edward Said's work on Orientalism (1978), other studies emphasise the construction of identities within a culture or region through a structuralist approach (Giddens, 1984; Gill, 1995). The modes of communication that communicate meaning and identity in both approaches are critical to the development of an understanding for region as a process.

Memory is a recurring element in defining and performing cultural regions. Memory may be expressed through stories, monuments and musical performances and can reflect particular ideologies, motivated by economic and political situations and

manipulated by particular agents. Memory may become institutionalised and combined with history to create a reference for the future understanding of the region. Memory too may become separated from the context in which it is created and therefore made irrelevant. An integral part of the role of memory is the role of forgetting (Roach, 1996). As some memories are forgotten, whether consciously or unconsciously, more are added, highlighting the evolution of the cultural region. Memory involves people and place and may be evoked through musical performance. It informs an understanding of tradition and the role of Irish traditional music in society.

Stories, histories and social networks are integral to regional identity (Massey, 2005; Newman, 2006). The diffusion of stories and other aspects of culture through social networks extends the boundaries of the region and highlights regional difference. Music is part of life and can symbolise connection to a particular community or place. Music is not removed from politics and can have connections to nationalist and anti-nationalist movements. Regions in musical cultures must be understood through an examination of how regional identity is communicated within and beyond the region.

Chapter 4

The ‘region’ in Irish traditional music

4.1 Evidence of regional diversity in Irish traditional music

In this chapter I review the way in which the concept of the region has been engaged within the context of Irish traditional music. Regions in Irish traditional music are conventionally identified in relation to particular individuals. In the first section, I consider three individuals who, through their performance of Irish traditional music, present examples of stylistic diversity in Irish traditional music. In the second section I examine the context in which a discourse on regions in Irish traditional music developed. In the third section, I examine the significant role of Seán Ó Riada in the investigation of regional difference in Irish traditional music. In the fourth section I explore various approaches to the identification of regions in Irish traditional music. Expanding on some of the ideas promoted by Ó Riada and explored in the second section, I consider a methodology for the examination of regional styles that is closely linked to the work of Ó Riada (1962), Ó Canainn (1979), Keegan (1997) and Cranitch (2006). In the fifth section I consider the importance of understanding the evolution of Irish traditional music and the impact of change on regional diversity, noting in particular the development of increased awareness of regional diversity amongst scholars of Irish traditional music. Processes of institutionalisation are evident in all sections of the chapter.

Though there is little evidence of regional diversity being explicitly discussed prior to Seán Ó Riada's radio series *Our Musical Heritage* (1962), recordings of musicians from different areas made before that time highlight the diversity in musical styles and approaches to performing Irish traditional music. Irish traditional musicians perform a basic melodic structure embellished in a manner chosen by the performer, though sometimes influenced by the audience and surroundings. When this style is shared by a group of musicians in a locality it may be considered a regional style of music (Ó Suilleabháin, 1990). The individuality of each musician and the uniqueness of each performance prevent a definitive analysis of musical styles. Instead, an understanding of the approaches to musical performance and the environments and contexts in which the music is performed contribute to an understanding of regional distinctiveness.

Amongst the musicians associated with regional traditions in Irish traditional music, I have selected Michael Coleman (1891-1946), Pádraig O'Keeffe (1887-1963) and John Doherty (d. 1980) as examples of performers with distinctive musical styles who have contributed to the identity of the regions they came from. As male performers, the

three exemplify the gender bias that existed in Irish traditional music, influenced by the cultural norms of Irish society, until the end of the twentieth century. All three came from a rural background in counties Sligo, Kerry and Donegal respectively. All three individuals played the fiddle, one of the most common instruments in Irish traditional music and an instrument that is prominent in all parts of the country. However, their lives and musical styles were markedly different. Coleman emigrated to America where he was a professional musician at the forefront of the recording industry from the 1920s to the 1940s. His was a confident, highly embellished musical style with a long, legato bowing technique and whose repertoire was dominated by reels. O'Keeffe was a schoolteacher but was unable to conform to a lifestyle expected of a person in his position at that time. Hickey notes that Pádraig "lost his job as a primary school teacher quite early in life; was a social outcast in the eyes of some; a man who spent many of his days and nights in pubs and someone who generally led a bohemian existence" (1999: 87). Following his dismissal by the Department of Education, Pádraig taught music to students in Sliabh Luachra for much of his life and never recorded commercially. Though his personal preference was for reels and slow airs, the popularity of dancing in Sliabh Luachra required him to perform and teach a large number of polkas and slides. Doherty was an itinerant tinsmith from a family with a rich musical heritage who travelled around Donegal. His style was fast, made use of single note bowing patterns and demonstrated many influences of Scottish music including the use of the 'Scotch snap' and the performance of tune types such as highlands and strathspeys. All three play a significant role in a regional understanding of Irish traditional music.

Much has been written about Coleman and a number of his contemporaries, many of whom came from a small geographical area in north Connacht. From a geographical perspective, these musicians also heralded a new sphere of influence in Irish traditional music. Their choices regarding repertoire and the musical styles in which they performed set trends amongst Irish traditional musicians of their generation. Through processes of time-space compression and distanciation, these musical trends were transported back across the Atlantic. Part of the significance of Coleman and his closest contemporaries in the early recording industry was their association with their north Connacht roots and in particular a Sligo style of playing (MacMathúna, 1987; Ó hAllmhuráin, 1995; Bradshaw, 1999; O'Connor, 2001). Their influence on traditional musicians outside of north Connacht is seen as the death knell for many of the regional styles that existed in Irish

traditional music prior to the early twentieth century (Ó Riada, 1982; Ó hAllmhuráin, 1995). Ó hAllmhuráin outlines the importance of these early music idols stating:

> The two stars of the Irish American recording industry in the 1920's and 1930's were undoubtedly Michael Coleman and James Morrison. They both played in a Sligo regional style, highly ornamented, flamboyant and attractive. Throughout the following half century their recordings had an extraordinary impact both in Ireland and North America. To imitate their technique and ornamentation as well as their repertoires became almost imperative as regional styles and performers simply went out of fashion (1993: 34).

The concept of a Sligo style that was represented by Coleman and Morrison emerged as a result of socio-economic change, migration patterns and the creation of new contexts for Irish traditional music.

The concept of regional styles is a simplified representation of the realities of the soundscape of Irish traditional music. Despite the popular notion that individuals such as Coleman, Morrison and Killoran were representative of a regional style, Lyth, in a study of bowing patterns in Irish traditional music, states:

> It is a remarkable fact that although they were of the same generation and from the same district of Co. Sligo, Coleman, Killoran and Morrison had completely different trebling styles in reels (1981: xiii).

By challenging the notion that these musicians played in the same manner, Lyth challenges our concept of a stylistic region within which musicians share musical traits. Other musicians are also part of the musical soundscape of county Sligo. One such example of the complexity of understanding and recognising regional styles is the music of the McDonagh Brothers of Ballinafad. Ryan (1999) suggests that they represent an alternative Sligo musical style. However, Ryan also notes the impact of the American recording industry on the imagination of a Sligo style. In an introduction to a recording of the McDonagh Brothers of Ballinafad, Ryan stated:

> When we think about Sligo musicians and their music, the names that come to mind most readily are those of the great masters of Sligo fiddling such as Michael Coleman, James Morrison, John Joe Gardiner and Paddy Killoran. These people, through their own musical genius, streamlined and refined the playing style they grew up with at the turn of the century. Their recordings, particularly those of Coleman and Morrison, had an immediate and powerful effect on that style as other musicians became captivated with

> the new idiom and turned away from their old, simple ways of playing in order to imitate it (1999: np).

Ryan acknowledges that there are few examples to draw on in an investigation of musical styles that predate Coleman. However, the narratives of Irish traditional music that attempt to construct clear geographical regions write out and ignore the full complexity of the tradition.

The legacy of Coleman and his contemporaries is apparent very early in Coleman's recording career. There is a perceived process of homogenisation in styles of Irish traditional music through the twentieth century that is conventionally traced back to Coleman and his contemporaries. In *Our Musical Heritage*, Ó Riada recognises that though Coleman's musical style stems from that of his homeplace and the musicians whom he heard in his youth, it is developed and individual (1982: 53). Ó Riada commends Coleman's individuality of musical style and bemoans the practice of musicians who seek to copy or imitate Coleman's musical style. In her writing on Irish traditional music in America, O'Connor points to the fact that Coleman is often considered superior to his contemporaries in his ability relating to 'setting a tune' and this is important in understanding his influence and legacy (2001: 71). The location of Coleman in America for much of his life also complicates an understanding of regions in Irish traditional music as bounded entities on the island of Ireland.

Similar to Sligo, the soundscape of Sliabh Luachra is more complex than the narrative may sometimes suggest. Pádraig O'Keeffe is the dominant character in the story of the Sliabh Luachra music region. O'Keeffe learned much of his music from family members but his style was neither entirely local nor representative of the diverse musical practices of the region. Described by Nicky and Anne McAuliffe as "a distinctive playing style which he passed onto his pupils" (1985: 4), O'Keeffe's musical style was in part influenced by Coleman and other recorded artists. Lyth has outlined how during the single period of time that Pádraig spent away from his homeplace, for the purpose of training as a school teacher in Dublin, he merged the music that he had inherited at home with that of the new soundscape of Dublin and the increasing number of recordings that became available.

> Through this period - 1920s and '30s - Pádraig would seem to have perfected his style, incorporating influences from the '78 recordings then available into his inherited local tradition and in doing so probably

> introduced a wider range of expression into the fiddle playing than had previously been common in the area (1996: 25).

As well as developing a regional tradition, O'Keeffe is also a conductor of change and a link, musically, to other regions in the Irish music tradition. His musical style is both inherited locally and informed by experience of other traditions.

Despite the complexities of identifying the musical style of Pádraig O'Keeffe as representative of a Sliabh Luachra musical style, recordings of O'Keeffe and his students have become part of what is now recognised as the Sliabh Luachra style, a developed version of what O'Keeffe himself had inherited. It is through the transmission process and his role as a music teacher that O'Keeffe contributes most to the identity of the music region. As Hickey states:

> While undoubtedly a superb fiddle player, his greatest achievement has been the manner in which he handed on the music. This gives him the leading position in the pantheon of Sliabh Luachra musicians and also a major place on the national scene (1999: 88).

O'Keeffe's musical life path highlights the role of networks in the development and diffusion of regional style, stories and ideas and helps in an understanding of the evolving geography of Irish traditional music.

Lyth, who included the music of O'Keeffe in his study of fiddle styles in the Munster region, highlights the ongoing importance of O'Keeffe in the region:

> Though Pádraig died in 1963, he is still the single 'most-talked-about musical personality' in this very musical district. He is a legend, a folk hero and the anecdotes of his doings and sayings seem to be limitless. He is remembered most of all, however, as a musician of extraordinary ability whose settings of both dance tunes and traditional airs are cherished by his pupils in Sliabh Luachra and further afield in ever increasing numbers (1996: 26).

The ability of O'Keeffe to gain recognition, albeit largely posthumously, outside of Sliabh Luachra, has granted the local musical traditions related recognition. The importance of O'Keeffe as an iconic individual is stated by Hitchener who acknowledged the great heritage of Irish traditional music in Sliabh Luachra but states "the one musician whose influence still holds sway was the great Pádraig O'Keeffe (1888-1963), principally a fiddler but also a flute and concertina player from Glountane, Cordal, about halfway between Ballydesmond and Castleisland in Co. Kerry" (1991: 53). Similarly, Lynch

highlights the importance of O'Keeffe with particular reference to the soundscape he helped develop. Lynch states:

> At the very mention of the music of Kerry, or Sliabh Luachra in particular, the name Pádraig O'Keefe immediately springs to mind. For it was his unique fiddle style which formed the basis of the distinctive sound emanating from the region as we know it today and can now be heard on almost all traditional instruments. It would be fair to say that O'Keefe's playing technique was as influential to Sliabh Luachra as were those of Coleman and Doherty to Sligo and Donegal respectively (1994: 32).

The interest in the musical style and repertoire of Pádraig O'Keeffe was developed when Séamus Ennis and others came to Sliabh Luachra to record him for the radio (O'Leary, 1982). In Sliabh Luachra they encountered a community of musicians with a common musical thread, often linked to O'Keeffe.

Pádraig O'Keeffe did not achieve the same fame as Coleman and others, perhaps because he did not spend much time outside of Sliabh Luachra. The story of John Doherty echoes that of O'Keeffe. Doherty has become the unassuming hero to outsiders in an oversimplification of a complex network of musical styles, genealogies and stories in and about Donegal. Mac Aoidh (1994) criticises the lack of understanding amongst musical commentators on the traditions of Donegal who often identify Donegal music as 'Scottish' and limit examples to a single stereotyped form as played by John Doherty. As Mac Aoidh states:

> While his style may be considered as the archetypal Donegal fiddling, it is, however, curiously unique. It had many of the hallmarks of most of the sub-regional Donegal styles, but was highly complex and personal, and as he made clear, was consciously developed. Such was the impact of his dynamic playing that he remains the most influential Donegal fiddle player, and he is the credited source on many of the late twentieth-century flood of Donegal-style recordings (1999a: 107).

Like Pádraig O'Keeffe, it is the influence of Doherty on the musical traditions of his native area and increasingly on our imagination of that area that constructs a narrative of a distinct musical region.

Despite the uniqueness of his musical style, a characteristic shared with Michael Coleman and Pádraig O'Keeffe, Doherty maintains some of the more general stylistic traits associated with the music of Donegal. The sleeve notes that accompany a

compilation of recordings of John Doherty highlight both his position in the Donegal tradition and the differences he performed:

> Donegal fiddle playing is generally recognised by a strong clear tone, skilfully controlled bowing and sparse but extremely effective finger ornamentation. John Doherty's distinctive style, which differed from that of his father and his older brothers, had all of these and more. His dramatic attacking, powerful yet sweet tone, was the cornerstone of his music while his incredible dexterity was a source of wonder to all who heard him play in awkward keys often using difficult position work at great speed and with the greatest of ease. Other hallmarks of his style included the crisp staccato triplets for which he was much admired and an impressive use of double stopping (Hammond *et al.*, 1978).

McCann notes how Doherty, on one of his few trips outside Donegal, introduced musicians at a Cavan *Fleadh Cheoil* in 1954 to a particular repertoire of Donegal music (1994: 21). For contemporary musicians who seek to discover and imitate the Donegal musical style, they are most often directed to recordings of Doherty, which are as much representative of the style and repertoire of an individual as a region. The narrative that is created allows the construction of beliefs of regionality that are preserved through the performance of what many people believe to be the music of Donegal.

John Doherty may also be seen as representative of a character type within the narrative of Irish traditional music. Doherty was a member of an itinerant family and though the term 'Tinker' has developed negative connotations, it is recognised that travelling people are important in the history of Irish traditional music. Other travelling families who developed and diffused Irish traditional music include the Dorans, Dunnes, Raineys and Fureys. As a travelling fiddle player John Doherty connected the communities of the region that were divided by geographical remoteness. Like Pádraig O'Keeffe, he brought a style of musical performance and a repertoire of music to these places that helped develop a commonality in the musical traditions of that area. Thus a regional tradition is created during his lifetime. Alan Feldman laments the loss of John Doherty as representative of the loss of particular characters in the tradition as a whole; the character who connects the people in a region. Feldman states:

> The recent death of John Doherty, the travelling virtuoso fiddler of Donegal, has ushered in a final tragic period in the Irish musical tradition […] the passing away of John Doherty is a crucial marker in an inevitable process by which Ireland will lose that remarkable sub-culture of older musicians who stood as the sole bridge between contemporary Ireland and

> the most fertile and expressive arts of the rural tradition. The next five to ten years will witness the gradual attrition of the rural master musician, that special breed of artist born around the turn of the century, who assimilated Irish music as a direct generational transmittance (1980: np).

Arguably the loss of such characters is related to the changing social context of the music and impacts upon the geographical narratives, identity and connectivity of the region. Musicians are now connected by other means, often technological developments such as the radio, television and internet. In the present, much larger populations and communities share styles and repertoires over much greater distances. The process of diffusion beyond a regional base, which arguably begins with the recording career of Michael Coleman, changes the context in which the region develops. However, a large amount of music making activities remain local, involving performers, teachers, students and audience who create a region with new landscapes, soundscapes and values.

In identifying particular individuals and musical styles to be transmitted, the region becomes institutionalised and managed. Some aspects of regional traditions are neglected and lost. Organisations promote aspects of the tradition that serve a particular purpose. The institutionalisation and management of regional identities in Irish traditional music is explored further in Chapter Five with particular reference to processes of transmission, recording and commemoration and the role of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*.

4.2 Changing contexts for understanding regional diversity in Irish traditional music

The contexts in which Coleman, O'Keeffe and Doherty learned and performed Irish music and shaped the concept of a musical region have changed dramatically since their deaths. Influenced by approaches in historical ethnomusicology (see Widess, 1992; Bithell, 2006), a number of processes that inform the study of regional diversity in Irish traditional music are identified in this chapter including the transmission process and changing spatial and social contexts. Bohlman states: "Changes in a community's social structure […] influence not only its folk music repertory but also the ways in which its repertory is transmitted. Musical change reflects – indeed, becomes a metaphor for – cultural change" (1988: 15). The study of musical and cultural change reinforces the understanding of regional identities as processes influenced by economic, political and social factors.

Regions and their boundaries are processes that are shaped by social, economic and political forces. These forces may be located at the periphery or significantly removed from the core of the region. Thompson suggests: "music geography is emerging to provide valuable perspectives that question the socially constructed boundaries around the production and consumption of music" (2006: 67). This section engages with the desire of music geography to understand the construction of regions and boundaries in musical traditions. These boundaries exist socially and geographically. The practice of constructing and performing boundaries leads to a conceptualisation of regions within the tradition. These regions are shaped by and based on musical styles, stories, aspects of social and economic change, and patterns of migration and communication. In Chapter Three, three aspects of the development of regions presented by Applegate (1999) were explored that are applied in this section. The first considers the economic environment in which Irish traditional music develops in the twentieth century with particular consideration of migration. The second notes the role of institutions of the nation state and those that operate in tandem with the development of national identity. The third considers the role of transmission and modes of diffusion in the development of regional identities.

Influenced by a number of factors including imperial rule and subsequent post-colonial attitudes, the economy of Ireland remained largely under-developed and primarily dependent on agriculture until the mid-twentieth century. Dowling notes the decline in agriculture and related trades in the latter half of the twentieth century and the growth of urban areas as factors that impact on the existence of "distinct musical regions in Ireland" (1996: 64). Economic factors had a significant influence on the development of Irish traditional music including the development and knowledge of regional traditions. Writing about the relationship between Irish traditional music and economic circumstances in 1940s Ireland, Ó hAllmhuráin notes:

> The traditional musician remained as susceptible to the ebb and flow of the Irish economy as any of his contemporaries. Only inheriting males could enjoy any modicum of certainty in rural Ireland. Non-inheriting females, as well as the working classes in small towns and cities, continued to emigrate throughout the 1940s (1998: 136).

Internal migration, particularly when linked to urbanisation and the growth of Dublin changed the context in which Irish traditional music existed as part of a way of life in

rural Ireland. Belfast, Cork, Galway and Limerick have also become important urban references for Irish traditional music, as spaces for the performance and consumption of Irish traditional music move from rural pubs to universities and concert halls. Emigrant communities also created spaces for the consumption of Irish traditional music (Hall, 1994; 1997). Gross (1992) describes the importance of musical culture in creating and maintaining social networks and kinship links in migration destinations. Similarly, Cohen writes: "Music is one means through which such relations are established, maintained and transformed" (1995: 438). Irish traditional music continues to be a valuable tool for expression, communication and admission to groups, particularly in centres of migration. At different stages commercial interest in Irish traditional music helped shape the popularity and playing styles of musicians.

Dublin city is a particularly important place in the development of Irish traditional music. Ó hAlmhuráin states:

> While England claimed the lion's share of Irish emigrants, Dublin too attracted its quota of migrant workers, among them musicians who deserted Ireland during the 'Hungry Forties'. Pipers and fiddlers became so numerous in Dublin during the Emergency that the Dublin Pipers Club, which had been defunct since 1926, was successfully revived in 1940 […] Its home in Thomas Street became a meeting place for traditional musicians from all over Ireland (1998: 136, 137).

Ó hAlmhuráin's statement highlights two aspects to the role of Dublin in the development of Irish traditional music. Firstly, in becoming a place with a strong community of Irish traditional musicians, Dublin-based musicians create a context that differs from conventional concepts of the geography of Irish traditional music dominated by the rural west of Ireland. Secondly, migration patterns of much of the twentieth century create in Dublin a community of Irish traditional musicians of varying styles that reflect the cultural mosaic of the Irish traditional music community nationally. It was Seán Ó Riada who brought the concept of regional styles to the attention of a wider public through his radio show *Our Musical Heritage* (1962). Keegan (2006) asserts that it was Ó Riada's experience of musicians from different parts of the country who met in Dublin and began playing together in their different musical styles and with different repertoires that influenced his thoughts on the concept of regional styles. O'Doherty also notes the significance of Irish traditional music for young, urban-based Irish people who began "questioning modern mass culture, particularly musical culture, with its vast passive

audiences ministered to by artificial creations of the media" (1979: 1). O'Doherty identifies Irish traditional music as an art form on a more intimate scale, which depends on reciprocal participation of audience and musician and plays an important role in the social life of ordinary people.

Dublin grew in population and stature at the expense of rural Ireland. The close ties that many recent immigrants maintained with rural Ireland influenced the growing cultural importance of a Dublin-based society (Johnson, J., 1994). Bradley identifies the 1950s as a period of transition in the Irish economy and economic policy and acknowledges that the "modern economic age dawned for Ireland in the late 1950s" (2004: 114). The economy, like the Irish music revival, mirrored the DeValerian ideologies of the time. Uncertainty and ultimate failure characterised Ireland's economic policy-making as it struggled to negotiate its own identity. There was a conflict between the identities, economies and cultures of rural and urban Ireland. In a paper outlining changing audiences for Irish traditional music, Curran (1996) highlights the fact that the power and influence of urban areas in the 1950s far outweighed that of rural Ireland. As Dublin grew in population, the people who became part of its communities adapted their cultures to new contexts. In the case of Irish traditional music, influences from the city and beyond were brought back to rural Ireland by those visiting home or attending sessions and festivals.

The role of Dublin as a cultural hearth of modernism in Ireland in the mid-twentieth century is epitomized by its role in shaping our understanding of the rest of Ireland. Dublin is the capital city of a centralized state. It is in Dublin that *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* develop headquarters and communicate ideologies and power hierarchies that impact on the performance and development of Irish traditional music in other areas. Other relevant organisations including *Radió Éireann*, *Gael Linn* and The Irish Traditional Music Archive are also located in Dublin. Seán Ó Riada featured a number of Dublin based musicians in *Our Musical Heritage* (1962). The collector Breandán Breathnach (1976) points to the emerging audience for and the desire to produce notated sources of music for this audience. The map indicating the sources of his collection (Fig. 6, page 206) highlights the role of Dublin based musicians as important reference points for a living tradition. It is, arguably, from Dublin in the mid-twentieth century that the discourse of regions in Irish traditional music emerges.

The state also impacts upon the spaces for the performance, consumption and transmission of Irish traditional music. These spaces have changed over the past century and the spatial context for Irish traditional music has impacted on its location both in social and geographical terms. Attitudes of the clergy, leading to The Public Dance Halls Act of 1935, impacted upon the spaces in which Irish traditional music was performed (Ó hAllmhuráin, 1998; Vallely, 1999a; Feldman, 2002). Irish traditional music moved from the rural kitchen to the dance hall. The increased popularity of English and American music, including jazz and later rock'n'roll impacted on the audience for Irish traditional music and the music played in dance halls. The pub session and *fleadh cheoil* became prominent spaces for the performance of Irish traditional music. These spaces were not evenly spread across the country, creating regional networks of spaces used by the Irish traditional music community.

Social networks as much as national institutions were integral to the transmission of culture. Spaces and customs in rural Ireland provided an environment in which regional cultures were nurtured and transmitted. Fairs and markets, as well as the custom of visiting private houses, were integral to communication within the region. Cullen (1968) highlights the importance of markets, fairs, funerals and weddings as events that commanded attention and notes that music was a part of these events. Music, song and dance were elements of work and rest in rural Ireland. Rambling and travelling people, many tinkers or farm labourers, as well as travelling music and dancing masters, diffused the music throughout a region and beyond. Irish traditional music is often learned within a family context and many musicians learn informally within close social networks. These social networks are integral to the construction of regional boundaries and identities. Quoting from Dorson, Ryden (1993) notes that the folk region is dependent on imagined as much as physical boundaries and as a result, these boundaries may change as the social networks that maintain the regions folkways and symbols stretch or contract in spatial areas. The enormous changes in Irish society, particularly through migration and urbanisation, underpin the examination of regional processes in this section.

The culture and society of urban Dublin may be contrasted directly with those of the rural west. Musicians learned music in new contexts, desiring and making use of notated collections and radio programmes. The regional environments in which Irish traditional music had developed with great diversity was challenged by new,

institutionalised and urbanised settings. However, some aspects of regional diversity and the musical traditions of rural Ireland were integrated into the reappropriation of Irish traditional music. Feldman notes:

> From the 1960s onward young Irish people reappropriated rural musical instruments, techniques and repertoires from a preceding and often culturally neglected older generation of musicians who served as their guides and mentors. This resurgence process resulted in a moderately cultural separatist, highly skilled and creative urbanized performance culture rooted in rural materials and transmitting rural cultural memory in both urban and rural performance contexts (2002: 108).

Echoing processes of localisation as a response to globalization as outlined in Chapter Three, these urban communities developed an awareness of regional diversity within Irish traditional music and influenced a greater appreciation of regions in Irish traditional music.

The process of constructing regions and regional identity is also part of the evolution of Irish traditional music and the popularity of the genre in the global marketplace. Commercial success and attention is a motivation for the use of regional styles of music by professional musicians (Vallely, 1997). However, it may be argued that the presentation of these musical styles in the context of a commercial market removes their geographical resonance, though paradoxically it can highlight the geographical diversity that exists (or that previously existed.) in Irish traditional music. A number of theories exist about the development of regional styles (Feldman, 1979, Corcoran, 1997, Ó Bróithe, 1999, Ó Suilleabháin in O'Connor, 2001). Familiarity with sounds and musical expression is important in recognising the geographical diversity and stylistic plurality of Irish traditional music. As geographers Russell and Kniffen point out: "The things we grow up with become the normal things and the ways we use them become the natural ways. The things and ways of other people are strange in proportion to the degree of contrast with ours" (1969:4). Prior to the development of sound recordings in the early twentieth century and the growth in popularity of music festivals in the latter half of the twentieth century, musicians were familiar with a limited local soundscape. Musicians played in a local style because it was the natural thing to do. The importance of this familiarity is highlighted in the recollections of Leitrim fiddle player, Charlie Lennon, who stated:

> My father would talk about local fiddlers, local musicians and he wouldn't ever listen seriously to Coleman. He preferred the plainer music that he was used to, the music he played himself. We had a gramophone and a few records. They were scarce enough. Each house would have a different record so you'd go around from one to the other and listen but it was also important to recognise the local people (quoted in Kelly, 2005: 16).

Lennon is reflecting on what is considered the first major turning point in the recognition of regional styles in Irish traditional music. In the early twentieth century, the recordings of Sligo musicians such as Michael Coleman were highly popular and many musicians around the country imitated the music. While the recordings began to dilute some of the regional styles, they also highlighted the differences that existed between heretofore-disconnected communities. The process of dilution exasperates attempts to identify geographies of Irish traditional music based on style, a process that has become increasingly evident during the course of the twentieth century. Ó Bróithe states:

> It became increasingly difficult in the later part of the twentieth century to find specific regional styles of playing, as musicians modified their techniques through listening to records and the radio, and exchanged their repertoires of tunes at fleadhs and festivals around the country. Some areas, bypassed by main roads or otherwise geographically isolated, resisted this homogenisation and regional characteristics survived mainly among the older musicians (1999: 128).

Much of the debate on regions in Irish traditional music has centred on the disappearance and erosion of regional music styles. Regional music styles in Irish traditional music are regularly dismissed as a thing of the past, a feature of isolated musical communities that existed before recorded music and radio broadcasts (Feldman, 1979; MacLaughlin, 1992; Corcoran, 1997; Vallely, 1997, 1999b; Cranitch, 2006). In a study of Donegal and Shetland fiddle styles, MacLaughlin stated: "the influence of the broadcast media, record companies and other agents whose interests in the materials of traditional music may often be led by less than musical criteria, has contributed to a large degree to the erosion of many distinctive stylistic traits and to the standardisation of both performing style and repertoire (1992: 2). These sentiments are echoed by Corcoran (1997) but, in both cases, the geographical significance is largely unexplored. The paradox of the development of sound recording and broadcasting is the legacy of reference on musical styles that now exist. Feldman (2002) notes the emergence and the popularity of musicians from Co. Sligo in the 1920s and 1930s and the shift towards music and musicians from Co. Clare in

the 1960s and 1970s, partly due to the development of recording and the radio and the privileging of regional identities.

4.3 Ó Riada and regions in Irish traditional music

In spite of the evidence of regional diversity in Irish traditional music outlined in preceding sections, the concept of regions in Irish traditional music receives little consideration in the discourse on Irish traditional music until the 1960s. Keegan (2006) identifies Seán Ó Riada and his radio series *Our Musical Heritage* (1962) as the first explicit investigation of regional diversity in Irish traditional music. In this section, I consider the significant role of Seán Ó Riada in developing a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. Through his work with the group *Ceoltóirí Chualann* and for the radio series *Our Musical Heritage* (1962), Ó Riada explored some of the history and diversity of Irish traditional music. Recording and broadcasting are at the centre of the single greatest paradox in the discourse on regional styles: recording and broadcasting are considered homogenising forces yet without recordings and broadcasts musicians may not have become aware of the regional diversity within the tradition. The most prevalent issues concerning recording and broadcasting relate to choice – who is recorded and broadcast; where these recordings are made; and the impact of these choices on processes of homogenisation or musical change.

Seán Ó Riada is one of the most influential figures in Irish traditional music. Ó hAllmhuráin writes: "Although the *fleadh cheoil* movement and the seminal broadcasts of Ciarán MacMathúna raised the morale of musicians in the 1950s, few could have anticipated the phenomenal influence of Seán Ó Riada, who transformed the status of Irish traditional music in the 1960s" (1998: 147). Various commentators on the life and legacy of Ó Riada note how he led a spatial revolution in Irish traditional music, opening up "the 'high art' concert halls of the nation" and declaring the presence of a once rural art form in urban Dublin (Ó hAllmhuráin, 1998: 149; see also Ó Canainn, 2003). Ó Riada's legacy is complex and combines a discourse on regional styles, performance contexts and the radio.

A number of factors influence Ó Riada's ideas in *Our Musical Heritage* (1962), described by Ó Suilleabháin as "written in the first flush of his personal rediscovery of the

native tradition" (1994: 343). Keegan suggests that Ó Riada's theories concerning regional styles were "informed by his initial experiences of working and socializing with traditional musicians in Dublin, all of whom were trying to make sense of their different sounds and of course rooting their organisation and rationalization of this in the context of what they hold dearest and idealise, the home place and the people of that place" (2006: 12). The Ó Riada home in Dublin became a laboratory for experimentation and discovery in Irish traditional music (Ó Riada, 2006). West Clare fiddler John Kelly was a particular influence on Ó Riada. Kelly was an important figure in Dublin, whose shop on Capel Street was a meeting place for traditional musicians. Highlighting Kelly's philosophy regarding Irish traditional music, accordion player and broadcaster Tony MacMahon notes that it was Kelly who was the first to stress to him the importance of locality in traditional music (2009: 23). The same emphasis on understanding Irish traditional music as the music of place is integral to *Our Musical Heritage*. Through the series, Ó Riada provided a framework for the discussion of Irish traditional music and, like Séamus Ennis and Ciarán MacMathúna, introduced audiences to a diverse range of musicians from around Ireland.

In *Our Musical Heritage*, Ó Riada (1962) presents a regional framework for understanding Irish traditional music. Early in the series Ó Riada states two intentions:

> To introduce to those not acquainted with it already, the rich and comparatively untouched pastures of Irish traditional music, both vocal and instrumental; and for those who already know the subject, to criticise (to some extent) the present condition of Irish traditional music with a view to suggesting some kind of standard (1982: 19).

Ó Riada structures the programmes by focusing on the voice and particular instruments, choosing regions at random. It is noticeable that the regions identified by Ó Riada are located along the west coast. Ó Riada's approach to the traditions is only partly retrospective, focusing more on the music of his time and using some examples that he himself recorded.

Irish traditional music, as explored by Ó Riada, is divided into the singing and instrumental traditions. The first geographical division identified by Ó Riada is in the singing traditions of Connemara and Munster. Ó Riada contrasts the big Munster songs that "are often spread over nearly two octaves, and use wide intervals which give a feeling of spaciousness" (1982: 32) with the somewhat compressed songs of Connemara that "do

not usually range wider than the interval of a 9th, or a 10th, just over an octave" (1982: 33). Ó Riada further divides Munster into the regions of the Déise in east Munster, which even at that time was declining in geographical range, and west Munster with two separate cores located in west Cork and west Kerry. By the time of *Our Musical Heritage* Ó Riada was not only coming to terms with Irish traditional music but was also forging a personal connection with, firstly, west Kerry and later the west Cork area of the Cúl Aodha Gaeltacht. In a review of the legacy of Seán Ó Riada, Ó Laoire states: "Ó Riada's fascination with sean-nós song and the rigorous aesthetic prescribed for it in *Our Musical Heritage* placed sean-nós song at the heart of Irish traditional music" (2009: 1). However, for many, the instrumental and singing traditions remain part of separate social networks and exist in different spatial contexts.

Ó Riada begins his study of the instrumental tradition by focusing on the uilleann pipes. The uilleann pipes present a challenge for the geographical consideration of regions in Irish traditional music. Though Breathnach suggests that the two identifiable styles of uilleann piping, namely loose or open fingering and tight or close fingering, as styles that were formerly regional, connecting open fingering with Leinster and eastern Munster, "whilst tight playing was favoured in Connacht and some other districts along the western seaboard" (1971: 94, 95). Ó Riada does not recognise regional differences in uilleann piping traditions but his selection of examples suggests his familiarity with and communicates the existence of a Dublin based community of musicians. Tommy Reck and Séamus Ennis are used as examples of uilleann pipers, as is traveller Johnny Doran, while uilleann pipers Seán Potts and Paddy Maloney are used as examples of tin whistle players, though Ó Riada recognises their prowess on the uilleann pipes (1982: 66).

After the uilleann pipes, Ó Riada turns his attention to the fiddle. Noting the variety found in fiddle playing, Ó Riada states:

> Like *sean-nós* singing, but unlike piping, fiddle styles vary from place to place; there is no definite standard style. I doubt if there is a county in Ireland that has not got its own quota of fiddle-players and its own tradition – thirty two counties and, you might say, thirty two styles (1982: 51, 52).

Ó Riada's seemingly throw-away remark ignores the complexity of the geography of Irish traditional music. Ó Riada explores a limited number of regional styles, chosen at random from along the western seaboard and namely a Donegal style, Sligo style, Clare style and a West Limerick-North Kerry style. The regions remain central to the discussion of

regions in Irish traditional music. Due to processes of evolution and modernization, Ó Riada has himself cause to question the stability of the regional distinctions that he identifies, stating:

> Radio and gramophone records are gradually tending to produce a uniformity of style in fiddle-playing, so that you could quite easily hear a fiddle-player in the far South playing in the style of some fiddle player from the far North whose style he might find attractive, and for which he would forsake his own local style (1982: 53).

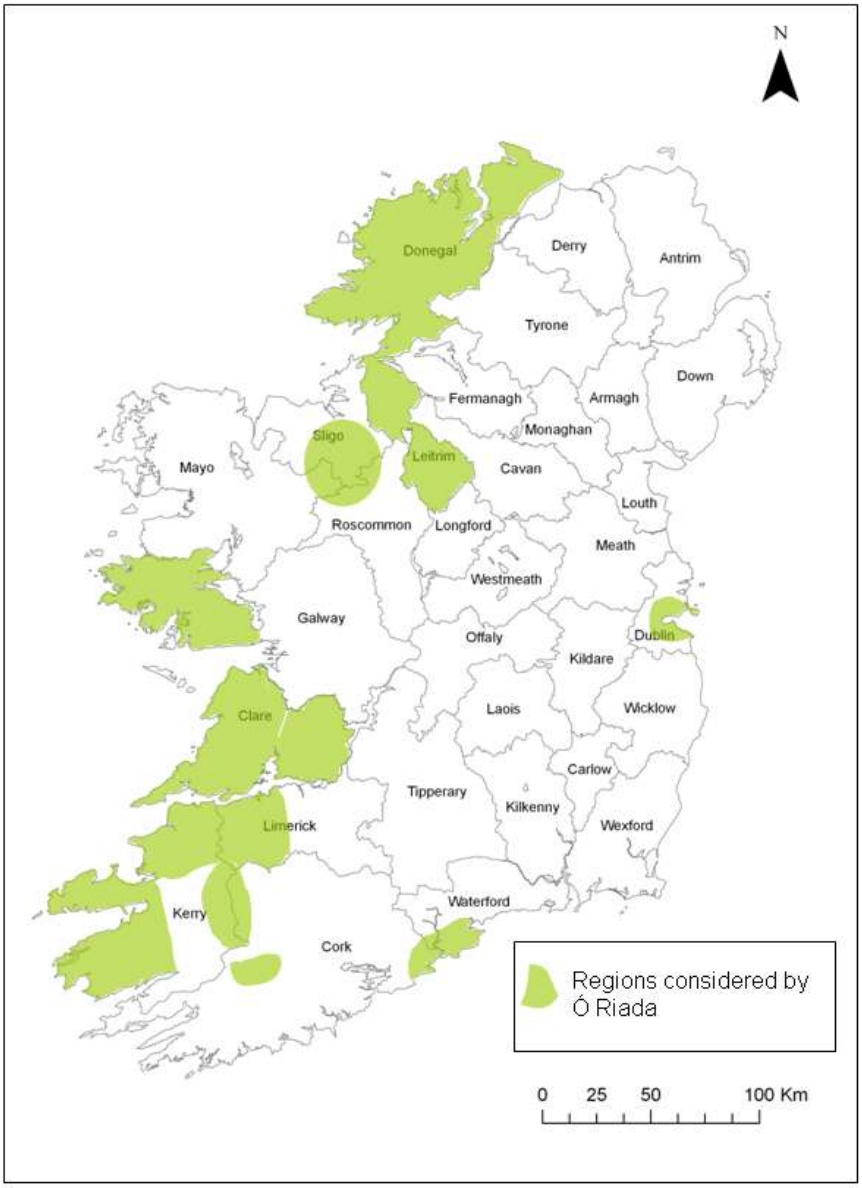
There are two elements of note in Ó Riada's deliberation. He is motivated to find difference in the tradition as he believes "no style is perfect, and the more styles that exist the better" (1982: 53). Also, *Our Musical Heritage* is part of a much more extensive process in which the radio and recordings that are leading to stylistic homogeneity are paradoxically highlighting and preserving regional difference in Irish traditional music.

Ó Riada presents a limited number of regional traditions (fig. 2). He attributes this, in part, to the limitations of a radio series; *Our Musical Heritage* consisted of just six episodes. However, in reference to singing and the concept of a hierarchy of musical or singing styles, Ó Riada states:

> If, in these programmes, I have neglected one region or another, it is because I felt that the regions I covered included all the most important features of the sean-nós as it still exists (BL/PP/OR/554/9).

The geography of Irish traditional music continues to focus on a limited number of regions, influenced by Ó Riada. Within those regions, Ó Riada 'discovered' much music making that was largely unknown outside the local area. However, *Our Musical Heritage* was an introductory examination of the depth and diversity in Irish traditional music and its relevance to a regional understanding of Irish traditional music must be considered as such. For all that he discovered in 1962, Ó Riada missed much. There were numerous musicians performing in various musical styles in Ireland at that time who did not feature on the radio series.

Figure 2 Regions explored in *Our Musical Heritage* (1962)



Ó Riada identified three regions of singing located in Connemara, West Kerry and East Cork/West Waterford. Ó Riada focused on a small number of regions in the instrumental music tradition. To the fore were Sligo, Clare and West Limerick/North Kerry. He featured a number of musicians from Dublin, signalling the location of a number of significant musicians in the capital. Ó Riada also recognised different traditions in west and east Clare and also makes reference to regions in Cork-South Kerry and Leitrim that he does not analyse. Source: Adapted from Ó Riada (1962/1982).

Following Ó Riada's death, *Fundúireacht an Riadaigh*, a trust formed to organise and oversee projects in memory of Sean Ó Riada, gave priority to the publication of *Our Music Heritage* (BP/LL/OR/715). Described as "the most comprehensive statement available of Ó Riada's vision of Irish music", the publication was seen as a most fitting memorial to his life and work (BP/LL/OR/715). Similarly, a letter from Riobáird Mac Góráin dated 24ú Feabhra 1972 to solicitor Joseph Lambe states: "The first proposal, to which Ruth is very sympathetic in principle, that the Fundúireacht should commit itself to achieving the publication of Seán's very important radio series 'Our Musical Heritage' – and that this, in fact, should be the Fundúireacht's first project". There are a number of aspects of *Our Musical Heritage* that have impacted greatly on the development of Irish traditional music. Many of the musicians featured by Ó Riada, including John Doherty, Patrick and John Kelly, Junior Crehan, Fred Finn and Peter Horan are amongst the most famous names in the musical traditions of their respective areas. The styles of these musicians were ascribed regional status though the complexity of regional styles was not fully explored conceptually or otherwise. The association of Irish traditional music with the west of Ireland is strengthened by Ó Riada's focus on Donegal, Sligo, Clare, Limerick and Kerry, though there is a greater awareness demonstrated in *Our Musical Heritage* of Dublin based musicians and the changing social geography of Irish traditional music. Ó Riada's legacy is, arguably, a greater appreciation of regional diversity within Irish traditional music.

Another aspect relevant to understanding Ó Riada's impact on the geographical imagination of Irish traditional music was his quest for *An Saol Gaelach*, an Irish way of life (Ó Canainn, 2003). Through his lifepath, Ó Riada embodies the myths of romantic nationalism. He himself had nationalist and republican sentiments and had considered becoming involved in the armed struggle (Ó Canainn, 2003). Ó Riada's musical activities were entwined with an interest in other aspects of Irish culture. As well as radio programmes, Ó Riada was also involved in the theatre and commercial recordings made of Irish traditional music. Another significant element of his life was the Irish language. An important organisation in the promotion of the Irish language was *Gael Linn*, an organisation that was also to influence the development and diffusion of Irish traditional music. Discussing Ó Riada's role with *Gael Linn* in the 1950s, Carolan stated:

> Seán Ó Riada certainly should be mentioned because he was central to the activities of Gael Linn at this time. He wasn't involved, as far as I've been

> able to establish, in the first issue - the first six of their 78s - but I think he himself was influenced by them when he was turning to the Irish language and Gaeltacht life at that time and I think that they were decisive enough in his life choices after that. But he left the Abbey Theatre where he had been a director of music and composer in residence, had got out of Dublin and gone to live in the Kerry Gaeltacht, keeping of course many connections with his friends in Dublin and Gael Linn and he recommended that Seán de hÓra and Jerry Flatherty as he was called would be recorded and he was involved in [...] arrangement and research and that type of thing. He was, it must be remembered, Ó Riada was on the first LP that Gael Linn put out about this time - he was accompanying Tomás Ó Suilleabháin on one side on songs and he was playing the piano on the record - so he was on both side of the microphone for Gael Linn at this time and of course *Mise Éire* was around the corner (Carolan, The Late Session 1st August 2004).

Ó Riada was a link between Irish musicians and singers in their various locations and the organisations that were recording, broadcasting and promoting Irish traditional music.

Ó Riada's interest in the Irish language brought him into contact with Gaeltacht communities and led, in part, to his decision to live in the Cúl Aodha Gaeltacht from around 1963. Ó Riada had previously experienced life in a Gaeltacht, enjoying a holiday to the west Kerry Gaeltacht in the late 1950s. Ó Canainn notes:

> It is clear that Seán was impressed by what he found in Kerry in 1959. For the first time in his life he experienced the Irish language and an Irish way of life, in their natural surroundings (2003: 34, 35).

Ó Riada returned to Dublin for a while but left permanently in 1963 upon attaining a post at University College, Cork. He settled with his family in Cúl Aodha, a Gaeltacht region in Cork. During his time in Cúl Aodha, Ó Canainn notes that Seán moved "closer and closer to native traditions" (2003: 145). Ó Riada's decision emphasises the attitude that, contrary to the geographical developments within Irish traditional music, it remained, in his opinion, a rural tradition that could only be truly experienced in a rural social context.

Plate 4 Gravestone of Seán Ó Riada, St. Gobnait's Cemetery, Ballyvourney, Co. Cork



The gravestone sculpted by Cork sculptor Séamus Murphy that stands at the grave of Seán and Ruth Ó Riada. A similar headstone, also by Murphy, marks the grave of Peig Sayers, one of the most famous Irish speakers and 'Blasket writers', whose autobiography describes the way of life of the Blasket Islands. Ó Riada was keen to live an Irish way of life, especially through the use of the Irish language, which related to that of Peig Sayers. Source: Author, 14th September 2007.

Plate 5 Monument to Seán Ó Riada in the ground of St. Gobnait's Church, Cúl Aodha



Source: Author, 27th September, 2008.

Seán Ó Riada became part of local identity and folklore in Cúl Aodha. In leaving Dublin to live in Cúl Aodha, Ó Riada also steps away from the urbanisation of Irish traditional music. In many ways he began a new process, the return of Irish traditional music to rural Ireland. Through his own location in a gaeltacht region of rural Ireland, Ó Riada reemphasises the popular associations between Irish traditional music, the Irish language and rural Ireland. His grave (Plate 4) and a monument dedicated to his memory located outside St. Gobnait's Church in Cúl Aodha (Plate 5) create new spaces in the geography of Irish traditional music. During Ó Riada's lifetime, Irish traditional music evolved into a confident musical tradition in Ireland that could be both urban and rural but the stories and memories remain firmly located and celebratory of the rural.

4.4 Approaches to regional musical style in Irish traditional music

The concept of diversity of musical styles, highlighted by the different sounds created by musicians such as Coleman, O'Keeffe and Doherty, was central to the development of *Our Musical Heritage* (1962). Debates on regions in Irish traditional music continue to be dominated by the discourse on regional styles, something that Morton describes as a "dead geography" (2001: 51). Sommers Smith (1997) suggest that a national culture of Irish music, propagated by travelling musicians and dancing masters, as well as early collectors, has existed since at least the post-Famine period that has diluted the cultural diversity in the island. Yet others have sought to reinforce the integrity of regional identity (Feldman, 1979; Mac Aoidh, 1994; Roche, 1994, 1995, 2008). However, the ability to define or definitively locate the stylistic region is the difficulty that has beset scholars from Breandán Breathnach and Seán Ó Riada almost half a century ago, to Niall Keegan and Matt Cranitch in the twenty first century. In the following section I examine the concept of a regional musical style and the development of a methodology for the study of musical style in the context of a multi-faceted understanding of the region in Irish traditional music. As well as examining these stylistic traits, it is important to also examine "the conditions in which styles are formed, maintained, modified and abandoned" (Blum, 1992: 165). Differences in methods of analysis are exemplified through the focus of studies on the poetics (making) and aesthetics (perception and evaluation) and in the relations between creation and reception (Blum, 1992). In concluding this section, I recognise the influence of the use of music on the performance of a particular musical style and the possible implications for a regional understanding of Irish traditional music.

A discussion of methods and approaches to the delimitation of musical regions in Ireland is at the core of this thesis. Deliberating on the process of delimitation in the study of musical regions, Nettl states:

> A body of music may be described at various levels. In the literature on the subject, the bodies of music are often not well defined, and the word "style" is frequently used to indicate a body of music which is described as having some homogeneity, without indications of exactly how this style is culturally delimited. In practice, descriptions of music strive toward statements of homogeneity, and the student taking upon himself the task of describing a body of music usually tries in advance to delimit it in such a way as to make possible an analysis which will yield a homogenous picture (1964: 174).

Nettl notes that in some cases, musicologists are selective, choosing aspects that satisfy some concepts of musical style but also neglecting others. Problems concerning the use of the term 'style' are inherent in the discourse on Irish traditional music (Fairbairn, 1993; Keegan, 1997, 2006; Vallely, 1997; Cranitch, 2006). Keegan (1997) presents five definitions for the term style in the context of music (see also Cranitch, 2006).

Table 16 Five definitions of musical style.

1.	The style which is the Irish musical tradition.
2.	The style associated with a particular instrument.
3.	The style of any one of the musical 'dialects' which are characterised by different levels of predominance of certain techniques, methods and repertoire.
4.	The style of an individual musician.
5.	The style of an individual performance.

Source: Keegan (1997: 117).

The first interpretation of 'style' offered by Keegan refers to the "style which is the Irish musical tradition" (1997: 117). This echoes Nettl's definition of style as "the aggregate of characteristics which a composition has, and which it shares with others in its cultural complex" (1964: 169). In relation to Irish traditional music, Carson states: "I think there is a consensus among the traditional music community as to what constitutes the instantly recognisable real thing; but it is difficult to put into words, beyond saying that it is the real thing, or the thing itself" (2009: 35). Even within the traditional music community, there is a diversity of attitudes, particularly relating to the acceptance of innovation and the introduction of 'foreign' elements into the music. An examination of the style that is Irish traditional music develops to include other aspects of Keegan's (1997) definitions of musical style (Table 16).

The second definition of musical style presented by Keegan is the "style associated with a particular instrument" (1997: 117). In a point that over laps with the first interpretation of 'style' presented by Keegan (1997), Ó Canainn includes a discussion of the instruments most often associated with Irish traditional music. Ó Canainn identifies also a number of instruments that have been accepted into the tradition during the twentieth century highlighting change in the definition of an Irish style of music. With reference to the relationship between instruments and musical style, Ó Canainn states: "A discussion of style must therefore include a detailed analysis of these instruments that have been important in the tradition and on which the music is still played, for it is here that style is formed and reshaped by succeeding generations" (1978: 2). Other academic studies of style, notably by Ó Riada in *Our Musical Heritage* (1962) have focused on particular instruments to identify differences in musical styles and, in some instances, attempted to locate these styles regionally through the association of instruments with particular regions. Different instruments are limited by the capabailities, range and appropriateness of particular forms of ornamentation that influence the style of music being played (Keegan, 1997). The predominance of a particular instrument in a region can impact upon the regional musical style. In Sliabh Luachra, the fiddle tradition has influenced the style of music played on the button accordion, an instrument whose popularity now challenges the centrality of the fiddle. Other traditions, such as those of the marching bands, may also have influenced the repertoire and style of music (Ó Síodhcáin, 1982; Shannon on *Céilí House*, 9th July 2005; *The Rolling Wave* 26th July 2009).

The third definition of musical style presented by Keegan refers to musical dialects which may be divided into various subdivisions that focus on the distinctiveness of a viruoso player, the location of a performer or performance in a period of time and the concept of a regional style. Keegan notes: "Regional style has become the premier method amongst the community around traditional Irish music for the stylistic categorisation of a performance and performer" (1997: 121). Keegan also notes the importance of speech about regional style in creating a sense of place, identity and tradition. The concept of regional style is challenged by the fourth definition of musical style presented by Keegan, which is concerned with the individuality of a musician. As musicians make choices that are influenced by the moment, the context in which the music is played, as well as the response from the audience, it is important to also

acknowledge the style of an individual performance. However, aspects of each musical performance may be shared in a manner that reflects the social networks that exist between people and spaces in Irish traditional music.

An expanded methodology for the study of musical styles in Irish traditional music is presented in Table 16. I have already considered the role of instruments in the development of musical styles. Another prominent element of the tradition is that of repertoire, the total assortment of melodies and tune types played by Irish traditional musicians. An examination of the repertoire of Irish traditional music may be approached in two ways. The first concerns the musical structures. Irish traditional music is divided between the song and air traditions, including much of the harp music, and the dance music traditions. The dance music forms or tune types comprise of a relatively simple structure based on eight bar parts, sometimes repeated. A number of tune types are common throughout the country, namely the reel, jig and hornpipe. Other tune types, such as the slide and strathspey, are associated with particular regional traditions, with the latter associated with Scottish music though all tune forms demonstrate some influence of foreign musical traditions. A second approach concerns the non-musical information associated with the repertoire, which can also relate the music to place. Tune names and the process of naming tunes are part of the narrative of the tradition that links the music with people and places. The connection between people, places and melodies is reinforced and adds to the rich geography of the tradition. In discussing tune titles, it is important to note, as highlighted by Breathnach, that "tunes and titles are not related musically. The name is merely a tag to help one recall the associated tune. It does not represent verbally a sentiment allegedly expressed in the music" (1981: 151). Many tunes are played without reference to their name or, in other instances, may be associated with a variety of names and, thus, with a similar variety of people, places and events. However, that does not imply that in recalling a tune through the use of such a title does not prevent the recollection of other meaningful people, places and events with which the tune may be associated. In both approaches, an examination of the repertoire of Irish traditional music can reinforce both its Irishness and its association with particular regions.

Figure 3 Methodology for examining style in Irish traditional music.

Instrumentation	Solo performance
	Group playing
Repertoire	Tune Types
	Tune names
Way of playing	Technique
	Ornamentation
	Variation
Use of music	Listening
	Dancing
	Expression of identity

Source: Adapted from Keegan, 1997; Vallely, 1999b; Cranitch, 2006.

A significant factor in the relationship between instruments and style is the way of playing the instrument and the use of musical ornamentation and embellishment. Vallely suggests: "Way of playing is definitive; how one blows, bows, pushes the bellows, plucks the string, holds the instrument are all critical to the sound and appearance" (1999b: 309). Particular ornaments are more suited to certain instruments. The use of ornamentation and embellishment in the performance of a piece of music relates to the third definition of 'style' presented by Keegan (1997). In this context, Keegan interprets musical style as the distinctive yet subtle nuances that exist within the tradition. These differences are often determined by the choices of individuals, thus blurring the distinction between the third and fifth definitions of 'style' presented by Keegan (1997). Ó Canainn defines style as "a

selection by a performer of certain traditional patterns or clichés of the traditions in his improvisation" (1978: 41). Similarly, McCullough states: "the term 'style' as used by traditional musicians, denotes the composite form of the distinctive features that identify an individual's music performance" (1977: 85). Individual musicians in Irish traditional music make choices that may be based on a desire to imitate the sounds of musicians in the tradition or a desire to innovate and develop a personal sound. Ó Suilleabháin outlines the development of style as a regional characteristic of Irish traditional music, stating:

> Where others share the same style in a particular locality, we are dealing with a recognisable regional style. While such regional styles form an interactive base against which the individual creativity of a musician may be measured, the generative force which gives rise to regional styles in the first place is obviously that of the creative energy of the individual (1990: 120).

Mac Aoidh (1994) suggests that the development of regional style was, and in some instances remains, a natural process whereby young musicians are exposed to or have access to a limited number of locally based influences. I explore the transmission process, its relationship to place and space, and the imitation of styles later but the recognition of diversity in the musical styles of Irish traditional music is connected to the discovery and promotion of different regional traditions and, in particular, the descriptions of the musical styles.

The clichés or patterns to which Ó Canainn (1978) refers are conventions of ornamentation and variation. In an analysis of musicians performing in informal sessions, Fairbairn states:

> Musicians themselves often extend the word 'ornamentation' to describe the combination of all the aspects of individual interpretation within the nuances of a given melodic line. The use of the word emphasises the integrity and significance of gracing as an outlet for individual melodic treatment (1993: 19).

There are a number of types of ornamentation common in Irish traditional music. They include rolls; crans; double-stopping; cutting; chording; triplets; sliding; tips; and trebles. In the following discussion of the most common types of ornamentation used in Irish traditional music I draw from the work of several authors, all in *The Companion to Irish Traditional Music*, edited by Fintan Vallely (1999).

Grace notes, of various kinds, are the most basic of ornaments popular in the performance of Irish traditional music. Grace notes, in their simplest form, are a single note used to ornament and accent a main melody note and occur between two consecutive notes of the same pitch. Doherty identifies two distinctive types of grace notes; a 'pat' or 'tip', defined as a lower note sounded to separate two consecutive notes of the same pitch, and the 'cut', "an upper note sounded to separate two consecutive notes of the same pitch" (1999b: 155). Rolls are amongst the most common ornaments in Irish traditional music and may be played on a number of instruments. Doherty states:

> [The roll] exists in two variants, the long roll and the short roll. In each case a single melody note is being decorated…The roll is popular with players of most instruments, the extent of its usage differing according to regional styles and personal tastes (1999c: 232).

In contrast to the popularity of the roll and other grace notes, other ornaments such as the cran are often instrument-specific. The cran is particularly associated with the uilleann pipes, used to achieve a staccato low D when playing the chanter (Vallely, 1999c). Flute players may also play in a 'piping style' with frequent use of craning. Another ornament, double stopping is also associated with a particular instrument, in this case the fiddle. Mac Aoidh (1994) suggests that double stopping may have been developed by fiddle players to mimic the sound produced by uilleann pipers when playing with drones and regulators. Doherty describes double stopping as:

> A technique employed for ornamentation purposes, which involves the simultaneous sounding of more than one pitch. Originally associated with fiddle playing (the term itself referring specifically to the stopping of two strings with the fingers) it is now also popular with accordion and concertina players (1999a: 109).

The development of techniques on instruments with which they are not normally associated highlights the increasing awareness of technical and musical possibilities within the tradition. Concertina players have developed the skills of octave playing, similar to double stopping but playing elements of the melody simultaneously in more than one octave.

Particular ornaments have become associated with the concept of regional styles in Irish traditional music. Triplets and trebles are amongst those most commonly referred to in the analysis of regional and individual musical styles. Doherty describes the triplet as "an ornament common to all instruments and all styles. It simply involves three

consecutive notes, in either upward or downward motion, played in the value of a single beat. The notes may move in articulated, legato or staccato fashion" (1999d: 406). It is the nature of the triplet, legato or staccato, that is most often used as a determinant in style. The treble is a similar ornament that "involves the division of a long note (usually a crotchet) into three shorter note values of the same pitch. It is a technique particularly favoured by Northern-style fiddle players, and executed using short, accented bow strokes" (Doherty, 1999e: 405). In his study of fiddle styles, Lyth suggests:

> Although the treble is a widespread feature of Irish fiddle playing, it is not used equally by all players. At least among the older generation of players, the treble becomes less common as one moves south from Donegal to Kerry (1996: 14).

The use of particular ornaments is ultimately the choice of a musician. Some scholars have argued that musicians in the past were open to limited influences and therefore performed in a style that was similar to musicians from their locality (Nic Suibhne, 1993). When musicians in a locality make similar decisions relating to the use of particular ornaments, a concept of a regional musical style is developed (Ó Suilleabháin, 1990).

The identity of regions based on the use of musical style in this context may be oversimplified. Mac Aoidh and others note how John Doherty has become the stereotypical Donegal fiddle player without due recognition being given to the diversity of fiddle styles throughout the county (Mac Aoidh, 1999a). In relation to Donegal, Mac Aoidh suggests that few Donegal musicians would accept the concept of a single 'Donegal Style' of fiddle playing. Instead he outlines "a number of sub-areas of the county – related to watersheds of physical geography which determined areas of socialisations prior to the relatively recent arrival of public transport" (1994: 49). In each of these areas, Mac Aoidh recognises the use and extent of different forms of ornamentation. Other studies have also indicated 'sub-areas' in regional traditions. Vallely (1999e) identifies four 'dialects' of concertina playing in Clare but notes that in contrast to the growth of interest in playing the concertina, these dialects have gone into decline. In his study of the fiddle styles of three of the most notable 'Sligo fiddlers', Michael Coleman, James Morrison and Paddy Killoran, Lyth (1981) notes that there is a significant degree of difference in their use of different musical ornamentation.

As well as considering the role and distribution of instruments and repertoire and examining ways of playing and ornamentation, it is important to also consider the use of

music and physical characteristics of the performer (see also Vallely, 1999b). The larger part of the Irish traditional music repertoire is that of the dance music tradition, which, as the name suggests, was traditionally used for dancing. Various developments through the twentieth century led to the development of contexts for Irish traditional music to be played primarily for a listening audience. New spaces and contexts for the performance of Irish traditional music, including performance on the radio and session playing, impacted on the musical styles chosen by individual performers. The resurgence of interest in set dancing has refocused the attention of some musicians and academics on the role of dance in the performance of music and highlights the role of the audience in the performance of musical style.

In playing for dancers, musicians are required to perform a particular repertoire and are often requested to play it in a particular manner. In reference to Paddy Murphy, Pádraig a'Chnuic (1972) notes the limited number of hornpipes in Murphy's repertoire, explained by use of more reels and jigs in the Caledonian Set, which was popular in the area. Micho Russell, the whistle player from West Clare, also remembers the power of a dancers' request. In reference to the *Inis Thiar* set dancers who came to Doolin on Sunday afternoons Ó hAllmhuráin states:

> The tunes they favoured most were reels known as the Connaught Man's Rambles and Miss McLoud's and as Micko recalls they used to dance mad-fast. They were easily distinguishable by their style of dancing in that they didn't dance the 'Caledonian Set' or 'Plain Set', which were most prevalent to the Doolin are, they favoured the old hop-jig style of the Aran tradition thus, their figures were long continuous bouts of lively dancing, somewhat like the East Galway set (1976: 17).

One of the most influential books that focus' on the revival of set dancing in the later half of the twentieth century, is *Toss the Feathers* by Pat Murphy. Like many commentators on music, Murphy refers to the speed desired by dancers:

> One of the recurring comments in dance histories since the sixteenth century is the complaint that dancing has become too wild and fast, losing its quality in the process […] Style and steps are being sacrificed to speed and the result is that steps are becoming almost uniform; it is impossible to dance steps properly at speeds that are too fast for them […] Significantly, in the more traditional dancing areas, such as Clare, the music is usually played at a slower, more suitable pace (1995: 17).

In the tradition, dance has arguably become intertwined once again with music in the narrative of musical regions (Ó Cinnéide, 2002). It is particularly evident in places such as North Kerry where organisations such as *Siamsa Tíre* have sought to preserve a regional style of dance; and Sliabh Luachra where Dan Connell's Pub in Knocknagree becomes central to an understanding of the nature and location of the region.

An important aspect in the implementation of this framework is the continued consideration of regions as processes. Change is integral to Irish traditional music. McCullough (1977) acknowledges that "styles of traditional Irish music are continually undergoing change", but a 'new' style, though distinct, is "never entirely divorced from its predecessors or contemporaries" (1977: 96). In her examination of Irish traditional music in east Galway, Cummins states:

> 'Regional style' suggests a stable musical region with a fixed boundary created by geographical obstacles in which communities of musicians developed in isolation, inhaling the same air, exhaling the same style. In reality, regional style is a literate term imposed onto an oral tradition, often describing the music of only one musician, or a small group of musicians from an area who have gained national popularity and thereby are ascribed regional identity. More accurately, the term describes a cluster of local and individual styles centred on one area, but the similarity of these styles might as easily be accounted for by the influence of Coleman 78s as any locational or environmental factors (1999: 146).

The use of regional musical styles as the foundation for a geography of Irish traditional music is limited in its application. Focusing entirely on a contemporary setting in Glasgow, Morton claims that existing geographies of Irish traditional music are "inactive" due to their spatial representations of 'regional styles' and such representations deaden the performed nature of Irish music (2001: 42). The geography of which Morton refers is based on a historical context for Irish traditional music and a narrative developed and promoted by Seán Ó Riada in the 1960s. Individual musicians continue to engage with the rich traditions of various places and the idiosyncrasies of those places.

New styles of music exist within new contexts as musical styles also evolve. Recognising the continuous evolution of styles in Irish traditional music, McCullough identifies the evolution of a style as a cumulative process (1977: 96). The concept of regions in Irish traditional music must, therefore, consider the changes in the context of the music and a new understanding of regions in Irish traditional music must be presented. As Horner notes:

> Any attempt at regionalisation must try to take account of this kaleidoscope of continuity and change, seeking to portray regional contrasts in terms that have contemporary relevance (2000: 143).

The investigation of regional style must therefore consider the evolution of that style as shaped by individuals within the tradition. If the community of musicians who perform that style retain some link, real or ideological, to a region, then the region continues to exist in some form. More understanding of the processes involved in musical change is required to more comprehensively understand the geography of Irish traditional music.

A geography of Irish traditional music may be developed in part through an examination and understanding of variations in style, repertoire and the use of music across Ireland. The patterns of regional difference, identification and diffusion that focus on located communities are often linked to the historical evolution of the tradition. Integral to that evolution are the individuals and their instruments that produced the sounds of the tradition and led to the development of many of the cultures myths and narratives.

4.5 Expanding a regional understanding of Irish traditional music

In addition to musical change and the evolution of musical style, the non-musical aspects of the tradition must also be considered. Integral to the concept of regions in Irish traditional music is the acceptance that places are an accumulation of folklore and stories (Glassie, 1982; Ryden, 1993, 1999; Massey, 2005). The discourse of regional styles in Irish traditional music is a collection of stories, stories that are often outlined in a rural context or setting. Concepts of regional music styles are intertwined with stories about musicians, places and events. Keegan asserts: "Speech about regional style is important in that it creates a sense of place, identity and tradition amongst many musicians in the face of the apparent destruction of these sensory footholds" (1997: 121). Thus, the discourse on regional styles, serves a purpose of locating Irish traditional music. As the discourse on Irish traditional music has developed it has become an integral part of the study of music in some third level institutions. The development of a community of dedicated critical thinkers has been matched by the development of organisations such as an Irish branch of the *International Council for Traditional Music* (established in 2006), the inclusion of papers and discussions on Irish traditional music by *The Society for Musicology in Ireland*

(founded in 2003), the development of a number of conferences dedicated to the study of Irish traditional music and an increase in the amount of critical literature relating to the tradition.

My approach to understanding the concept of the region in Irish traditional music is informed by a combination of personal experience and the evolution of an increased academic discourse on Irish traditional music in the past decade. The central issues and themes emerge from two conferences of the mid-1990s: "*Blas* / The Local Accent in Traditional Irish Music" held in 1995 and "*Crossbhealach an Cheoil* / Crossroads Conference: Tradition versus Change" held in 1996. *Blas* was held at the Irish World Music Centre at the University of Limerick, now the Irish World Academy of Music and Dance, which was established in 1994. The increase in graduate opportunities for research has added to the discourse on Irish traditional music already present at University College Cork (Smith, T. 1997). The development of this discourse is part of a process of institutionalisation, as explored by Peter Cooke (1997) in his Keynote Address to the conference entitled "*Blas* / The Local Accent in Traditional Irish Music". In this section it is argued that the processes of institutionalisation are integral to the changing geography of Irish traditional music and the construction and imagination of regions.

Therése Smith, in an article entitled 'From the local to the global, and back', notes that "*Blas* / The Local Accent in Traditional Irish Music" was "the first international conference of the 1990s held in Ireland which focused exclusively on traditional Irish music in its many manifestations, both at home and abroad" (1997: 1). Smith notes the growing public awareness of Irish traditional music, the role of television series, the proliferation of festivals and the popularity of summer schools. "*Blas*" was held in the context of and in response to a variety of changes in the Irish traditional music world and was concerned with, amongst other things: "a reassertion of the local in the face of primarily international/transnational phenomena" (Smith, T. 1997: 3). Amongst the papers that stand out in the context of the investigation undertaken in this dissertation are the papers by Seán Corcoran (1997) entitled 'Concepts of regionalism in Irish traditional music', Fintan Vallely (1997) and Niall Keegan (1997) who develop their articles on the concept of regional style from personal experience. Others focus on particular aspects of the tradition: Steve Coleman (1997) and Catherine Foley (1997) focus on *sean-nós* singing and traditional step dancing in North Kerry respectively. Both Peter Browne

(1997) and Caoimhín Mac Aoidh (1997) focus on particular 'regions' in Irish traditional music, Sliabh Luachra and Donegal respectively. It is notable that Cooke's comments on institutionalisation and the results of the processes of musical change resonate throughout the subsequently published book.

Table 17 Results of the processes of musical change.

1. Change in the context of performance – from local, participatory (and often ritual situations) to stage shows. Such change produces a performer-audience split with the audience becoming a predominantly listening group.
2. The use of a few selected artists
3. Competitions for selection leading to the formation of supergroups
4. An increase in orchestral diversity
5. More careful musical organisation and greater discipline with a consequent reduction in spontaneity. In this respect we see a decrease in number of stylistic variations and the appearance of 'arrangements'

Source: Adapted from Cooke (1997: 21).

Cooke (1997) presents a commentary on the conflict between globalization and localization through an overview of music from various parts of the world, relating the study of Irish traditional music to ethnomusicological pursuits in other traditions. Cooke highlights three processes of change in a music tradition: recording; the effects of broadcasting; and "an increasing tendency to institutionalise what were once mostly autonomous and often many-coloured performance traditions" (1997: 20). Cooke describes institutionalisation as fostering a tradition through the establishment of formal teaching and perhaps competitions with the motive of defending and maintaining that tradition. Recording and selling music, as well as the effect of radio and television, may also be considered part of the process of institutionalisation. Cooke also acknowledges the role of locally based individuals in developing and transmitting a tradition in an area. Developing the work of Wallis and Malm (1984), Cooke presents five results of the processes of musical change (Table 17).

Since the 1950s it has been widely acknowledged that Irish traditional music has moved from rural kitchens to the concert stage and its use changed from a dance music to one to be listened to (see for example Ó hAllmhuráin, 1998). However, the complexity of manifestations of Irish traditional music and related meanings – céilís, pub sessions, dance/stage shows, concerts, etc – mean that an acknowledgement of the various spatial and contextual conditions for Irish traditional music must continue to receive consideration. Competitions have become increasingly prominent in Irish traditional music since the establishment of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in 1951 and the development of *Fleadhanna Cheoil*, as well as other competitions such as *Slógadh* and *Siansa* organised by *Gael Linn* and *Scór*, which is organised by the GAA. The affect of competitions on regional styles is central to the discourse on regional styles (see also Brennan, 1999, in relation to Irish dancing). Commercial opportunities have also motivated change in Irish traditional music (see also Vallely, 1997). Changing instrumentation is also considered in an understanding of regional soundscapes, particularly in recognition of the introduction to and subsequent role of the accordion and concertina in regional traditions. Cooke's fifth point relates directly to the existence of regional styles in Irish traditional music. Competitions have an important role to play as imitation becomes increasingly evident (and critiqued.) in the discourse on Irish traditional music in the latter half of the twentieth century (Ó Riada, 1982; Vallely, 1999). Cooke also suggests the role of organisational changes and the role of professionals. In considering the radio, television and groups such as *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, these become agents of the process of institutionalisation. All of these interrelated processes affect the construction, imagination and perception of a geography of Irish traditional music.

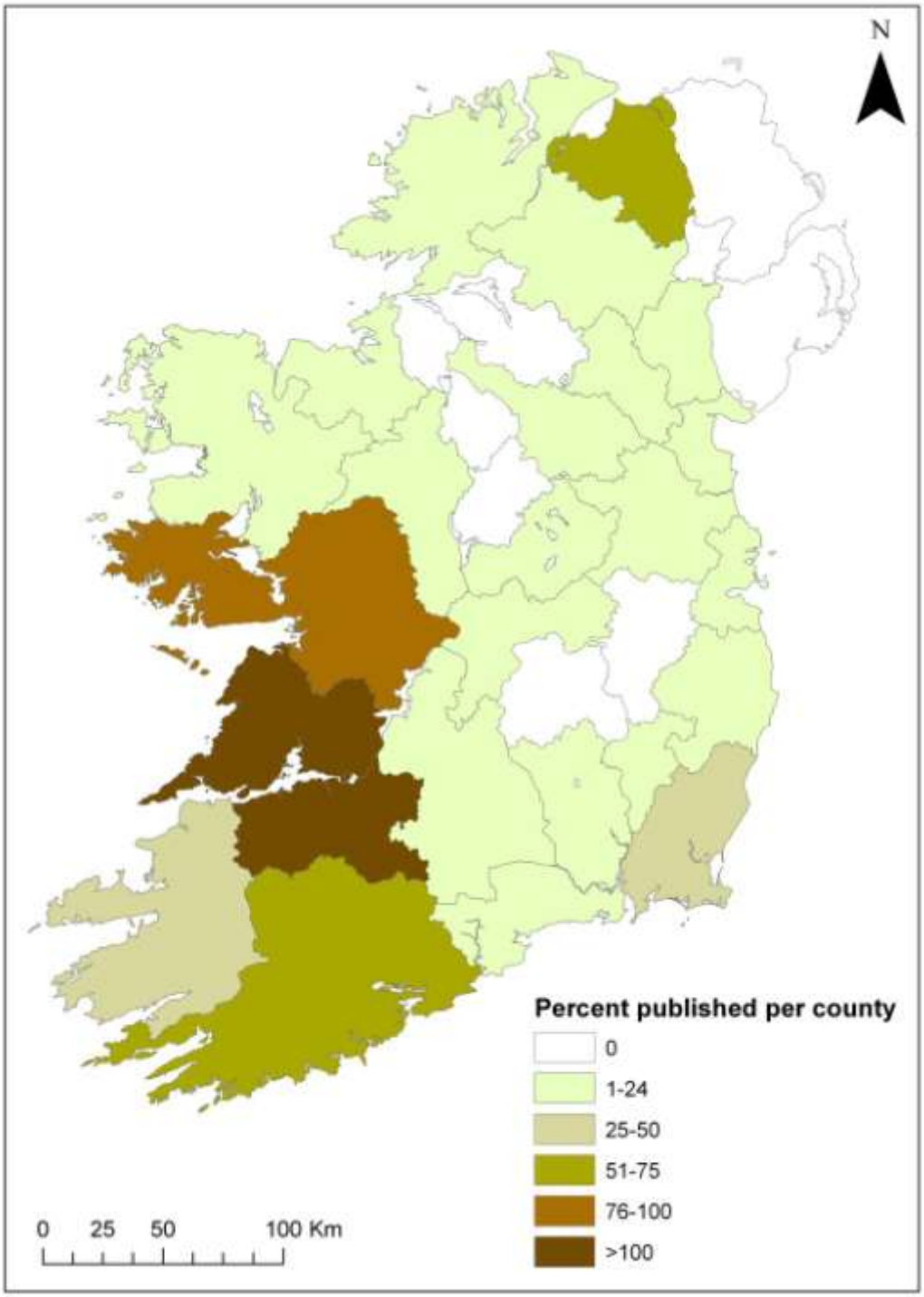
Inspiration for my research comes in part from Seán Corcoran's short article entitled *Concepts of Regionalism in Irish traditional music* (1997). Corcoran begins his paper with the statement:

> […] concepts of place and region have long had a powerful role in the history of Irish thought. These concepts have been largely ideological constructs with little correlation with cultural distribution patterns, and have been widely accepted in fields of folk-music and folklore studies, where they are linked with various related concepts, like 'remoteness' and 'authenticity' (1997: 25).

Irish geography has not yet begun to investigate the strong geographical resonances of the regional discourse in Irish traditional music. Neither has Irish traditional music studies developed an awareness of geographical paradigms. Terms such as 'authenticity' are problematic and shaped by a number of processes, some of which are explored in greater detail in subsequent sections and chapters. Methods of locating Irish traditional music, both historically and in the present, are diverse and sometimes conflicting.

Corcoran (1997) presents a largely historical viewpoint that may be contrasted with the performance of regional difference and identity in the present. Corcoran first addresses the role of regional stereotyping and the importance of local identities. Corcoran makes reference to the role of the west of Ireland in the development of Irish identities and its link to Irish traditional music. It is related also to theories of isolation and remoteness and, in a post-colonial context, the absence of Britishness. Corcoran challenges romantic myths but their role in shaping the geography of Irish traditional music should not be discarded. Corcoran also notes: "perceptions of regionalism in Irish music depend greatly on the filters of mediation which stand between us and the reality of the social processes of popular music-making" (1997: 28). He makes reference to the written collections of Bunting who "had a definite Northern concentration", as well as a preference for the music of Mayo, and Petrie, more than half of whose work comes from Munster (see fig. 4). Petrie's collection is also influenced by particular sources and Corcoran notes that "Connacht is represented largely by the tunes of just one musician, Paddy Conneely, the Galway Piper", (1997: 28). This further highlights the role of individuals in the imagination and construction of regional traditions. Corcoran also notes the work of Captain Francis O'Neill but notes the different context of his work in "the melting-pot of emigration" that was Chicago at the turn of the twentieth century (1997: 29).

Figure 4 Sources of melodies in the Petrie Collection 1855/1882.



Source: Adapted from Corcoran (1997).

O'Brien Moran acknowledges a variety of collectors in nineteenth century Ireland, in particular noting the prominence of Petrie and his influence on and communication with others. One of Petrie's many positions was as a commercial artist and a superintendent of the topographical department of the Ordnance Suvey, which brought him around the Irish countryside. In these roles he became familiar with the Irish landscape, it's people and their customs and initially collected folk melodies for his own pleasure.

Corcoran also problematises the role of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and RTÉ in highlighting particular areas that distort the perceived geography of Irish traditional music. In his article, Vallely also notes the role of *Comhaltas* and the selectivity of *Radió Éireann* as it was – "effectively Ciarán MacMathúna's choice and Seán Ó Riada's opinions respectively" (1997: 107). Elsewhere Feldman notes how local memory becomes supplanted by the emergent collectivized and textual national memory in published collections of Irish traditional music and states:

> When recorded music began circulating widely, the same dynamic was repeated at the level of sound and commerce since recordings were disseminated on radio and recording channels as components o the marketplace. Certain styles, players and/or regional traditions like Sligo in the 1920s and 1930s and Clare in the 1960s and 1970s were repeatedly recorded and disseminated by radio and phonograph and, through their commercial circulation, were elevated to a national sound archive. While the music of other regions of Ireland, which were not recorded, disseminated or commodified, fell out of the framework of "Irish music" and were not registered in the public culture, and thus were accorded an inferior or marginal status (2002: 111, 112).

The discourse on Irish traditional music continues to privilege particular regions, influenced by a range of historical processes. However, it is also important to note the empirical evidence that reinforces the link between Irish traditional music with these areas, manipulated by those involved in collecting and disseminating that evidence.

Other articles in *Blas* focus on particular regions of the country and the concept of a regional music tradition (Browne, 1997; Mac Aoidh, 1997). In relation to Sliabh Luachra, Browne (1997) notes the complexity of musical styles that originate from a number of different sources – this despite the popular use of Pádraig O'Keeffe as the primary reference for many in discussing Sliabh Luachra musical style. Browne also notes the effect of radio, recordings, printed collections and improved transport in the evolution

of the concept of a regional style of music. He also points to "a new consciousness" that has appeared amongst younger players most evident at the many festivals now in existence (Browne, 1997: 65). In contrast to the positive attitudes in the work of Browne, Mac Aoidh (1997) challenges some of the attitudes amongst Irish traditional musicians in a manner reflective of the new consciousness referred to by Browne (1997). He notes the challenge to the existence of regional styles emanating from competitions and marketing (including tourism) in what he terms "Cultural Imperialism" (Mac Aoidh, 1997: 68). Mac Aoidh's article is imbued with geographical information – even noting the comparative distance of a number of Irish towns from Dublin with Donegal in contrast with the popular perception of Donegal. Mac Aoidh notes the role of a local organisation in institutionalising the musical traditions of Donegal (though Mac Aoidh does not use the term institutionalisation). Mac Aoidh points to a framework through which a regional identity could be explored and some of these ideas, including the role of local organisations, tourism and festivals, are examined in relation to Sliabh Luachra in this thesis.

Regional musical styles exist within a number of contexts and their meaning to the listener is dependent on the experience of that listener and the context in which the music is performed and consumed. Attempting to place regional music styles in context, Vallely argues:

> Obsession with regional style has its equivalents in other domains: love of history, archaeology, fondness for interesting, wholesome and nostalgic things from the past. Ass-carts, thatched roofs, turf fires and famous ruins are terrifically-sentimental and comforting in an era of fat travel, plastic utensils, intense competition, apartment living and insubstantial community life. Listening to regional styles for the native is like going home, for the outsider it is like going on holidays to the country. Such a regional soundscape for the returned migrant is reassuring, for the tourist it is pleasantly different (1997: 113).

Vallely argues against mimicking and argues that "a regional style is of real meaning only to local identity, because only therein is it invested with the experience of its people's earlier lives" (1997: 113). In some contrast, Keegan presents a different perspective on the study of regional style in Irish traditional music. Having learned to play Irish traditional music growing up in London, his knowledge of the existence of regional styles in Irish traditional music was fuelled by visits to Ireland. While Keegan acknowledges the existence of regional style and, in contrast to other commentaries, their importance in

competitions run by *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, there is little clarity in the understanding or definition of regional styles. Instead Keegan notes a "dichotomy between the perception of style and the reality of performance" (Keegan, 1997: 116). Furthermore, Keegan suggests that the words of regional styles become more important because of the increasing volume of Irish traditional music available.

Keegan (1997) also suggests, without further exploring the idea, that there is a sense of exclusivity about regional styles (see also, O'Shea, 2008). It echoes the experience of Konig (1980) in enacting fieldwork in Clare in the 1990s. Konig noted that locals did not discuss the stylistic facets of their performances but rather it was the hoards of Dublin musicians who came to Clare who attempted to understand the idiosyncrasies of the local musical style. Other themes with geographical implications that emerge from the papers in the *Blas* publication include the role of names of dance tunes in the narrative of the tradition (Coleman, 1997); the context for performance, urbanisation and the role of organisations (Foley, 1997).

While the Crossroads Conference (Vallely *et al*., 1996) which followed *Blas* attempted to build on the themes explored, the focus changed from local accent to a discourse on the disparity between tradition and change. Essentially, the Crossroads Conference presented a different perspective on the changing contexts for Irish traditional music. The geographical undertones of *Blas* are less apparent in the articles published following the Crossroads Conference as the discourse on Irish traditional music appeared to be consumed by concerns with musical change and a discourse on education and transmission. The second Crossroads Conference was primarily concerned with the issues of transmission and education, which can also have regional significance.

The discourse on regional styles in Irish traditional music has repeatedly returned to the public realm. In 2007, TG4, the Irish language television station, broadcast a six part series on regional styles in Irish traditional music entitled *Caniúntí Cheoil*. The programmes present a juxtaposition of sounds and landscape imagery. Many of those interviewed are seen in possession of an instrument, adding a sense of authority to those speaking about the music. The programme wishes to present Irish traditional music from the perspectives of the musician, thus assuming a particular status or legitimacy for the opinions presented. The six programmes are linked by a number of recurring themes and motifs, not least the image of the map at the beginning of each programme. There is an

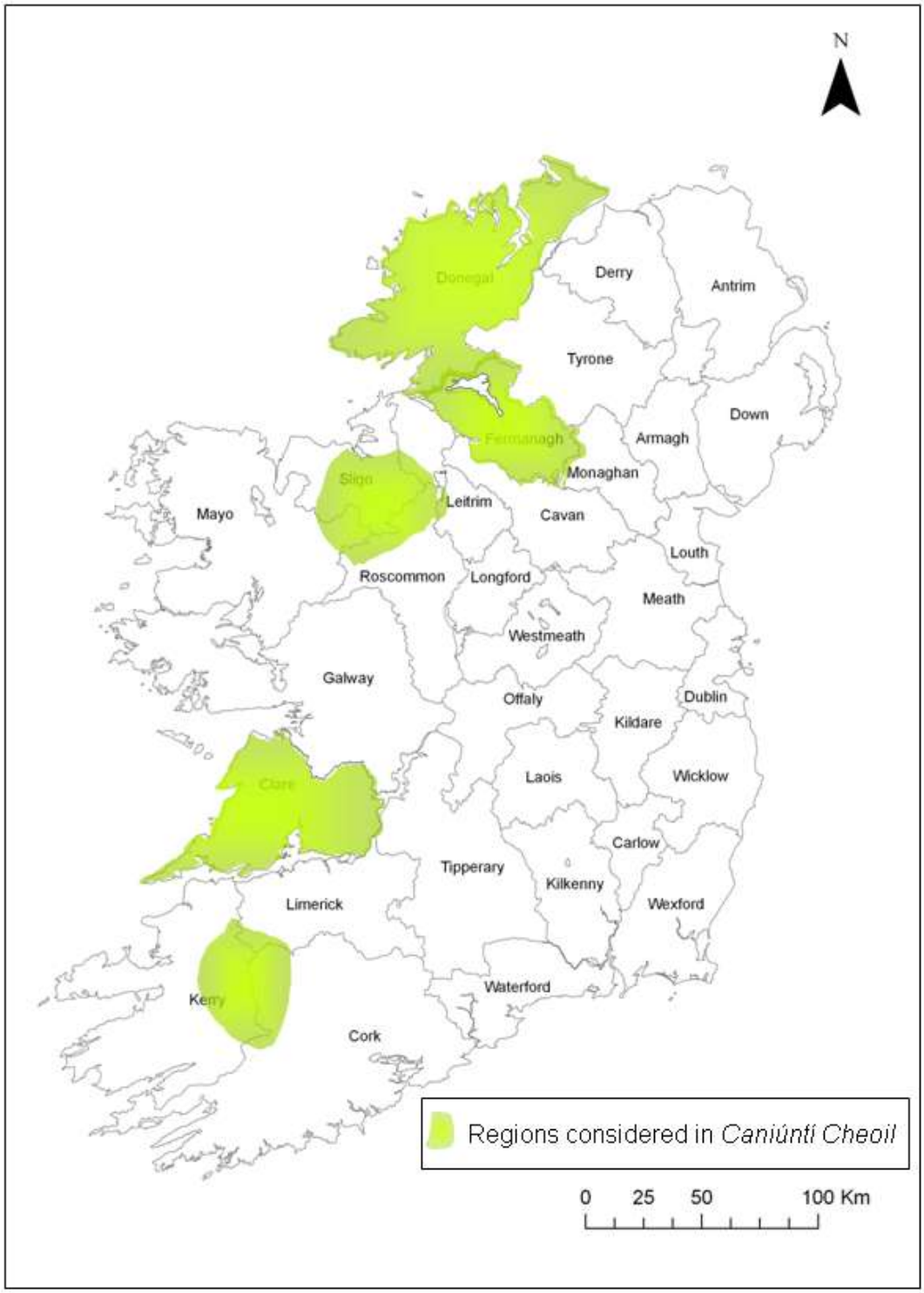
attempt to create a fixed location where sounds may be studied. Ireland is divided and Irish traditional music remapped to create a framework for analysis. Amongst the principal themes is the conflict between the homogenisation of Irish traditional music and the resurgence of interest in the regional styles of Irish traditional music. An apparent re-evaluation of the value of regional styles within regions is expressed in a number of the programmes. There exists a cyclical process that relates to the forces and processes from within and beyond the region. Musicians within regions create and shape the musical soundscape but they also abandon those sounds in favour of the sounds of other areas. Equally, musicians from outside the region can cherish that which may once have been abandoned.

The challenge of tradition, the conflict between presenting the old and making it meaningful in the present, is at the core of the series *Caniúntí Cheoil*. Both stability and change in the musical tradition reflect the changing contexts for the performance and transmission of Irish traditional music. References to the landscape and the notion that the music is in some way shaped by the landscape is regularly suggested without explanation or much consideration. It is a myth that reinforces the connection between style and place. Much more readily understandable is the link between the principal individuals and the sounds they shaped. As Gary Hastings states: "Music is irrelevant without the people" (28/10/2007). The series focuses on many of the important spaces in regional traditions where the presenters meet and hear the principal people of the musical traditions in those regions.

The first programme of the series *Caniúntí Cheoil* opens with the following statement by producer Peter Browne:

> Ireland was once home to hundreds of local musical styles, each inextricably linked to its native area. Now only a handful of them remain. In this series we will look at the musical styles of Donegal, Clare, North Connaught, Fermanagh and Sliabh Luachra and we will talk to musicians, experts and teachers and look at what regional styles are and how the future looks for them (5/11/2007).

Figure 5 Regions examined in the television series *Caniúntí Cheoil* (2007).



Source: Author.

Continuing the acceptance that regional styles were once common in Ireland, James Byrne states that he could once tell where a musician was from, from their style of music (5/11/2007). The role of transmission of tradition and the processes involved in the transmission of Irish traditional music across space and generations is also highlighted. In the series, there is a strong focus on individuals, built upon Jackie Small's statement that "There are no rules. Each musician has free rein. Therefore every musician can have their own unique style" (5/11/2007). In the programme on Clare, Geraldine Cotter states her belief that the regional styles developed from individuals such as Bobby Casey. Peter O'Loughlin remembers that musicians did not travel very far and thus "music was confined to an area. Wherever it was, it stayed there" (21/10/2007). Statements and memories such as this are in stark contrast to the realities of today, which are highlighted in Morton's (2001) critique of geographies of regional styles in Irish traditional music.

The series moves beyond a limited litany of individuals. The first programme points to the conventional canon expressed in the discourse on regional styles in Irish traditional music.

> Every once in a while a musician comes to the fore whose musical style is powerful and unique that he/she is highly influential on fellow musicians. The most obvious example in this case is Michael Coleman. People are still trying to figure out his technique on the fiddle. His style spread throughout Ireland. The styles of, for example Sliabh Luachra musician Pádraig O'Keeffe, Paddy Canny from east Clare and John Doherty from Donegal all embody the style of their respective areas (Browne, 5/11/2007).

The series attempts to and does, without over-analysis, introduce some lesser known names in the various programmes. The programme also notes the context in which the music and musical styles are developed and performed, particularly in relation to the connection between music and dancing.

Another important element in the series is the recognition of multiple styles within regions. In a programme on the music of county Clare, Noel Hill remarks:

> Musicians from Tulla, Feakle and so on have the east Clare style. Kilfenora on the other hand had a totally different style. We're now in Miltown Malbay which had yet another style. If you go towards Carrigaholt, Kilbaha and so on, they had yet another style (21/10/2007).

The series recognises the role of globalisation in changing the nature and context of regional styles. Noting the choices now open to musicians learning their music, it is

suggested that musicians may choose to play in a style no longer associated with their own area. Musicians wishing to learn from older musicians can travel to meet, listen to and learn from musicians from almost anywhere. Noel Hill points to the development of technology in replacing the bicycle as the only mode through which a person could experience the music of another place (21/10/2007). In the same programme Mary McNamara points to the existence of the music as a very local cultural expression without the influence of commercial recordings. In contrast, Cathal McConnell notes that tunes heard only amongst older musicians in Fermanagh up to recent decades are now heard all over the world (28/10/2007). Part of this process was the publication of *Hidden Fermanagh*, a book (Maguire, 2003) and two CDs (2003, 2004) of the same title by the Fermanagh traditional music society (see also Vallely, 2004a).

Many of the programmes end with a reflection on evidence of change and evolution in the tradition but without lamenting the state of music in the area. Rather each programme looks to the future and the next generation of musicians. In Sliabh Luachra, the grandchildren of Johnny O'Leary represent another generation of musicians in the area. In relation to Clare, Hensey states: "The music is evolving and will continue to do so, as life is constantly changing. That said, Clare music is under no threat whatsoever" (21/10/2007). In relation to Fermanagh, Gary Hastings notes that Fermanagh music has been rediscovered and passed on. The understanding of Irish traditional music as a culture of many regions is reinforced through the programmes and the discourse presented further highlighting a need for a greater understanding of regions in Irish traditional music.

4.6 Conclusion

In the mid-twentieth century, the identification of regions in Irish traditional music became a framework for understanding Irish traditional music. Despite an emphasis on the concept of regional musical styles in Irish traditional music, a number of other factors influenced the development of regional identities. The importance of differences in a regions musical style was supplanted by the diffusion of historical narratives that celebrated regional networks of musicians and the particular individuals that helped shape those narratives. Thus, Irish traditional music must be understood within the frame of the social context in which it is performed, consumed and transmitted. The commodificaion

of Irish traditional music focused the attention of the audience for Irish traditional music on particular individuals and a limited number of places, often in the west of Ireland.

Despite the increased interest in and attention to a regional understanding of Irish traditional music, a limited geographical knowledge of the tradition exists. Irish traditional music is performed in various contexts to varying degrees of skill and prominence in almost all parts of the country. The regional variations are influenced by the various social networks, local politics and resources, sense of tradition and institutionalisation of the tradition. 'New regions' of Irish traditional music are emerging motivated by the commodification and exploitation of music, the role of music in the representation of place and as a social activity, as well as an increased understanding of the diversity of musical traditions in Ireland.

Three maps are presented in this chapter, representing different processes and periods in the development of a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. The collectors of Irish traditional music have gathered tunes unevenly across the country. Petrie provides one example of a collector, influenced by his own attitudes, whose work highlights the music of particular regions (Fig. 1). Counties Clare, Limerick and Galway are particularly prominent. As well as Cork and Kerry, Counties Wexford and Derry are prominent and somewhat detached sources, though other western counties including Mayo and Donegal provide very limited sources of melodies. Figure 2 outlines those regions referred to by Seán Ó Riada in *Our Musical Heritage* (1962). It is an incomplete but influential study of regional diversity in Irish traditional music that reinforces the association of Irish traditional music with the west of Ireland. Ó Riada also recognises the role of Gaeltacht areas in the imagination of Irish identity and the understanding of Irish traditional music. Mayo is again absent from Ó Riada's study, though Donegal is particularly prominent, particularly through his consideration of the music of John Doherty. Furthermore, Ó Riada recognises the importance of Dublin as the location of an Irish traditional music community and highlights the importance of understanding new contexts for a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. *Caniúntí Cheoil* provides the most recent example and, though it echoes Ó Riada's study, it focuses on the instrumental traditions, ignoring the Gaeltacht regions and including Fermanagh (Fig. 3). Two aspects of the development of a regional understanding of Irish traditional music are

demonstrated. The role of different popular commentators in drawing attention to particular regions and the development and decline of traditions in some regions.

The concept of the region is central to the geographical narrative of Irish traditional music. Dominated by the concept of regional styles of music, it is informed by Coleman's anthropologically informed treatise: "To study style one must include the wider social events that create it, and their development over time" (1997: 31). This echoes Hood's earlier statement that "a true comprehension of musical style is dependent on an understanding of it's cultural context" (1971: 296). In seeking to generate a regional understanding of Irish traditional music, this thesis explores the discourse and representation of regions in the tradition and the processes involved in the evolution of the tradition. The thematic elements examined in the body of the thesis focus on the developing interdisciplinary relationship between the study of music and geography, the role, representation and understanding of landscape and the importance of identity amongst groups of people.

Chapter 5

Shaping regions in Irish traditional music

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter I examine how processes of recording and representation have influenced a regional understanding of Irish traditional music (Table 18). A tradition is dependent on culture being transmitted from one generation to the next. The process of transmission is shaped by a variety of forces over time including individual choice, social context, available resources and reference material including published sources, radio and television programming, commercial recordings and teacher training courses. In this chapter, recording is examined in the form of music notation, as well as the phonograph and subsequent technological developments. I also examine the role and contribution of a number of individuals and institutions in the evolution, diffusion and representation of Irish traditional music through the twentieth century. Underpinning many of the processes directly concerning Irish traditional music are the patterns of migration and urbanisation as examined in Chapter Four. The large Irish community in America were influential in the development of Irish traditional music in the early twentieth century, particularly through the recording industry. The growth of urban centres and the decline of agriculture led to new social and spatial contexts for Irish traditional music communities and Dublin in particular becomes an important place in the tradition.

The principal processes impacting on the evolution of Irish traditional music include notation and transcription, broadcasting, representation and institutionalisation. There is a paradox present throughout the discourse on these agents and processes. Each of the agents and processes are considered on the one hand to be detrimental to the survival of regional styles while on the other hand they are central to their preservation and revival. Issues of authenticity, often built upon negative attitudes to change, development and the commodification of music, form parts of the discourse that complicate a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. In concentrating on the importance of regional traditions and the diversity within the tradition I examine the construction, representation and institutionalisation of regional identities in Irish traditional music and the connection between Irish traditional music and places in Ireland.

Table 18 Processes and principal agents in the changing geography of Irish traditional music.

Period	Process	People	Impact	Consequence
Constant	Transmission	Various	Creation of tradition	Existence over time.
1900s	Publication (in America)	Francis O'Neill	Popular repertoire source	Blurred regional boundaries in repertoire
1920s	Recording industry	Michael Coleman	Certain styles came to the fore, emphasis on Sligo.	Many musicians abandoned regional styles of playing in favour of popular styles that featured on recordings.
1950s	Institutionalisation and debate.	RTÉ, Seán Ó Riada, *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*	Considered a revival period for Irish traditional music, more people became involved in the Irish traditional music community.	Certain styles were perceived as more worthy of award in competition, creating feelings of regional bias.
1950s / 1960s	Radio and later television	Séamus Ennis, Seán Ó Riada, Peter Browne	From 1947 the Outside Broadcast Unit of *Raidió Éireann* recorded many musicians around the country. *Our Musical Heritage* was broadcast in 1962 and focused on regional styles in Irish traditional music.	Highlighted and contributed to the discourse on regional diversity in Irish traditional music.
1960s	Publication (in Dublin)	Breandán Breathnach	Created index of tunes and presented tunes being played.	Identified diverse sources from around the country. The collection was in part aimed at a new Dublin audience for Irish traditional audience.
1980a	Monuments, memorials and public statuary	Local organisations, *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*	Connection of music and landscape.	Reinforced the role of music as heritage in the development of local and regional identities.
1990s	Academic study	Caoimhín Mac Aoidh, Peter Browne, Matt Cranitch	Post-*Riverdance* rediscovery of local traditions. Provides motivation for the performance and understanding of regional music traditions.	Conferences such as *Blas* focus on regional traditions. More informed audience desire recordings that make reference to regional difference. Radio and television programmes also aware of regional difference.

5.2 Transmission

Ethnomusicologists such as Blacking (1973) and Campbell (2001) have outlined the importance of understanding the transmission process as part of a musical culture. Transmission processes have performed an important role in shaping the geography, narratives and ideologies of Irish traditional music. McCarthy notes: "The transmission process in not a neutral, innocent activity but one underpinned by a strong motivation to define the parameters of human activity for an individual or group of individuals within a community" (1999: 13). The transmission process shapes the identity of the learner. The learning of the rudiments of playing may be determined by the style of the teacher and the choices made in the transmission process. Musicians, such as Martin Hayes have commented on the role of observation and mimicry in developing a playing style (see Williams, 2003). Others note the importance of listening (Carson, 2009) or immersion in the traditional music community (O'Shea, 2008; Quinn, 2009). Commentators who focus on the isolationist theories of the development of regional style suggest that often a style was learned because students did not have access to other teachers and performers (Nic Suibhne, 1993, 1995; Randles, 1998; Ó Bróithe, 1999).

Increased access to teachers and sources has challenged the conceptualisation of regions in Irish traditional music based on localised regional styles. Musicians often reference their mentors and influences in live settings, liner notes to CDs, radio and television interviews and other opportunities. Referencing an older generation of musicians as influences on an individual's musical education is a prominent feature of Irish traditional music and reinforces the prominence of particular individuals in the narratives of the tradition. Musicians, as agents in the transmission of tradition, influence the choice of instrument and the style of playing including the use of ornamentation, repertoire and attitudes to the music. In an era when Irish traditional music is no longer solely transmitted within a local community, the significance of these connections, both geographically and musically, becomes more complex.

The importance of place, social networks and geographical context in the evolution and transmission of regional music traditions is often ignored. Focussing on the role of Pádraig O'Keeffe in Sliabh Luachra, Cranitch notes: "In such a learning milieu, the music that was created depended also on a great deal of unwritten musical information and knowledge, and on an understanding of the music itself, all of which were acquired

and absorbed within the context of the local tradition" (2006: 270). A challenge to regional styles and the diversity that exists in Irish traditional music is the changing contexts in which the tradition is transmitted and consumed.

There is a saying in Irish, often referred to in relation to Irish traditional music that says '*ó ghlúin go glúin*' or 'from knee to knee', which refers to the convention of young students learning informally as an individual from an elder. Observation and listening are integral to learning Irish traditional music and the development of particular musical styles. Of the many examples in Irish traditional music of young musicians growing up with a close connection to a mentor, one of the most commercially successful and famous is Martin Hayes. In an article entitled 'A Master Class with Martin Hayes', Williams states: "Just as he learned rhythm by watching as well as playing for dancers, Martin learned the basics of his bowing technique by sitting opposite his father and watching what he was doing" (2003: 44). The process of transmission and the context in which the tradition is learned become crucial in the understanding of the style of an individual. Hayes himself stated, in the interview with Williams:

> Always, my bow hand is based on Paddy Canny and my father. It is an evolved style, a composite of both. I wanted my father's rhythmic pulse and energy but also Paddy's lyricism, the sweep and flow of his music. So, I struggled to develop a bowing technique that kept both aspects alive (in Williams, 2003).

Hayes outlines the key characters in the regional narrative of the musical traditions of east Clare. Hayes notes the uniqueness of his father and Paddy Canny though they are presented as sharing a regional musical style. Hayes' own musical style is a combination of styles and influences that reflect his musical experiences and changes in access to musical influences. Elsewhere, in the sleeve notes to his album *Under the Moon*, Hayes (1995) discusses the importance of the style that he inherited from local musicians in his formative years and the attempt he makes to connect with an inherited musical tradition. Hayes is an individual with a unique regional style but his reference to an older regional tradition raises awareness of the musical traditions of that region and how they are evolving.

The concept of inheritance of tradition is crucial to a folk tradition and exists not only musically but also in the attitudes, stories and ideas that form the narratives of that tradition. Musical style is one element of Irish traditional music culture that is transmitted.

Other aspects are learned or acquired through experience. The values and expectations surrounding the music and particular aspects of it, the discourse that surrounds the performance of music and the histories and folklore that are told and retold are crucial to the geographical identity of a localised tradition. Musical genealogies are often traced to gain a sense of pedigree in the tradition. Whether through familial or educational ties, musicians often become part of the tradition through their musical activity but their status in the community is enhanced through relationships with other members.

Martin Hayes is an example of a musician who has tested the musical boundaries of the tradition, developing his style from that inherited from his father and neighbours. He is symbolic of a living musical tradition whereby the teacher passes on a certain amount of knowledge with a degree of possibility left for the student to make choices. Noting the role of the teacher in both the transmission and evolution of music, MacAmhlaoibh states:

> Young traditional musicians learn the music from their masters […] If they have the confidence and musical expertise to introduce innovations for the further embellishment of the music we have given them, we should feel proud of their ability to put their own stamp on it (1990: 7).

MacAmhlaoibh's argument allows for change in the style of a region, even when inherited from a local teacher. Within the concept of Irish traditional music as a living and changing tradition, it is possible that the new musical styles can replace older styles as the dominant style of a region if shared by musicians in a particular locality. Regions are not dependent on reference to sounds from previous periods of time, though older recordings highlight geographical diversity in the evolution of Irish traditional music.

A number of other agents and processes also impact upon the transmission process. Teachers increasingly use print sources as teaching aids. The notation and publication of Irish traditional music with particular tune names and settings influences the music of the learner and makes reference to particular elements of the geography of the tradition. These publications are based on the experience and decisions of other agents such as collectors. Broadcasting has also become a source for learners who are informed by radio and television programmes. Broadcasters and producers are guided by particular agendas. Particular stories, concepts and tunes are transmitted through the medium of broadcasting. Recordings are also an important source of tunes and musical style. The context in which recordings are produced, presented and sold is important in

understanding their impact on the narratives of the tradition. The packaging and marketing material of recordings convey stories, meanings and ideologies that inform the consumer. The process of teaching Irish traditional music has become institutionalised by organisations including *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, as well as third level institutions.

Ó Suilleabháin (1990) defines regional style as a form of playing that is shared amongst musicians in a particular area. While attending *Fleadh Cheoil na Mumhan* in July 2006 in Lismore, Co. Waterford, I contemplated the question of style and diversity in Irish traditional music of the twenty-first century. The '*Fleadh*' is sometimes criticised for being a space in which one hears a very limited number of tunes or, as in Ó Bróithe (1999), a musical space in which musical styles become homogenised. I remember when I was competing and the dismay I felt when the person before me played the jig that I had spent weeks practising and perfecting. Though there has been a significant increase in the availability of collection of music, particularly by more recent composers in the tradition (Liddy, 1981; 1991; Ryan, 1994; Brady, 2000; O'Brien Minogue, 1992, 2009; Power, 2009), the development, publication and widespread availability of a variety of 'session books' cultivate a standardised repertoire and fail to represent the wonderful diversity contained in the vast repertoire of Irish traditional music. The onus is, therefore, on the individual teachers who work in the various branches and classrooms around the country, to transmit to each generation, a varied selection of tunes and tune types as well as those tunes most commonly played in the sessions of different places. A balance must be struck also, between the need for two, three or four 'quality' competition tunes and the development of each young musician's repertoire, which they can enjoy playing and sharing.

My observations of *Fleadh Cheoil na Mumhan* in Lismore were in contrast to the criticism of the '*Fleadh*' as a space of few tunes. Listening with interest to the Under 12 fiddle competition, my memory indicates that no tune was repeated. That means the seventeen competitors played a total of thirty-four tunes. Within the competition, the diversity in the repertoire of Irish traditional music was evident. There was not only diversity in the repertoire performed. As I observed from my position within the audience I made my own adjudications, jotting down comments and reminders as well as marks. I quickly realised that every musician was different – different in the style of playing his or her instrument. I noticed the use of roles by one musician, the staccato nature of another,

the use of nice variations or the drive that urged my feet into action. Having experienced the position myself I, like many others in the room, did not envy the task facing the adjudicators. However, as an audience member I was delighted by the performances of these fantastic musicians whose age was irrelevant.

Regional styles are often considered an element of the past yet my experience of hearing the young fiddlers in Lismore revealed to me that diversity still exists. In some cases the repertoires and styles played were different from the regional and stylistic traditions outlined in other analyses of Irish traditional music. The styles of the young fiddlers echoed the different influences upon their musical development. The discourse on regional styles in Irish traditional music makes reference to a small number of historical musicians such as Michael Coleman, Pádraig O'Keeffe and Johnny Doherty. Irish traditional music is a vibrant tradition that is constantly changing and evolving, while also making reference to the past. The memory of Coleman, O'Keeffe, Doherty and the other celebrated musicians that occupy the pantheon of Irish traditional music has not been forgotten or replaced. Instead an increasing number of respected musicians and teachers are constantly complementing it. The tradition needs living links to pass on the music and culture to the next generation and these outstanding individuals exist in all parts of the country. Their students represent local traditions in competition. The audience can appreciate not only the young musician performing on a sunny Saturday morning in the hope of winning a medal and a place at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* but also the teacher who has guided them on their musical journey.

In the context of the competition I have just described, Nicky McAuliffe in Kerry, Connie O'Connell in Cork, Kathleen Nesbitt in Tipperary, Denis Liddy in Clare and many others assume the role of Pádraig O'Keeffe as the primary influence on regional styles. The power of these individuals in the transmission of music was further emphasised in Lismore. Muireann Ní Dhonnabháin, a former student of Connie O'Connell, was the teacher of another competitor, Bréanainn Mac Mathúna. In this way, arguably, regional styles are created through the teaching methods and practices of particular teachers located in particular regions. There is a musical genealogy and sense of inheritance that is fundamental to the definition of tradition. The emergence of individuals in succeeding generations who influence the evolution of the tradition does not mean that the styles past masters are no longer relevant. The success of Liam O'Connor and Ciarán Ó Maonaigh in

winning the TG4 Young Musician of the Year highlights the interest in regional styles among the current generation of Irish traditional musicians. O'Connor has tapped into the wonderful Sligo musical heritage while Ó Maonaigh has inherited a wonderfully rich family tradition based on the music of Donegal. Ó Maonaigh has since released an album with fellow Donegal fiddle player Aidan O'Donnell entitled *Fidil* (2008) which focuses on the Donegal fiddle tradition and together they have been selected as performers on the *Music Network* series.

The process of transmission is an integral part of the social network in which Irish traditional music and the regional identities therein develop. Although young musicians increasingly travel to workshops in diverse locations delivered by tutors from another plethora of places, the primary learning context for Irish traditional music remains within the local community, strengthening regional identity. Despite the increased range of influences on the style of Irish traditional music performed by an individual can often lead to a blurring of difference in the sound performed, the regional context in which music is inherited is a factor in their musical experience.

5.3 Notating and publishing Irish traditional music

Notation is a communication system that involves the development of written and codified representations of music (Cole, 1974). Schafer defines notation as "an attempt to render aural facts by visual signs" and considers the value of notation for both the preservation and analysis of sound as considerable (1977: 123). Notation is both prescriptive and descriptive as it gives instructions for sounds yet to be made and describes sounds that have already occurred. Cole (1974) emphasises the need to understand not only the systems of notation but also the way in which they are used and the situations which produce them. The amount of information communicated through notation must also be considered (Cole, 1974). The principal model used for transcribing and notating Irish traditional music has been that of European or western art music and influenced by piano tonometry. The use of these models and tonometries are influenced by the social and cultural context in which collectors were situated and the politics of identity associated with music. Often described as an oral or aural tradition, transcription and notation perform an increasingly prominent role in the transmission and

dissemination of Irish traditional music, as well as providing a source for research on the tradition.

Table 19 Three approaches to the study of published collections of Irish traditional music

1.	The role of the collector, the process of collecting and the context for collecting.
2.	The role of the text as artefact and the meanings communicated through the visual manifestation of the music as it is presented in notated form.
3.	The role of published collections of Irish traditional music in the diffusion of Irish traditional music and the dissolution of regional distinctiveness and, paradoxically, the role of published collections in highlighting the connection between music and place.

Source: Author.

Three approaches to the role of notated collection of Irish traditional music in the construction of regions are presented in this study (Table 19). The first approach considers the development of notation and collecting in Irish traditional music and the geographical implications for the tradition. An examination of the role of collectors in the process of notating and representing Irish traditional music helps to inform a new understanding of regions in Irish traditional music. An examination of the work of various collectors concentrates on the contexts in which the collections were made, the sources from which these texts were formulated and the possible influence of historical, social and economic factors on the evolution of the collections. The second approach concerns an analysis and interpretation of the text as artefact and gives consideration to the meanings communicated through the visual manifestation of the music as it is presented in notated form. A collection of music is similar to a map. The music book represents a series of choices made by the collector/publisher relating to what to include and exclude and in what manner should it be presented. The third approach focuses on the role of published collections of Irish traditional music in the diffusion of Irish traditional music and,

paradoxically, the role of published collections in highlighting the connection between music and place. Published collections allow greater diffusion of repertoire and blur the boundaries between regional repertoires. However, many collections demonstrate patterns of regional bias, highlighting the music of particular regions and thus impacting on a regional understanding of Irish traditional music.

In his introduction to an edition of O'Neill's collection, Krassen states: "Although a small number of Irish airs can be found in manuscripts dating from the sixteenth century, the first serious attempts to transcribe and collect the traditional melodies of Ireland began with the publication of Edward Bunting's *General Collection of the Ancient Irish Music* in 1796" (1976: 10). As well as Bunting (1773-1843), Krassen also considers the role of George Petrie (1790-1866), Patrick Weston Joyce (1827-1914) and finally Francis O'Neill (1848-1936). Other subsequent collectors include Breandán Breathnach (1912-1985) who was to influence, amongst others Pat Mitchell and Terry Moylan who published collections of the music of Willie Clancy (Mitchell, 1993) and Johnny O'Leary (Moylan, 1994) respectively, both of which are relevant to understanding regional traditions. In addition, collections of composers in the traditional idiom are increasingly available, many of which reflect the evolution and enhancement of local traditions ((Liddy, 1981; 1991; Ryan, 1994; Brady, 2000; O'Brien Minogue, 1992, 2009; Power, 2009).

Breathnach (1986) divides the transcription process into two classes based on the motivation for collecting and transcribing: the transcription of music as part of an archival process and the transcription of music in a format for learning. The first type of publication is described by Breathnach as:

> […] those that were published by collectors who were moved to do so in order to preserve some part of the national heritage for posterity. These collectors (Bunting, Petrie, Joyce, to name the chief amongst them) have been described, in a borrowed phrase, as nation builders. Their labours were directed to a literate public who, like themselves, were outside the tradition. They were not addressed to the class to which their informants belonged (1986: 2).

In an effort to reach such a literate audience from the higher classes of society during his lifetime, Bunting arranged many airs for the piano, the fashionable instrument of his time. The contemporary figure Thomas Moore made use of the airs published by Petrie, writing new lyrics in the English language for an elite society. Bunting, Petrie and others are

influenced by processes of cultural nationalism in Ireland (White, 1998). While the music transcribed in these collections are from a living tradition, the music is presented as part of a tradition that is in the process of dying out and many of the melodies do not survive in the session repertoire of Irish traditional musicians today.

The second grouping outlined by Breathnach is that comprised of performers who directed their collections to learners and other musicians. The collections are representative of a living tradition and many of the melodies remain in circulation. These collections may be divided into those that provide skeletal outlines of tunes and those that contain highly descriptive notations of a single performance by an individual. The nature of the collections is shaped by the use of musical notation as a mnemonic device or as an attempt at mimicry. Publications of collections of transcriptions by Francis O'Neill and Breandán Breathnach were popularly used in the transmission of the tradition but they have been replaced in many instances by books presenting a smaller number of 'session tunes' often gathered into 'set' of two or three influenced by contemporary practices.

In studying the impact of notated collections of Irish traditional music on a regional understanding of the tradition, it is important to note the context in which the music was both heard and written down. The transcribers of Irish traditional music bring with them their own agendas, as well as social and cultural baggage. Their writings empower and privilege aspects of the tradition that include the melodies as one element. The publication of their work has huge geographical consequences emanating from the sources for their work and the construction and imagination of place within the tradition. While many of O'Neill's sources were based in America, Petrie states "I have availed myself of every opportunity in my power to obtain the purest settings of the airs, by noting them from the native singers, and more particularly from such of them as resided or had been reared, in the most purely Irish districts" (1855/1967: xviii; Cooper, 2002: 36). However, Petrie also ascribes himself authority in testing the accuracy of these melodies and as such they are subject to his approval. It is also worth noting that Petrie was President of The Society for the Preservation and Publication of the Melodies of Ireland, founded in 1851, with an antiquarian approach that underpinned much of Petrie's work (Cooper, 2002).
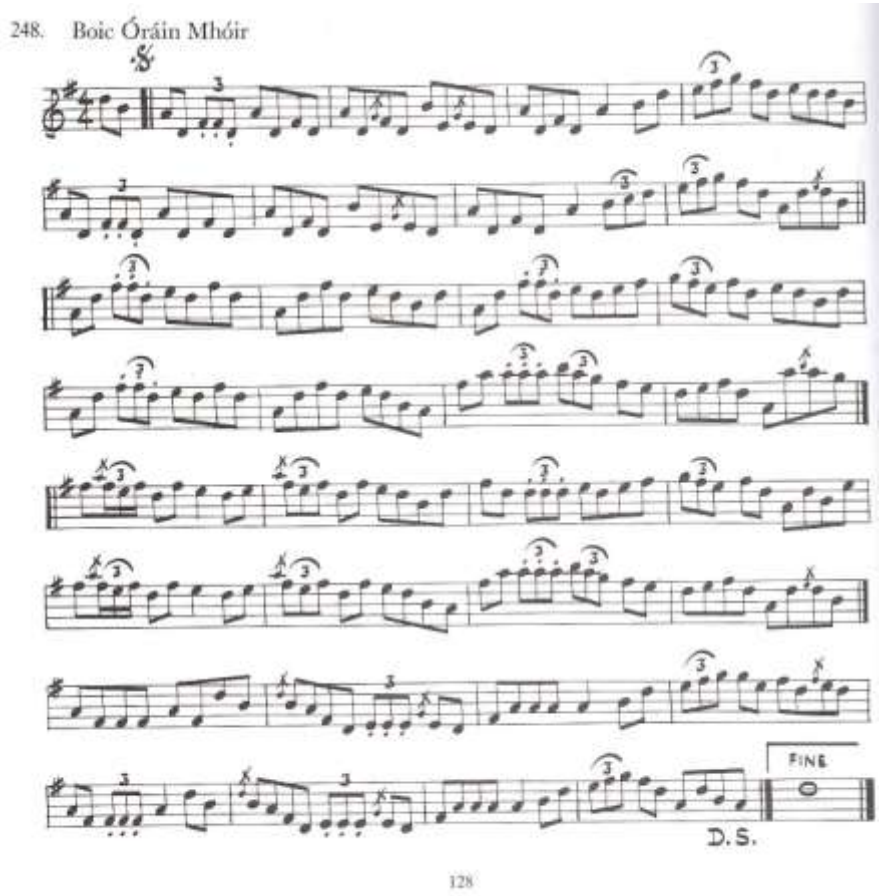
Recognising patterns in the selection of various areas for the collecting of music and its impact on the geography of the tradition, Corcoran suggests: "The regional biases

of the 19th century collections seems more random than intentional" (1997: 28). Corcoran makes reference to both Bunting and Petrie noting: "It is interesting to note how much Petrie's areas of concentration conflict with widely held perceptions today of 'strong musical areas'" (1997: 29) (See fig. 4, p. 176). Breathnach (1975), with reference to Stokes (1868), notes Petrie's activities collecting music in County Clare in 1821 and notes that Petrie considered "the music of Clare possessed distinctive qualities not possessed by that of other counties" and "Petrie visited the county not only to collect music towards its preservation, but to pursue his theory about its particular distinctiveness" (1975: 63). The suggestion that Petrie was aware of and sought out regional difference in Irish traditional music in the early 19th century reinforces the concept of regional styles. A greater awareness of regional diversity is expressed by Cathaoir O'Braonain in his foreword to Francis Roche's first volume, dated 1909. O'Braonain states: "In the south of Ireland alone there are many districts which have never been tapped by the collector". Roche's own preface indicates his sources as coming primarily from Munster, principally Limerick and Kerry, as well as Cork, Tipperary and Waterford and also Dublin (1911). Roche (1866-1961) is one of a number of collectors whose collections are influenced by the music heard during childhood and the localities in which they lived during their lives. Later collections, such as *The Northern Fiddler* (Feldman and O'Doherty, 1979) and *Johnny O'Leary of Sliabh Luachra: Dance Music from the Cork-Kerry Border* (Moylan, 1994) recognise the developing interest in local and regional traditions that develop in the latter half of the twentieth century in response to modernisation (see O'Doherty, 1979: 1).

Nettl identifies two main approaches to the transcription of music: "1) we can analyse and describe what we hear, and 2) we can in some way write it on paper and describe what we see" (1964: 98). In writing down what is heard, it is necessary to give some consideration to the stylistic features of the music, the demonstration of the principal melody and aspects of variation and ornamentation in a performance. There have been varied attempts to transcribe the stylistic features of Irish traditional music and include them in different publications. In his introduction to the Roche Collection, Ó Suilleabháin (1982) notes the indication of ornaments and the innovative if subjective transcription of airs by Francis Roche. Breandán Breathnach, arguably one of the greatest collectors of Irish traditional music, noted his own change of practice in *Ceol Rince na hÉireann II*, when he included stylistic notation omitted in previous and subsequent volumes of his work (Breathnach, 1976; Plate 6). Lyth (1981; 1996) concentrated on the

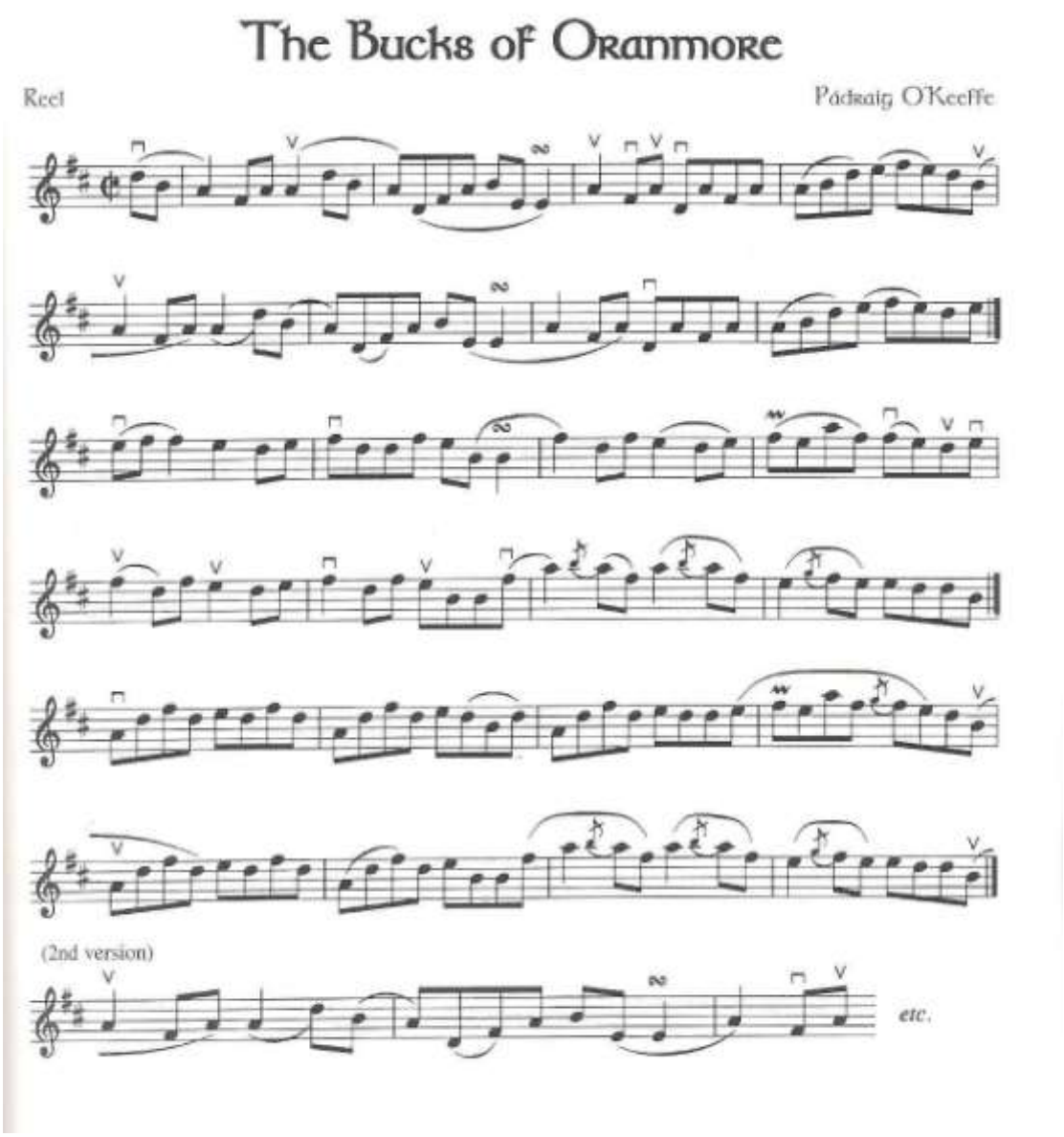
bowing patterns of various fiddlers in an attempt to understand the sound created (Plate 7). However, Lennon suggests that the notation in Lyth's analysis of bowing styles should be used "not be to simply reproduce it but rather to understand it and then use it as a possible base for personal development" (1981: iii). Keegan (1996) echoes this when asserting that though notation helps preserve a tradition and allows for the resurrection of individual melodies, the performer often ignores any stylistic elements included in notation.

Plate 6 Example of transcription from *Craobh Rince na hÉireann II* with ornamentation indicated.



This setting of 'The Bucks of Oranmore' was transcribed from fiddle player Patrick Kelly of Cree, Co. Clare. The transcription indicates a number of ornaments and elements of Kelly's style of playing. Breathnach chose to present the names of the melodies in the Irish language. Source: Breathnach, 1972, page 128.

Plate 7 The Bucks of Oranmore as transcribed by David Lyth from Pádraig O'Keeffe of Glountane, Co. Kerry.



Lyth seeks to highlight the bowing styles of the individuals from whom he transcribes the music. Lyth includes indications of bowing and phrasing as well as a number of ornaments. The difference between this transcription and that which appears in *Craobh Rince na hÉireann II* highlights the differences performed by different musicians of the same tune and the choices made in the publication of the music. Source: Lyth, 1999, page 27.

Transcriptions of Irish traditional music may also be considered as texts that are open to interpretation. At an introductory lecture to undergraduate geography a short number of years ago I was intrigued listening to the lecturer, Professor WJ Smyth, who spoke of reading not only textbooks but the landscape and representations of the landscape such as paintings, photographs and maps. He also spoke of the difficulties involved in reading maps, particularly in consideration of that which is absent from a map and the role of the people involved in constructing the map – the surveyors, cartographers and financiers. Consideration must be given to the use of language, symbols, emblems and iconography. It may appear quite natural that when studying music one should not only listen to the music but read the various representations of the music. Like the geographers map, the score is a representation of sound that echoes the geographers' representation of place. Cole (1974) identifies a number of aspects of notation as communication that may be considered. Cole considers the quality of graphics, the use of symbols, the amount of information given and the precision of that information as factors that impact upon the use of notation (Table 20). The sounds represented by the notation and heard in a performance of the music may also communicate cultural, social and geographic information. A performance of a written piece of music is also dependent on the choices and identity of the performer. Sounds vary depending on the identity of the performer particularly in relation to accent, which may be influenced by the socio-economic and geographic background of the performer.

The music score consists of more than musical symbols of pitch and rhythm. There is an incredible amount of social and cultural meaning to be found in a map, photograph and painting and arguably a score, particularly a transcription of a performance. The preface, tune titles and related notes provide much information. The name provided might not, for example, be the name used or provided by the performer of a melody. For example Francis O'Neill took certain liberties with both the melodies and their titles in his publications (Krassen, 1976; Breathnach, 1986). These names represent a variety of people and places in Ireland, influenced in no small part by both Francis and James' geographical backgrounds in west Cork and the north east of Ireland respectively, as well as the people whom they engaged with in Chicago. Francis O'Neill, who was keenly interested in Irish politics and influenced by, among others, Douglas Hyde who

later became the first President of Ireland, had a special typeface made up in order to encode tune names with a sense of ancient authenticity (Carolan, 1997). In spite of this, the book also includes recent compositions of the time (Breathnach, 1977; Mac Aoidh, 2006). The process of naming and the existence of numerous names for the same melody is an indication of diversity within the tradition.

Table 20 Potential difficulties in the use of notation for communication.

1.	Graphical faults (poor spacing and alignment, badly-formed symbols, unclear layout).
2.	Inconsistency (contradictory markings, symbols used in different senses without good cause).
3.	Too little information given (that is, too or adequate performance under the prevailing conditions).
4.	Too much information given (that is, unnecessarily much under prevailing conditions).
5.	Meaningless precision (unnecessary instructions hinder a reading of the notation).
6.	Uncertainty as to terms of contract (degree of latitude to be taken in interpretation).
7.	Ambiguity (where signs may have two meanings, only one of which can be right).
8.	Insufficiency of notation for the job in hand (weakness of notation system used.).

Source: Adapted from Cole (1974).

Published collections of Irish traditional music play an important role in the diffusion of Irish traditional music and the dissolution of regional distinctiveness and, paradoxically, in highlighting the connection between music and place. As previously indicated, the collections of Petrie and Bunting demonstrate significant regional bias in their sources. Corcoran highlights the difference between the collections of Petrie and

Bunting in Ireland with those of O'Neill: "O'Neill's work is quite different since it's more a reflection of the melting-pot of emigration than of distribution patterns back home" (1997: 29). It should not be inferred that this implies that O'Neill and other collectors are geographically unimportant in an Irish context. For example the acclaimed Clare concertina player, Paddy Murphy, sourced many tunes from a copy of *O'Neill's 1001 Gems of Irish Dance Music* owned by Hughdie Doohan, a neighbour who could read music (Ó hAllmhuráin, 1993). In a time before regular festivals and contact with musicians it was the only way to increase the local repertoire and highlights the mobility of music. However, Murphy and his fellow musicians were themselves accomplished musicians and the notated melodies merely provided a skeleton to which they could apply their musical knowledge.

O'Neill's legacy shapes the geographical dissemination of the music, continues to make somewhat anecdotal references to place and is an integral part of the institutionalisation of Irish traditional music from which the concept of regions as espoused by this thesis develops. Speaking on *The Rolling Wave* in relation to *O'Neills 1001* on the centenary of its publication, Nicholas Carolan stated:

> This book and O'Neill's other books too contributed to the status of the music, to the self belief of the musicians, to identity on all those levels, but the really important thing is that it preserved, O'Neill judged that he preserved about a thousand dance tunes that wouldn't otherwise have been preserved. Brendan Breathnach, who knew this music next to the O'Neills, estimated that he preserved around seven hundred dance tunes. That's an enormous amount of music that might have been lost forever had the O'Neills and their team not done their work in Chicago in the late 1800s early 1900s (18th April 2007).

Thus, O'Neill and other collectors have an enormous impact on the soundscape of Irish traditional music since the publication of their collections.

Breandán Breathnach arguably inherited O'Neill's position as the foremost collector of Irish traditional music. Breathnach was almost certainly influenced by the O'Neills and wrote about the influence of Francis O'Neill on Irish traditional music (see Breathnach, 1977). Mac Aoidh asserts:

> Breathnach studied and was greatly aware of the details of the O'Neills' projects […] It is not hard to imagine that Breandán Breathnach directly adopted the systems pioneered by James and Francis O'Neill (2006: 53).

Breathnach developed a project indexing Irish traditional music melodies under the auspices of the Department of Education. The indexing system followed the same indexing system adopted by the O'Neills.

The publication of *Ceol Rince na hÉireann* is the project with which Breathnach is most readily associated, though he was also a prominent member of *Na Píobairí Uilleann* and wrote a number of essays on Irish traditional music (see Potts *et al*., 1996; Mitchell, 1986; Munnelly, 1986; Carolan, 1996). Breathnach approached each of the volumes of *Ceol Rince na hÉireann* with a different agenda, often focusing on a particular part of the tradition thus impacting upon the imagination and geography of Irish traditional music. The development of *Ceol Rince na hÉireann* was influenced greatly by the social context of the 1950s and the growth in popularity of Irish traditional music. Carolan notes:

> Young people, in urban areas especially, who were drawn to traditional instrumental music but who had no regular first-hand access to practising musicians, were in need of published collections of dance music. The classic collections of Francis O'Neill of Chicago from early in the century, and the slightly later collections of Francis Roche of Limerick, had however long been out of print, and the few and paltry printed collections available in the 1950s only palely reflected the richness of the music that new enthusiasts were coming into ecstatic contact with at fleadhanna ceoil and music sessions (1996: xi).

In Dublin, Breathnach was part of an urban Irish society in which Irish traditional music was gaining new popularity in a variety of new spatial and social contexts. In the introduction to *Ceol Rince na hÉireann Volume Two*, Breathnach states:

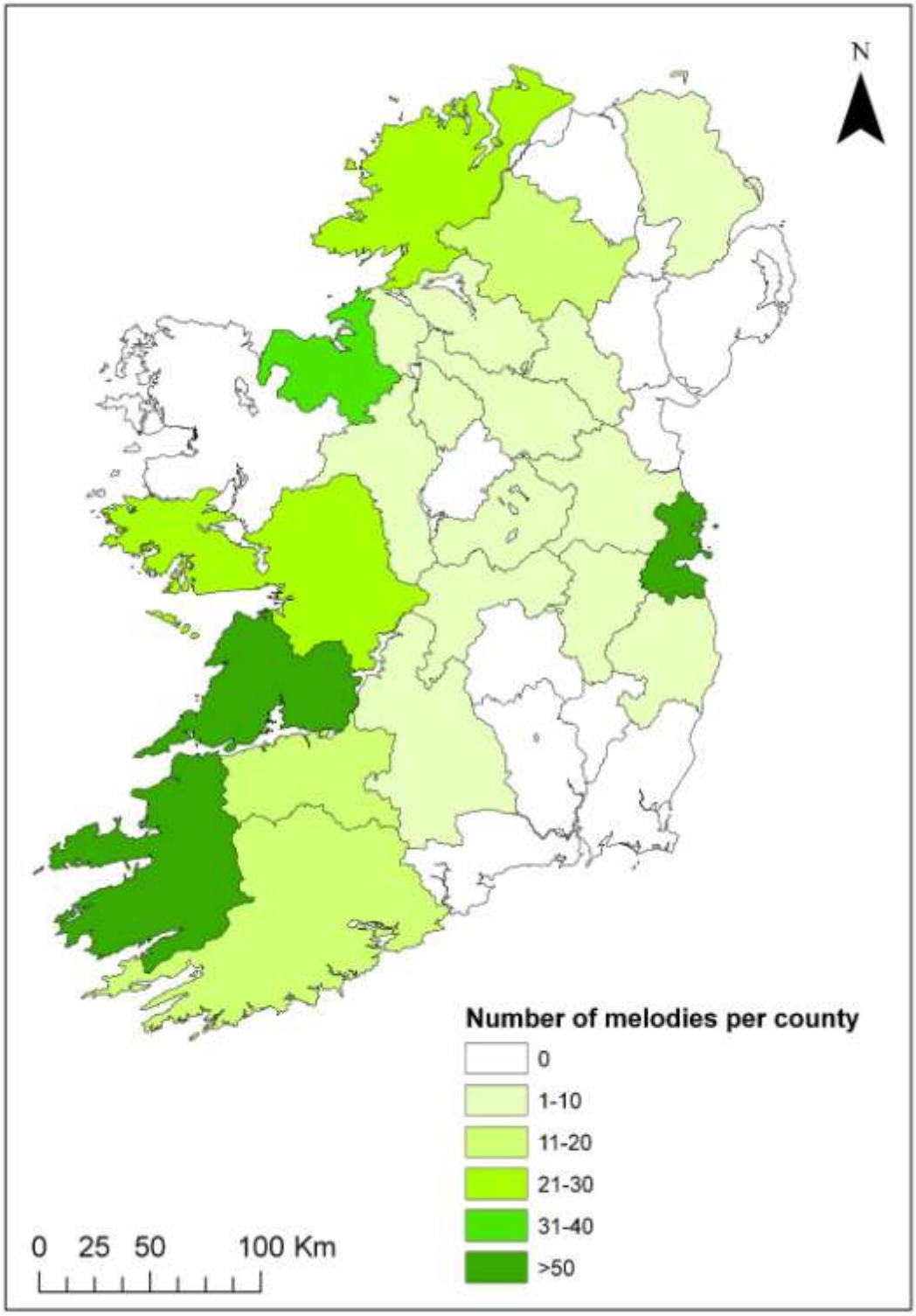
> Young people being attracted towards this music and practitioners wishing to add to their repertoire cannot be expected to await with patience a feast promised for the future. They must have something here and now to take the edge off their hunger. To meet the needs of these people, primarily, it is proposed to publish, from time to time selections of dance music from the Department's collection (1976: xiii).

Breathnach recognised the changing social structures and contexts for traditional music and the emergence of personal repertoires derived from print sources. Breathnach also operates within a different political context to that of O'Neill. Though Irish traditional music was still associated with an expression of Irish identity, difficulties in the north of Ireland and the beginning of a period termed 'The Troubles' assigned political resonance to the performance of and activity connected to Irish traditional music.

Like O'Neill's collections, *Ceol Rince na hÉireann* also includes various references to the geography of Irish traditional music. Each of the books contains a section of brief notes relating to the tunes. Names of tunes are written in Irish with English translations in the notes. This section also includes references to alternative names, musicians from whom the tune is sourced and with which they are associated, lyrics that may be sung to the melody. Places are also prominent in the notes. Through the publication and format of *Ceol Rince na hÉireann* Breathnach impacts on the understanding and awareness of regional traditions in Irish traditional music. Though based in Dublin, Breathnach drew on sources from throughout the country. Carolan notes the inclusion of polkas and slides, as well as tunes from Donegal in the second volume of *Ceol Rince na hÉireann*, "which had not been part of Breathnach's world in the 1950s" (Carolan, 1996: xii). Carolan notes: "Denis Murphy of Kerry, Micho Russell of Clare, James McEnery of Limerick, Aggie White of Galway and Johnny Doherty of Donegal were among the 81 regional musicians whose music, transcribed from tape recordings, the volume brought to a national and international public" (1996: xii). Social and kinship networks are influential in shaping the geographical spread of Breathnach's sources – he married Lena Donnellan of Mullagh, Co. Clare, which brought him into contact with sources with musicians like Willie Clancy (Carolan, 2005a).

The geographical spread of sources and their tunes for Breathnach's collections is, like in Petrie's collection, uneven but appears to support popular opinions as to where Irish traditional music is strong (Fig. 6). The patterns evident in a study of Breathnach's collection do not replicate those of a study of Petrie, particularly in consideration of counties Derry and Wexford, from where Breathnach records no musician. In contrast, the repertoire of Donegal and Sligo is more prominent. The map includes some doubling up of figures as Breathnach acknowledges that some musicians are part of two musical communities, often one rural and one urban, influenced by the processes of urbanisation and migration patterns. This particularly affects the number of tunes credited to a Dublin source. I have included the tunes as part of both locations, reflecting the participation of the musicians in two musical scenes. Micho Russell (26 tunes) and Denis Murphy (30 tunes), are notable contributors, reflecting the role of individuals in influencing the work of collectors. In the context of regional repertoires, most polkas and slides are accredited to Kerry musicians.

Figure 6 Distribution of contributors of melodies to *Ceol Rince na hÉireann II* (1976)



Source: Adapted from Breathnach, 1976.

References to stylistic embellishment are included in the notation of tunes in the second volume as in *Ceol Rince na hÉireann II*, Breathnach introduces symbols of ornamentation that were not included in the first volume. Breathnach states: "I yielded to the argument that people studying the music like to deal with transcriptions which are complete in themselves" (Breathnach, 1976). The critique may be presented that no transcription is complete in itself and each transcription fails to show the multitude of choices available to a traditional musician in ornamenting and varying a tune. The ability to interpret the notation presented by Breathnach is based on experience and the musical style of the performer influenced more by hearing rather than reading the music.

In contrast to other volumes, the sources for tunes in *Ceol Rince na hÉireann III* are commercial recordings (Breathnach, 1985). In his introduction, he notes that the tunes are essentially the selection of musicians in a living tradition but notes the influence of O'Neill's *Dance Music of Ireland* (1907) on the repertoire of musicians. Breathnach suggests that *Ceol Rince na hÉireann III* is "a fair and accurate account of the current state of traditional music in Ireland" (1985: xi). Breathnach passed away before the publication of the fourth and fifth volumes of *Ceol Rince na hÉireann*, which were edited by Jackie Small and demonstrate an emphasis on particular regional repertoires. Sources for volume four come entirely from Breathnach's collection of music, *An Cnuasacht Iomlán den Cheol Damhsa*, which is also the source for most of the music in volume five. For *Ceol Rince na hÉireann IV* (1996), many tunes come from Grier's collection in Leitrim. In *Ceol Rince na hÉireann V* (1999), Sliabh Luachra musicians Denis Murphy and Pádraig O'Keeffe are prominent sources. Reflecting the continuing evolution of the tradition, particularly geographically, Small notes: "Music [in volume five] comes from all parts of the country, and from Irish emigrants, particularly in the United States. There is a special emphasis on the rich tradition in the Sliabh Luachra area of east Co. Kerry and northwest Co. Cork, where Breathnach spent so much time and where he gleaned such an incomparable harvest" (1999: xi). Thus Breathnach becomes an important agent in the construction of regions and in particular the dissemination of Sliabh Luachra music in the latter part of the twentieth century. The *Ceol Rince na hÉireann* series is a resource for those learning tunes but also contains valuable information concerning the tradition and makes note of connections between music, people and place.

Through the publication of *Ceol Rince na hÉireann*, Breathnach was also involved in locating Irish traditional music in formal institutions; *Ceol Rince na hÉireann* was published by the Department of Education and was in a response to the cultural conditions of the time. Breathnach also plays an important role in the institutions that shape our understanding of and the geography of Irish traditional music. He was to the forefront of the organisation of *Na Píobairí Uilleann* and the development of *Scoil Samhradh Willie Clancy*. In his writings he was very aware of the characters that represent regional music traditions and, through a column entitled 'The man and his music' that appeared in *Ceol*, he presented essays on a number of musicians including John Kelly (1964), Willie Clancy (1965), Denis Murphy (1965a), Micho Russell (1970) and Johnny O'Leary (1981a). In other writings, Breathnach presents a commentary on the various processes that shape Irish traditional music during his lifetime, providing essays on radio and television programming (1965b; 1968, 1968a; 1969; 1972), *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* (1965c) as well as the role of the Department of Education (1972) and The Arts Council (1981b). Through his work in both the notation of thousands of melodies and writing essays on various aspects of the tradition, Breathnach provides an opportunity for the location of melodies and musicians geographically at a particular point in time.

The patterns created by the notation and publication of Irish traditional music inform a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. While the areas studied by Petrie are similar to those identified as strong regions of Irish traditional music in the twentieth century (Corcoran, 1997), the musical content of his collection is markedly different from that which is performed in these places today. The work of Captain Francis O'Neill highlights the diffusion of Irish traditional music, particularly in America but the celebration of his connection with west Cork, both by O'Neill himself and by others at a later period, highlights the importance of musical heritage as both an element of regional identity and as a possible economic resource. Through *Ceol Rince na hÉireann*, Breathnach provides and constructs a pattern from the repertoire in Ireland in the mid-twentieth century. Breathnach, like O'Neill, is involved in processes that extend beyond their activities as collectors of Irish traditional music. Breathnach was motivated by a desire to engage with the diversity that exists within Irish traditional music (see Breathnach, 1977). The patterns presented by the various published collections of Irish traditional music and the celebration of their creators extend the parameters for regional study in Irish traditional music beyond the analysis of musical style.

5.4 Recording and broadcasting Irish traditional music

As previously identified, recording and broadcasting have had an enormous impact on the development, dissemination and popularity of Irish traditional music. There are a variety of aspects to the study of the geographical impact of radio and recording technologies. The value and legacy of recordings made for radio are presented by Peter Browne (2007; see Table 21). There is a paradox identified in the study of the impact of recording and broadcasting on Irish traditional music: recording and broadcasting are considered homogenising forces yet without recordings and broadcasts musicians may not have become aware of the regional diversity within the tradition. The most prevalent issues in the study of recording and broadcasting concern who was recorded and broadcast; where these recordings are made; and the impact of these choices on the construction of regional identity. These questions relate closely to Graham's (1997a) four themes in the cultural geography of Ireland that focus on empowerment and contestation, the transformation and reproduction of identity, issues of inclusion and exclusion, and other dimensions of identity. While the processes of production and dissemination are different, the geographical consequences are quite similar and so, for the purposes of this thesis, recordings and broadcasts will be considered together. I have previously highlighted the importance of Seán Ó Riada's series *Our Musical Heritage* (1962) as an overt provocation of a discourse on regions in Irish traditional music. This section examines other aspects of recording and broadcasting in the development of regional musical identities in Irish traditional music. I present a particular focus on the influence of Michael Coleman (1891-1946), Séamus Ennis (1919-1982) and Ciarán MacMathúna (b. 1925) as agents in the process of recording and broadcasting.

Understanding the role of recordings and the radio in the evolution of the tradition and the discourse of regions is crucial to a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. The connection between music and power is outlined by Attali who, in *Noise*, stated:

> Recording has always been a means of social control, a stake in politics, regardless of the available technologies. Power is no longer content to enact its legitimacy; it records and reproduces the societies it rules (1985: 87).

Table 21 The value, use and impact of recordings.

Recordings may:
Be pleasant and interesting to hear.
Be part of a body of collected or archive material.
Deepen our appreciation of and add substance to what are legendary names in Irish traditional music.
Be a source through which tunes, variations, styles and versions can be studied and learned.
Be a source through which technique may be appreciated and acquired.
Be a source for academic study.
Highlight diversity in musical styles.

Source: Adapted from Browne, 2007: 1.

The impact of recording on the development, diffusion and transmission of music is intensified through the availability of recording devices. As more artists and organisations develop the power to record and disseminate music, the importance of performing and communicating difference through music intensifies. Recording becomes a method of control. As Attali states:

> Possessing the means of recording allows one to monitor noises, to maintain them, and to control their repetition within a determined code. In the final analysis, it allows one to impose one's own noise and to silence others (1985: 87).

Through the inclusion and exclusion of particular artists, recording helped to shape the soundscape of Irish traditional music from the beginning of the twentieth century. Recording provided the power to enact and observe change in the tradition. Recordings were used by various groups to promote particular aspects of the tradition and to further other ideologies including nationalist politics.

The first Irish traditional musicians to be recorded commercially were in America and, by coincidence as much as design, many came from north Connacht and shared some traits of musical style. The musical style that features on these recordings became the most popular style in Irish traditional music. Musicians desired to play music like that of Coleman, Morrison and McKenna and the recorded settings of tunes became part of the repertoire of Irish traditional musicians globally. The legacy of these recordings shapes our understanding of the history of Irish traditional music but also the musical and geographical development of the tradition. The geographical importance and regional distinctiveness of these recordings is celebrated more in the latter half of the twentieth century, long after the initial impact of the recordings.

Similar to early publications of Irish traditional music and the development of the radio, the early music recording industry was not immune from international political contexts and, particularly in relation to Irish traditional music, the political struggles in Ireland. Writing on the era of Irish traditional music recordings in New York by John McKenna, Small states:

> The Irish in America participated eagerly in the upsurge of interest in ethnic music of all kinds after the First World War, an interest reflected in the case of the Irish, by news of great political change at home. The founding of the O'Byrne DeWitt record company, with its subtitle 'The Sinn Fein Music House', followed events in Ireland in 1916 […] The first records by [John] McKenna to arrive back in Leitrim around 1922 were on the New Republic label, bearing on them the tricolour of the new nation, reflecting Irish-American interest in the new status of the 'old country' (1982: 3).

Small highlights the interaction of different processes on Irish traditional music that are entwined with concepts of nation, place and identity.

The paradox of recording and broadcasting as homogenising forces that have highlighted regional diversity is evident in the discourse on regional styles in Irish traditional music. Writing in the context of an introduction to a collection of Donegal music by Alan Feldman at a time when the Donegal style was considered to be dying out, O'Doherty states:

> Of the influences on traditional music in the twentieth century, gramophone records and the radio have probably had a greater effect than any other single factor. The mass media is, however, viewed with mixed feelings by musicians, for while it has repopularized and spread the music, it

> nonetheless has tended to unify the style and repertoire of players, and the subsequent loss of regional variations is greatly felt as it is precisely in this direction that much of the interest in traditional music lies (1979: 11).

O'Doherty is part of the group that highlights regional variation as something of interest in Irish traditional music. O'Doherty suggests that regional musical styles and repertoires are challenged by modernisation and, in particular, recording and broadcasting. In contrast, Corcoran points out that the distinctiveness of Donegal music is not, as proposed by Feldman (1979), due to its isolation and remoteness "but to its intimate interaction with urban centres (Scotland) and its love-affair with the 78 record" (1997: 28). The connection between the musical cultures of Ireland and other countries, particularly Scotland and North America, are intertwined with economic and social factors, predominantly famine and emigration. In relation to the development of the musical traditions of Donegal, Ó Baoill notes:

> After the Famine (1845-1847) emigration to Scotland increased and John Doherty would have access to records of the talented Scottish fiddlers brought home by emigrants. It would seem that he listened carefully to these recordings and in his early years emulated Skinner's style of playing. John himself became an excellent fiddler of Scottish Strathspeys and Highlands. As we, fishermen brought home Shetland reels from Lerwick and exchanged their own tunes with Scottish musicians (1996: 13).

Similarly, the music of Coleman, Morrison and others entered the traditions of Donegal but the style, generally and with the exception of Inishowen, did not (Mac Aoidh, 1994; McCann, 1994). The impact of the radio and sound recordings challenge the isolationist theories presented by some as an attempt to understand regions in Irish traditional music.

Recording technology has undergone enormous change in the past one hundred years. The availability and location of recording technology in Irish traditional music has a geography of its own. From the early recordings in North America to the deployment of an outside broadcast unit by *Raidió Éireann* that focused on rural Ireland and the Gaeltachts in particular to the popular use of portable devices by young students attending classes has impacted on the evolution of Irish traditional music. Early *Raidió Éireann* broadcasts featured primarily Dublin or Dublin based musicians as "proximity to the Dublin studio was of more importance than musical authenticity" (Carolan, 2005). In his paper considering the conflict between processes of homogenisation and the survival of local music cultures, Cooke stated:

> The very portability and cheapness of cassette technology (with its facility for recording on domestic machines) has been a stimulus to the production, duplication and dissemination of the performances of countless local musicians in their own countries (1997: 15).

Teachers in Irish traditional music stress the importance of hearing the music and the usefulness of tape recorders to the transmission process. It is unusual in workshops for students not to request to record the music to be learned. In some ways, the extended use of recording devices marks a return to an oral tradition, albeit without the sense of isolation or remoteness from a teacher, style and other musicians.

In spite of the criticisms of recorded sound as sounding the death knell for regional styles, Fairbairn argues:

> The decline of regional styles has been recognised just in time for musicians and scholars to collect much of the rapidly disappearing material […] Some of today's young urban players are turning to these recordings and basing their styles on them. The accumulation of archive recordings and their subsequent use as an oral source is an ironic contemporary backlash. It demonstrates a displaced learning process which uses the very medium (recording technology) which all but destroyed traditional music and the mechanisms of rural lifestyle and community which generated it (1994: 577).

Recordings of Irish traditional music, both commercial and archival, become reference materials that are part of a process of displacement of the sonic elements of regional traditions and simultaneously raise geographical awareness amongst the Irish traditional music community. The paradox of the process of modernisation is that the development of sound recording led to an increased knowledge of the regional styles it was apparently destroying. In this sense, the impact of globalising forces and modernity, as well as contact with a wider musical community, is often used as an over-simplified reasoning for the abandonment and dilution of regional styles.

Irish radio began broadcasting on the January 1st 1926 (Pine, 2002; Browne, 2007). Radio in Ireland was developed with nationalistic motives and Irish traditional music was an important element of its programming from the start. Kelly and Rolston note that *Raidió Éireann*, whose remit was to contribute to the project of building the Irish state and nation (1995: 565), linked popular culture and national identity through the broadcasting of Irish traditional music (1995: 569). Browne notes:

> There was much traditionally-based Irish content in the opening night's schedule, as one might expect in a brand new broadcasting service in a newly created State just four years into its independence, and there was a bias towards "trained" performers and refined, formal performance (2007: 2).

Browne notes the inclusion of traditional music in the ensuing years but acknowledges the difficulties presented by early radio, including the spatial environment of the live studio, which was something very different to the rural homes and house dances where Irish traditional musicians were more used to performing (2007: 3). The later development of the Mobile Recording Unit provided the opportunity to record musicians in various parts of Ireland, often in their own habitus, thus changing the methods and practice of selection and the representation of regional diversity in Irish traditional music (Browne, 2007).

The radio negated the spatial distances between people allowing musical styles to cross regional boundaries in radio waves and became an influence on the soundscape of the country. The radio also presented stories of people and places that were part of the Irish traditional music narrative, thus creating mythified spaces for Irish traditional music and allowing the development of knowledge on regional diversity in Irish traditional music. Gibbons notes "media representations, and cultural forces in general, act as transformative forces in society, rather than as 'reflections' or mimetic forms at one removed from reality" (1996: xii). Kelly and Ralston also assert that "Raidió Éireann's efforts in researching and broadcasting traditional music was to foster a revival of interest and to create an audience for it, both on radio and elsewhere (1995: 569). The radio also became an institutionalising force that solidified and disseminated the discourse on regions and place in Irish traditional music.

The radio was a welcome addition to the soundscape of Irish life, particularly in rural areas (Pine, 2002). Noting the role of *Gael Linn* in the development of the radio and the role of the radio in Irish society in the 1950s, Carolan states:

> [The radio programmes] reached into every home and in the late 1950s, well, *Raidió Éireann* was the only game in town. It was the national station and the only national station, it didn't have a second channel, it was the only channel even, so everybody in the country who listened to the radio listened to *Raidió Éireann*, so there was terrific audience penetration as people would say now and people grew up with the sounds of *Gael Linn*. They began the programme itself in the early fifties, in 1953, and they had a difficulty because there was practically nothing available in the Irish language in Irish language singing. Most of the programmes, the radio

> sponsored programmes, fifteen minutes sponsored programmes, relied heavily on music (*The Late Session*, 1st August 2004).

Thus the radio became an increasingly influential factor on the evolution of Irish traditional music from the 1950s. Carolan notes that RTÉ would record singers and musicians in studio settings onto acetate discs, some of which were kept as a limited archive and some were later released as commercial recordings. Musicians were chosen based on a number of principles, including acknowledging winners at the *Oireachtas* and *Fleadh Cheoil* competitions and those artists who were popular at the time. There is also a sense of exoticism extolled by the *Gael Linn* recordings and broadcasts. Carolan notes the strangeness of Seosamh Ó hÉanaí's singing to the Dublin urban audience. Indeed, the urban rural divide was very evident in the discourse of the time. Carolan notes that in internal correspondence the records were referred to as *ceirníní gaeltachta* - Gaeltacht records. Thus the nationalist myths of the earlier twentieth century that romanticised the west of Ireland were still evident, particularly in consideration of Irish traditional music and song. Carolan recognises the 1950s as an era when a lot of things were about to happen and there was a coming together of talents.

In many ways, the radio became central to the transmission and dissemination of tunes, styles and attitudes. It was central to the diffusion of knowledge about diversity in Irish traditional music. Amongst the influential figures that came to the fore in the early 1950s were Séamus Ennis and Ciarán MacMathúna. The importance of the radio in Irish traditional music is outlined by Curtis who states: "Ciarán's and Séamus's programmes proved that Irish traditional music and song - though reported ill and in many cases near death in some areas - was alive and well in selected pockets around the country" (1998: 16). The electronic media, as outlined by Berland, "establish a space between the origin of a sound and its listener […] The electronic media, designed to conquer space, transform its very nature" (1998: 129). The development of recording and broadcasting changed the way and spaces in which Irish traditional music was listened to.

Séamus Ennis is probably the most well known of a group of collectors that included his predecessor Séamus Delargy and successor Ciarán MacMathúna who worked for the Folklore Commission and *Raidió Éireann* (Uí Ógáin, 1999; Browne, 2007). His importance to our understanding of the geography of Irish traditional music emanates from his work traversing the country and his intimate interaction with musicians, singers,

dancers and storytellers. Ennis empowered people and places by giving them a voice on a national stage. He also decided what ought to be representative in what he recorded and broadcast, influenced by his personal relationship and preference for Connemara and its culture. Ennis' legacy is also informed by the description that accompanied his job in RTÉ. As Mac Réamoinn remembers it, the official work specification of the Outside Broadcast Officers was, "to seek throughout the country, including the Gaeltacht, material suitable for recording and suitable broadcasting" (*The Rolling Wave*, 8th August 2007). The specific reference to the Gaeltachts and Ennis' concentration on the west of Ireland are linked to the nationalist association between the west of Ireland and notions of authenticity. Reflecting on where Ennis recorded, Uí Ógáin notes that Ennis spent sixty two weeks in Co. Galway, twenty six weeks in Co. Donegal, four weeks each in counties Clare and Mayo, a week each in counties Limerick and Cavan, as well as a number of weeks in counties Cork and Kerry (Uí Ógáin, 2006; Fig. 7). In her edition of some of the diaries of Séamus Ennis, Uí Ógáin provides a series of maps that illustrate the townlands in which Ennis collected, limiting still further the areas highlighted in Figure 7.

It has been noted that the development of recording and broadcasting both undermined and preserved regional styles (Vallely, 1999b; Cranitch, 2000). The radio presented a particular regional bias, influenced by those in control. In his history of Irish traditional music, Ó hAllmhuráin notes the role played by Séamus Ennis in collecting and broadcasting Irish traditional music, highlighting the emergence of regional characters: "Among Ennis's chief sources were the Dohertys and O'Beirnes from Donegal, the Russells and Willie Clancy from Clare and the celebrated Pádraig O'Keeffe from Sliabh Luachra" (1998: 139, 140). Reflecting on the process of notation, it is interesting to note the similarity between Ennis's chief sources and those of Breandán Breathnach who was working contemporaneously to Ennis on an entirely different process, collecting, transcribing and publishing notated forms of Irish traditional music. Ennis also influenced other collectors who came to Ireland including Alan Lomax (Lomax, 1959, 1960). Thus Ennis is a prominent agent in the construction of regional identities by highlighting individual musicians. The musicians recorded by Ennis were to become reference points for the musical distinctiveness of their regions and reinforced the perception of these 'regions' as primary locations of 'authentic' Irish traditional music.

Figure 7 Counties where Séamus Ennis collected material between 1942 and 1946.



Source: Adapted from Uí Ógáin, 2006.

Séamus Ennis was much more than a broadcaster and his influence on the narrative, sound and geography of Irish traditional music extends beyond the part of his life dedicated to the radio. MacRéamoinn highlights Ennis' ability to communicate in the various dialects of the Irish language as just one of the ways in which he became accepted into the communities that he visited.

> He could literally speak to people in their own language. This was one of his great gifts. He could speak as I say to the man from Meenish in the language of Connemara. He could speak to the man from the Blaskets in the language of Corca Dhuibhne [...] he could speak to them in terms that were of their own experience and culture. He wasn't the big fellow coming from outside. He could share with them their culture and then ask them to give him some (*The Rolling Wave*, 8th August, 2007).

As an insider, he became an important authority for others who sought out Ireland's musical heritage. Ennis' legacy is, as yet, largely unexplored. His collecting in a number of counties, principally in the west of Ireland helped shape the geography of Irish traditional music as perceived by his audience.

Ennis was succeeded at *Raidió Éireann* by Ciarán MacMathúna, whose career on Irish radio led to the award of the 2007 TG4 *Gradam Saoil* or lifetime achievement award for service to Irish traditional music. Of Ciarán MacMathúna, Curtis wrote:

> The man most responsible for ensuring that the public was exposed to the finest traditional musicians and singers from town and country was music-collector and broadcaster Ciarán MacMathúna, whose ground-breaking weekly radio programmes of traditional music, *A Job of Journeywork* and *Ceolta Tíre*, became essential listening for anyone with even the slightest interest in the real thing. Also essential listening in the Fifties was *As I Roved Out*, a weekly radio programme of traditional music and song presented on BBC by the great uilleann piper/singer/folklorist and collector, Séamus Ennis. Séamus's superb *As I Roved Out* never gained the listenership it deserved, mainly due to the fact that BBC transmission signals did not penetrate to all areas and, to most people in the Republic, the BBC was regarded as a foreign radio station (1994: 16).

MacMathúna joined Raidió Éireann in 1955 and held special responsibilities for the collection of music and song for broadcast (Vallely, 1999f). Vallely describes MacMathúna as "the voice of traditional music revival, the link between all parts of the country and with emigrants, a source of comparison and inspiration" (1999f: 221). Vallely also notes that, through the work of MacMathúna, placenames such as "'Miltown Malbay', 'Killavel', 'Kilrush' and 'Loughrea' became familiar names, creating an

important part of the mythology that still sustains the music" (1999f: 221). Vallely also notes the role played by MacMathúna in the privileging of Co. Clare and its association with "'proper' music" (1999f: 221). The construction of Co. Clare in the narratives of Irish traditional music is further explored later in a consideration of a complex mix of processes. Vallely also notes the role of MacMathúna's broadcasts in developing and educating listening audiences for Irish traditional music, which was complimentary to the role of Seán Ó Riada.

Ennis joined the BBC in 1951 and his recordings were broadcast on the radio programme 'As I Roved Out' (Ó hAllmhuráin, 1998). Highlighting the possible geographical implications for Ennis' work and the increasing prominence of his successor Ciarán MacMathúna, Ó hAllmhuráin states:

> While certain parts of Ireland were too remote to pick up the BBC's 'As I Roved Out', Ciarán MacMathúna's 'Ceolta Tíre' and 'Job of Journeywork' were winning huge audiences all over Ireland by the mid-1950s […] With the assistance of a mobile recording unit, he managed to tape traditional musicians in their own localities. His recording sessions, which were conducted in country kitchens, public houses and small halls, reflected the natural milieu of the musician in a manner which was far more authentic than studio or concert hall recordings (1998; 140, 141).

There are two obvious outcomes of the work of Ennis, MacMathúna and others. It created and satisfied a new Dublin audience for Irish traditional music and firmly located Irish traditional music in rural Ireland (Vallely, 1999). The legacy of this process is highlighted by Konig (1980) who observes the desire of young Dublin musicians to go to Clare as a result, in part, of the popularising of Clare music on the radio. In some ways, it was a return to romantic ideologies of an earlier era of cultural nationalism that is now expressed through a cultural revival, on which *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* is an enormous influence.

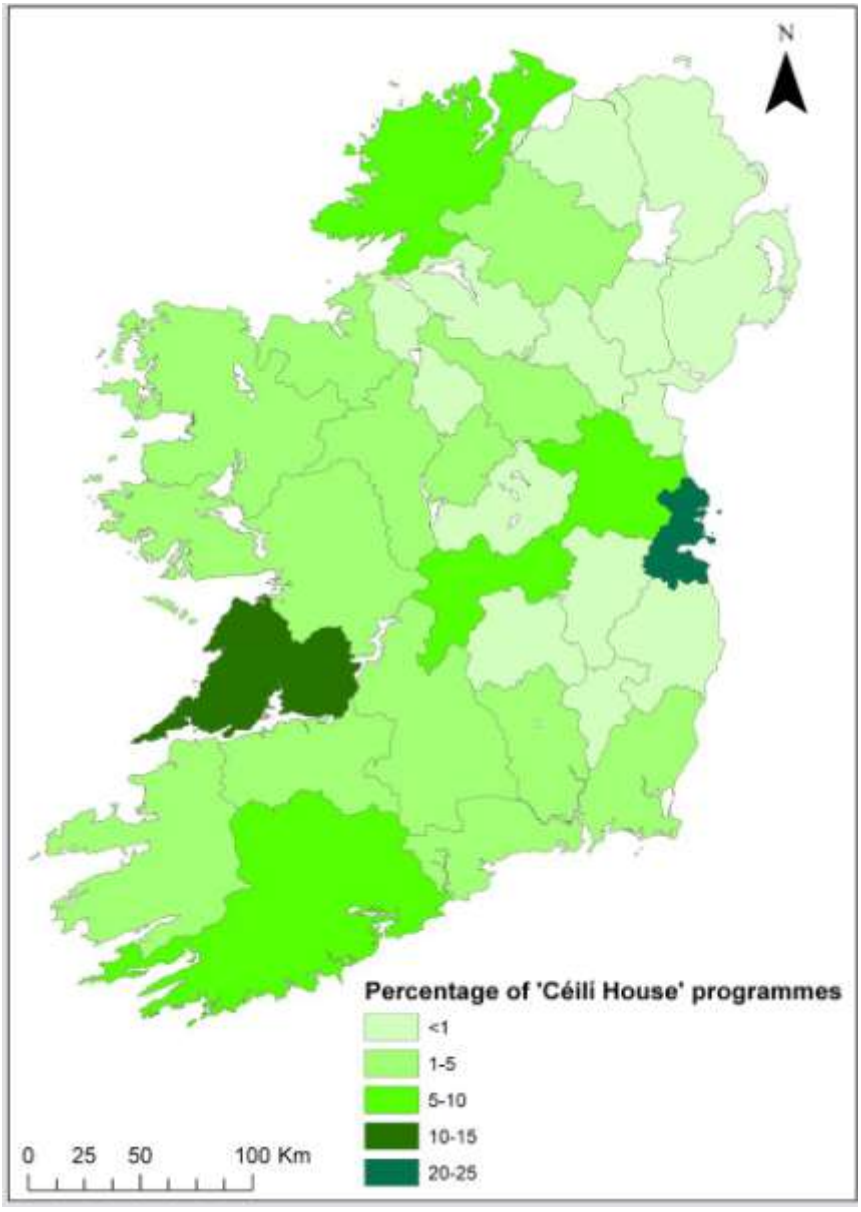
The significance of radio shows in shaping and representing the geography of Irish traditional music has not diminished. One of the most popular and long running Irish traditional music shows, broadcasting continuously for over forty years, has been *Céilí House*, now presented by Kieran Hanrahan and produced by Peter Browne. *Céilí House* has broadcast from every county in Ireland, from the major cities in Britain and from events such as Provincial Conventions of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in the USA and Canada. Reflecting on the history of *Céilí House*, Browne states:

> The exact date when *Céilí House* first took to the airwaves on Radio Éireann is not known for certain as there were different programmes of céilí band music broadcast for short periods under various titles…In those earlier years, the bands and musicians made the journey to record in the *Céilí House* studios in Dublin and Cork. In the mid-1980s a decision was taken to bring the programme around the country to record at festivals, fleadhanna and all sorts of musical gatherings (2004: 17).

The change in the use of spaces in the 1980s allows *Céilí House* to better reflect the diversity of spaces in the geography of Irish traditional music. Two particular spaces are identified by the programme – the public house and the festival while more recently third level campuses have hosted the programme. *Céilí House* has also recorded a number of tribute shows to individuals such as Breandán Ó Dúill, Ciarán MacMathúna and Johnny O'Leary. *Céilí House* is closely connected to organisations involved in the promotion of Irish traditional music including *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and *Na Píobairí Uilleann*. A number of patterns emerge in an examination of *Céilí House* during the period of this research, 2004-2008. Programmes often coincide with festivals and *fleadhanna cheoil* and include interviews with local musicians. These interviews diffuse information about local musical traditions and strengthen the link between music and place.

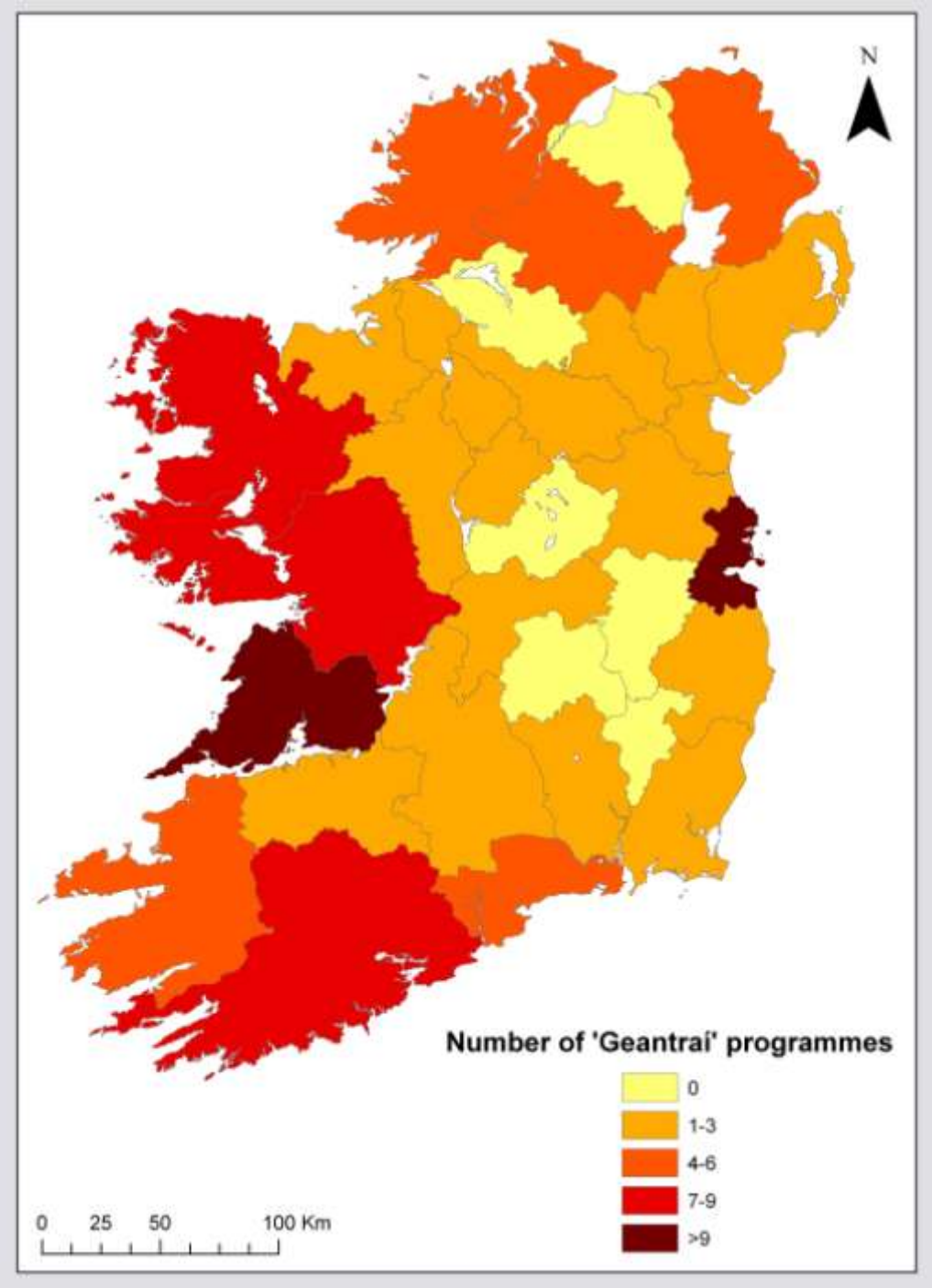
Céilí House presents a strong link with *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. Many *Céilí House* programmes have been recorded in the spaces used by *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* including *Tithe Cheoil* and *Cultúrlann na hÉireann*. A number of spaces have been used repeatedly over the last number of years including *Cultúrlann na hÉireann,* the headquarters of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*; the family home of Antóin MacGabhann in county Meath, a musician and an influential figure in *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*; and numerous branches of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. Programmes recorded at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* dominate the schedule and place an emphasis on céilí band competitions. Unlike many other programmes, the programmes recorded at the *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* do not emphasise local music traditions and musicians.

Figure 8 The distribution of spaces in which *Céilí House* has been recorded (July 2004-October 2008).



Programmes are often recorded and broadcast in conjunction with festivals from different parts of the country. Some programmes also celebrate the music and lives of particular individuals. Other programmes are recorded in particular spaces that are part of the geography of Irish traditional music. More recently, third level institutions, including University College Cork, have become spaces for the recording of *Céilí House*. Programmes are occasionally repeated. Source: Author from www.rte.ie/radio1/ceilihouse/

Figure 9 Distribution of venues featured in Geantraí (1997-2008)



***Geantraí* has been recorded in most counties of Ireland but patterns similar to those present in other processes are evident. Counties Clare and Dublin are prominent, as well as Cork, Galway and Mayo while some midland counties have not featured as much. Source: Author.**

Céilí House is an important source of repertoire and information for members of the Irish traditional music community, regardless of location and boundaries. *Céilí House* communicates the changing locations of activities in Irish traditional music and reflects the changing geography that that creates. *Céilí House* exists with the paradox of both creating and challenging the spatial fixity of regional traditions. Patterns that emerged through the course of this research create a geographical image through the presentation of particular folk narratives that become 'visible' through the airwaves. Figure 8 demonstrates the spread of locations from which *Céilí House* has broadcast between July 2004 and October 2008. There is an imbalance caused by *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* as a number of programmes are recorded in the host town each year. In the map (Fig. 8), this affects counties Donegal and Offaly in particular. Counties Dublin and Clare dominate the programming. A number of archive programmes or programmes containing a mix of material from different areas are not included.

Television has provided a new medium through which ideas and sounds of Irish traditional music are diffused. A significant element of the televised soundscape of Irish traditional music in the last decade has been the programme *Geantraí* (1997-). *Geantraí* began as a concept in response to a commission offered by RTÉ for the development of programming relating to Irish traditional music. Forefront productions, a company that also produce programmes on *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* for RTÉ, proposed a series based on capturing the pub session. The producers sought to identify public houses that were genuinely involved in the promotion of Irish traditional music in an area and not solely in existence to cater for a tourist market. *Geantraí* is an effort to present, as best as possible, real sessions from different parts of the country and, according to Joe McCarthy, was "very much a play on the regional aspect of traditional music" (interview with author, 27th June 2007). Two patterns emerge from a study of where *Geantraí* has been recorded. Venues in Dublin and Clare have hosted a significant number of programmes (see Fig. 9). In response to questions on Ennis and County Clare, McCarthy states:

> There are so many venues, there are so many musicians there, and it's natural when you are making television programmes that you end up in Clare more than anywhere else, but we try not to be, I mean we are conscious of that and we give Clare a rest for a year or two. We try and be as conscious as we can of going to a new place. And the same applies to musicians. We try to use new musicians (Interview with author, 27th June 2007).

Geantraí provides an insight into the musicians and spaces of different parts of the country and features a mix of well-known professional and local musicians. However, critics of the programme have noted that programmes do not confine the musicians featured to those that normally perform in the public house or town that the programme is being recorded in. *Geantraí* is a complex representation of regional soundscapes motivated by a desire to create good television and attract an audience. The geographical patterns that it presents or creates are challenged by the political economy in which Irish traditional music exists.

Radio, recording and broadcasting play an important role in developing a regional understanding of Irish traditional music through the representation and diffusion of regional traditions. The processes and motivations of selection have presented particular geographies during different eras, highlighting the music of Sligo in the 1920s and 1930s, Clare in the 1950s and 1960s (see also Feldman, 2002). The relationship between agents of recording and other interest groups involved in Irish traditional music further complicates the representation of regional diversity within the tradition. Recording and broadcasting represent and reinforce the importance of regional diversity in a seemingly borderless world.

5.5 Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann

In this section I examine the influence of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* on the geography of Irish traditional music and in particular the impact of the organisation on regions and regional identities within the tradition. *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* embodies and affects many elements of the study of regions outlined in preceding chapters. As a powerful interest group in Irish traditional music, the organisation constructs and communicates ideologies, celebrates and empowers individuals, and creates representations. A study of the organisation also demonstrates a series of patterns based on the location of different aspects of the organisation and associated events. As in the discourse of recording and broadcasting, *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* provides a paradox in the study of regions, being critiqued for creating a context in which regions are subsumed within a national or canonical tradition yet highlighting regional traditions and stories.

The following section examines the history and ideology of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, hereinafter referred to as CCÉ, and presents a context for studying the organisation focusing on processes of musical change, diffusion and institutionalisation in Irish traditional music. Three aspects of CCÉ are explored. In a spatical study of CCÉ the location and absence of branches in Ireland is examined (see fig. 10). The regional rhetoric of the organisation as presented by the organisation through its quarterly journal *Treoir*, first published in 1968 is also explored. The diffusion of infrastructural projects in recent years in Ireland provides another layer of geographical interest. I will first provide an overview of CCÉ and assess its prominence in Irish traditional music. In particular, I refer to the development of national identity and nationalist ideologies and the influence of migration on the geography of Irish traditional music. Much of the reference material for this chapter is drawn from the 2007 Annual Report entitled *The Living Tradition: Promoting the Cultural Traditions of Ireland at Home and Abroad* (CCÉ, 2007). Another significant development has been the re-launch of the official website, www.comhaltas.ie, which carries information about the history and development of the organisation, maps concerning the location of branches, *Fleadhanna* and other services; and musical resources for the transmission of the tradition. Much of the material about the organisation and definitions of *Comhaltas* activities featured in the Annual Report and the website are drawn verbatim from previous publications such as *Treoir*, *Athnuacan* and *Meitheal*.

CCÉ is a somewhat controversial topic in the discourse of Irish traditional music. It is the "largest body involved in the promotion of Irish traditional music" (Vallely, 1999d: 77). The sheer size of the organisation decrees that it requires consideration. In 2007, CCÉ reports a membership of approximately 36,000 members in 400 branches spread across fifteen countries on four continents. Thus, the organisation may be viewed as a global organisation bound up in the processes of globalisation. CCÉ cannot be studied independently of other narratives of Irish traditional music. CCÉ constructs and intertwines with regional narratives and informs a reimagination of the geography of Irish traditional music. An analysis of CCÉ would present a significant geography in its own right.

According to the most recent annual report, "*Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* was founded in 1951 with the objective of keeping our unique cultural traditions in all forms

alive and returning them to a prominent position in Irish life" (CCÉ, 2007: 1). It is widely noted that CCÉ was formed at a time when the traditions were under threat from neglect and changes in both society and the economy. Former president of CCÉ, Diarmuid Ó Catháin once stated:

> The fifties will be remembered as the gloomiest period in Irish music, not alone in Kerry but all over Ireland. Instruments were scarce after the Second World War and the traditional way of life also seemed to change. It is doubtful if the music would have survived were it not for the formation of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (1980: 21).

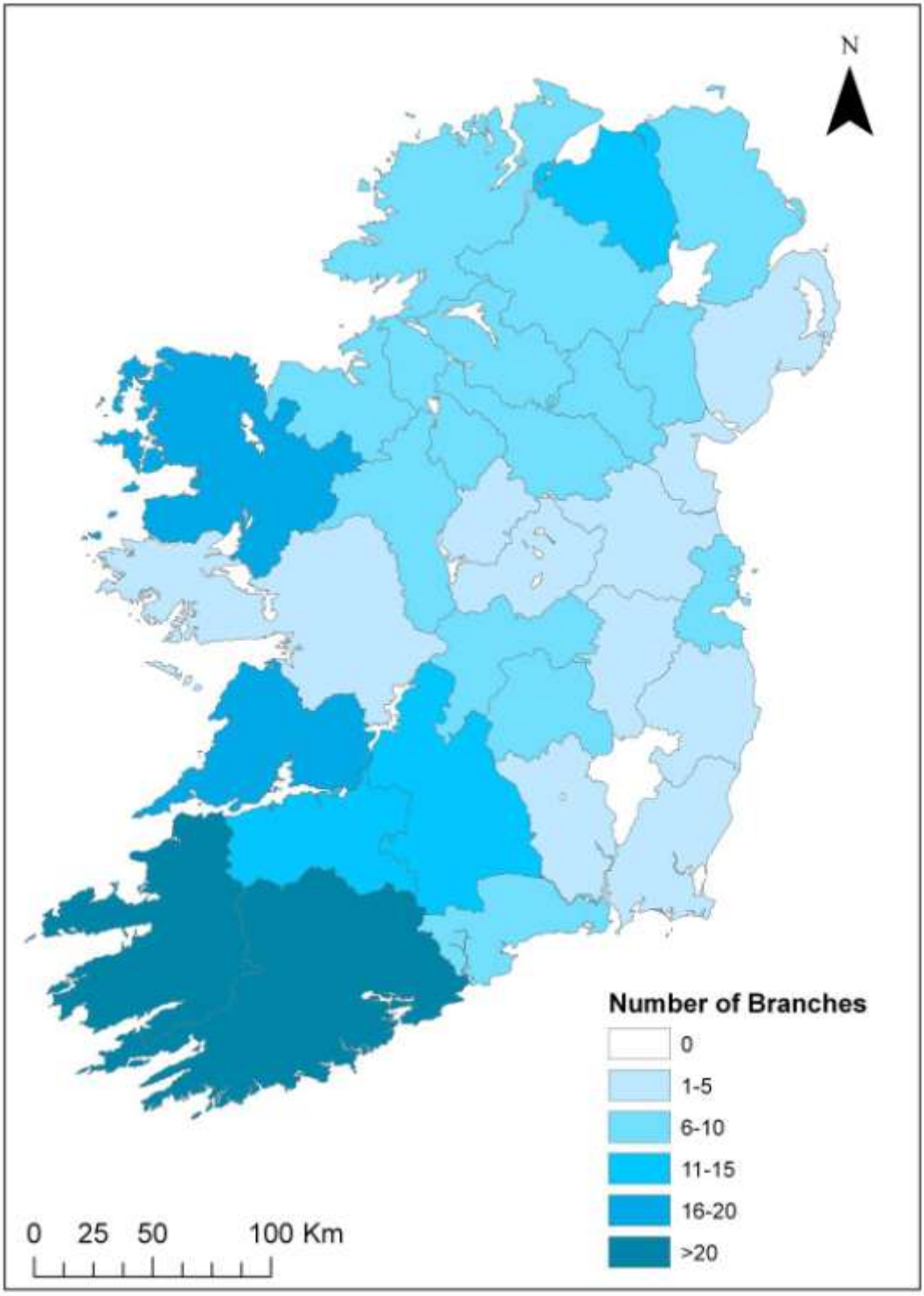
The literature of CCÉ exudes a pride in the current popularity of Irish traditional music at home and abroad, referring to the creativity and proficiency of many individual musicians who have grown up in the CCÉ system.

Table 22 Aims and objectives of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*.

To promote Irish Traditional Music in all its forms;
To restore the playing of the Harp and Uilleann Pipes in the National life of Ireland;
To promote Irish Traditional Dancing;
To foster and promote the Irish language at all times;
To create a closer bond among all lovers of Irish music;
To co-operate with all bodies working for the restoration of Irish Culture;
To establish Branches throughout the country and abroad to achieve the foregoing aims and objects.

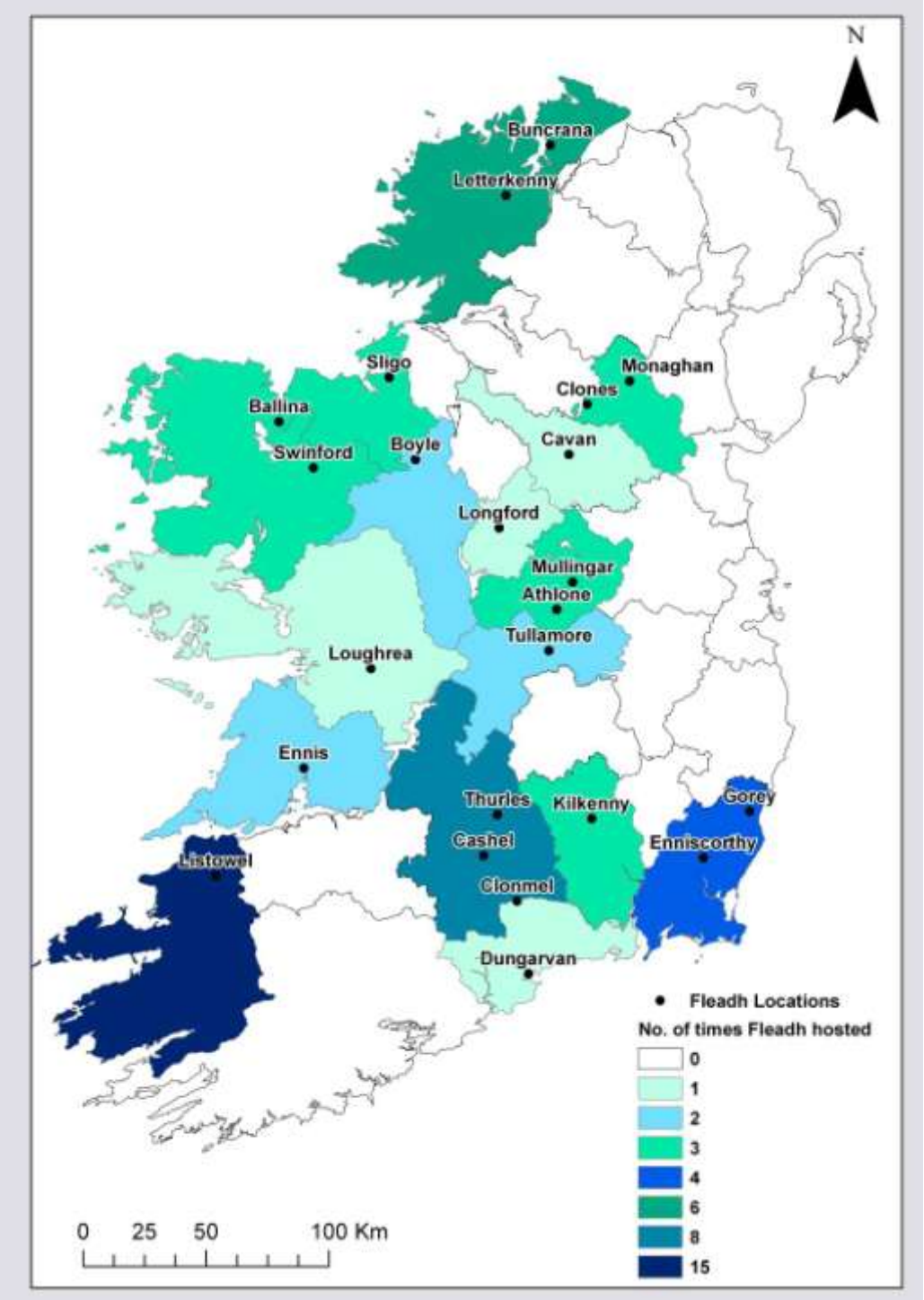
Source: Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (2009).

Figure 10 Distribution of branches of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in 2008



Source: Adapted from www.comhaltas.ie

Figure 11 Map of towns that have hosted *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* (1951-2008)



Listowel has hosted *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* more times than any other town and Fleadh *Cheoil na hÉireann* has never been held in the six counties of Northern Ireland. Clare has not held *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* since the early 1977 but has hosted *An Fleadh Nua* annually since 1974 reinforcing the link between the county and *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. Source: Author.

CCÉ operates within a remit, which is outlined in *An Bunreacht*, the constitution of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. Ten main aims and objectives are outlined in *An Bunreacht* (Table 22). A sense of cultural nationalism and the reinforcement of Irish identity may be read from the aims and objectives of the organisation. An awareness of the role of the harp and uilleann pipes as symbols of Irish identity are evident in the aims and objectives. The link between Irish traditional music and the Irish language is evident and CCÉ has maintained strong links with organisations promoting the Irish language. There is also an awareness of the global nature of Irish traditional music and a desire to develop a global network of branches within the organisation. It is widely accepted that CCÉ have, to a great degree, succeeded in these aims, though it must be observed that they have been aided, and their work complemented by a number of other organisations including *An Coimisiún le Rincí Gaelacha, Na Píobairí Uilleann, Siamsa Tíre* and *Gael Linn*.

A number of aspects of CCÉ present opportunities for a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. The journal *Treoir* was briefly considered in Chapter Two (see plate 1, 2, pp. 124, 125). *Treoir* communicates particular information about Irish traditional music to members of CCÉ around the world and reinforces attitudes and ideologies promoted by the organisation. Local branches are fundamental to the strength of the organisation. The location of these branches and the differences in their identity and activities provide a geographical insight into the role and popularity of CCÉ across the country. Branches become integral to the production and dissemination of local and regional narratives. Branches of the organisation are unevenly distributed throughout the island of Ireland (fig. 10) and each branch is, in many ways unique. The level of activity, the catchment area for membership, the promotion of local traditions and the influence of outside musicians and teachers presents a complex, multi-layered element of the geography of Irish traditional music. Other aspects of CCÉ that influence a regional understanding of Irish traditional music include *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann*, the summer performances entitled *Seisiún*, and the various summer schools in which they play a role, most notably *Scoil Éigse*. Each provides an insight into the geography of Irish traditional music and the role of CCÉ in the construction and reinforcement of that geography.

Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann is the single biggest event organised by CCÉ and is the conclusion of a network of events consisting of forty-five separate *Fleadhanna Cheoil*

organised in Ireland, Britain, United States of America, Canada and Australia. A festival of music, it is a competitive forum for young musicians involving "up to 7,000 qualifiers who have emerged from over 25,000 competitors at County and Provincial level" (CCÉ, 2007: 6). The location of *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* changes regularly (see figure 11). *Fleadhanna Cheoil* have changed considerably over the past half century. The *Fleadh Cheoil* of 1951, which marked the beginning of the organisation, was altogether different from the huge scale events of today. The importance of the *Fleadh* at that point of time was, in the minds of some, critical to the survival of Irish traditional music. The introduction of a competitive element to CCÉ was not without debate. Speaking on the history of the movement, Ó Murchú wrote:

> The need for such a festival and such an organisation had for long been sorely felt. Although there were thousands of musicians in the country their morale was generally low, for their music was entirely unappreciated in social, intellectual and 'trendy' circles. The ordinary people of the countryside loved the music - it being their own music - but the tendency in supposedly sophisticated circles was to deride and scoff at the traditional music of Ireland as being of no beauty or value. Traditional musicians who entered competitions for 'Irish music' were frequently advised to change their approach, discard their traditional intonation and techniques and 'learn to play properly (1990a: 29).

Thus, the *Fleadh Cheoil* movement is seen or presented as a crucial agent in the preservation and repopularisation of Irish traditional music throughout the country. However, it must be understood in the context of a wider set of power geometries in play at that time. The competitions to which Ó Murchú refers are most probably the *Feis Cheoil*, documented by Marie McCarthy in her book *Passing it on: The transmission of music in culture* (1999, see also Vallely, 1999j, 1999k). However, attitudes to approach and style in fleadhanna competitions remain part of the debate as to the role of competitions in Irish traditional music.

The competitive element of *Fleadhanna Cheoil* places certain pressures of requirement and conformity upon competitors. Competitors are required to present a particular set of tunes that conform to the expectation of the adjudicators. Commenting on the impact of competition on Irish traditional music, Henry states: "Critics say that CCÉ is trying to standardize the music by limiting the competition to genres supposedly played all over Ireland - the jig, reel, hornpipe and slow air, and that certain genres are not admitted in competitions […] This results in a feeling of regional discrimination" (1989:

91). Also commenting on the competitive aspect of CCÉ, fiddle player and radio producer Paddy Glackin has commented:

> Competitions, in some ways, can bring on a certain standard; but what standard? How often have we heard very good regional players going up in competition and not getting a look-in, getting adjudicated by people who know nothing about it; and as a result, I believe that competitions in many ways have contributed to the demise of regional styles of playing in some cases. I mean, how can you adjudicate between people like Denis Murphy and John Doherty, two wonderful players from different parts of the country with their own way of expressing music? How any one individual man can get up and say that this particular man is better than the other! (1991:36).

Prominent button accordion players Jackie Daly and Paudie O'Connor have both spoken of a sense of regional discrimination when reflecting on their own experiences (Long, 2005; O'Connor in Kelly, 2005a). In recent years the list of appropriate tune types for competitions has been revised by CCÉ but older attitudes conferring extra value or weight to the reel, jig and hornpipe are reflected in the choice of tune by competitors. My own experience recalls whistler Tadhg Maher being advised by an adjudicator at *Fleadh Cheoil na Mumhan* in 1999 that a reel rather than a polka would be more appropriate for competition. The suggestion of value systems in repertoire choice may affect the attitudes of young people who may bring such attitudes into the local setting, thus diluting regional traditions. In spite of this, the *fleadh cheoil* continues to provide a space in which musical diversity is performed, as examined in a previous section concerning transmission. A paradox exists in the rhetoric of the organisation that, in spite of pressures to conform to a particular '*Comhaltas* style' in competition, encourages branches to explore and promote local traditions.

It is difficult to assess the impact of *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* on local musical activity and attitudes towards Irish traditional music without more focused research. The host town for *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* is the meeting point for a globally diffused community of musicians. While the location of the fleadh depends on some local interest in the town, the prominence of the town and the surrounding area in the geographical narratives of the tradition may be overstated. The location of *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* in a particular location is as much in recognition of the suitability of the town's infrastructure and capabilities in hosting a large event as it is a celebration of local musical culture. *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* has traditionally been located away from

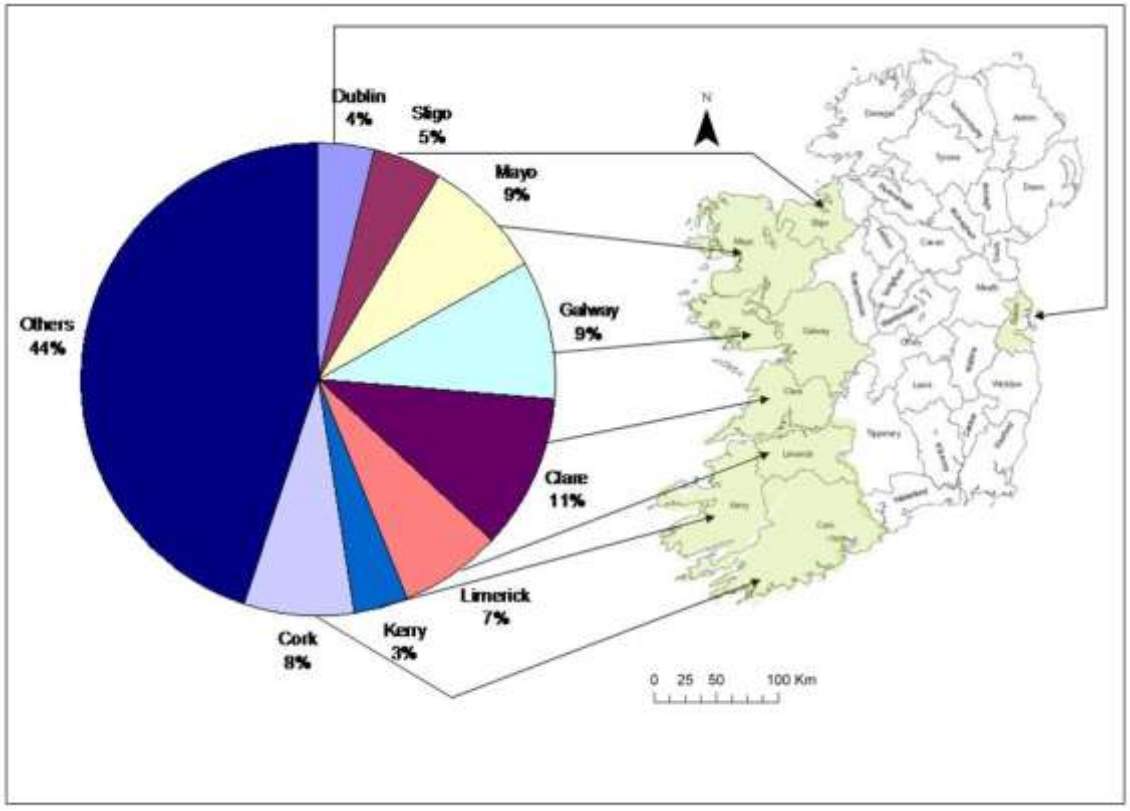
Dublin and though many *fleadhanna* have been held in the midlands, counties at the edge, namely Wexford, Donegal and Kerry have hosted the event more times than any other county. *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* has become particularly associated with Listowel, which has hosted the event on more occasions than any other and was the proposed location for the cancelled 1971 event. The 1971 *Fleadh Cheoil* was postponed due to the political situation in the north of Ireland. Notably, *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* has not been held in the six counties of Northern Ireland. In contrast to organic festivals of Irish traditional music that remain located in a place, such as The Patrick O'Keeffe Festival in Castleisland, which may be more representative of local and regional musical traditions, *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* reflects the existence of Irish traditional music in a space of flows.

An examination of the distribution of medals awarded at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* at different periods in time highlights changing patterns in the location and geography of Irish traditional music. In the late 1970s, competitors from the United Kingdom (as it is termed in *Treoir*) were winning an average of 15.4% of all medals at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann*. Competitors from the United States of America were winning an average of 7.7%, a figure bettered in Ireland by Dublin alone. The success achieved by overseas competitors gradually diminishes and in 2007, competitors from the United Kingdom accounted for approximately 7% of the medals total while those from the United States of America accounted for approximately 3% of medals awarded. Changing migration patterns and the development of standards within Ireland, due in part to developments in education practices and new contexts for Irish traditional music, are part of the changing geography of Irish traditional music.

In contrast to the decline in success achieved by overseas competitors, there is significant growth in the achievements by western counties including Kerry and Galway but most notably Limerick and Mayo. County Sligo is an exception with its level of success dropping through the 1980s and 1990s, though two bands representing County Sligo achieved first and second place in the senior Céilí Band competition in 2008. Monaghan has also developed a greater level of success. The decline in numbers leaving these counties in search of employment in Dublin or overseas has led to a greater sense of confidence in these places. The location of *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* may be presented as one reason for greater success within a county, where the *Fleadh* provides a context for

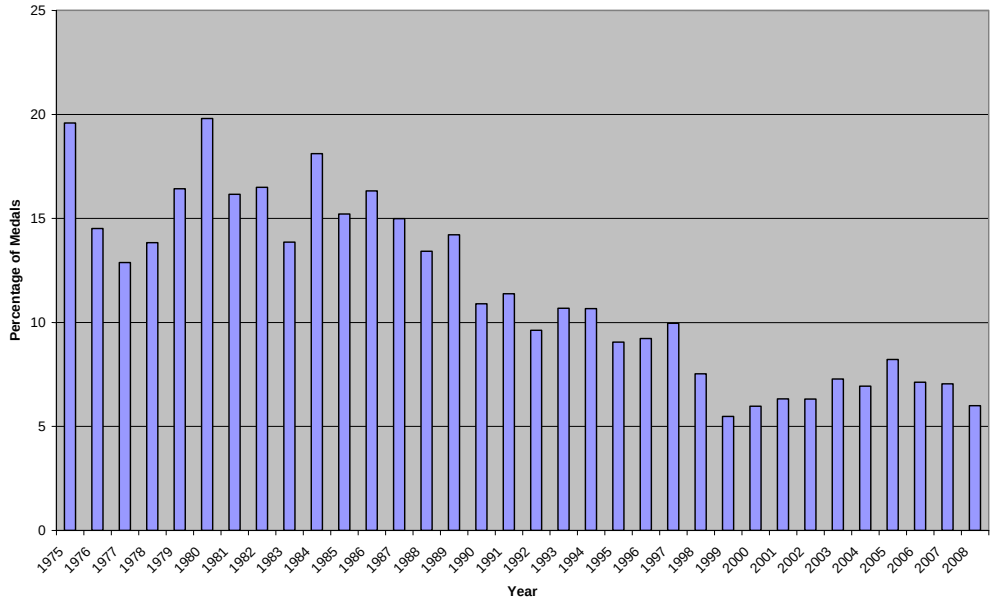
success for aspiring musicians. While Limerick has not held *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann*, its proximity to Listowel, Cashel and Clonmel allows greater possibility for musicians from Limerick to interact within a *fleadh* space.

Figure 12 Distribution of medal winners at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* 2008



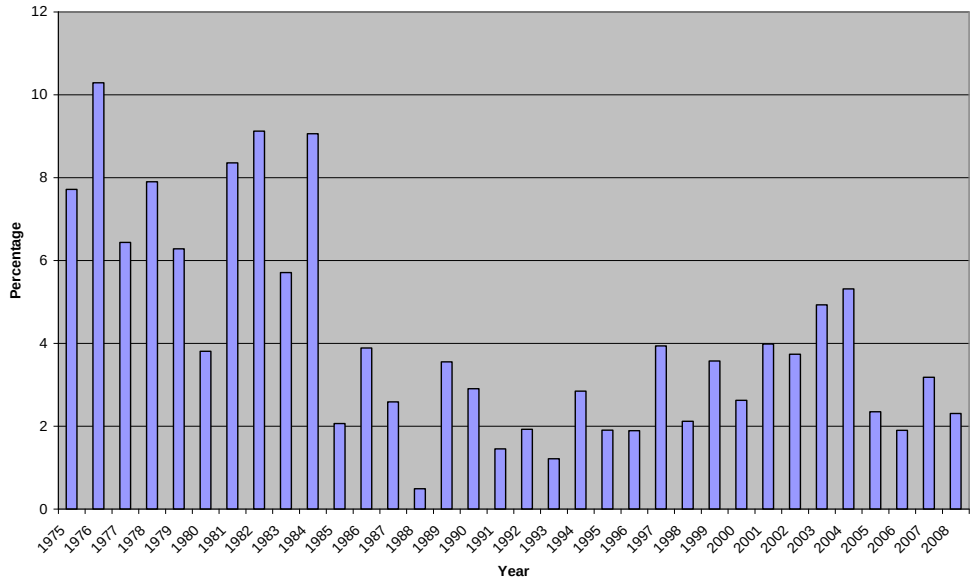
Source: Author.

Figure 13 Percentage of medals won by competitors from England, Scotland and Wales at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* 1975-2008



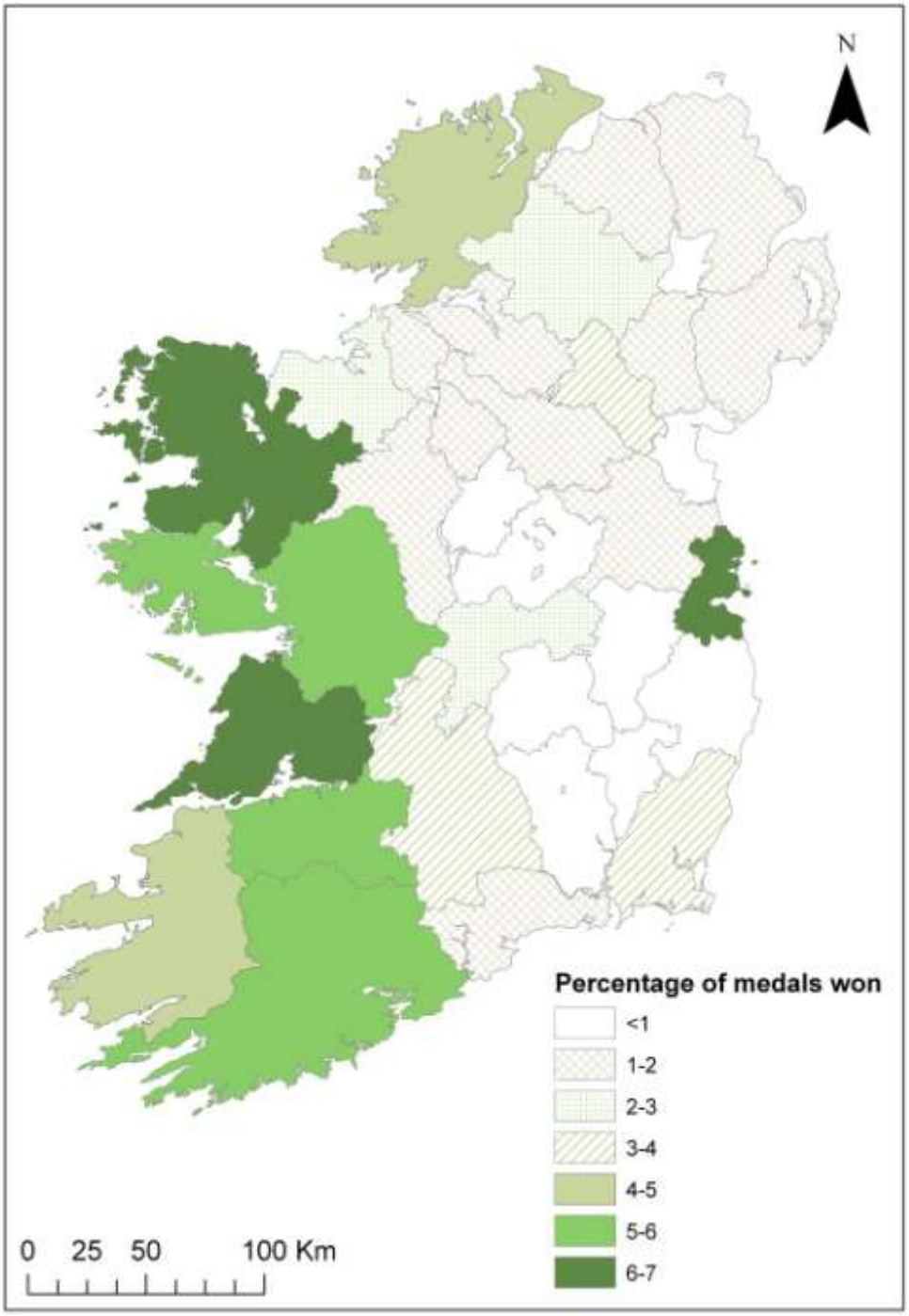
Source: Author.

Figure 14 Percentage of medals won by competitors from the USA at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* 1975-2008



Source: Author.

Figure 15 Distribution of medals won at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* 1975-2008



The pattern of distribution is identified through analysis of average number of medals won by each county in all competitions at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* between 1975 and 2008. It highlights the prominence of Dublin and counties on the western seaboard.

Dublin, with a large population and strong Irish traditional music community that includes many musicians from around the country, is the county that experiences most fluctuation in terms of success achieved. In the early *fleadhanna* in the 1950s, Dublin musicians were quite successful, due in large part to the large numbers of competitors from Dublin. The decline in the success of Dublin based musicians in the late 1980s and early 1990s is concurrent with a period of economic difficulty and social change in Dublin. Despite the large numbers of musicians in Dublin, the county does not dominate in terms of percentage of medals won, due in part to the structures that only allow a limited number of competitors from any one county to progress.

The results from *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* can indicate trends in the musical tastes of competitors, adjudicators and audiences. Particular tunes, styles and approaches to playing go through cycles of popularity. These approaches originate in different parts of the world where local teachers and performers influence young musicians. Competitors often approach a *fleadh* in a particular mindset influenced by who is judging, who else is competing and an awareness of results from previous years. The results at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* are sometimes used to endorse a particular style or approach to Irish traditional music that can become part of the construction, promotion and diffusion of a regional narrative.

Fleadhanna Cheoil are an important part in the construction of a political and geographic narrative in Irish traditional music, not only relating to CCÉ but to the wider Irish traditional community of both musicians and audience. As Smith states:

> […] festive forms are spectacular, yet routinized, events whose political content expresses and shapes the character of the cosiety in which they are embedded. They are sites where the political is articulated through the cultural to inform the sameness and differences that make up local life (1999: 135).

Through the formal and informal discussions, location of *Fleadhanna* and musical choices made in presentations, the sites of *Fleadhanna Cheoil* become temporary cultural cores where the narrative of the tradition is revised and then diffused once more. Duffy (2000) highlights the fact that festivals are problematic in the study of local communities as festivals also include non-participation by local people. The host towns for *Fleadhanna Cheoil* include large populations who do not become involved in the Irish traditional music aspects of the event but are involved through the economic benefits that the event

creates. Equally, not every member of the Irish traditional music community is present at a *Fleadh Cheoil*, nor even every member of CCÉ. Each host town can present its own identity during a *Fleadh Cheoil* and that identity is further shaped by the presence of the *Fleadh Cheoil* in that place.

Fleadhanna Cheoil are also important for the presentation of an identity of the Irish traditional music community and, in particular, CCÉ. Duffy points out:

> The community music festival, then, can be seen as means of promoting a community's identity, or at least how that community would like others to see it. There is a sense of the local at various levels: through performances, the audience and how the festival is organised. Yet, although the community music festival can be seen as an articulation of local connections between identity and place, this is problematic (2000: 51).

While Duffy highlights the non-involvement of local people as one issue that problematises the role of festivals as communicators of community identity, the location of *Fleadhanna Cheoil* outside of centres or cores of Irish traditional music culture is also problematic. By necessity, *Fleadhanna Cheoil* must be held in urban centres of suitable size with services to cater for the large crowds that attend. Thus, the location of large festivals of Irish traditional music is shaped less by the past and the sense of history and heritage and more by the present economic and infrastructural conditions of a place.

In contrast to the localised nature of a regular, often weekly session, usually attended by musicians with short commuting distances, festivals and the sessions that are held during a festival create a different sense of connection within Irish traditional music that is non-regional. Festivals create a different geography of Irish traditional music that may enhance our understanding of places within the tradition. Festivals attract musicians from greater distances, often attracting an international audience, and provide new settings for the transmission of culture. Yet the session space, usually inside in a public house, remains central to the spaces created by the festival. Commenting on the *Fleadh Cheoil* Fairbairn states:

> The Fleadh instigated a new national network of musicians and with it the opportunity for musicians to play with a much wider and more diverse selection of people than they would normally encounter. Sessions dissolved boundaries, and large numbers of musicians, with or without previous experience of one another's playing, representing diverse musical backgrounds, styles and experiences, came together to play tunes (1993: 122).

Fleadhanna Cheoil both break down geographical boundaries and highlight musical diversity. Many festivals also encompass formal music classes in many instruments, some with a particular stylistic agenda. For example, *Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy* places an emphasis on the musical traditions of West Clare, though other styles are evident amongst the tutors.

The complexity of the geography of Irish traditional music is increased by the new global community by whom the music is performed and consumed. The new locations for Irish traditional music festivals are exemplified in the extreme at Milwaukee Irish Music Festival. Though not a CCÉ organised event, The Milwaukee Irish Music Festival creates a space for people from different places to meet and share ideas and music in a similar fashion to a *fleadh*. In a paper exploring the globalisation of Irish culture and the significance of newer festivals of Irish traditional music, Matthews states:

> One of the well-recognised features of globalisation, of course, is the teaming of cultures from specific locales […] one is likely to meet more internationally renowned Irish musicians at the Milwaukee Irish Fest than at Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann. This can often mean that global Irish culture is less likely to emerge from, reflect on, or relate to the shared experiences, problems, and dilemmas of the Irish 'homeland' (1995: 11).

Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann developed out of a need for a celebration of Irish traditional music but, as the popularity of Irish traditional music has increased so too has the number of spaces and events related to Irish traditional music. *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* is located within Ireland and is shaped by the social, political and economic forces in Ireland. Festivals of Irish traditional music outside of Ireland are subject to other social, political and economic forces and motivations.

Another aspect of festivals that is important in understanding their impact on the transmission and dilution of boundaries of Irish traditional music is the development of workshops, masterclasses and summer schools. In the week prior to *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann*, *Scoil Éigse* is run. *Scoil Éigse* is "an annual weeklong school of master classes and recitals, is attended by almost 800 students from all over the world" (CCÉ, 2007: 7). *Scoil Éigse* mirrors the earlier and somewhat different *Scoil Samhradh Willie Clancy*, with which *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* were involved in the first year only (Kearns and Taylor, 2003). *Scoil Éigse* both challenges and supports regional identities within the CCÉ network. While it brings several pupils together under the guidance of one teacher,

that teacher can often inform students of musical traditions from a part of Ireland from which they are not familiar. My own experience of attending the classes of Treasa Ní Mhiolláin from Inisheer at *Scoil Éigse* in Enniscorthy, Co. Wexford, allowed me gain an insight into the singing traditions of the Aran Islands and, to a lesser extent, Connemara. Many of the teachers have won All-Ireland titles or completed the *Teastas I dTeagasc Ceolta Tíre* or Diploma course for teachers run by CCÉ. In operation for twenty years, over 650 traditional musicians have qualified. The spatial diffusion of these teachers also presents an uneven distribution pattern in Ireland that creates further imbalance in the provision of CCÉ services. *Scoil Éigse* also fulfils a role bringing people of all ages and profiles together in one location. As highlighted by Labhrás Ó Murchú: "The unique relationship within the world of Irish traditional music, through which a stranger or beginner can walk up to a Joe Burke or a Charlie Lennon, or an of our outstanding musicians and ask to have a tune played or a technique demonstrated and explained is seen to best advantage at Scoil Éigse" (1987a: 31). *Scoil Éigse* challenges spatial boundaries in the Irish traditional music community.

A key element of the CCÉ structure is the branch network. According to the website, www.comhaltas.ie, "The branch is the fundamental and most important unit of our movement, making it possible to propagate and strengthen our native cultural characteristics within local communities. Our members come together to organise sessions, classes, concerts, festivals, exhibitions, fleadhanna cheoil, and other events both for their own enjoyment and that of the community at large" (25/5/2007). The significance of the branch in the movement is repeatedly stated through the annals of CCÉ. The 1989 Annual Report stated:

> The significant features of the movement is that it is rooted in the community and working consistently at local level. In this way it creates an awareness of our culture among the general public […] The importance of community based cultural activity is that it generates a pride in and a curiosity about local traditions - the keystone of our heritage (1989: 4).

The suggested emphasis on 'local traditions' is important to the development and understanding of the geography of Irish traditional music. The located natures of many of the branch activities within local settings create a geographical focus for the branch that is not mirrored by the national organisation.

A concern for the geographer is the spatial diffusion of CCÉ branches in Ireland (Fig. 10, p. 223). The regularly changing number of branches, often exasperated at times of economic difficulties, is difficult to trace. An article by Diarmuid Ó Catháin (1985) in *Aisling*, a journal on Kerry, outlines the development of branches of CCÉ in Kerry and highlights the difficulties in developing the organisation. It echoes the connection between music and society, economics and politics suggested by Smith (1994). Branches and branch membership lapsed during times of economic difficulty. In 2008 there were a large number of branches in Kerry (27), Cork (26), Clare (20) and Limerick (13) but very few in the south east and south east midland counties of Carlow (none listed.), Kilkenny, Wicklow, Wexford (2 each), and Kildare (3). A number of factors may influence the dispersal patterns of branches including the influence of musicians in the area, competition from other activities or organisations, and a lack of understanding relating to the activities of CCÉ. It is also necessary to consider the size and activities of branches. Some branches may draw on a larger area and preclude the need for other branches. There is enormous disparity in the level of activity of branches and their contribution to local and regional culture and identity.

As the organisation has grown, not alone within Ireland but as an international organisation with multiple aims and aspects, the importance of the branch continues to be an integral part of the rhetoric of the organisation. According to Breandán Feiritéir, a former committee member of CCÉ at various levels:

> The bigger the organisation the more it should be aware of the importance of the branch. The branch draws its members from all sections of the community and provides a cultural service for that community. Young and old play traditional music, exchanging tunes, learn from each other in the branch setting. The branch is an integral part of the community and creates no artificial 'generation gap' (1975: 24).

The importance of the branch is regularly highlighted as it is through the branch network that the majority of members are nurtured and the traditions transmitted. According to CCÉ, the branch network is:

> […] often based on the parish, which provides the focal point for community action. The branches are more than simply local music schools. Comhaltas provides the 'nursery' setting in which young students spend most of their formative years learning and perfecting their art forms, while developing an attachment and commitment to our rich cultural heritage that will stay with them throughout their lives (2007: 6).

It may be argued that in many branches, the reality may appear more like a music school with a conveyor belt of students involved solely in an isolated music class than the development of a community of learners as the rhetoric suggests. It is suggested: "Pupils learning instrumental music are introduced to other cultural traditions such as singing and dancing" (2007: 6) but this depends largely on the resources available to the branch. Breathnach (1986) criticised the group classes arranged by CCÉ, referring to the traditional method of passing the music 'ó ghlúin go glúin' or between individuals that may be lost in the context of a large group class. Much like the range of services provided, the type of classes organised are often governed by resources, largely financial but also by the availability of teachers, time and space. CCÉ also promotes the idea that the branch *Seisiún* "brings people together in an enjoyable setting and provides an invaluable opportunity for players to perfect their art" (2007: 6).

The '*Seisiún*' referred to in this statement is a desired session of music, sometimes informal, in which all members of a branch can participate as musicians, singers, dancers or audience. Each branch of CCÉ takes a different approach to developing a programme of activities. CCÉ highlights the diversity of activities carried out by "some" branches, listed on the website as:

> Partner with community groups and charities to develop local, regional and national fundraising events;
>
> Undertake annual tours to international music festivals;
>
> Produce "Seisiún" performances over the summer months;
>
> Publish their own books and CDs of traditional music;
>
> Rehearse ensembles for the annual "Fleadh" competitions;
>
> Develop youth exchange programmes within Ireland and abroad;
>
> Foster improved North-South relations through cross-border cultural initiatives;
>
> Organise local lectures, classes, concerts and radio shows.
>
> (www.comhaltas.ie, accessed 23/9/2008)

The diversity in these activities suggests the many differences between branches and highlights the different experiences of people of Irish traditional music across Ireland

depending on the services provided by the organisation. These experiences further foster regional difference, not only in the music but in the attitudes towards music and the geographical narrative of the tradition.

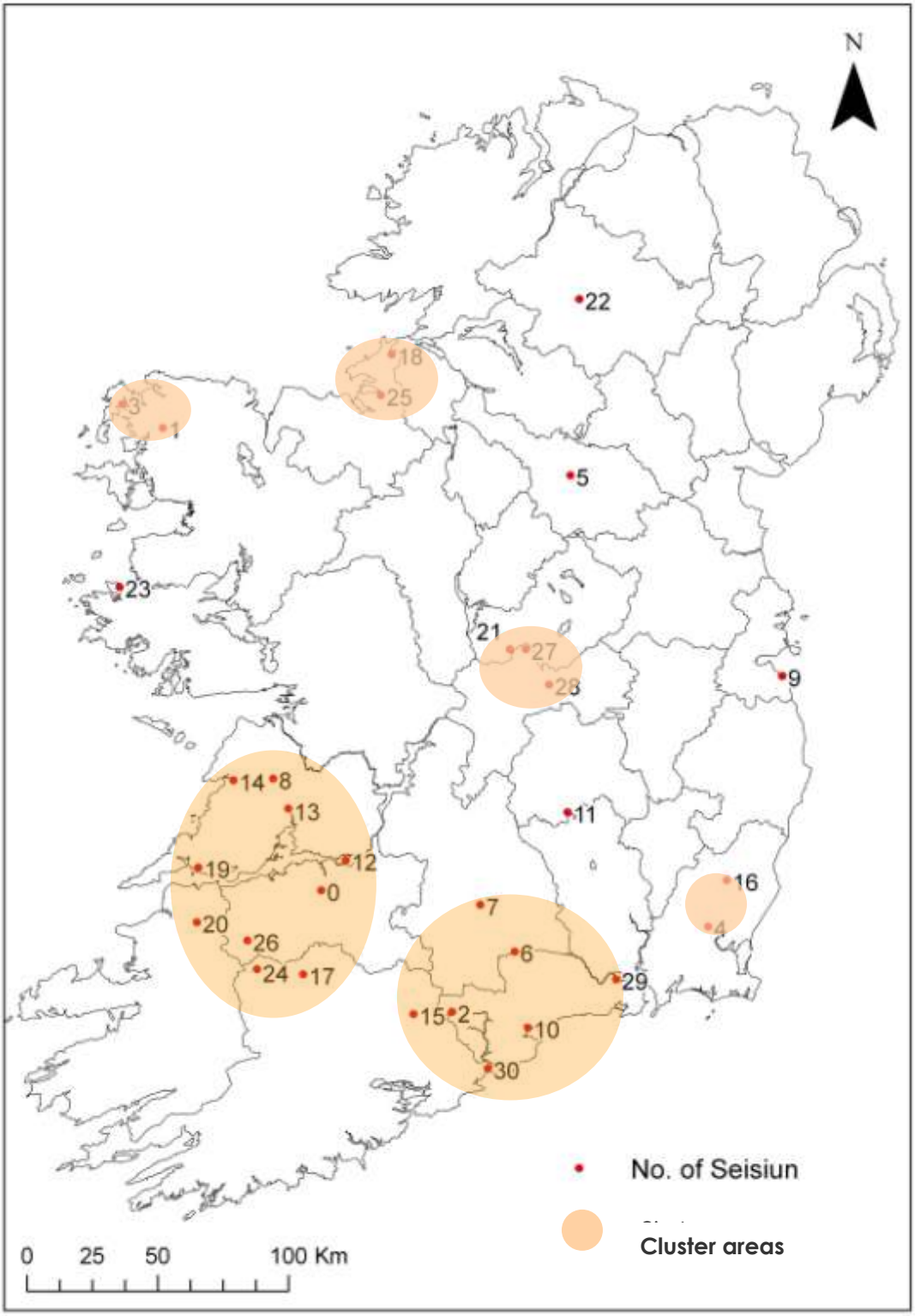
More significantly in terms of the processes already outlined, many of the activities desired by CCÉ to be undertaken by each branch echo some of the processes already analysed. I will outline other processes subsequently. Partnership with community groups and charities strengthens local ties and reinforces identities. Branches are asked to publish their own books and CDs and organise radio shows that may reflect a local choice, representing the paradox of recording and broadcasting. Performance is at the heart of CCÉ and the main contexts for performance are in *Seisiún* or at *Fleadhanna Cheoil*.

In contrast to the often informal music session, *Seisiún* is the name given to a type of performance presented by branches around the country during the months of July and August. Comhaltas describes *Seisiún* as "a colourful show of music, song, dance and storytelling, [which] is produced by Comhaltas branches in the summer months in most counties" (2007: 7). There is little guidance from the hierarchical order of CCÉ, the artistic and other decisions in relation to seisiún shows are made at a local level. In many ways, the local nature of the decision-making process enables local branches to meet the desire for *Seisiún* to represent local aspects of Irish traditional music culture. Upon the relaunch of *Seisiún* in 1988, Ó Murchú stated:

> Emphasis in the presentations will be on local traditions and customs. This will help to instil a pride in local communities in their own heritage. In many cases also the research involved unearths many gems of traditions which might otherwise have been lost for all time (1988: 12).

In this way, *Seisiún* reinforces regional narratives in areas where a strong regional narrative exists. All too often, however, the lack of a strong regional narrative or tradition, accompanied by a desire to perform the most popular aspects of the tradition, lead to a performance of national culture with little reference to local culture. In turn, the performance of a standardised national culture by musicians in a locality can lead to the replacement of older regional differences by new evolutions within the local Irish traditional music community. Thus, CCÉ plays a role in the evolution of Irish traditional music and regional narratives.

Figure 16 The location of Seisiún performances in 2008



Source: Author from publicity material.

Table 23 Key to locations of Seisiún performances during July and August 2008 indicated in Figure 24.

0	Adare	Co. Limerick		16	Ferns	Co. Wexford
1	Ballina	Co. Mayo		17	Freemount	Co. Cork
2	Ballyduff	Co. Waterford		18	Gurteen	Co. Sligo
3	Belmullet	Co. Mayo		19	Kilrush	Co. Clare
4	Bree	Co. Wexford		20	Listowel	Co. Kerry
5	Cavan	Co. Cavan		21	Moate	Co. Westmeath
6	Clonmel	Co. Tipperary		22	Omagh	Co. Tyrone
7	Cashel	Co. Tipperary		23	Renvyle	Co. Galway
8	Corofin	Co. Clare		24	Rockchapel	Co. Cork
9	Monkstown	Co. Dublin		25	Sligo	Co. Sligo
10	Dungarvan	Co. Waterford		26	Templegleantine	Co. Limerick
11	Durrow	Co. Laois		27	Tubber	Co. Offaly
12	East Clare (Ennis Road)	Co. Limerick		28	Tullamore	Co. Offaly
13	Ennis	Co. Clare		29	Waterford	Co. Waterford
14	Ennistymon	Co. Clare		30	Youghal	Co. Cork
15	Fermoy	Co. Cork				

Neither is *Seisiún* spread evenly around the country (Fig. 18). Counties Clare, Cork and Waterford have a number of *Seisiún*'s across a number of nights of the week. There is also a small cluster in the mid-lands. *Seisiún* performances are linked to the tourist industry and the marketing of place, explored further in a later section. These performances also suggest the location of stronger branches of the organisation. It is also important to note that the location of the performances by the East Clare branch are held in county Limerick.

Seisiún and other performances by CCÉ represent a dichotomy within the organisation. The constant tension between the low profile and sometimes voluntary work at the local level and the high profile and often paid performances by groups such as those at Brú Ború exemplifies the multi-faceted approach to promoting Irish traditional music employed by the organisation. CCÉ have stated:

> Stage performances, recordings and other such developments are the natural consequence of the movements work but they are only an incidental adjunct to the main activity at local level. If the status of our music were to depend on its commercial acceptance then its future would be questionable. Because of its business connotations, traditional music in the commercial sphere is subject to the pressures and uncertainties of the entertainment business (2007).

In some ways, the quote may be an attempt to justify what Di Maggio (1991) has outlined as a natural process of institutionalisation whereby the organisation becomes increasingly dependent on financial support from outside interests such as state funding. The value of performing Irish traditional music to a foreign audience is debateable in an age when Irish identity is often linked to those images presented by *Riverdance* (Ó Cinnéide, 2002). My own experiences of touring and lecturing have highlighted the role of *Riverdance* in presenting a popular, modern and simplified representation of Irish culture. CCÉ presents an alternative aspect of Irish culture, though in some instances it is increasingly influenced by the commercially successful shows such as *Riverdance*. Commenting on the role of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in the evolution of Irish traditional music, Kilroy states:

> Comhaltas itself must ultimately take a firmer stand on the nature of progress. No use basking in the sunlight of how internationally popular our music has become for the sake of numbers, or reflected glory from RIVERDANCE (1995: 20, author's emphasis).

However, others suggest that *Riverdance* arguably presents a more relevant image of modern Ireland that contrasts sharply with the concert presentations in stage Irish costumes promoted by CCÉ or the innovative folk theatre presentations of *Siamsa Tíre* that may not be immediately recognisable as Irish from a visual perspective but maintain a very 'traditional' sound.

The development of CCÉ has played a significant role in the survival, dissemination and popularisation of Irish traditional music. As part of a national and international organisation with a significant international profile and reputation, many branches of CCÉ provide a pathway to success for local musicians who learn and perform locally on the way to national recognition. Carney highlights a similar process in the bluegrass tradition of Western North Carolina.

> The innovative bands and creative individuals from the various Western North Carolina communities would have made little impact had it not been for the myriad social institutions of the region that provided performance opportunities, repertoire exchange, and professional exposure for the musicians to gain regional prominence and national recognition (1998: 145).

Many musicians who perform at branch events, including *Seisiún* as outlined below, gain the experience and exposure that allows them to further their participation in a wider Irish traditional music community. A glance at the successful competitors at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* over the past half a century highlights the connection between CCÉ and the commercial music industry with many award winners becoming successful recording artists.

The establishment of CCÉ is an integral part of the institutionalisation of Irish traditional music. Cooke (1997) highlights the process of institutionalisation in relation to the preservation of culture (see figure 20, p. 164). CCÉ was founded out of a desire and perceived need to preserve Irish traditional music at a time when the tradition held very little status in Irish traditional music. The development of CCÉ may be perceived as a threat to the existence of that which it was developed to preserve. In an article considering threats to Irish traditional music, Cooke states: "There is another force for change that paradoxically grows out of the feeling that one should defend and maintain a tradition by fostering it - especially by establishing formal teaching and perhaps also instituting competitions" (1997: 17). CCÉ changes Irish traditional music through the very processes

of institutionalisation outlined by Cooke. CCÉ has established formal teaching, an examination cycle (*Scrudú Cheoil Tíre*), published various tune books (*Foinn Seisiún*), and established competitions (*Fleadhanna Cheoil*). CCÉ are to the fore in the institutionalisation of Irish traditional music. The ways and contexts in which Irish traditional music is played and consumed have changed. The conceptualisation of regions has also changed becoming an institutionalised historical narrative of 'the way things were' and newly imagined administrative regions in an institutionalised culture.

Di Maggio (1991) presents another perspective on the processes of institutionalisation with a particular emphasis on the economic motivation for change. Irish traditional music is largely supported by audiences paying to see and hear performers, send children to classes and also upon state grants. While CCÉ developed as a community and voluntary organisation, the development of the organisation, including the employment of staff and management of a number of centres, requires the organisation to increase their income. Di Maggio states:

> Policies of institutionalisation and expansion encourage organisations to become larger, more bureaucratic, and more dependent on both institutional subsidy and earned income. Although many institutional patrons try to support innovative programming, dependence on earned income (especially in the performing arts, where audiences are organised by subscription) tends to overwhelm such efforts and drive presenting organisations toward safe or commercially rewarding repertoire. Moreover, the emphasis on expansion through earned income has been self-defeating; insofar as larger organisations require more institutional patronage (in absolute terms) even if a larger proportion of their income is earned through the sale of services (1991: 150).

Increasingly, as highlighted by a range of documents, CCÉ is dependent on state funding. A substantial portion of that money has gone towards infrastructural programmes as CCÉ aim to expand the branch network and support services through a focus on capital projects. As Kilroy (1995) has noted, CCÉ must not base its activities solely on financial reward and model its artistic values on commercially successful shows such as *Riverdance*. The need to finance the activities of the organisation impacts on the context in which Irish traditional music is promoted and performed by members of the organisation and impacts on an understanding of the geography of Irish traditional music.

CCÉ has also been involved in the process of recording and broadcasting Irish traditional music. Séamus MacMathúna was particularly prominent in this aspect of the

organisation, recording for the archive and a weekly commercial radio programme (1970-1980). MacMathúna was also involved in RTÉ's television programme *Ag Déanamh Ceol*, "a 1970s series which in some eighty programmes focused on regions, age-groups and localities" (Vallely, 1999h: 222). The organisation also produces notated collections of Irish traditional music, notably *Foinn Seisiún*. Comhaltas describes *Foinn Seisiún* as "unashamedly devoted to learning the good old traditional tunes, none of your unusual newly composed or highly ornamented competition pieces but instead the tunes as played by musicians around the fire long ago or at the early Fleadhanna back in the fifties and sixties" (2007: 34). The accompanying books and CDs allow those attempting to enter the session space of Irish traditional music an opportunity to learn the most popular melodies that they might encounter. The publication of these books and recordings represents the evolution of the transmission process from a fireside event to one that is increasingly removed from the local. CCÉ also promote the *Foinn Seisiún* as a teaching tool for those who teach in CCÉ branches. Thus a single, *Comhaltas* promoted repertoire is promoted throughout Ireland to the detriment of local difference. In contrast to the motivation for publishing *Foinn Seisiún*, CCÉ have also published the work of David Lyth (1981; 1996) on bowing styles in Irish traditional music that reference regional traditions. In *Treoir* CCÉ have celebrated various regional narratives and musicians including Tom Billy Murphy (Murphy, 1980) and John Doherty (McCann, 1994, 1995; Ó Baoighill, 1996). A few authors have been to the fore in publishing articles concerning regional musical traditions, most notably Jack Roche, chairman of the Rockchapel branch (Roche, 1994, 1995, 2008). Until recently there has been a lack of clarity in the understanding of regional distinctiveness and the importance of a regional understanding of Irish traditional music in the discourse presented by CCÉ.

CCÉ has developed a greater awareness of itself in recent years. As part of the assessment of the organisation from within, a greater geographical awareness of Irish traditional music has emerged. In 2001, linked to the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the founding of the organisation, CCÉ produced a development programme entitled *Athnuachan*. The *Athnuachan* project seeks to "engage the whole community through the '*Meitheal'* initiative and the formation of new strategic partnerships". The *Meitheal* initiative is a community based outreach project that seeks to engage the whole community in the promotion of Irish traditional music, support the teaching of the

traditional arts at all levels, expand the branch network and support services, and establish new regional resource centres and support teams.

Plate 8 *Cultúrlann na hÉireann*, Monkstown, Co. Dublin.



Source: Breandán Ó Nualltáin.

Figure 17 Meitheal Regions and Outreach Centres



Map indicating the location of regional centres of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and the seven regions created as part of the 2001 Development Programme. Centres are located in Tipperary, Clare, Dublin, Sligo, Louth and Tyrone. Meitheal teams based at these centres aim to link communities and support community based projects. Source: Author.

The *Meitheal* initiative constructs a new regional overview of Ireland in relation to the administration and support of Irish traditional music activities (Fig. 20). The cores of these regions are the new regional and outreach centres that are part of the built infrastructure of the organisation. The location of these centres presents an argument for regional bias by the organisation but also reflects the location of strong support for CCÉ and the activities and policies of that organisation. The regions identified in the *Meitheal* initiative are administrative regions and demonstrate little understanding of existing regions in Irish traditional music. Like any organisation, the key individuals involved in the hierarchy of the movement play a role in the geographical policies of the organisation.

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann has played an important role in the development of Irish traditional music and has impacted on the geography and location of Irish traditional music. The prominence of CCÉ, it's role in the transmission of the tradition and extent of its membership within the Irish traditional music community present a need to consider the role of the organisation in the various processes that affect Irish traditional music. CCÉ are also part of the process of institutionalising Irish traditional music and the development of narratives of the tradition that become points of reference for those involved. Through an examination of the infrastructure and branch network of CCÉ and the soundscape that CCÉ presents, the diffusion of Irish traditional music and its connection with place can be better understood.

5.6 Monuments

The landscape is central to geographical thought. The Irish landscape has been shaped by generations and is part storyteller of the history of Irish traditional music. The landscape details the agricultural history of the country and demonstrates the results of increased urbanisation and abandonment of rural communities. Abandoned buildings mark older settlements, communities that have moved to new places or disappeared into other communities. Wylie (2007) highlights the importance of examining the decision making processes in the development of landscapes of memory, heritage and identity. Increasingly, communities have sought to celebrate their local histories and their connections with the events of their place. Battles, war heroes and victims of colonial rule are commemorated in almost every townland in Ireland. Studies have focused on

monuments of the 1798 rebellion (Johnson, 1994) and the famine (Crowley, 2007). More recently, communities have begun to celebrate their musical heritage in the built environment. Monuments and public statuary commemorating musicians have increasingly become a feature of the Irish landscape. In this section I examine the use of monuments in recent years to reaffirm and promote regional identity and difference in Irish traditional music. I examine the dual processes of remembering and inventing in the construction of regions in Irish traditional music with particular reference to the spaces of memory and commemoration in the tradition.

Monuments and public statuary concerning Irish music and musicians have contributed to the acknowledgement of the musicians' contribution to and skills in Irish traditional music, as well as emphasising the connection between music and particular spaces and places. They have also contributed to the discourse and politics concerning local and national identity. The harp, as the national emblem, is included in many of the monuments commemorating nationalist and republican figures and events. Clusters of monuments also contribute to the concept of musical regions. The landscape of both South Sligo and Sliabh Luachra is enriched with monuments to a number of local musicians. These may become part of heritage trails designed to attract tourists to the region (Plate 9). A number of monuments also celebrate lists of musicians and the musical heritage of an area including those listing names of musicians at Tobercurry and Doocastle, both in County Sligo (Plates 10, 11).

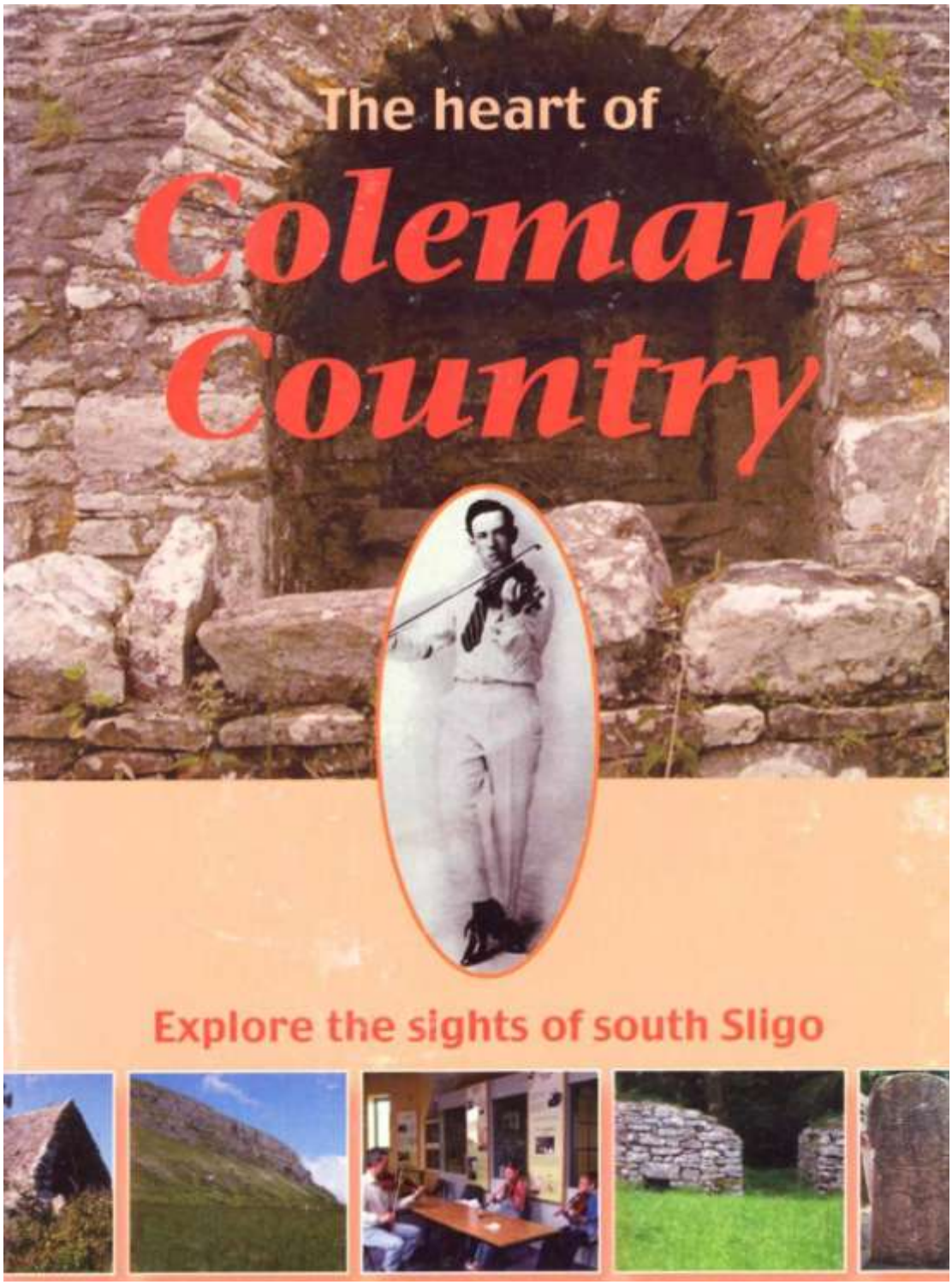
The following section is a summary of the monuments, plaques and public statuary relating to Irish traditional music and musicians in Ireland. Notable sculptures featuring both musician and instrument celebrate the lives, music and legacies of Turlough O'Carolan (Mohill, Co. Leitrim), Captain Francis O'Neill (near Tralibane, Co. Cork), Pádraig O'Keeffe (Scartaglen, Co. Kerry), John McKenna (near Tarmon, Co. Leitrim), Séamus Ennis (The Naul, Co. Dublin), Edmund Keating Hyland (Cahir, Co. Tipperary), Canon James Goodman (Skibereen, Co. Cork), Johnny O'Leary (Killarney, Co. Kerry) and Seán Ó Riada (Cúl Aodha, Co. Cork). Many of these figures are also celebrated in less elaborate forms. Outside the island of Ireland there is a bust of Thomas Moore in Prospect Park, Concert Grove, New York.

A number of monuments mirror the appearance of gravestones including those commemorating Johnny Patterson (Feakle, Co. Clare), Tom Billy Murphy

(Ballydesmond, Co. Cork), Fred Finn (Killavil, Co. Sligo), and Sonny McDonagh (Bunnanaddan, Co. Sligo). There are a number of other plaques and wall mounts in the Irish landscape. These are often located independently of other features though they may highlight the location of a musician's homeplace. In contrast, Seán Reid (Ennis, Co. Clare) PJ Hayes (Feakle, Co. Clare) and Denis Murphy (Gneeveguilla, Co. Kerry) are commemorated in a plaque in a *Comhaltas* regional centre (*Cois na hAbhna*), Peppers Public House and the local GAA Hall respectively. *The Chieftains* are included in the Dublin Tourism Rock 'n' Stroll Trail at St. Catherine's Church, Thomas Street, Dublin, noted as being the venue of their first live gig. The inclusion of *The Chieftains* on a trail more associated with rock and popular music blurs the boundaries between popular and traditional music. Apart from a plaque to the ballad singer Delia Murphy in Co. Mayo (Plate 12), the absence of female figures and the location of public statuary in predominantly rural areas reinforces many of the myths concerning the development of Irish traditional music.

More general and often abstract public statuary include that of a fiddler and chair in Ennis, Co. Clare, three dancers outside Brú Ború in Cashel, Co. Tipperary, musicians and dancers in the square in Lisdoonvarna, Co. Clare, 'Let the dance begin' (Strabane, Co. Tyrone), and the silhouette of musicians in Tobercurry, Co. Sligo. A number of monuments and public statuary engage with politics of local identity, nationalism and the connections of musicians to one or more locations. Many are part funded and supported by agencies and organisations including branches of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and local Leader rural development agencies. The first meetings of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and *Comhaltas Comhairle na Mumhan* are commemorated by wall plaques in Mullingar, Co. Westmeath and Kanturk, Co. Cork, respectively. Local branches of CCÉ were involved in the commemoration of the McDonagh Brothers (Ballinafad, Co. Sligo; Plate 13), Larry Wall Fitzpatrick (Commons, Co. Tipperary), and the Hanafin Brothers (Milltown, Co. Kerry). The monuments to Pádraig O'Keeffe in Sliabh Luachra contribute to the affirmation of local identity and regional style. In contrast, the monument to the McDonagh Brothers in Ballinafad highlights diversity and individuality within a region. The impact of migration and the contribution of Irish musicians to music in America are acknowledged in monuments to Coleman, McKenna, Hanafin Brothers. The connection between Irish traditional musicians and nationalist sentiments are demonstrated in monuments to Jack Mulkere (plate 14) and Éamonn Ceannt (Plate 15).

Plate 9 Tourist guide to 'Coleman Country' providing information on the area of south Sligo associated with fiddle player Michael Coleman whose image is used in the centre of the cover



Source: Coleman Heritage Centre.

Plate 10 A monument commemorating the musicians of Doocastle, Co. Sligo.



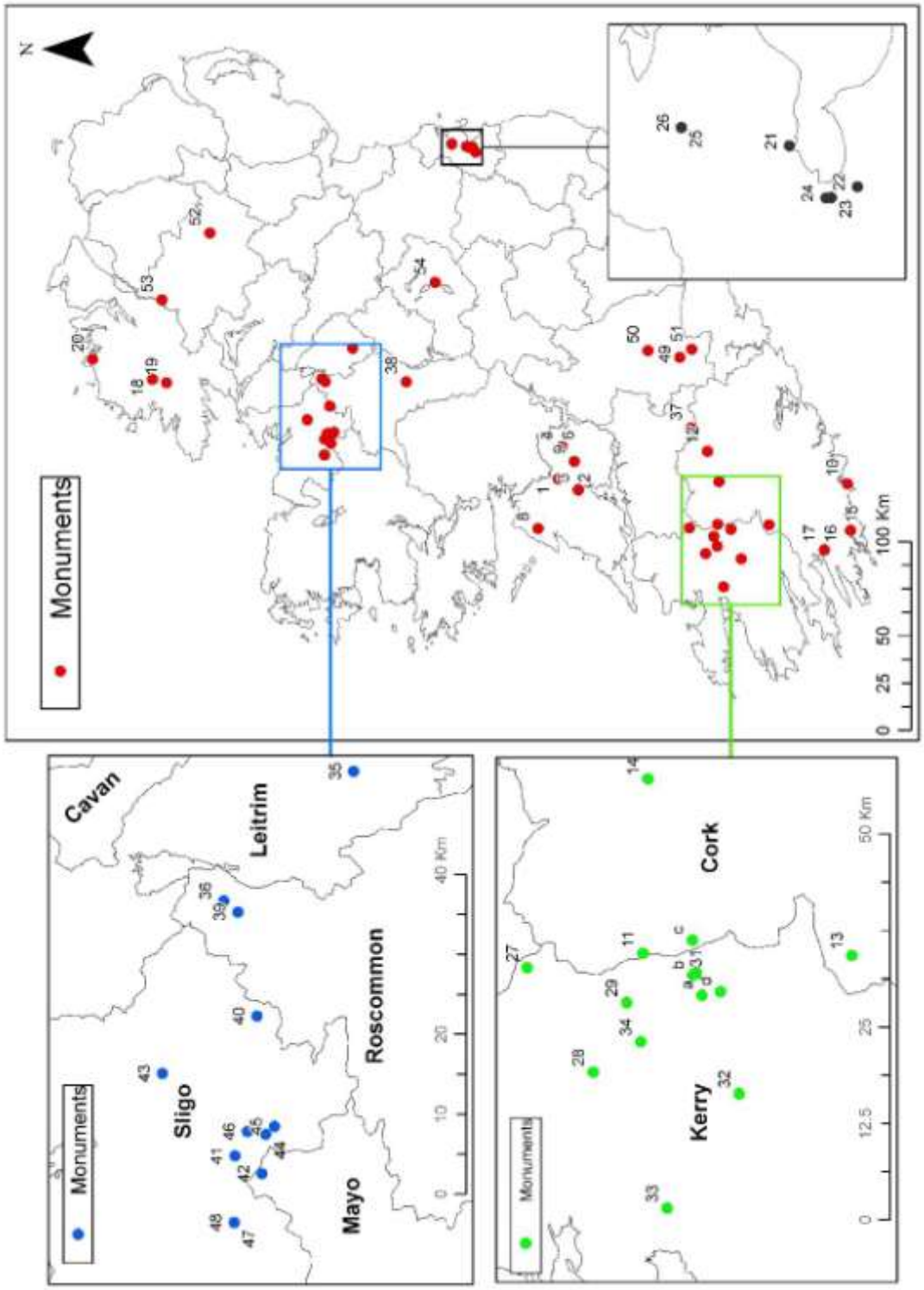
Source: Author, 12th April, 2007.

Plate 11 A monument erected by Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann commemorating fifteen fiddlers from south Sligo in the town of Tobercurry, Co. Sligo.



Source: Author, 12th April, 2007.

Figure 18 The location of monuments concerning Irish traditional music and musicians on the island of Ireland.



Source: Author.

Table 24 Key for map of monuments in figure 40.

1	Jack Mulkere	30	Local heritage
2	Séan Reid	31	Denis Murphy
3	Fiddler and chair	32	Johnny O'Leary
4	Johnny Patterson	33	The Hanafin Brothers
5	Welcome	34	Pádraig Ó Caoimh
6	PJ Hayes	35	Turlough O'Carolan
7	Welcome	36	John McKenna
8	Musicians and dancers	37	Patrick Weston Joyce
9	Town crest	38	Martin Donoghue
10	Noel Redding	39	Turlough O'Carolan
11	Tom Billy Murphy	40	McDonagh Brothers
12	Rev. Charles Bunworth	41	Sonny McDonagh
13	Seán Ó Riada	42	Local Musicians
14	Comhaltas, Comhairle na Mumhan	43	James Morrison
15	Canon James Goodman	44	Michael Coleman
16	Francis O'Neill	45	Welcome
17	Francis O'Neill	46	Fred Finn
18	Doherty Family	47	Local Musicians
19	Mickey Doherty	48	Silhouette
20	Daniel Donnelly	49	Edmund Keating Hyland
21	Peadar Kearney	50	Brú Ború Dancers
22	Éamonn Ceannt	51	Larry Wall Fitzpatrick
23	Turlough O'Carolan	52	Johnny Loughran
24	The Chieftains	53	Let the dance begin'
25	Séamus Ennis	54	*Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* foundation
26	Séamus Ennis	A	Aodhgáin Ó Rathaille
27	Village name	B	Eamon Kelly
28	Patrick O'Keeffe	C	Eoghan Rua Ó Suilleabháin
29	Pádraig O'Keeffe	D	Eoghan Rua Ó Suilleabháin

Plate 12 Plaque indicating the birthplace of singer Delia Murphy near Claremorris, Co. Mayo.



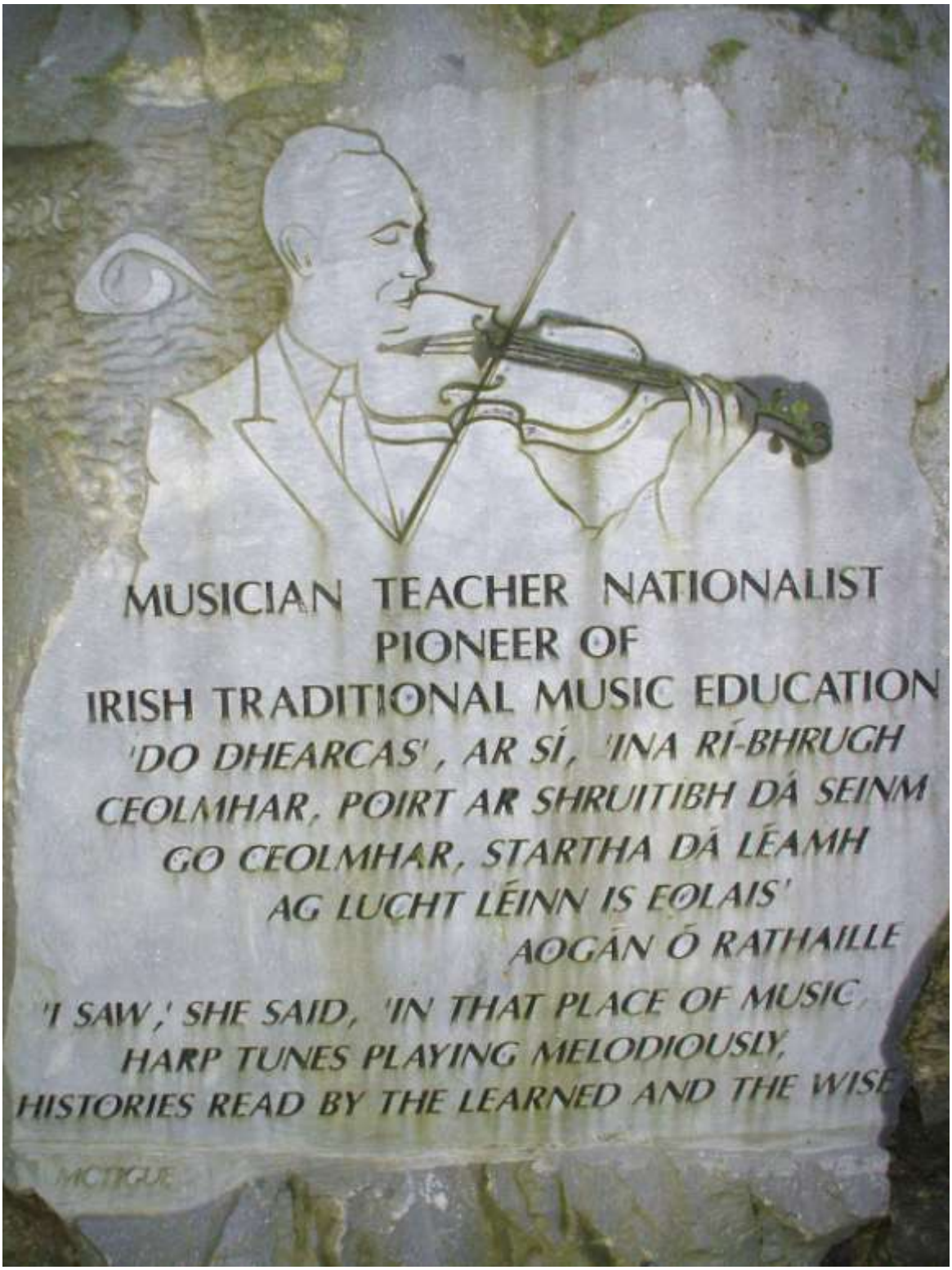
Source: Author, 5th August, 2009.

Plate 13 Monument to the McDonagh Brothers of Ballinafad outside the parish church in their home village



Source: Author, 12th April, 2007.

Plate 14 The monument to Jack Mulkere in Crusheen, Co. Clare



Source: Author, 13th January, 2007.

Plate 15 Monument to the Hanafin Brothers in Miltown, Co. Kerry



A photograph of William and Michael Hanafin appears in the opening pages to O'Neill's 1001 Gems. They emigrated from Kerry to Boston where they were prominent musicians in the Irish traditional music community and contributed tunes to the O'Neill collection. Source: Author, 24th April, 2007.

Johnson outlines the importance of the social and historical contexts of monuments, stating:

> Monuments were not just decorative appendages erected to beautify cities and towns, and their location within public space was no historical accident. They represented self-conscious attempts to solicit public participation in the politics of the day (1994: 78).

By sequentially analysing the construction of monuments and statuary on both a spatial and temporal basis, they can be examined in relation to the sequence of historical events in Irish society (Whelan, 2003). Monuments and statuary construct and express elements of and attitudes towards a musical tradition and may in turn be read in relation to the process of creating regions within the narratives of Irish traditional music.

Assman (1995) outlines the development of monuments and other spaces of meaning as an attempt by a cultural group to make itself visible and to communicate some of the values and narratives of that culture. However, Gross (1992) warns of the dangers that exist when a real tradition becomes an image and is illusionary and symbolic. Through the process of representing tradition, the boundaries between the real and imagined are blurred. The creation of monuments as spaces for memory and communication within the tradition lead to a process whereby a selection of images are created that may be reinterpreted, perhaps in a way not intended by the creators. Public statuary essentially sets out to portray culture and, in doing so, is often selective in what is presented. Cruikshank (1992) warns of the selection process involved in cultural displays of antiquity, a process that may impact on the narrative that is transmitted to the next generation thus changing the memory of a cultural group (see also Kelly and Ní Laoire, 2005). Confino (1997) addresses this as the instability of memory in a group context whereby historical facts may be revised. Such instability is particularly true of a folk tradition that spans many generations, much of the narrative is oral in nature. The spaces of memory in the Irish landscape present a narrative that is informed by both fact and folklore, often celebrating individual musicians who have meaning in a local or regional context.

Johnson, in her investigation of 1798 centenary monuments, investigates "the role of public statuary in constructing a heroic analysis of the past" (1994:78). Within the Irish music tradition, the individuals who have gained fame through their individuality or importance to localised communities become the central characters of a body of folklore,

heroes of a heroic tradition. It is a process that glorifies not only the music and the individual but, often, the place. Places become important in Irish traditional music narratives because of the sense of 'home' that they present. Dowling (1996) has noted how performers make reference to a home place, something that is readily visible in the sleeve notes of many recordings. In her studies of Scottish folk culture, MacDonald states: "Places are considered important for identity not because of the aesthetic qualities of the landscape, nor because they have a particular 'culture' or 'heritage', but because of the social relations and knowledge which they entail" (1997: 144). The local social relations and the personal narratives of the culture bearers enhance the sense of regionality and community. In some cases, these culture bearers become part of an organisation, associated with an institution or, often posthumously, are celebrated through festive events or commemorative constructs such as monuments or the renaming of buildings. In this sense, the concept of home becomes intertwined with concepts of reality and authenticity.

Monuments are part of an interlinked geometry of processes that include performance, collecting, recording, broadcasting, tourism and institutionalisation. The monuments reflect the complexity of the tradition and the often difficult connection between musicians and place and the hidden geographies of mobility within the tradition. The monuments to Michael Coleman (Plate 16), John McKenna (Plate 17), James Morrison and The Hanafin Brothers stand in the homeplaces of the musicians but they were much more prominent in the soundscapes of America. The sense of success and fame are integrated into local identity.

Plate 16 Monument to Michael Coleman near Gurteen, Co. Sligo.



Source: Author, 29th January, 2006.

Plate 17 Monument to John McKenna in Co. Leitrim erected in 1980.



Source: Author, 29th January, 2006.

Plate 18 Statue of Séamus Ennis in Naul, Co. Dublin



Source: Author, 11th September, 2007.

Musicians are also celebrated in the areas in which they have left a lasting cultural legacy. The monument to Seán Ó Riada in the grounds of St. Gobnait's church in Cúl Aodha evokes a complex connection with place (Plate 4, p.155). Ó Riada chose to live in the Cúl Aodha Gaeltacht as part of a quest for an Irish way of life surrounded by rural traditions, customs and the Irish language. He encouraged a pride of place and tradition in the local community, particularly through *Cór Cúl Aodha*. The statue portrays Ó Riada playing the organ and is located in the grounds of St Gobnait's, where one of his most enduring compositions - the Ó Riada Mass - is still sung every Sunday by the local choir led by his son Peadar. The statue of Ó Riada is the work of sculptor Mike Kenny from Castleisland, Co Kerry, a musician who has also sculpted a number of statues in Sliabh Luachra and is involved in the promotion of local musical identities (see Chapter seven). Like Ó Riada, Canon James Goodman is celebrated in the place where his legacy was most directly felt rather than his homeplace in west Kerry (Plate 21).

Séamus Ennis also demonstrates a difficult connection to place. Though associated with rural Ireland and, in particular the Gaeltachts, he chose to return and make his home in the Naul in Dublin where he embodies the changing Dublin attitudes towards and soundscapes of Irish traditional music. The statues of Séamus Ennis stands outside a cultural centre bearing his name, which itself is a performance space for many prominent touring musicians as well as a local session in a juxtaposition of local and global soundscapes (Plate 19).

The diversity in the monuments dedicated to Irish traditional musicians highlights the diversity within Irish traditional music. The proliferation of monuments highlights the increased desire within the Irish traditional music community to understand this diversity and develop a greater sense of local knowledge. There is a reconnection of local Irish traditional music activity and energy with that of the past that attempts to hide any break in the continuity of local traditions. The politics of identity and the desire for attention continue to shape the connection between music and place.

Plate 19 The Séamus Ennis Cultural Centre and statue in the Naul, Co. Dublin



Source: Author, 11th September, 2007.

Plate 20 Séamus Ennis Commemorative Plaque in the Naul, Co. Dublin



Source: Author, 11th September, 2007.

Plate 21 Monument to Canon James Goodman at the gate to Abbeystrewry Church in Skibereen, Co. Cork



Canon Goodman collected a number of tunes from uilleann pipers during his life spent largely in Dingle, Co. Kerry and Skibereen, Co. Cork which were later edited by Hugh Shields and published by The Irish Traditional Music Archive (1998). Source: Author, 4th February, 2007.

Plate 22 Entrance sign for the village of Keadue, Co. Roscommon making reference to 'O'Carolan Country' based on the areas associations with the life of harper composer Turlough O'Carolan



Source: Author, 29th January, 2006.

Plate 23 Plaque to Turlough O'Carolan in memorial park in Keadue featuring the notation of one of his compositions *Sídh beag Sídh Mór.*



Source: Author, 26th January, 2006.

Plate 24 Monument to Turlough O'Carolan in Keadue, Co. Roscommon



Source: Author, 26th January, 2006.

Music is an integral part of the history and identity of a community. Music is also part of the assertion of that identity. McCarthy, whose research focuses education and transmission, suggests: "As a cultural practice, music functions in highly complex and powerful ways to advance ideologies and to form and transform the identity of communities" (1999:13). The way in which music is used, celebrated and transmitted and the space that it occupies are essential in the identification of regions. There exists what Massey (1993) terms as power geometry. Different individuals, organisations and institutions play their role in the global networks that communicate, or suppress the existence and importance of regional difference. With an increased awareness in regional traditions and admiration for local musicians in various parts of Ireland, there has been a proliferation in the development of monuments related to Irish traditional music in the Irish landscape. These monuments become part of and help construct a built heritage that communicates the narrative of culture and region. Monuments become part of the telling of a story and the communication of identity. They exist within a wider social context and their meanings are intertwined with the performance of music and the use of space. Through the construction of monuments and the creation of located sites of meaning within the tradition, the relationship between memory, power and identity as signified through these constructions, particularly in relation to competing national, regional and local narratives, is reinforced.

The development of monuments is linked to a number of other forces present in society. Many of the monuments are funded by rural development agencies and some by CCÉ. The monument to The Hanafin Brothers is funded by The South Kerry Development Partnership, the statue of Captain Francis O'Neill was supported by West Cork Leader Co-operative Society and many of the monuments examined in Chapter Five are supported by Integrated Rural Development Duhallow (IRD Duhallow). Part of the ideology behind supporting these projects is the promotion of pride of place based on cultural awareness. These statues also become part of the marketing of place. The monuments in south Sligo are integrated into a marketing campaign for tourism based on the concept of 'Coleman Country'. Similarly, statues mark the existence of 'Carolan Country' in Co. Roscommon and surrounding areas (Plate 22; Plate 23; Plate 24). Festivals and other tourist based attractions also impact on the geography of Irish traditional music.

5.7 Conclusion

The discourse on regional styles is dominated by the celebration of the musical performances and legacies of exemplary individual musicians and teachers. Towards the end of the twentieth century, attempts were made to construct a pantheon of great musicians whose influence on the tradition was accepted and admired. Different groups, agents and ideologies influenced the choice of people who became celebrated. These choices impact on the geography of Irish traditional music in two important ways. Recorded music and the radio presented certain selections of musicians and their music that influenced the association of Irish traditional music with particular places (Feldman, 2002). *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* also referenced particular individuals with whom they identified as exemplary individuals. The celebration of a musician acknowledged the place in which the musician was born or performed. Thus the narrative of the place was shaped by its association with the musician and their music. Some of these musicians were commemorated through the naming of buildings or the erection of monuments. These buildings and monuments are spaces of importance in the landscape of Irish traditional music and create markers that locate regional hearths and boundaries.

Regional identities are motivated by the emergence of musical heritage as an economic resource and often involve the expression or representation of the past in the present. The competing images and spaces that attempt to locate Irish traditional music and present a particular and regional narrative for the traditions are living representations that may also become wrapped up in a tourist gaze or, perhaps more fittingly, a tourist haze. Regions in Irish traditional music emerged initially from localised transmission that in many cases depended on travelling or itinerant music teachers and dancing masters who operated within small geographical areas. The wider circulation of notated collections of Irish traditional music, the development of broadcasting and recording and the emergence of organisations that support formal learning contexts and structures have impacted on the geography of regions in Irish traditional music.

The concept of the region continues to be challenged by new means of thinking about place, space and time. Irish traditional music is no longer dependent on a local music community for the development and performance of the music. As McCarthy notes:

> We generally conceive of community as arising out of the geographical proximity of its members but it is not limited to that factor. An individual may participate in a musical practice at the local level and simultaneously identify with multiple imagined communities across time and space (1999: 23).

Thus, a regional understanding of Irish traditional music must examine the connectivity and power geometries that exist between the local level and a multitude of other levels that are divided by time and space. As has been outlined in preceding chapters, the development of processes that negate the importance of geographical location in Irish traditional music has not led to an abandonment of place in the narratives of the tradition.

Building on developments in human and cultural geography, I present a concept of regionality within Irish traditional music that owes as much to the stories attached to the music, often by musicians, as the sounds performed by the musicians. Individuals such as Breandán Breathnach, Séamus Ennis and Seán Ó Riada have played an important role in developing, preserving and disseminating knowledge of the tradition as it was before and during their lifetimes. More recent researchers such as Matt Cranitch, David Lyth and Caoimhín Mac Aoidh are part of the process of constructing regions through their analysis of styles and playing methods. They are part of a process that challenges concepts of globalisation and homogeneity and reflect the attitudes of part of the Irish traditional music community and the wider societies in which it exists. Conferences such as *Blas* and *Crosbhealach an Cheoil* further add to the institutional processes that shape the tradition while radio and television programmes such as *Our Musical Heritage* and *Caniúntí Cheoil* bring concepts of regional style to a wider audience. Irish traditional music and the contexts for it as a culture of a community have changed, developed and evolved – much like the tradition itself. The narratives of Irish traditional music celebrate the diversity within the musical tradition – the people, sounds, places and spaces. These narratives colour our understanding of places within the tradition, which are often linked to particular people and sounds.

Though largely a qualitative study of Irish traditional music, examples of quantitative analysis are presented in this chapter, including the source of tunes, the location of *fleadhanna cheoil* and levels of success at *fleadhanna cheoil*, are based on the choices of individuals and organisations. In some cases these quantitative studies conform with qualitative analysis of the music and an understanding of the discourse concerning

Irish traditional music. The connection between music and place is acknowledged through the location of music spaces, performances and classes and celebrated in story. The concept of a region helps support notions of unity and distinctiveness and challenges the concepts of globalisation and homogeneity. Ryden suggests that people attach meaning to places to which they have never been through the use of "positive and negative stereotypes of the kind found in movies, television, newspapers, advertisements, popular music and books" (Ryden, 1993). An analysis of the geographical patterns of Irish traditional music must consider the various modes through which the tradition is viewed and believed to exist, including the influence of commercial activity and the desire for a sense of local identity. The existence of both real and imagined geographies of tradition is outlined by Eyerman and Jamison who state:

> Traditions are a curious phenomenon, in that they are both real and imagined at the same time; a tradition exists, we might say, by being imagined, but what is being conceived as tradition does have real meaning and substantive content for those who identify with it, or believe in its realness, its authenticity (1998: 33)

The reinforcement of regional narratives may be examined through an analysis of recordings and albums, radio and television programmes, the establishment of branches of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and their activities and success, and the development of monuments, as well as music and cultural centres. Authors present the stories of the region in the books they write (Hickey, 1999; Mac Aoidh, 1994; Ní hUallacháin, 2003). Through the process of imagining and writing, the region is made more real and gains greater prominence in the discourse of Irish traditional music.

The culture industry also plays a critical role in the understanding of the geography of Irish traditional music in the present. Strinati notes that the culture industry "shapes the tastes and preferences of the masses, thereby moulding their consciousness by inculcating the desire for false needs. It therefore works to exclude real or true needs, alternative or radical concepts or theories, and politically oppositional ways of thinking and acting" (1995: 61). Moves within the culture industry to increase awareness and valuations of regional difference in cultural products and their identities create a sense of desire for regional difference and identity. Vallely has highlighted how a musical recording presenting a regional sound or style has a marketable commercial value (1997: 114). However, the popularity of individual artists or groups who come to represent a

regional musical tradition within the culture industry can stimulate a process of simplification of regional narratives. Examples include the prominence of John Doherty in Donegal traditions despite the diversity that exists within the county. John Doherty's fiddle style is widely considered the archetypal Donegal style of fiddle playing yet within the county there are a number of other styles, as outlined by Mac Aoidh (1994; 1999a; 1999b). The desire to sell a musical sound based on the concept of regional styles that connects it to a place and provides a commercial marker can also create new regional traditions with little historical reference or highlight regions whose narratives are not widely known. Examples include *Leitrim's Hidden Treasure* by The McNamara Family (1998) and *A Hidden Fermanagh* released by The Fermanagh Folk Society (2004). Other recordings challenge the narratives that focus on particular individuals such as *The McDonagh's of Ballinafad* (1999). Desires for local and regional identity are intertwined with musical traditions, both old and new, that often seek connections with the past to generate a sense of legitimacy.

A number of perspectives and areas of study are important in the study of regions in Irish traditional music in the present. The region must be understood in the context of its historical development, the emergence of social network and the construction of spaces. In the context of Irish traditional music, five elements are crucial in understanding the region Firstly, the concept and discourse of musical style in recent performances and recordings shapes an understanding of the role of the region in the present. Secondly, the celebration of individual performers and their links to particular places is evident in narratives and ideologies that are part of the tradition. Thirdly, there is an acknowledgement of how the concept of regional difference is present in the transmission process. Fourth is an understanding of the role of organisations and commercial activity, including the culture and tourism industries, in the identification, construction and production of regional musical traditions. Organisations and politics play an important role in the development and diffusion of regional traditions. The fifth element of the study of regions concerns the role and nature of spaces and their soundscapes. The thematic structure presents and examines different narratives in the construction of regions in Irish traditional music and celebrates both musical and geographical diversity in that folk tradition. The study of regions in Irish traditional music combines the soundscape of the musical tradition with the social context and narratives within which it is presented and performed. The inclusion and exclusion of different elements of the tradition in

performance, celebration and remembering is part of the process of regionalisation and diversification within an ever-changing tradition.

Chapter 6

Sliabh Luachra

6.1 Introduction

Sliabh Luachra is the name of a loosely defined region in the southwest of Ireland, located on the Cork-Kerry border. The identity of the Sliabh Luachra is constructed primarily through the expression of cultural difference and in particular the strong musical traditions of the people living there. In the following two chapters I examine the Sliabh Luachra region using the themes and methods outlined in the preceding chapters. In both chapters, the examination of the region involves an understanding of the region from the outside, examining representations of the region and processes involved in the development and diffusion of a Sliabh Luachra identity rather than engaging an ethnographic approach. In Chapter Six I outline the fieldwork context and trace the historical development of Sliabh Luachra culture and the awareness of that culture outside of the region. Engaging with ideas of new historical geography that investigate the role of the past in the present, in chapter seven I examine the representation of the region in the present and attempt to locate or delimit the Sliabh Luachra region involving both historical and contemporary data.

Chapter Six is divided into four sections. In the first section I consider the motivation for the examination of Sliabh Luachra as a region of significance in Irish traditional music and present a context for the fieldwork I conducted in the region. In the second section I present an historical geography of Sliabh Luachra with particular concern for the landscape and the development of communications and social networks in the region. The second section is influenced by the paradigms of historical geography and examines the history, topography and environment in which the culture of the Sliabh Luachra region has developed. Informed by historical geographies of Ireland by Evans (1967), O'Flanagan (1975; 1985), Smyth (2006), Graham and others (Graham, *et al*., 1993; Graham and Nash, 2000), the section focuses on changes in the social, cultural and economic structures of the Sliabh Luachra region in the 16th to 19th centuries. The accounts and papers of James Weale in the early 1830s, contained in part in the parliamentary papers of Great Britain (1834) are significant in identifying the location of the Sliabh Luachra region, shaped also by subsequent road building and development of villages (see also Moynihan, 2003). Spaces for the performance of music and dance in this period include the home, crossroads and fairs and markets which are connected with rural life and social networks. The Irish language is an important element of the culture of

the region and poets are significant in the subsequent construction of regional identity for the Sliabh Luachra region. It is during this period that the seed of regional identity is sown and from which historical validation for regional identity is developed in the latter half of the twentieth century.

In the third section I examine how the culture of Sliabh Luachra was 'discovered' and how the identity of Sliabh Luachra was shaped by the various processes outlined in Chapter Five, including the transcription and publication of music, broadcasting and recording and the institutionalisation of culture. A number of individuals, primarily fiddle players, played an important role in developing the musical soundscape of the Sliabh Luachra region. A number of collections of Irish traditional music, including those of Breathnach (1976, 1996, 1999), indicate a distinctive musical tradition in the Sliabh Luachra region. The radio and related recordings are integral to the diffusion of a Sliabh Luachra musical identity. Though branches of CCÉ are largely absent in history of Sliabh Luachra, apart from a period in the late 1970s and early 1980s and a recent resurgence, the organisation has also been involved in developing and diffusing the musical traditions of the Sliabh Luachra region, primarily through information and music published in *Treoir*. I examine the particular instruments, repertoire, ways of playing and the use of music associated with the Sliabh Luachra region.

In the fourth section I examine the changes in the musical soundscape and sociospatial contexts for music in the Sliabh Luachra region from the middle of the twentieth century. In his study of Bluegrass music, Carney (1998a) traces the changing sounds and instrumentation of the region through an examination of the prominent individuals involved. In the context of Sliabh Luachra, I examine the role of people such as Dan O'Connell, as well as accordion players such as Johnny O'Leary and Jackie Daly, who play an important role in changing the musical soundscape and influence attitudes to place and the location of the Sliabh Luachra region. There is a particular focus on social institutions and filters of mediation noting the importance of social institutions in providing "performance opportunities, repertoire exchanges and professional exposure for musicians to gain regional prominence and national recognition" (Carney, 1998a: 145). The recordings of musicians associated with the Sliabh Luachra region reflect the changes in the sounds of the region in the latter half of the twentieth century.

6.2 Fieldwork context

I have chosen Sliabh Luachra as a region for study, in part because of my knowledge of the region since my childhood growing up in Kerry. Though I grew up in the town of Tralee, I was made aware of the singing traditions of west Kerry, the dance traditions of north Kerry and the musical traditions of east Kerry by my parents, teachers and my experience of the traditions growing up in Kerry. My mother's circle of friends included musicians such as Johnny O'Leary and she told me stories of driving to Knocknagree for a night of dancing. For my mother, the sounds and spaces of Irish traditionally existed as part of a social and cultural network in rural Ireland where community structures bridged the older rural traditions and the modernising urban Ireland emerged. However, my experience of the Sliabh Luachra region differed from that of my mother. Many of the people that she encountered in person, I became aware of through stories and tune names. Thus, much of this chapter is about experiencing the region at a distance of time. I am also motivated by a desire to understand the Sliabh Luachra in the present in a different context to that in which it developed and in which it was experienced by people such as my mother.

Another motivating factor in choosing to study the Sliabh Luachra region is the lack of critical consideration of the construction of Sliabh Luachra as a region in Irish traditional music. As identified in previous chapters, regions in Irish traditional music were not identified and examined until at least the 1950s, becoming more prominent principally through Seán Ó Riada's radio series *Our Musical Heritage* (1962). However, the Sliabh Luachra region is not part of Ó Riada's examination at this time. It would appear that the reputation of Sliabh Luachra as a prominent region of Irish traditional music had not yet developed despite the wealth of Irish traditional musicians in the area. Arguably, the particular repertoire and spaces of the region had not yet been, or at least were only just being 'discovered'. It was through the actions of individuals such as Ciarán MacMathúna and Séamus Ennis who, like Ó Riada, were working with the intention of broadcasting material on radio, that Sliabh Luachra began to emerge as a region of distinctiveness within the wider spectrum of Irish traditional music. Since the 1960s, debates and discourse concerning the location of the Sliabh Luachra region have developed that further motivate a structured and informed investigation of the Sliabh Luachra region.

In the context of my postgraduate research, I first travelled to Sliabh Luachra in 2003 when I attended the Patrick O'Keeffe Festival in Castleisland. I was immediately challenged by the soundscape of the festival. The soundscape of the festival is a confused mix of local and global sounds in a town where folk culture and pop culture co-exist. The performance and celebration of Irish traditional music at the festival does not equate entirely with the memory of the individual in question or the regional identity promoted by the festival, while the bass-dominated beats of adjoining nightclubs interrupt the flow of acoustic sessions. The busy main street is a major artery between the major towns of the region and the sound of so many cars is at odds with the romanticised rural imagery of the Sliabh Luachra region.

I was further challenged by the confusion concerning the location of the Sliabh Luachra region. My awareness of the region did not, at that time, extend beyond its outer edges. Part of my experience of the Sliabh Luachra region over the past number of years has involved travelling the various roads that run through the region, each of them relating to part of the history and development of Sliabh Luachra. That experience has often been largely visual and my interaction with musical soundscapes influenced by the symbolic and discursive representation of Sliabh Luachra. Often in these journeys I filled the soundscape with recordings that made reference to the region, landscape and people that I was encountering. The diversity of sounds further challenged the often simple and limited representations of the Sliabh Luachra region.

My experience of the Sliabh Luachra region has also been influenced by a number of people who have acted as guides both to the region and to Irish traditional music. As a child, during my training with *Siamsa Tíre* at the *Teach Siamsa* in Finuge, I learned music from teachers Nicholas and Anne McAuliffe of Castleisland who continue to be important mentors. Jack Roche of Rockchapel has been to the fore in the promotion and dissemination of Sliabh Luachra identity, particular through his roles with *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and IRD Duhallow, and he has also acted as a filter of mediation through which I have examined the region. I have had the opportunity to play with musicians such as Timmy Connors and Denis Callaghan in Rockchapel and Newmarket, Joe O'Sullivan and Jimmy Doyle in Killarney, as well as Ciarán O'Sullivan (son of the aforementioned Joe) and Brian O'Leary (grandson of Johnny O'Leary). Throughout my

examination of Sliabh Luachra, there has been an emphasis on understanding the role of history and people in the evolution of the region.

6.3 An historical geography of Sliabh Luachra

Though the focus of this study is concerned with the emergence of Sliabh Luachra as a region with particular musical traits, the definition of Sliabh Luachra as a region is grounded in other historical developments in the region. In this section I focus primarily on the period from c. 1500 to c. 1920 and borrow from four approaches to understanding the historical geography of Ireland (Graham and Proudfoot, 1993). The first approach focuses on the development of early modern Ireland and in particular the changing patterns of land ownership and colonisation (Gillespie, 1993; see also Smyth, 2006). The second element is the development of regionalism and localism that grow out of "the very uneven social, economic and political structures created by the sixteenth and seventeenth-century land reallocations" (Proudfoot, 1993: 186). The third considers the development of rural economies in post-Famine Ireland (Turner, 1993). The development of fairs and markets in early modern Ireland (see O'Flanagan, 1985) create new contexts and environments for the performance and diffusion of music, song and dance that remain prominent in the Sliabh Luachra region until the twentieth century. Agriculture was the principle mode of employment in rural Ireland until late in the twentieth century and music was part of the ritual of rural life.

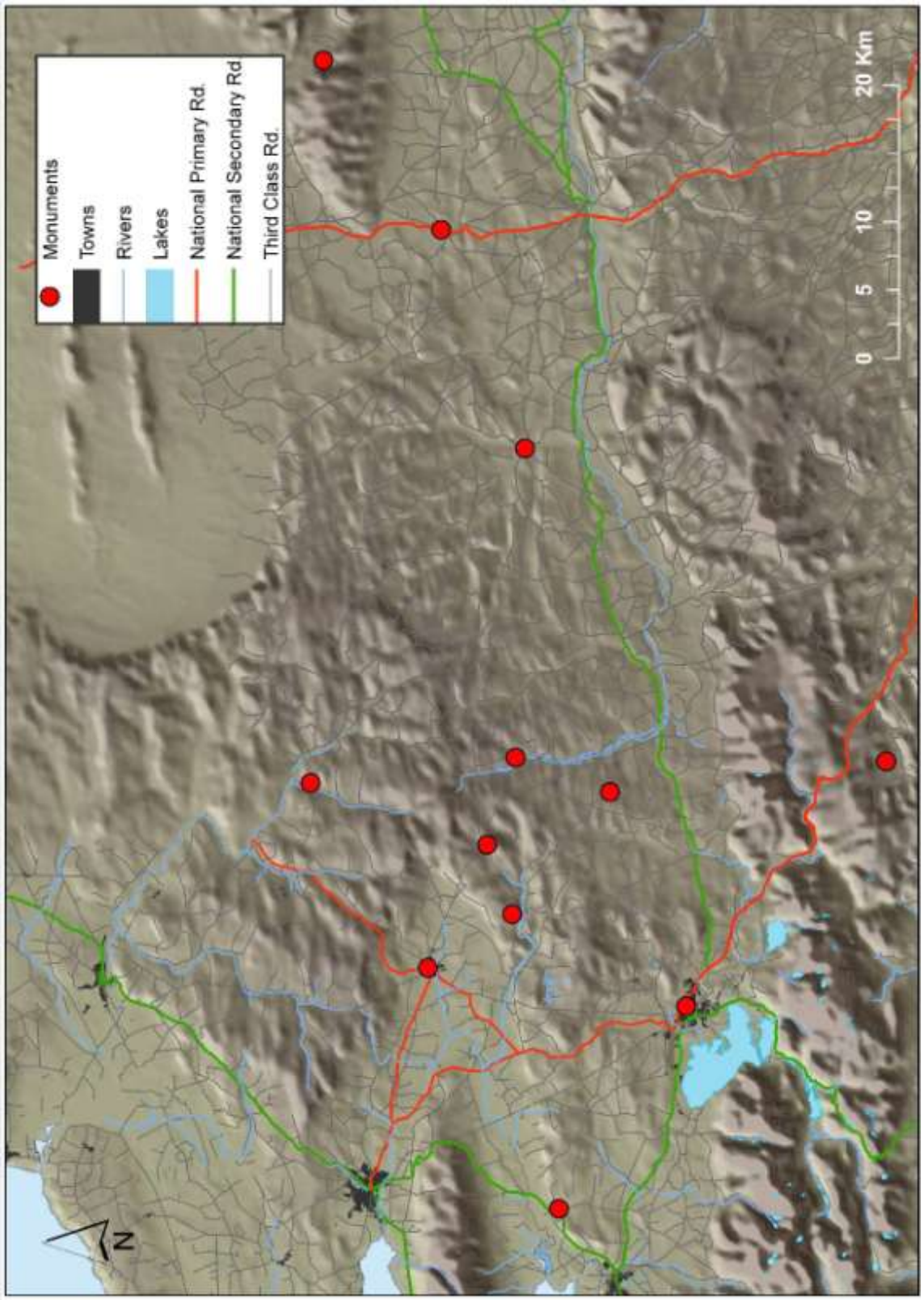
In the concluding chapter of the aforementioned book, Smyth (1993: 399) reminds the reader of a fourth element, that the landscape and ecology of the island of Ireland cannot be ignored when considering the social, cultural and economic development that takes place:

> No other European country has such a fragmented peripheral arrangement of mountain land all along its borders. This has enriched Ireland with a diversified scenic heritage but the complicated distribution of massifs presented severe difficulties to would-be conquerors. Likewise, the topography has meant that the richer lowlands regions are scattered and fragmented all over the island, facilitating the evolution of strong regional subcultures. In turn the hills and boglands came to serve as territorial bases for local lordships and, with later phases of conquest and colonization, often became regions of retreat and refuge (1993: 402).

The Sliabh Luachra region is an area of hills and boglands that avoided English occupation and the colonial process of surveying and mapping until later than many other regions in Ireland. Figure 19 highlights the topography of the region and the road network that was gradually imposed on the landscape. The ordinary people survived as self-sufficient farmers whose way of life allowed a Gaelic way of life, characterised in part by the use of the Irish language and the use of Brehon Laws, to survive longer than it did in other areas (Moynihan, 2003). It may be argued that the lingering Gaelic culture, which created a post-Cromwellian context for poets such as Aodhgáin Ó Rathaille and Eoghan Rua Ó Suilleabháin is fundamental to the regional identity of Sliabh Luachra today. In addition to the framework derived from this work (Graham and Proudfoot, 1993), an acknowledgement of the role of folklore in the construction of regional identity is also important (Ryden, 1993).

The words 'Sliabh Luachra' are translated from the Irish language as the rushy mountain. A local farmer once said to me: "Sure, what else would you call it?". However, there is no one mountain. Sliabh Luachra is better described as "a rolling undulating plateau of rough mountainous coarse land, interspersed with what is generally accepted as its seven glens, or what is in the Irish idiom known as 'seacht ngleann Sléibhe Luachra'" (Moynihan, 2003: 4; see Fig. 42). It is a landscape now dominated by large tracts of intensive forestry and small farms. According to Coilte, a commercial company operating in forestry, land-based businesses and added-value processing operations, more than 90% of the land in Duhallow, part of which is in the Sliabh Luachra region, is classified by the Department of Agriculture as disadvantaged or severely handicapped and "Duhallow has one of the highest concentrations of forestry in Ireland" (http://www.coillte.ie/community/community_partnerships/munster/, 26th August 2009). Land use is limited by poor drainage and the predominantly reclaimed podzol and peaty podzol soils. The areas around Gneeveguilla, Ballydesmond and Rockchapel are covered by raised bog. The significant towns that appear in the area represented in figure 19 are Tralee, Killarney and Listowel. There is archaeological evidence of human settlement in the area but Moynihan notes that these sites are "largely situated on the outer fringes of Sliabh Luachra, with a very small minority of the in isolated locations within the inner higher regions of the area" (2003: 8). The archaeological and pre-historic geography of Sliabh Luachra remains part of the identity of the region today.

Figure 19 Map highlighting the terrain and road network in east Kerry and north west Cork.



Source: David Kearney and Katherine Cronin.

The earliest reference to Sliabh Luachra is found in *The Annals of Inisfallon* (MacAirt, 1951) but the 'City' at Shrone, *Cromlech Cathair Crobh Dearg*, is believed to be one of the oldest settlements in Ireland (Hickey, 1999; Cronin, 2001; Roche, 2008). The 'City' is located in the shadow of An Dhá Chích Danú or The Paps about four miles south of Rathmore in Co. Kerry (Plate 25). Myths relating to the ancient civilisations of the Tuatha Dé Danann and the Milesian's, as well as Fionn and the Fianna, the great heroes of Irish folklore, make reference to and are associated with this place. There is a complex mix of pagan and Christian ritual bound up in the social activities, such as the celebration of Bealtaine and the pattern of 'doing rounds', a Christian ritual often associated with holy wells, of the 'City' (Cronin, 2001). The prominence of reference to ancient civilisation in Sliabh Luachra echoes Kearney's assertion in relation to nations and states: "Most contemporary nations and states invoke myths which provide a sense of original identity for their people" (1997: 108). Folklore and mythology are an integral part of the Sliabh Luachra narrative.

Plate 25 A view of the Paps from the village of Knocknagree, Co. Cork



Source: Author, 6th September, 2007.

Sliabh Luachra was slow to adopt Christianity and pagan ritual is still remembered, highlighting the process of compromise between Christianity and older beliefs (Cronin, 2001; Moynihan, 2003). The land was granted to Norman rulers as part of the kingdom of Desmond but there are no castles, which are physical markers of Norman influence, "within the inner confines of Sliabh Luachra" (Moynihan, 2003: 35). The Norman castle at Castleisland marks the edge of Sliabh Luachra and though there is little physical evidence, there is a cultural legacy still present in the area including family names and placenames. As the political fabric of Ireland changed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (see Smyth, 2006), the Normans gradually became accepted and the Earls of Desmond left their mark on the landscape of Sliabh Luachra.

Changes in the economic and social structures in early modern Ireland did not affect Munster in the same ways as some other regions because of developments already underway under the Desmond lordship which evolved on two fronts. Smith acknowledges the Desmond lordship of south Munster as one of the most Gaelicized whose leaders were "classic frontiersmen and astute politicians" (1993: 419). However, he also notes:

> While patronizing Gaelic-Irish poetry, literature and styles of living, nevertheless they ensured that sufficient territorial order prevailed to permit the efficient collection and export of the hides and woollen goods upon which the prosperity of the region depended (1993: 419).

Thus by the sixteenth century, Munster already had a network of towns, markets, roads and castles and immigrants accelerated rather than initiated the processes of economic development. However, the area known as *Pobal Uí Chaoimh* or Sliabh Luachra was largely unmapped with few roads or significant settlements.

Sparsely populated until the sixteenth century, following the process of plantation and various struggles with British forces, the Sliabh Luachra region became a safe haven for those who escaped death in the nearby battles of Knocknanoss (1647) and Knockbrack (1652) and an alternative to Connacht for those seeking to escape Cromwell's army (Moynihan, 2003; Herlihy, 2004). The increased population drew attention to the previously neglected region. A series of surveys were instigated, the reports on which outlined Sliabh Luachra as a wild and uncultivated land (Griffith, 1823; 1829; Weale Report, 1831). Sliabh Luachra was generally considered impassable with few roads until the late seventeenth century (Moynihan, 2003). Cullen (1968) notes the important role road building played in the changing social patterns in the nineteenth century, in

particular as people built near roads and towns developed becoming centres for trade and social activity. The development of a road network in Sliabh Luachra, outlined in more detail by Moynihan (2003), impacted on the culture of the region. Roads became the arteries for people and culture. Ideas, knowledge and materials from outside the region were more readily accessible. People who were formally involved in criminal activity settled into working on the newly enclosed farmland (Moynihan, 2003).

Probably the most significant individual involved in shaping the landscape and environment of the Sliabh Luachra region was Richard Griffith who, between 1823 and 1851, "submitted nine separate reports on the various roads constructed under his supervision within and through Sliabh Luachra" (Moynihan, 2003: 62, 63). These roads were to have an enormous impact on the language and culture of the area. Moynihan notes that "Griffith's roads finally established a satisfactory network of roads within and through Sliabh Luachra and vastly improved the quality of life of its inhabitants" (2003: 87). Despite these improvements, even today, there is no national primary or secondary road through the Sliabh Luachra region (see figure 19).

Despite advances in accessibility and agriculture, the Sliabh Luachra region succumbed to a number of famines (1821, 1836, 1837 and 1842) that preceded the Great Famine (Moynihan, 2003). Moynihan notes the massive population loss brought about by the Great Famine in the late 1840s, observing that townlands within the innermost parts of the region were worst affected. Post famine work schemes brought some relief to the region and the opening of Rathmore train station in 1854 created further links to the outside world. However, Sliabh Luachra was still largely unaffected by developments in Ireland as a whole. Moynihan notes that thought The Encumbered Estates Act of 1849 led to one fifth of Ireland's land change hands over the course of the following two decades, "the structure of land ownership in Sliabh Luachra remained as it was prior to the outbreak of the Great Famine" (2003: 98).

The Irish language remained strong in the Sliabh Luachra region but this was challenged by the development of the National School system, in which English was the official language. The economy of Sliabh Luachra gradually improved and the development of the Gaelic Athletic Association (G.A.A.) in 1884 and the Gaelic League in 1893 were welcomed in Sliabh Luachra where branches were formed in a number of parishes (Moynihan, 2003). Despite the gradual decline in the use of Irish in the Sliabh

Luachra region, a number of individuals including the poets Aodhgáin Ó Rathaille and Eoghan Rua Ó Suilleabháin were integral to the Irish language movement elsewhere. Most significant was cleric, author and lexicographer An tAthair Pádraig S. Ó Duinín whose work included the celebration of the Sliabh Luachra poets and the publication of an Irish-English dictionary (Herlihy, 2004). While the language went into decline and the poets became part of the story from another age, Sliabh Luachra developed a strong musical tradition with a distinct regional sound in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Dairy farming has, since the famine of the 1840s, become an important element of the Sliabh Luachra economy. Prior to that, greater emphasis was placed on self sufficiency and potatoes, oats and turnips found more readily in the region while the pig was also an important part of the family's produce. Ó Duinnín notes: "The climatic conditions with abundant rainfall and the upland nature of the countryside favoured dairying as opposed to fattening, with peak pasture growth from about May to November" (1991: 9). Butter was homemade and sent in firkins to the butter exchange in Cork while "the exchange of cattle generally found expression locally in the great fairs of Knocknagree" (Ó Duinnín, 1991: 9). While agriculture remains an integral part of life in Sliabh Luachra, the local fairs and markets have been replaced by modern marts in Castleisland, Gortatlea, Milltown and Abbeyfeale.

With the development of villages and towns along the new network of roads, new social and economic networks are created. Commenting on the development of villages in the Sliabh Luachra region, Ó Ceilleachair notes: "It is generally accepted that villages grew up because of the necessity to provide a trading centre for the surrounding countryside. Not trading as we know today, but a place that provided the people with the basic requirements of everyday living – based for the most part on materials provided locally. Usually they were situated no more than six or seven miles apart – this we can presume was because of lack of transport at the time" (1996: 3). Elsewhere Ó Céilleachair notes: "While the rural village shops supplied the basic necessities of life, many people, especially women, visited "Town" a couple of times a year. "Town" could be Killarney, Castleisland, Kanturk, Millstreet – it all depended on where one lived in Sliabh Luachra" (1996a: 7). While fiddles appear to have been readily available in the villages of Sliabh Luachra in the early twentieth centuries, it was necessary to go to "Town" for an

accordion and visit Caball's in Tralee, Ryan's in Newmarket or other shops in Killarney (O'Leary, 1982; Doyle, 1985).

Towns and villages became centres for cultural activity and fairs and markets and later dance halls and public houses became important spaces for the performance and reception of Irish traditional music. Significant fairs were held at Knocknagree on a monthly basis in the early to mid-twentieth century, marking it is an important economic and cultural centre for the region. While the economy of the Sliabh Luachra region was largely dependent on agriculture, many also sought employment in the tourism sector, particularly in Killarney. Irish traditional musicians became a feature of the cultural tourism sold to an overseas market that is largely unaware of regional nuances in the music. As well as musicians from surrounding areas, musicians came from other places to gain employment, particularly during the summer months. Other nearby large towns including Tralee, Newcastle West and Millstreet also provided some employment opportunities.

A significant development in the region was the establishment in 1973 of Munster Joinery, a fully Irish owned company in Ballydesmond, Co. Cork. Munster Joinery is recognised as the largest private employer in the area, employing 1,000 people at Lacca Cross at the beginning of 2009 (*The Corkman*, 22 January 2009). The company was started by brothers Donal and Patrick Ring at the family house at Lacca Cross. According to *The Corkman* newspaper:

> The rise of Munster Joinery over the years meant that young people in Duhallow emigrated out of choice; not necessity. It has also meant that women who wished to go back to work on a part time or full time basis could secure administration or sales work, and yet be only a few miles from their doorstep. It has also meant that the local areas of Ballydesmond, Boherbue, Kiskeam, Knocknagree, Kanturk, Newmarket, Cullen, Rockchapel as well as towns and villages outside the catchment area also benefited (22nd January 2009).

Munster Joinery is a significant feature of the region's economy and the effects of its location outlined in the quoted article are important in a consideration of local culture.

The evolution of the economy of the region has impacted upon the evolution of music in the region, as well as the role of music in the lives of the people in the region. The decline in local economies and regional social networks impacts upon the musical culture of the region, particularly in relation to the availability of venues such as rural

public houses for the performance of Irish traditional music. In some places, Irish traditional music has been combined with other aspects of Irish culture to form a marketable commodity under the guise of cultural or heritage tourism. As explored in later sections, the economic pressures that emanate in particular from the tourism sector complicate the construction and examination of regional culture and identity.

6.4 Origins and evolution of Sliabh Luachra as a musical place

The identity of Sliabh Luachra as a region with a particular musical tradition was not realised until the latter half of the twentieth century. The following section considers the various interconnected processes that have helped construct the Sliabh Luachra musical region and its soundscape. I examine the various musicians that are to the fore in shaping the soundscape and musical style of the region. The musical style, instrumentation and repertoire have undoubtedly evolved. The various processes identified in Chapter Five – transcription and publication of repertoire, impact of recording and broadcasting and the institutionalisation of aspects of the tradition – may be identified in the Sliabh Luachra region.

As already highlighted, the spaces of the social network in Irish traditional music have evolved from the home, dancehall and public houses in the immediate neighbourhoods of the artists involved to a global, often urban based social network supported by political and economic motives. Writing about the Sliabh Luachra region, Ó Síodhacáin (1982) notes the role of the folk boom and the popularity of city folk clubs during the 1960s which impacted on the status and context for performance of Irish traditional music. Increasingly, musicians record albums, take part in competitions, travel to festivals of Irish music around the country, and appear on radio and television. These further strengthen the recognition of some regions of Irish traditional music. The regional imbalance in Irish traditional music is highlighted by an examination of some of these social institutions.

The non-musical history of Sliabh Luachra remains relevant to the examination of the Sliabh Luachra music region. The poetry of Aodgháin Ó Rathaille and Eoghan Rua Ó Suilleabháin made reference to and influenced the music of the area (Herlihy, 2004). Ó Suilleabháin is also referred to as a harper and is credited with the composition of the air

‘Rodney’s Glory’, developed from a Carolan composition to accompany his own poem of the same title. The rich poetry of the region has attracted the attention of a variety of scholars including Seán Ó Riada. Even though he had not examined the musical traditions of the Sliabh Luachra region in *Our Musical Heritage* (1962), Seán Ó Riada was aware of the poetic and linguistic traditions of the region. Reflecting on the work of his father, Peadar Ó Riada notes:

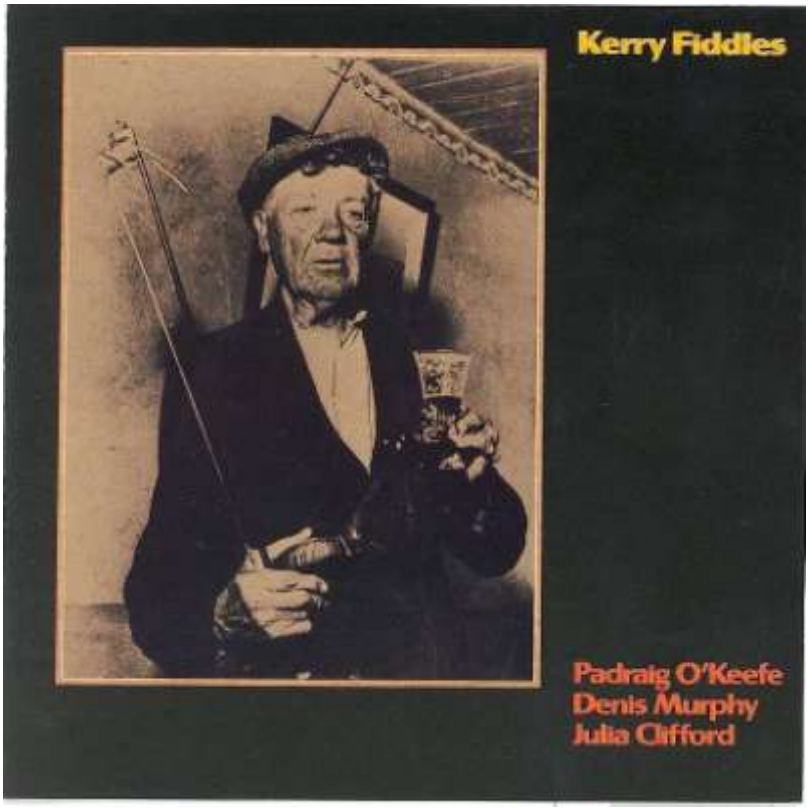
> Seán was enthralled with rediscovering the ‘Náisiún Gaelach’ or the ‘The Great Gaelic World’, the world of Brehon laws and poetry and heroism and legend and language. Eoghan Rua Ó Suilleabháin became the immediate hero for him and Aogán Ó Rathaille a person for venerating. Both these men were seventeenth and eighteenth century bardic poets from Sliabh Luachra on the Cork Kerry border (Ó Riada, 2008: 24).

Influenced by Corkery’s *The Hidden Ireland* (1924), Ó Riada did not reconcile his imagination of the culture of Sliabh Luachra which was consigned to the past with the vibrant musical traditions of the region during his lifetime.

The Gaelic League was influential in organising events and music classes that fostered local music traditions intertwined with the Irish language and dancing (Herlihy, 2004; see also Brennan, 1999). In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, local feiseanna were organised and some competed in the Demesne in Killarney on the 15th August, which was ‘Pattern Day’, an important social event where people from many localities gathered and took part in cultural and sporting activities (Herlihy, 2004). Sunday afternoon dancing at crossroads was also popular at this time. Lynch (1991) notes the importance of the Pattern at “The City” on May first. Cnocán an Rince was an important site in the early nineteenth century, while Loobridge (the Rock) near Glenflesk and Shrone Lake were also popular locations for music and dance. In some instances crossroad dancing gave way to platform dancing. In a history of music in Kilcummin parish, nine sites for platform dancing are identified: The timber bridge at Mastergeeha’; Charlie Thaden’s; Toormore; Filebue/Keane’s Cross; Michael Friel’s shop; Castleisland Cross; The Kicking Jennet; Lawlor’s Cross; and Corner of the Park (Herlihy, 2004). The importance of Pattern Day’s for musical activity was challenged by the development of dance halls in the mid-1920s. An exception being the Gortacarrin Platform in the 1930s, by which time dance halls were established features of the Sliabh Luachra soundscape. Crossroads dancing did not disappear completely and the activities of Bill Sullivan of

Knocknacolan, Kanturk, were influential in the later diffusion of Sliabh Luachra musical culture (Roche, interview with author, ; see also O'Keeffe, 1999).

Figure 20 Cd cover for the album *Kerry Fiddles* featuring the photograph taken of Pádraig O'Keeffe by Diane Hamilton in 1947.



Source: O'Keefe, Pádraig, Murphy, Denis, and Clifford, Julia, 1977, 1994, *Kerry Fiddles* London: Topic (TSCD309) Topic 12T 309 / TSCD309 - Ossian OSSCD10. Author's collection.

While Ó Riada (1962) makes loose reference to an area in South Kerry by the Cork border, Sliabh Luachra is not identified as a region in *Our Musical Heritage*, a major element in the development of a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. In spite of Ó Riada's focus elsewhere, it is unlikely that Ó Riada was unaware of the region. Fiddle player Denis Murphy from Gneeveguilla was a friend of and much admired by Ó Riada. Even before Ó Riada began exploring regional traditions in Irish traditional

music, Séamus Ennis and Ciarán MacMathúna had already begun to recognise and record regional variation. The identification of a Sliabh Luachra music region dates from the 1940s and 1950s when individuals such as Séamus Ennis and Ciarán MacMathúna came to record material for the radio, some of which was later released on LP and CD (O'Leary. 1982; Herlihy, 2007). Liam Clancy, in the company of Diane Hamilton, also visited the Sliabh Luachra region in 1955, recording Pádraig O'Keeffe and taking what has become the most recognisable picture of the man (Plate 43). The recordings made by Clancy and Hamilton later appeared on the album *The Lark in the Morning*.

Those who visited the Sliabh Luachra region in the late 1940s and through the 1950s, including Séamus Ennis and Ciarán MacMathúna, encountered a soundscape of strange accents in which the fiddle provided the dominant musical sound. As well as the standard repertoire of jigs and reels, they encountered a repertoire of polkas and slides that were played primarily for dancers. Notable accordion player Johnny O'Leary (1997) stresses the role of Ciarán MacMathúna work from the 1950s onwards. Herlihy (2007) also argues for the significance of recordings released in the late 1970s in creating a musical identity for Sliabh Luachra, as well as highlighting and diffusing the traditions of the region. Referring to the 1950s, Johnny O'Leary notes:

> That time, the music of Sliabh Luachra wasn't known as well as it is now. Séamus Ennis did the first radio broadcast in the early 1940s. People like Seán Mac Reamoinn, Ciarán Mac Mathúna and Seán Ó Riada came after that. They put Sliabh Luachra music where it is in Ireland today (1982: 11).

The importance of the activities of Ennis and MacMathúna in Sliabh Luachra is further emphasised by a story from Dan Herlihy. The recordings made by Seamus Ennis at Charlie Horan's in September 1952 went into the BBC Sound Archives and disseminated in 1977 as an LP entitled *Kerry Fiddles - Music from Sliabh Luachra Vol.1* released under the Topic label. Speaking on *The Rolling Wave*, Dan Herlihy recollected:

> Well you see when I left to go to England, there wasn't an awful lot of talk of Patrick Keeffe at all or even Sliabh Luachra because, you won't believe this now but I was over in Dave Lyths house one night and he said to me "I got this new ah thingame, this new ah, big round records, what do you call em, [Peter Brown: "LP's"], yes, ahm music from Munster he said, its from Sliabh Luachra". And I said to him "where the hell is Sliabh Luachra?" you know and he said "its, its on the Cork Kerry border it says here on the thingame" and I said "who are the players?" and he said "Denis Murphy and Julia Clifford and Patrick" and sure I says "ah for Christs sake sure that's where I come from". But I didn't know the Sliabh Luachra before I

> left but twas all Sliabh Luachra when I came home (*The Rolling Wave* 10th January 2007).

Herlihy's memories reflect the historical and imaginative invention of Sliabh Luachra within the Irish traditional music and the juxtaposition of time and place. He also highlights the role of Pádraig O'Keeffe and his students in the construction of identity for the Sliabh Luachra region.

The role of the radio in disseminating knowledge about the Sliabh Luachra region of music is crucial to an understanding of Sliabh Luachra identity. In particular, the recordings of Pádraig O'Keeffe were and still are significant in the 'discovery' of Sliabh Luachra. The recordings were made towards the end of Pádraig's life and, until then, Pádraig remained little known outside the Sliabh Luachra region (Hanafin, 1995). Séamus Ennis, Ciarán MacMathúna and Aindreas Ó Gallchóir, who also worked for *Raidió Éireann* and recorded Pádraig, become important characters in the Sliabh Luachra story and agents in the process of the Sliabh Luachra region. Ó Síodhacáin states: "For creating outside awareness of Sliabh Luachra music first and primary credit must go to Ciarán MacMathúna" (1982: 100), though this reflection ignores the importance of other characters. The radio continues to play a significant role in the dissemination of Sliabh Luachra identity through programmes such as *Céilí House* and *The Rolling Wave* as outlined further below. The role of Peter Browne, in essence the inheritor of the roles of Séamus Ennis and Ciarán MacMathúna, in the narratives of Sliabh Luachra is notable, particularly in his role in the establishment of the Patrick O'Keeffe Festival. Browne visited Castleisland in 1992 in order to conduct research on the life and times of O'Keeffe for RTE Radio 1. Browne's research informed a four-part documentary that examined the life of Pádraig O'Keeffe, first broadcast in November 1994. At the conclusion of his work in the Sliabh Luachra area in early 1993 Browne suggested that Castleisland should host a festival to mark the 30th anniversary of O'Keeffe's death. The festival continues and is an important element of experiencing Sliabh Luachra today.

The history of music in Sliabh Luachra and the identity of Sliabh Luachra music are dominated by the figure of Pádraig O'Keeffe. O'Keeffe is central to the emergence of Sliabh Luachra as an area of interest in Irish traditional music in the 1950s. However, a more complex narrative exists relating to individuals involved in shaping the musical traditions of the Sliabh Luachra region. Music in Sliabh Luachra was performed in private

homes for generations. Travelling musicians and dancing masters were integral to the development and diffusion of the tradition. Arthur Young, who travelled through Ireland in 1776-7, noted the popularity of dancing among the population and the custom of travelling dancing masters to be accompanied by pipers or fiddlers. In the series *Caniúntí Cheoil*, flute player Séamus Tansey argues that pipers were the first influence on regional styles (4th November 2007). The pipes were the favoured instrument and "piping offered a respectable livelihood for any youth, who, physically incapacitated, could not hope to earn a living as an agricultural labourer, servant or tradesman" (Breathnach, 1985: 6). The engineer Richard Griffith made reference to the dancing and the playing of pipes in Kingwilliamstown (Ballydesmond) following the completion of one of the roads (Hickey, 1987). The collector and early scholar of Irish traditional music, Captain Francis O'Neill (1913) makes reference to Daniel O'Leary, a piper from Duhallow who had connections to Doon in the early nineteenth century. O'Leary is a contemporary of James Gandsey (1769-1857), the 'Killarney Minstrel' who is associated with Muckross House and Lord Headley of Aghadoe (Plate 41, p. 345). Gandsey inherited much music and a set of pipes from Thady Connor, a blind piper in the Killarney area and the first piper that can be named in Kerry (Breathnach, 1985). Such was the fame of Gandsey that many writers of the time including Crofton-Croker, Sir Samuel Ferguson, the Halls and Thomas Francis Meagher referred to him in their writings and "it was very much part of the routine for anyone visiting Killarney to hear Gandsey play as it was to view the lakes" (Breathnach, 1985: 6). The music performed by these musicians may not be remarkably different from today but the contexts and spaces in which they performed have altered dramatically.

The harp, linked to the traditions of poetry in the region, also contributed to the musical soundscape of the region. Folkore recalls the ability of Eoghan Rua Ó Suilleabháin on the harp. Ó Siodhacáin (1982) also makes reference to the harp tradition and in particular Edward Walsh (1805-1850). Referred to as The Bard of Duhallow, Walsh came from Derragh near Kiskeam. Walsh was a hedge-school master and later a teacher in the National School system. He then became a journalist in Dublin where some of his music and poetry became part of the collections of Thomas Moore (Ó Síodhacáin, 1982; Ó Ríordáin, 1986). Ó Ríordáin notes that Walsh was a folklorist, schoolmaster, journalist, secretary, musician and singer and, through writing in a variety of publications, introduced a wider audience to the folkore of Duhallow (Ó Ríordáin, 1986; 2005). However, Ó Ríordáin (2005) makes little reference to Walsh's capabilities on the harp,

noting instead his influence on the evolution of Irish culture, particularly in the realms of poetry and language. The tradition of harps and uilleann pipes has all but died out in this region and the musical traditions to which most people refer are dominated by the tradition of fiddle playing.

Figure 21 represents the transmission of the fiddle tradition in Sliabh Luachra and the musical genealogies present. Fiddlers Patrick O'Grady (d. 1888) and Corney Drew (b. 1838) are early travelling music masters from the same period as Gandsey to whom many of the musicians can trace their lineage. John Linehan (1860-1932) was also a full time travelling music teacher who taught a large number of pupils. Pádraig O'Keeffe is the most celebrated musician of his region and it is around him that the identity and narrative of the Sliabh Luachra region is centred (Ó Duinnín, 1993; Lyth, 1996; Lynch, 1994). Other important music teachers of Sliabh Luachra are the fiddle players Tadhg Ó Buachalla or Tadhgín an Asal (dates unknown) and his student Tom Billy Murphy (1875-1943). These fiddlers are important historical characters in the identity narratives constructed for the Sliabh Luachra region.

Patrick O'Grady is reputed to have played for Queen Victoria on her visit to Killarney in 1861 (Herlihy, 2007). O'Grady died in Brosna in 1888 and is buried in Rockchapel cemetery. John Linehan (1860-1932) from Gleanreagh, Co. Cork also preceded O'Keeffe in teaching music in Sliabh Luachra and his pupils include Maurice O'Keeffe of Kiskeam, Co. Cork. Linehan travelled with a donkey to Cullen, Boherbue and other nearby places. He would teach the scale for ten shillings and charged eight pence per tune after that. He wrote out the music in staff notation. Linehan's daughter Sheila Beale also played fiddle but emigrated to America (Maurice O'Keeffe on *The Rolling Wave*, 19th August 2009). O'Keeffe himself got much music from his Mother's family, the Callaghan's of Doon, near Kiskeam. The Callaghan's in turn got much music from Corney Drew. Herlihy (2007) identifies Drew as an influential fiddle teacher who was born in Dromtariffe, Co. Cork in 1838 and settled in Kiskeam in 1863. The Drew family emigrated to America at some point between 1885 and 1890 and the tune entitled *Corney Drew's Hornpipe* appears in O'Neill's Collection (O'Neill, 1913).

Figure 21 Musical genealogies in Sliabh Luachra.

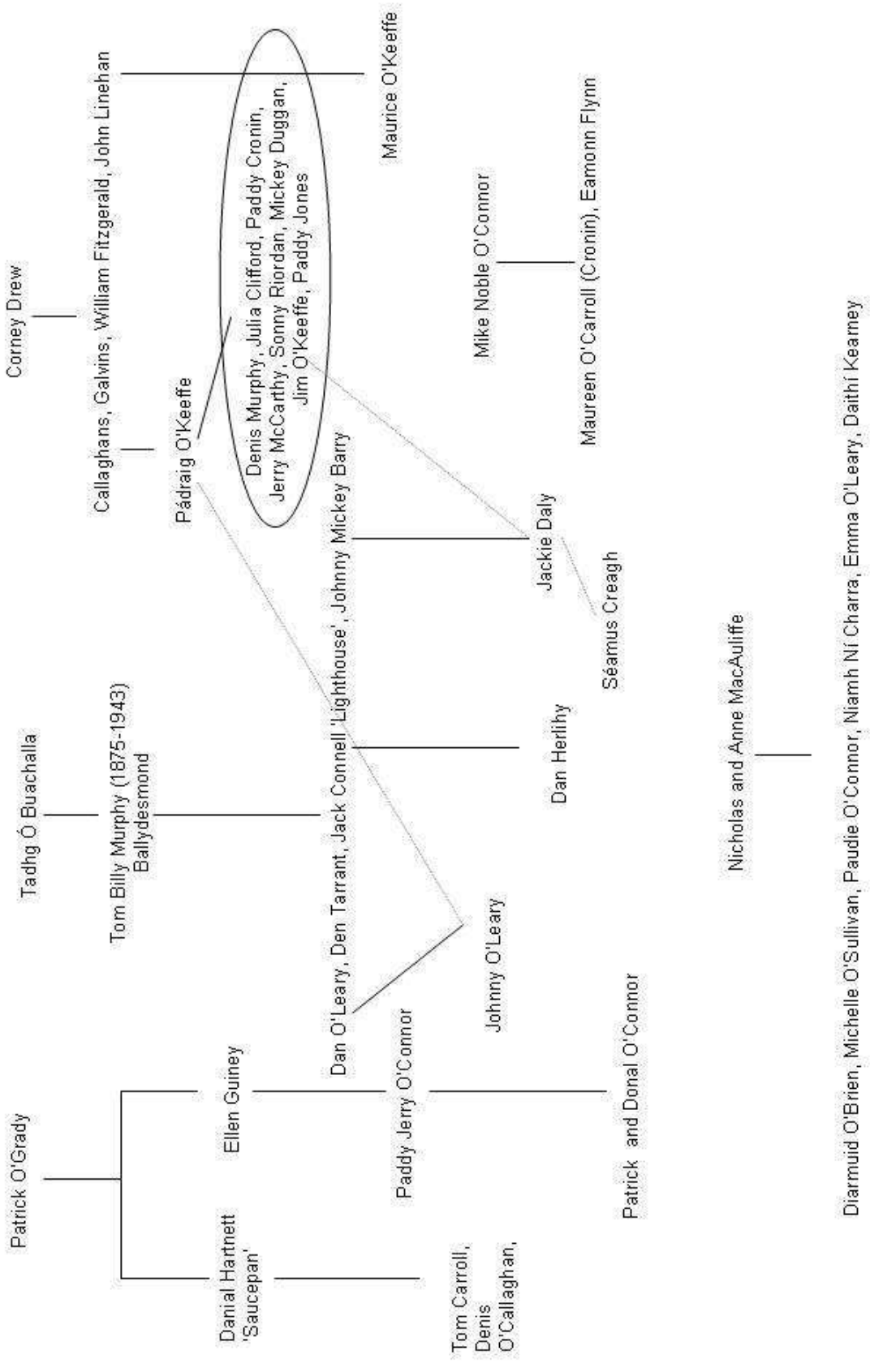
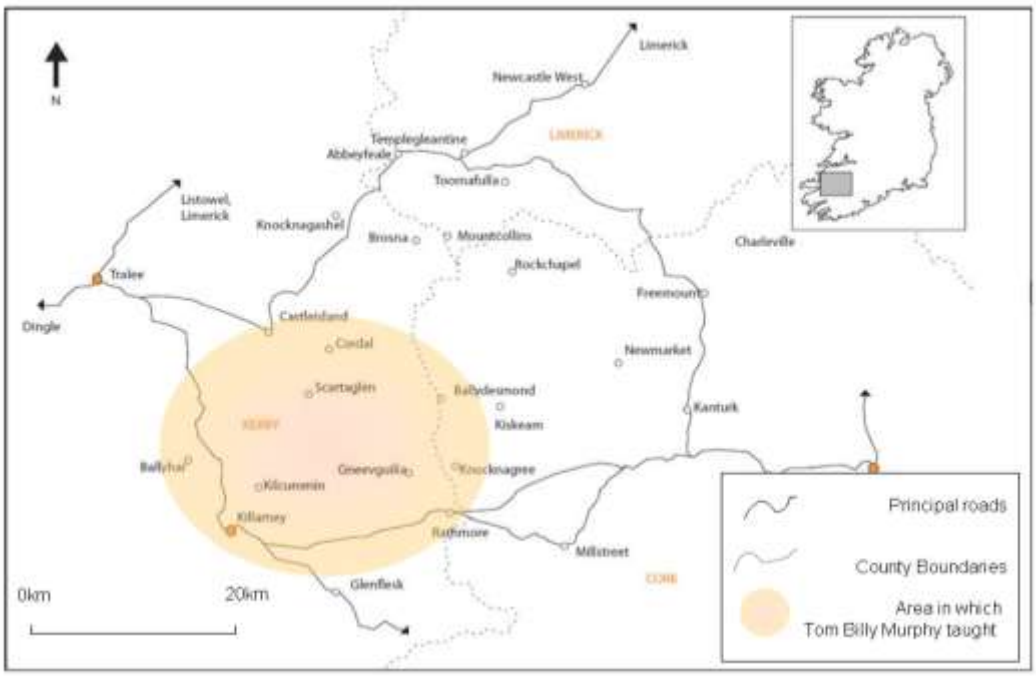


Plate 26 Monument to Tom Billy Murphy near Ballydesmond, Co. Cork, unveiled on September 11th 1983.



Source: Author, 26th May, 2007.

Figure 22 Map indicating the area visited by Tom Billy Murphy



Source: Adapted from Murphy (1980).

Tom Billy Murphy is a near contemporary of Pádraig O'Keeffe but does not become part of the process of audio recording. Born in Glencollins, Ballydesmond, Co. Cork in 1875 to a family of seventeen, his family had lived for generations in the Sliabh Luachra area (Murphy, 1980). Tom Billy's mother died when he was eight years of age and at thirteen he lost his sight and partial use of one leg and hand. He learned music from Tadhg Buckley or Tadhg an Asal from Knocknagree who travelled the locality on a donkey. Tom Billy himself travelled on a donkey, his travels bringing him from Ballydesmond to Knocknaboul, Gneeveguilla, Shrone, Barradubh, Kilcummin and Farranfore (Murphy, 1980; Fig. 22). Tom Billy died in 1943. People in the region have commented that his musical style differed to that of Pádraig O'Keeffe, being less ornamented and more suitable for dancing. In contrast Murphy notes: "He played his hornpipes in smooth long lazy rhythm that perhaps did not please everybody" (1980: 21). Herlihy also reflects:

> Tom Billy was a great player for house dances. Maybe more so than Patrick Keeffe. Patrick Keeffe was a great player himself but for the house dance, for the kind of lively music you'd want for a house dance, Tom Billy was the man for that […] it might have been very simple and very straight but the music actually relied on the notes of the music without any ornamentation at all (*The Rolling Wave*, 10th January, 2007).

Herlihy identifies a link between Tom Billy and accordion player Johnny O'Leary through Johnny's uncle and teacher Dan at whose house Tom Billy would stay on occasion. A great number of tunes named after Tom Billy and attributed to him, including a number entitled 'Tom Billy's Jig', are present in the repertoire of Sliabh Luachra and beyond. A monument to him stands on the Newmarket Road, half a mile from Ballydesmond village (Plate 26).

An important element of the transmission process in the Sliabh Luachra tradition was the learning of music from parents and other family members. Music was shared across Sliabh Luachra between musicians who performed together at house dances, sessions and, more recently, festivals. Danny Ab, whose name appears on the album *Kerry Fiddles* to identify a set of slides provides an interesting reflection on the nature of transmission in Sliabh Luachra. Danny Ab was a tailor from Sliabh Luachra who used to whistle his tunes to his neighbours including the flute and whistle player, Art O'Keeffe. Julia Clifford said of Danny Ab:

> Myself and Denis were very young, you know, mad for music. One Sunday afternoon we were sitting indoors and up through our old-fashioned yard through the fields came Danny Ab. And he came in... my father knew'm anyway. He loved tea--he was mad for tea. So he started whistling these slides y'know. So we made tea for'm anyway and the more he was whistling the slides the more we were making tea. And the two of us sat there and learned the two slides while he was drinking the tea (Ward, 1977).

Similarly, Johnny O'Leary remembered:

> He was a small little man that lived alone above, up the road from Denis Murphy. Danny Ab, he used to do a bit of mending in clothes. That's how he lived, the poor man. Danny Ab, and he was an awful man for music. He never played. He had a bit on the tin whistle all right. He could start the tunes on a tin whistle. But, Jesus Christ, when Denis Murphy and them got to know him right, they followed lots of his tunes, and Art O'Keeffe the same way. He'd the nicest slides that was ever. Handed down to him. Seemingly his mother's people used play. She was supposed to be a Welsh woman. But she had all traditional tunes. And 'tis she handed them over to him. [...] I declare to Christ he started diddling the tunes and Denis above one day. And Denis said, 'Where did you get that one Danny?' 'I have a share of them', he says to Denis. And Denis started at him. Denis went up with the fiddle the following evening. Sure he got the world of slides from him, man. He called three or four of them Danny Ab's slides (in Moylan, 1994: 102).

The stories of Danny Ab reflect the role and importance of music in Sliabh Luachra and the processes of naming that reinforce the connection between music, people and place. The context for the transmission process presented above has changed dramatically and in many instances has been institutionalised. *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and the Vocational Education Committee (V.E.C.) have had an important role in supporting and promoting the transmission of Irish traditional music since the latter half of the twentieth century. Though the institutionalisation of the transmission process has enabled greater access to the traditions in many places, it challenges the local connections and connects local processes of transmission with a global network.

Despite the various music teachers in the region and the different contexts for learning music, the prominent position of Pádraig O'Keeffe in the narratives of the Sliabh Luachra region owes much to the work of Séamus Ennis and Ciarán MacMathúna. Séamus Ennis first met Pádraig in 1946 and it is considered that they developed a mutual regard and respect for each other (Cranitch, 2006). Ennis recorded Pádraig in 1947 for the Folklore Commission, 1948 and 1949 for Raidió Éireann, and for the BBC in 1952

(Browne, 1993 cited in Cranitch, 2006). Ennis, Ciarán MacMathúna and Aindreas Ó Gallchóir all recorded Pádraig for the radio but Liam Clancy and Diane Hamilton, the American folk music collector, also recorded Pádraig's playing in 1955 (Clancy, 1996; Cranitch, 2006). Some of these recordings were later released on *The Lark in the Morning*, notably listing a slide as a jig reflecting the level of knowledge of the region's repertoire at that time. Other recordings of Pádraig that were later released include the aforementioned *Kerry Fiddles* (O'Keeffe, Murphy and Clifford, 1977), *The Sliabh Luachra Fiddle Master* (O'Keeffe, 1993) and *Music from Clare and Kerry* (1987). It was through the radio and subsequently the release of these recordings that Sliabh Luachra became more widely known.

It was also through the radio that the association between Sliabh Luachra music and the music of Pádraig O'Keeffe was developed and communicated to a wider audience (see Cranitch, 2006). Though there are limited recordings of Pádraig and these are widely considered to feature him past his prime, these sounds become part of what is now recognised as the Sliabh Luachra style. Pádraig himself favoured reels and slow airs, though he also played slides and polkas which were required for the dancing of sets in the region. The Sliabh Luachra sound and style of music is a developed version of that which Pádraig himself had inherited but it becomes institutionalised through a number of available recordings including *Kerry Fiddles, The Star Above the Garter* and a series of albums released on the Ossian label.

Kerry Fiddles was recorded by Seamus Ennis at Charlie Horan's Bar in Castleisland, Co. Kerry for BBC in 1952 and first published in 1977 by Topic. It was not originally recorded for commercial release – the radio provided the motive for the recording (Winick, 1997). The recording featured Pádraig O'Keeffe with two of his students, Denis Murphy and Julia Clifford. McCullough's (1978) review of this and other albums in 1978 highlights the connection between music and place, which is reinforced through the many recordings at that time. Despite the common association of Sliabh Luachra with polkas and slides, this particular recording only features one set of polkas and two sets of slides alongside jigs, reels and hornpipes. The recording also features two airs by Pádraig reflecting his liking for them. The nomenclature present makes reference to notable local characters including Tom Billy and Danny Ab, as well as local places such as Ballydesmond, though it is noticeable that this is prevalent in the slides and

polkas rather than the more generic tunes. The influence of these recordings in informing different generations within the Irish traditional music audience on the concept of regional styles is noted by Condon (1995) and Winick (1997), particularly in relation to Topic Records.

Fiddle players Denis Murphy and Julia Clifford – the 'Waivers' of Gneeveguilla were amongst the most influential and well-known students of Pádraig O'Keeffe. Their nickname 'Waiver' or 'Weaver' is a reference to the family's occupation in previous generations in the flax weaving industry in the region which has since died out. Julia and Denis were part of a large family born to Bill Murphy, a whistle player and Maimie Corbett, a singer. It is largely from their father that the Murphy's got their music (*The Rolling Wave*, 29th July, 2009. First broadcast on 5th August 1995). He was part of a marching band in Lisheen. Denis' sister Mary got a fiddle when Denis was nine years old and he would try to play it when she was not around. Denis' brothers Dan and Teddie played much music in the dance halls in New York. Pádraig O'Keeffe became the principal influence on their playing. Julia (1914-1997) moved to London in 1935 and, apart from visits home, spent most of her life there. Her son Billy remembered that even though Julia played all sorts of music while in London, she would revert to the Sliabh Luachra style when she returned home and played with Denis (*The Rolling Wave*, 29th July, 2009. First broadcast on 5th August 1995). Denis (1910-1974) spent much time in New York between 1949 and 1965 and his music is also influenced by the Sligo style of Coleman and others that was popular at the time.

Denis Murphy played music regularly with Pádraig O'Keeffe in Jack Lyon's public house in Scartaglen. Denis was very much influenced by Pádraig. Denis Murphy married Julia Mary Sheehan of Toreencahill. Though Denis Murphy is an important character in the Sliabh Luachra story, he is also part of global Irish traditional music community. Denis enjoyed listening to various musical styles. In America, Denis was friendly with, performed with and was influenced by Paddy Killoran. According to Paddy Cronin, Denis was known as 'the polka man' in America and though he played a lot of slides and polkas, he adapted his music to suit the place where he was playing and the people with whom he was playing (*The Rolling Wave*, 29th July, 2009. First broadcast on 5th August 1995). Though they spent much time in America, Denis and Julia Mary were always anxious to come back to live in Ireland. Back in Ireland Denis Murphy also

became friendly with Seán Ó Riada (Ó Canainn, 1993; 2003; Cranitch, 2006; Herlihy, 2007) and Breandán Breathnach, influencing the work and attitudes of both. Denis Murphy is remembered in Gneeveguilla where the local GAA Hall is named after him (Plate 28). Denis is buried with his wife Julia Mary in Gneeveguilla, with the Paps providing a backdrop to his grave (Plate 27).

Plate 27 The grave of Denis and Julia Mary Murphy in Gneeveguila, Co. Kerry.



Source: Author, 5th June, 2009.

Plate 28 Plaque commemorating Denis Murphy at Gneeveguilla GAA Hall.



Source: Author, 5th June, 2009.

Julia Clifford (1914-1997), is an interesting character in the global network of Irish traditional music, as well as the narratives of Sliabh Luachra. Julia remembers that it was her father that got her started on the fiddle and she got tunes from her brother early on but, when it was decided that she should have a teacher, it was Pádraig O'Keeffe that was chosen (*The Rolling Wave*, 15th July 2009, first broadcast 31st January 1988). As previously mentioned, Julia moved to London in 1935 where she married her husband Johnny Clifford. She was active in the music scene of London but, as Herlihy notes: "There didn't seem to be a whole lot of mass in the polkas over there, 'twas mostly the west of Ireland stuff" (*The Rolling Wave*, 10th January, 2007). As a woman, Julia Clifford has a particular position in a male dominated tradition, her participation in that tradition possibly made easier by her location in London. Along with her husband Johnny on accordion, and later son Billy, a flute player, she contributed to the narrative of the Sliabh Luachra music region from a distance. Later living in Newcastle West, Co. Limerick, she

remained at the edge yet directly connected through tradition, memory and story. Her son Billy now lives in Tipperary where he teaches music and returns regularly to the Sliabh Luachra area. As part of *Fleadh Cheoil na Mumhan* 2009, Billy taught a polka and slide workshop, maintaining a link with the traditions of the previous generation. Billy was part of the Star of Munster Trio with his mother and father who recorded *Music from Sliabh Luachra Volume 2: The Star of Munster Trio*. Billy himself recorded *Music from Sliabh Luachra Volume 4: Irish Traditional Flute Solos and Band Music from Kerry and Tipperary*. Despite his lineage and the promotion of his recordings as music from Sliabh Luachra, it is difficult to identify the role or position of Billy Clifford in the narrative of the Sliabh Luachra region today.

Julia and Denis appear on *Kerry Fiddles* which was recorded in 1952 with Pádraig and *The Star Above the Garter* which was recorded in Dublin in 1969. According to Cranitch, the recording made by Denis and his sister Julia, *The Star Above the Garter*, "is widely considered to be a masterpiece by musicians and listeners alike, both within Sliabh Luachra and outside the area" (2006: 229). The track listing for *The Star Above the Garter* includes eight of jigs, three hornpipes and ten reels, reflecting the common breakdown of tunes in the tradition. Denis and Julia also play two airs each, as well as two sets of slides and three sets of polkas, which reflect the local soundscape. Tune names make reference to musicians including Tom Billy, Dan O'Keeffe and Padraic O'Keeffe and local places including Rathawaun, Ballydesmond, Knocknaboul, Scartaglen, Glentaun and Lisheen.

The informal contexts for learning and sharing music has changed somewhat from that experienced and remembered by Julia Clifford and Johnny O'Leary. Teaching music has become more formalised. The role of Nicholas and Anne McAuliffe in teaching Irish traditional music to a large numbers of pupils is part of a new context for learning Irish traditional music that is somewhat removed from the genealogical style profile of music in the region. The McAuliffe's are part of a wider Irish traditional music community with a strong connection to musicians from other parts of the country and they have brought a wide range of influences to the musical soundscape of the Sliabh Luachra region including technique, repertoire and stories. Some of the music classes conducted by the McAuliffes are sponsored by the V.E.C. and others operate in conjunction with *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. The McAuliffes exist in both the local network of music

transmission and as part of a wider global context of Irish traditional music teaching in a number of summer schools such as *Scoil Samhradh Willie Clancy* and *Scoil Éigse* as well as their regular classes. A number of their pupils, of whom only a very small sample relevant to this study are presented in the Figure 21, have gone on to contribute to Irish traditional music and the evolving identity of music in Kerry as commercial artists, teachers and researchers.

While the fiddle dominates the narratives of Sliabh Luachra, the McAuliffes also note the strong tradition of flute and tin whistle playing in Sliabh Luachra (McAuliffe and McAuliffe 1985) as well as fife and drum bands. Amongst the best-known tin whistle players was Bill 'The Weaver' Murphy who was the father of Denis Murphy and Julia Clifford. Julia's son Billy is also a well-known flute player. Also noted are Dan Cronin and Art O'Keeffe of Gneeveguilla and Mick Cronin of Reaboy. Though the flute never attained the same status as the fiddle in the Sliabh Luachra region, a number of flute players continue to contribute to the regional soundscape of the region. Joe O'Sullivan of Gneeveguilla is part of the present generation of flute players in the Sliabh Luachra region. Joe plays regularly with Jimmy Doyle and others whose names are enshrined in the narratives of the Sliabh Luachra region. Joe's wife Katie is the founding secretary of the Sliabh Luachra branch of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and their son Ciarán is a notable tin whistle and banjo player. Geraldine Guilfoyle is also a noted whistle player and currently secretary of the Kerry County Board of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and her son Colm is a noteworthy flute player. In recent years Emma O'Leary (b. 1979) of Scartaglen has won All-Ireland honours at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* on tin whistle as well as fiddle. In listing the various musicians of the region, of whom only a small number are included, it is worth noting the intergenerational links and the genealogy of music that is present.

The dominance of the fiddle and an associated repertoire of reels, jigs, slides, polkas, hornpipes and slow airs also overshadows the development of brass bands in the region at the end of the nineteenth and start of the twentieth century. As previously noted, Pádraig O'Keeffe got much music from his mother's family, the Callaghans of Doon, Kiskeam. Kiskeam provides an interesting mix of narratives and spaces for musical traditions. On the gable wall of the village hall is painted a mural of a brass band from an altogether different musical tradition (Plate 30). Such bands were not uncommon in

Sliabh Luachra and stories tell of British soldiers stealing and supplying instruments at different times. These bands were connected to political demonstration and upheaval in the early decades of the twentieth century (Ó Síodhcán, 1982; Carolan, 2007). These bands were important to Irish traditional music for two reasons. The bands were important in the development of the flute and fife in Irish traditional music and these bands encouraged and facilitated musicians to learn to read music (Carolan, 2007). Ó Síodhacáin also notes that the bands "brought back good rousing marches that were later to find their way on occasion into the mainstream of music" (1982: 82).

The mural in Kiskeam presents a particular period of time and a musical tradition that seems disconnected from popular narratives of Sliabh Luachra music. It points to a concurrent musical tradition that highlights the centrality of music to the lives of people in Sliabh Luachra in the early twentieth century. O'Keeffe notes: "The first band in Kiskeam was a fife and drum band and it was formed in or about 1880" (1986: 47). He continues: "This band played at all local race meetings and at all the Land League assemblies" (1986: 47). Of the Kiskeam band, Ó Síodhacáin notes that it was founded during the Land League and "was left without instruments at a Sinn Féin rally in Newmarket during the Tan War when a local R.I.C. inspector rounded up the band and released them less their 'noise'" (1982: 82). Shoemaker Timothy Kiely, formerly a member of the Millstreet Brass Band, set up a business in Kiskeam in 1895 and under his leadership the Kiskeam Band evolved into a Brass Band by 1916. O'Keeffe comments on the fame of the band's banner, carrying a portrait of Kerry born patriot Thomas Ashe and reflected the patriotic fervour of the day. O'Keeffe notes that "there is scarcely a family in the neighbourhood of Kiskeam which had not some connection with it in its long and varied history" (1986: 47). There is little reference to the local tradition from which Pádraig O'Keeffe learned yet an annual festival to a living fiddler, Maurice O'Keeffe was established in the village of Kiskeam in 2001 (Plate 29). In 2007, Maurice received an award from The Patrick O'Keeffe Festival in recognition to his contribution to the music of Sliabh Luachra.

Plate 29 Mural commemorating Kiskeam Brass Band in Kiskeam, Co. Cork



Source: Author, 12th August, 2007.

As well as the fife and drums and brass bands made up of local musicians, the growth of the fair in Knocknagree in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s attracted a number of internationally renowned musical acts including opera singers and popular music groups. Moynihan (1983) notes that well know Irish tenor Frank Ryan, who had performed in Carnegie Hall, performed in Knocknagree. Dancehalls, which had featured a range of local musicians, were also increasingly featuring outside groups and their music. Highlighting changes in the music performed in the dancehalls from the 1950s Ó Ceilleachair notes:

> Tastes and habits became more sophisticated: Big bands were the main attraction. Their names alone conjured up visions of romance and excitement: The Clipper Carton, The Savoy Swing Seven, Brose Walsh, The Vanguard Six, Mick Delahunty, Maurice Mulcahy (1987: 9).

The impact of these bands on the local music scene was short lived and, while music from other places became the popular music of the younger people in particular, Irish traditional music continued to be performed and transmitted in the region. An important element was the changing spaces in which, and the social networks through which the music was disseminated.

6.5 Changes in the musical soundscape of the Sliabh Luachra region

The spaces and sounds of the Sliabh Luachra region have changed throughout the twentieth century. From the 1920s, influenced by financial reward, dance halls became important social and musical spaces in Sliabh Luachra (Clifford, 1987; Ó Ceilleachair, 1987). Such was the popularity of the dance hall, musicians such as Johnny O'Leary, Denis Murphy and Julia Clifford might play in one hall on a Sunday afternoon and another on Sunday night. Reflecting on the music of Denis Murphy, Browne states: "At that time the music was played in dance halls and people's homes rather than in pubs and Denis was a frequent performer in Thady Willie's hall in Gneeveguilla, Vaughan's hall in Ballydesmond and Peter Murphy's hall in Lacka playing with other musicians such as his sister Julia, Pádraig O'Keeffe, Din Tarrant, Dan O'Leary and his nephew Johnny" (1995: 25). Though initially featuring local musicians and musical culture, Ó Ceilleachair notes: "Time marched on and local musicians took a back seat as bands became the rage. Though some incorporated local talent – others travelled from one end of the county to the other" (1987: 8). Bands, which usually included a variety of instruments including guitars and played music influenced by the popular music of the time, became advertised as orchestras and gradually bigger halls in bigger towns took over. In the 1940s, influenced by the numbers of people in attendance, the Knocknagree fair also attracted acts from outside the region including well known Irish tenor Frank Ryan who had performed in Carnegie Hall and whose repertoire included operatic arias (Moynihan, 1983). The public houses and other businesses in the towns and villages were often dependent on the fairs and markets (Ó Ceilleachair, 1991; O'Connell on *The Rolling Wave* 12th August, 2009). The fairs and markets of rural Ireland have declined and though some, such as Puck Fair in Killorglin have become major festivals, many others, including the famous fair of Knocknagree, are no longer in existence.

The development of sessions in public houses is one of the most notable changes in the soundscape of the Sliabh Luachra region. The most notable public houses in the context of Sliabh Luachra music in the twentieth century are Dan O'Connell's in Knocknagree, Fleming's and Lyon's in Scartaglen and later Scully's in Newmarket. Each of these spaces becomes prominent at particular periods in the narrative of Sliabh Luachra. Tom McCarthy's Pub in Castleisland, which is an important space in the story of Pádraig O'Keeffe, The Three Counties in Brosna, The Arch in Newmarket, Moynihan's, Riordan's and Walsh's in Cullen as well as three pubs in Kiskeam and four in Ballydesmond are remembered by Maurice O'Keeffe as being important session spaces for the musicians of Sliabh Luachra (1996). These pubs and others including Jimmy O'Brien's in Killarney function as museums of local musical culture but some, especially in smaller and more rural villages have closed in the early years of the twenty first century.

Dan O'Connell (1921-2009) emerges as an important figure in Sliabh Luachra in the late 1950s, particularly when developing a spatial understanding of the region. A noted athlete in his youth, Dan first got involved in agriculture in 1955 but a car accident left him unable to work the farm. He sold the farm in 1957 and bought Herlihy's Pub in Knocknagree, then a village of fourteen public houses. Ó Ceilleachar notes that the pub was mainly dependent for its turnover on the fairs and markets but by the early 1960s the fairs were "practically dead and Knocknagree was losing out economically" (1991: 67). In the early 1960s, Johnny O'Leary and Denis Murphy were playing in Cahill's pub in Rathmore, where Dan ventured for entertainment. He invited them to start a session on St. Stephen's night, 1965, an event that marked a change in the soundscape of Sliabh Luachra and marked Knocknagree as a centre of musical culture within the region.

The development of interest in set dancing, a popular pastime in Sliabh Luachra and one to which Dan O'Connell was both partial and influential in developing, is an integral part of the identity of Sliabh Luachra as a musical region. Ó Síodhacáin (1982) notes that in the 1960s, centres for sets included the Shamrock Bar, Kiskeam, Shamrock House, Cullen, Johnny Dee's, Ballydesmond, as well as various spaces in Scartaglen, Rathmore, Newmarket and Castleisland. Dan O'Connell's became a particularly popular space and attracted people from great distances including many tourists. To some extent, the context of the dancing changed and, as Ó Síodhacáin notes: "Dan Connell have a few

regulars that never came any closer to a cow than seeing one on TV" (1982: 109). However, O'Connell himself encouraged all who came to participate and emphasised enjoyment over perfection. The recording of the album *I gCnoc na Graí* by Noel Hill and Tony MacMahon (1985) established an almost utopian imagination of Dan O'Connell's and further enhanced and diffused the reputation of the place as a special place for Irish traditional music.

The other significant aspect of the changing musical soundscape of the Sliabh Luachra region was the emergence of a new instrument, 'the box'. The dominance of the fiddle and fiddle masters such as Tadhg Ó Buachalla, Tom Billy Murphy and Pádraig O'Keeffe in the early twentieth century was challenged by the emergence of the button accordion and the music of musicians such as Johnny O'Leary (1923-2004) in the mid-twentieth century. Paddy Cronin, who spent many years in America before returning to live in Killarney, commented on the decline in fiddle playing and development of accordion playing while he was away (*The Rolling Wave*, 12th August, 2009). The growing popularity of the melodeon and later button accordion reflect a trend apparent throughout Ireland. Breathnach notes the development of the melodeon and the button accordion as the preferred instruments for dancing:

> The growth in popularity of the melodeon in the closing decades of the last century coincided with the decline of pipes throughout the country, and went hand-in-hand with the spread of the sets and half-sets, which by then had almost ousted the solo set dances. The change in dancing was responsible, to an extent, for the changing fortunes of the instruments. The melodeon could provide the marked, uncomplicated rhythms which admirably suited the sets, and although it sounded thin and shrill, it could be heard quite clearly above all the hub-bub created by the dancers (1971: 89).

The introduction of the melodeon, concertina and button accordion and their later popularity is an important development of the soundscape of Irish traditional music (Smith, 1997). Sliabh Luachra has a strong reputation built upon the local traditions of set dancing (Hickey, 1999). The irony that Pádraig O'Keeffe, the quintessential Sliabh Luachra musician was not a fan of playing for dancers, preferring to play in public houses and often including slow airs, cannot be lost in the context of Breathnach's observations.

Johnny O'Leary was awarded the TG4 *Gradam Saoil* or lifetime achievement award in 2003. O'Leary was influenced by the strong fiddle tradition of the region and, in

particular, the playing of Pádraig O'Keeffe, Denis Murphy and Dan O'Leary. Writing in the commemorative programme for the tenth anniversary of the TG4 awards, Pat Ahern states:

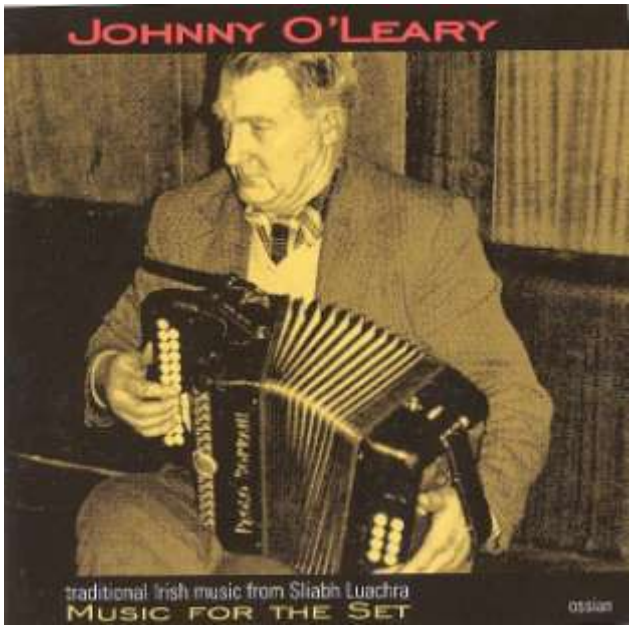
> Born in 1923 at Mullykeavaune in the Sliabh Luachra heartland, Johnny learned his first tunes from his uncle Dan O'Leary. With Denis and Julia Murphy (later Clifford), he was a pupil of the fiddle master, Pádraig O'Keeffe […] Johnny O'Leary was the last of the Sliabh Luachra masters (2007).

Ahern presents a somewhat pessimistic scenario, proclaiming Johnny as the last of the Sliabh Luachra masters. It should be noted that a statue to Pádraig in Scartaglen makes reference to Pádraig as 'The Last of the Fiddle Masters of Sliabh Luachra" (see plate 44). Recordings of Johnny O'Leary are important reference points in the study of the musical style of Sliabh Luachra. Johnny O'Leary is part of a Sliabh Luachra musical lineage that is heavily influenced by the fiddle tradition. Writing a reflection in *Irish Music Magazine*, Seán Laffey states:

> Johnny could trace his musical lineage back to the great fiddle masters of the Sliabh Luachra tradition, Pádraig O'Keeffe, Tom Billy Murphy and his first teacher, his Uncle Dan O'Leary. In the 1930s he teamed up with the fiddler Denis Murphy and they began a musical partnership of some thirty years, playing regularly at Dan O'Connell's Bar in Knocknagree. After Murphy died in 1974, Johnny continued to play for dances in the area, and regularly played for some forty years at the weekend sessions and dances at Dan Connell's (2004: 6).

The evolution of the soundscape of Sliabh Luachra is very evident in the story of Johnny O'Leary. It is a process based on social interaction and acceptance of changing spaces and instrumentation. An important space in the development of the Sliabh Luachra soundscape is Dan O'Connell's pub in Knocknagree (Plate 30; Plate 31).

Plate 30 Album cover for Music for the set: Traditional Irish music from Sliabh Luachra



Source: ***Music for the set: Traditional Irish music from Sliabh Luachra*** **Cork: Ossian (OSSCD25) 1977, 2002. Author's collection.**

Plate 31 Dan O'Connell's Public House, Knocknagree



Source: Author, 26th May, 2007.

Plate 32 Sign for Dan O'Connell's Public House



Source: Author, 26th May, 2007.

Johnny O'Leary regularly played for dancers and one album, *Johnny O'Leary: traditional Irish music from Sliabh Luachra: Music for the set*, included instructions for dancing the Sliabh Luachra Set (Plate 30). O'Leary was also an important source of music for Breandán Breathnach, who had intended to publish a collection of music from Johnny O'Leary, a project completed after Breathnach's death by Terry Moylan (1994). Moylan makes reference to the musical style of O'Leary and others in the area, especially in the playing of polkas and slides. Noting the local significance of the music, Moylan also makes reference to the process of naming tunes with many names reinforcing the connection between music, people and place. The recording entitled *Johnny O'Leary of Sliabh Luachra: Dance Music from the Cork Kerry Border* (1995) was recorded in Dan O'Connell's Bar and, according to Terry Moylan's introduction, was intended to complement the publication by The Lilliput Press. Twelve of the twenty-eight tracks are polkas, five of slides and of the rest, only three are reels. Moylan notes that though the jigs, reels and hornpipes performed by Johnny are "part of the broader national store of music, his polkas, slides, barn-dances are often quite unusual and little known" (Moylan, 1995). It is evident from later recordings by groups such as *Sliabh Notes* and *North Cregg* that through his performances, recordings and publications, Johnny became a tool through which others heard, learned and diffused these tunes.

The evolution of the fiddle and accordion duet, evident at Dan O'Connell's through the partnership of Johnny O'Leary and Denis Murphy, was an important development in the soundscape of Sliabh Luachra. Jackie Daly is another important character in the Sliabh Luachra narrative and the evolution of the Sliabh Luachra soundscape who attracted a largely confident young urban audience (Smith, 1997). During the 1970s the combination of Jackie Daly on button accordion and Séamus Creagh on fiddle attracted a new audience, particularly following the release of the LP *Jackie Daly and Séamus Creagh* (1977). There was a new audience for Sliabh Luachra music that was no longer confined to the region. In an examination of accordion playing in Irish traditional music, Smith (1997) notes that those who championed the 'new melodeon style' of Jackie Daly in the 1970s were part of a largely confident young urban audience and reflected the changing contexts for the performance and experience of Irish traditional music. Jackie Daly himself came from Kanturk, Co. Cork, quite a distance from the core area of the Sliabh Luachra tradition focused on Pádraig O'Keeffe. Daly's experience of Irish music was, in part, shaped by Bill Sullivan who himself was a nephew of Din

Tarrant of Ballydesmond, a student of Tom Billy Murphy. Sullivan organised crossroads dancing at Knocknacolan Cross where he erected a platform and invited a young Jackie Daly to join in. The music of the crossroads was often dominated by the accordion, which provided more volume than the fiddle. However, Daly was primarily influenced by the fiddle players of the region and, in particular, Jim O'Keeffe, a student of Pádraig O'Keeffe. In contrast to Daly's close links with the region, Creagh was very definitely an outsider, coming from Westmeath where he had played in various musical ensembles and styles. He quickly became associated with and later representative of the musical traditions of Sliabh Luachra region (Long, 2009).

Similar to Lyth's (1996) assessment of the role that the *The Star above the Garter* played in the dissemination and popularisation of the Sliabh Luachra sound, the accompanying programme for the tenth TG4 Gradam Ceoil stated of Jackie Daly:

> His exuberant playing style, as well as his involvement with so many highly regarded players and groups since the 1970s has done much to spread the popularity of Sliabh Luachra music outside its own area (TG4, 2006).

Similarly, in the sleeve notes to the album, *Traditional Accordion and Concertina Music from Sliabh Luachra* (1977/2002), Ahern states:

> Jackie has also had a profound effect on the music of Sliabh Luachra, bringing a new perspective on the playing of polkas, in particular, to national and international audiences. Where others introduced polkas on the periphery of their repertoires, almost as a form of light relief, Jackie placed them at the focal point. This proud planting of the flag was both an invitation and an inspiration to other players to follow suit.

With the emergence of Jackie Daly and his musical partnership with Séamus Creagh in the 1970s, the music of Sliabh Luachra became part of a 'mass-mediated popular entertainment' that was the Irish folk revival (Smith, 1997: 451). The combination of accordion and fiddle was part of the evolution of the Sliabh Luachra soundscape. Daly and Creagh's mostly unaccompanied duets inspired a whole generation of musicians to learn some of the polkas and slides native to the southwest of Ireland. The focus of the imagery on the CD cover is the duet in a black and white photograph, creating an image of something old in a sea of muddled colour (Plate 33). Morton, who also makes reference to Smith (1997) and considers the mass mediation of Irish traditional music, states: "The new age of communications, media and technology has made musical transmission,

distribution and diffusion easier and more widespread, for example, from the first recordings on the 78" to availability and access to tunes on minidisk, video and the Internet. As a result, styles as such have transgressed their regional representations…into the realm of the digital and virtual" (Morton, 2001: 48, 49). As interest in regional styles of music develops, so too does accessibility to recordings of musicians in regional styles.

Plate 33 Cd cover for *Jackie Daly and Séamus Creagh* (1977)



Source: *Jackie Daly and Séamus Creagh*, 1977, 2005, Gael Linn (CEFCD 057). Author's collection.

The accordion style of Sliabh Luachra differs from the modern style most associated with Paddy O'Brien (Hitchener, 1993; Smith, 1997). It was the modern style that became more popular and also accepted by *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. Reflecting on the evolution of his own playing style, Jackie Daly notes:

> I always loved what was called the 'depress and draw' style of plating from Sliabh Luachra, Comhaltas weren't into it; they were more interested in what was called the 'B & C' style, so I was pulled in two directions, and I couldn't enter competitions with my own style. I had to learn the 'B & C' style. I won the all-Ireland in 1974, and straight after that I packed it up and went back to my own style of playing. It's one that suits slides and polkas a lot better, because it makes the music bouncier (Jackie Daly quoted by Siobhán Long in *The Irish Times* September 24th 2005).

A similar attitude and sense of injustice and local identity is expressed by another box player, Paudie O'Connor:

> When I was playing in Fleadhs, I found myself changing my style just to suit competition. I didn't really see why I had to play in a Tipperary, or an east Galway or whatever style just to suit competition. If I played Kerry music most of the people adjudicating wouldn't be interested in it. Now I love all the other music but I couldn't see why me from Kerry would have to play music from another part of the country. I think it has had a big impact on the local music down here in so far as most younger musicians these days can't play a lot of their own local music, the pressure is on them to play non-local music if they want to compete in competition. It demeans and downgrades the local music in their minds. I think it has definitely led to the music around Kerry and Cork not developing as it should over the last 15 to 20 years (quoted in Kelly, 2005a: 48).

Two issues come to the fore in these statements: the desire for recognition for Sliabh Luachra music and the centrality of the accordion in the Sliabh Luachra sound.

Other accordion players associated with the Sliabh Luachra region include Jimmy Doyle, Dan Herlihy, Mick Mulcahy and John Brosnan. Jimmy Doyle from Jib, near Gneeveguilla, grew up influenced by Dan O'Leary, with whom he recorded the album *Traditional Music from the Kingdom of Kerry*, as well as neighbouring musicians such as Dan's nephew Johnny O'Leary. His importance was celebrated at the tribute concert at *Fleadh Cheoil Chiarraí* 2009. He continues to play sessions in the area, known for his jovial and welcoming personality. Jimmy Doyle has remained local to Sliabh Luachra and, as such, embodies the sense of location within the tradition, reinforcing the concept of a located community and inviting those with interest to visit the area.

Dan Herlihy from Ballydesmond, Co. Cork, has recorded a number of albums, described by Donal Ó Síodhacháin as "the premier exponent of Sliabh Luachra music and style" in the introduction to the recording *The Ballydesmond Polka*. Herlihy remembers Pádraig O'Keeffe coming to his house when he was young. There was a fiddle at the house but it was in poor condition so Pádraig said he would get him strings but, as he never did, they bought an accordion. Playing B/C accordion with a fairly wide or wet tuning, Dan learned from Jack O'Connell who, in turn learned from Pádraig O'Keeffe and Tom Billy Murphy. Dan himself spent a number of years in England and it was here that he first encountered the idea of a Sliabh Luachra region of music (*The Rolling Wave*, 10th January 2007). Since his return, he has played and recorded with many of the musicians in the area, including Denis O'Connor, Con Moynihan, John Drew, Tim Browne, Cormac O'Mahoney and others. He cites the influence of many of the prominent figures in Sliabh Luachra including Pádraig O'Keeffe, Tom Billy Murphy and Din Tarrant. Dan has also published two books on the musicians of Sliabh Luachra (Herlihy, 2003, 2007). His music has a particularly jaunty rhythm while his repertoire makes particular reference to the people and places of Sliabh Luachra.

Mick Mulcahy from the townland of Kilmanaghan, about four miles from the village of Brosna, Co. Kerry, was influence by his father and uncle, who both played the accordion (Moloney, 2000) but was also open to the influence of Ciarán Mac Mathúna and the programme 'A Job of Journeywork' while growing up (Browne, 1990). Mick worked in London in the 1960s where, amongst the Irish musicians he played with was Mick O'Connor. Together they recorded the album *Mick Mulcahy agus cairde* for Gael Linn, a recording that also featured Joe Rynne and Mel Mercier. The range of influences on Mulcahy's music, outlined by Mick Moloney (2000) in his introduction to the recording *The Mulcahy Family*, highlights the difficulty in locating Mick Mulcahy in the Sliabh Luachra tradition. Like their father, Louise and Michelle Mulcahy have excelled in music, influenced by a wide range of individuals and recordings. Growing up in Abbeyfeale, Co. Limerick, they have always been part of a broader musical sphere with close connections to *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. Introducing the family's second album, *Notes from the Heart*, Peadar Ó Riada has stated: "The music is rooted in Sliabh Luachra and West Limerick but is also under the influence of the Clare tradition" (2005: np). As multi-instrumentalists, they have won numerous awards but, in contrast to trends that have seen musicians attempt to rediscover or promote links to particular places or

regions, the Mulcahy's represent a globalised tradition devoid of temporal or geographical boundaries.

John Brosnan was born ten miles from Listowel, in the townland of Dromadda, Lyrecrompane, in north Kerry. His late uncles, Timmy and Dan Brosnan, were well known accordion players in North Kerry and influenced John's playing (*The Rolling Wave*, 12th August, 2009). John began to repair and tune accordions in the 1980s and continues to do so at his home in Kilcummin. Living near Killarney, John was fortunate to play with many of the legendary musicians of Sliabh Luachra's past, among them, the inspirational accordionist, the late Johnny O'Leary. John released a solo recording in 1996 entitled *The Cook in the Kitchen*, which demonstrates the influence and awareness of various melodeon and accordion styles. Paudie O'Connor (2005a) cites Brosnan's use of various styles as impacting on the development of accordion playing in the Sliabh Luachra region.

While the fiddle and accordion remain central to the Sliabh Luachra tradition, with the concertina largely forgotten about, other instruments have also been a part of the musical soundscape of the region. Through his performances with Mick Mulcahy, London banjo player Mick O'Connor may be loosely associated with the region. However, Denis O'Connor provides a more organic link with the region. From Castlehill, Cordal, Co. Kerry, Denis' introduction to music came from his father, Maurice, who played the fiddle and was a student of Pádraig O'Keeffe but Denis taught himself how to play. Denis regularly plays with Con Moynihan from Gneeveguilla, Co. Kerry who credits the influence of Nicky McAuliffe on the music of the area. Influenced by their father's practice of playing in their kitchens on Sundays after mass, Denis and Con recorded an album entitled *Sunday after Mass* in 2003. Another young banjo player in Sliabh Luachra is Ciarán O'Sullivan from Gneeveguilla, a son of flute player Joe O'Sullivan, whose wife Katie was prominent in the development of *Craobh Sliabh Luachra CCÉ*. While the branch of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* has developed organically, Ciarán crosses two communities, attending fleadhanna cheoil and competitions as well as local sessions where he can develop a sense of place and musical lineage.

Like the fife and drum bands already mentioned, other musical groups developed musical traditions that are often neglected in the study of Sliabh Luachra as a music regions. Céilí bands have been an important if sometimes contentious part of the

evolution of Irish traditional music in the twentieth century. Céilí bands developed in a particular context, often associated with the radio but also in response to the spaces and social contexts for music and dancing in rural Ireland, as well as London and other places. The context for céilí bands as providers of music for social dancing in large halls – dance halls having been replaced by hotel ballrooms in many instances – remains but the development of *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* and the status ascribed to the senior céilí band competition provides a new context for the development of this form, a development that has also impacted on the musical traditions of Sliabh Luachra.

A number of bands played an important role in the social activities of the region in the mid twentieth century. Including some of the most respected Sliabh Luachra musicians, the Desmond Céilí Band included Mike Duggan (Scartaglen), Johnny Leary, Denis Murphy (both Gneeveguilla), Jimmy Doyle and Michael O'Callaghan. As well as playing throughout Kerry and parts of Cork and Limerick, the band also competed at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* in Boyle, County Roscommon in 1960 (Duggan, 1983). Other bands included the Araglen and the Duhallow Céilí Bands. Accordion player Dan Herlihy has played in a number of céilí bands in the area including the Sliabh Glas Céilí Band, which also featured Con Moynihan and Denis O'Connor. Accordion player Johnny Reidy of Scartaglen is one of the most popular accordion players for set dancing in the present and has recorded an album with the Sliabh Luachra Céilí Band (n.d.).

Amongst the most popular and successful céilí bands, in the context of *fleadhanna cheoil*, associated with the Sliabh Luachra region is the Brosna Céilí Band, which won the senior céilí band competition at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* in 1972. The Brosna Céilí Band was celebrated in a special *Céilí House* programme on 26th May 2007. Brosna is located in north Kerry, near the border with counties Limerick and Cork. Though the band is often celebrated as having a heritage that is closely connected to Sliabh Luachra, greater appreciation of the music, social and economic geographies of the local area complicate this perception. The Brosna Céilí Band also draws upon the traditions of and musicians from north Kerry and west Limerick. Donal and Patrick O'Connor or the Paddy Jerrys as they are better known, whose musical lineage may be traced back to Patrick O'Grady, are the stalwart members of the band. They were also among the early musicians with *Siamsa Tíre*. Seán Ahern of Moyvane, in north Kerry and someway removed from Sliabh Luachra, was also a member of *Siamsa Tíre* and the Brosna Céilí

Band. Mícheál Ó hEidhin, a close friend of Seán Ahern's brother Pat and the Paddy Jerrys, was also a member of the band and is now a prominent member of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. The accordion player Mick Mulcahy who now resides near Abbeyfeale, as well as Nicholas and Anne McAuliffe, now living in Castleisland, were also members of the Brosna Céilí Band. They were also involved in the development of *Siamsa Tíre* (of which Anne was a founding member) and are prominent members of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. The music and heritage of the Brosna Céilí Band blurs the boundaries between the musical traditions and institutions of Sliabh Luachra, north Kerry and west Limerick and the band members are also part of a deterritorialized Irish music tradition.

The tradition of céilí bands peaked again in 2007 when the Allow Céilí Band, representing *Craobh Cróináin CCÉ* in Freemount became the first band from County Cork to achieve the All-Ireland Senior Céilí Band title at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann*. The band represents a new social and infrastructural context for music-making in the wider area. Accordion player and teacher Con Herbert is integral to the development of the band, many of whom learned music from him as children. The band's development is also influenced by the role of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in the community and the role of competition in bestowing status on musicians and their music. Some members of the band have studied music to third level and a number of members of the band are active in the musical communities of other areas including the cities of Cork and Limerick. Despite the popularity of set dancing and the presence of a number of céilí bands in the region, céilí bands are rarely represented in the narratives of the Sliabh Luachra region.

Individuals also challenge the sound and identity of Sliabh Luachra. One of Pádraig O'Keeffe's best known pupils, Paddy Cronin (b. 1925), was voted TG4 *Gradam Saoil* (Lifetime Achievement) recipient in 2007. He was celebrated as a representative of the Sliabh Luachra region. Cronin's musical style, like many others, is more complex. According to Cranitch:

> Paddy Cronin was a pupil of Pádraig O'Keeffe, but spent about forty years living in Boston. His distinctive music style has elements of both the Sliabh Luachra style, which he learnt at home, and the Sligo style, which was more prevalent in the United States during his time there (1999: 125).

Paddy Cronin has returned to live in Killarney and has once again become part of the soundscape of Sliabh Luachra. My own experience of Paddy highlights the different

sounds that are now present in the Sliabh Luachra soundscape. In a session at the Pádraig O'Keeffe Festival in 2006, after a number of reels, Dan Herlihy turned to Paddy and said, quiet loudly owing to Paddy's hearing difficulties, "time to put on your 'Pádraig hat' now and play some polkas or slides" (see Plate 34). For many, Cronin's style symbolises the impact of the recordings and legacy of Michael Coleman and other Sligo fiddle players on Irish traditional music in the twentieth century, particularly amongst musicians in America.

Plate 34 Paddy Jones (left) and Paddy Cronin (right), two pupils of Pádraig O'Keeffe playing a session at The Patrick O'Keeffe Festival 2006 in Castleisland.



Source: Grace Kearney, 1st October, 2006.

Another band that is often neglected in the study of the music of Sliabh Luachra is the Cullen Pipe Band. Cullen, whose name in Irish reads as Cuilleann Uí Caoimh – a reference to the historical links with the family of the area – is an important if often hidden node in the musical soundscape of the region and is located but a few miles from

Knocknagree. The Pipe Band developed from an event in 1941 at the home of Paddy Fitzgerald, Mologhroe when the local postman, Michael Rea, who played both Uilleann and Bagpipes, was noticed to have a practice chanter in his bag. Rea began to teach piping to a group of local men and, at the same time, a number of others were coached in the art of drumming by Mr. Baker who worked with C.I.E. Most of the equipment was from Crowley's Music Shop in Cork City, while some of the drums came from the old Fife and Drum band. The first performance in uniform by the band was in 1943 at Laitiaran Day and they were blessed after mass by Fr. Griffin. According to the bands website, Knocknagree Races, a significant day of local revelry in the 1940s, and Feis Laitiaran in Cullen, provided two local platforms for performance. The band performed at a variety of carnivals, parades and celebrations and, not unlike the fife and drum bands some decades earlier, numerous political occasions. The band entered an inactive period between the mid-1960s and early 1970s but a meeting on St. Stephen's Day in 1972 led to the re-establishment of the band. On St. Laitiaran's Day 1972, which coincided with a Mid-Cork by-election and the presence of former Taoiseach Jack Lynch in Cullen, the band performed again. At the turn of the twenty first century, the band have a strong group of young musicians and regularly compete in competitions at the highest level in Ireland and abroad with the support of The Arts Council and Music Network (www.cullenpipeband.ie).

6.6 Conclusion

The cultural geography and soundscape of Sliabh Luachra have changed greatly over the past three centuries. The evolution of Sliabh Luachra music presents different possibilities of what Sliabh Luachra music and the musical style of Sliabh Luachra is. *The Rolling Wave* of the 10th of January 2008 featured button accordion player Jimmy Doyle – introduced by presenter Peter Browne as "one of the big names of Sliabh Luachra music" (10th January 2008). Jimmy was recorded at The Patrick O'Keeffe Festival in 2007. The festival itself is an important element of the Sliabh Luachra soundscape and reflects the popularity of Irish traditional music generally, as well as the strong interest in regional traditions in Irish traditional music. Jimmy makes reference to the changing soundscape of the region during his lifetime. Peter Browne posed the question:

> Was there a period here in Cork, Kerry, ok you mention some of those big names like the Cronins, Denis Murphy, Julia Clifford, and all them but then the music would have gone down because a lot of them left the country. Now I know Johnny Leary stayed but a lot of them left. Would you have noticed it going down and then would you have noticed it coming up again?

To which Jimmy responded:

> That happened for sure. Like people emigrated and [of] course when they came back then again they revived up the music again you see and it kind of lifted then again and of course Comhaltas came along then and that was great for the youth, they were picking up the music again. And it is at a high now of course, it is very popular now again. And all these festivals now, take the Pádraig O'Keeffe Festival and the Joe Cooley Weekend and all these festivals you see they're all great for the youth and the one that is interested.

The Sliabh Luachra soundscape is a simultaneity of people, stories and music. It exists in different forms at different times. Each Sunday, Jimmy Doyle and others play a session in the Arbutus Hotel in Killarney, across from Jimmy O'Brien's, near where the statue of Johnny Leary now stands. The session began as a commercial venture that has taken on additional significance with the development of greater appreciation for the older generation of living Sliabh Luachra musicians. The session allows for colliding soundscapes to cohabit a space. Speaking to Peter Browne, Jimmy notes:

> A lot of players come in and join us. And a lot of young players you know, they like to hear the older tunes and 'tis great for them cause you know they're picking up the, they have both sides of it then, they have the old style of music and the new style of music and 'tis good for them too (*The Rolling Wave*, 10th January 2008).

Thus, Sliabh Luachra is a complex network of sounds and stories presented by people within and outside the region who all shape the evolution of the soundscape they seek to present and represent. The Sliabh Luachra soundscape, the frame of reference for the Sliabh Luachra musical region in Irish traditional music, is continually changing and with it, so too are the expectations of the audience for Sliabh Luachra music. In order to understand the concept of regions in Irish traditional music, it is necessary to develop a historical as well as geo-musical perspective.

Chapter 7

Re-imagining and representing Sliabh Luachra

7.1 Introduction

The Sliabh Luachra region has changed enormously since James Weale conducted his surveys at the beginning of the nineteenth century. In chapter seven I examine the existence of a Sliabh Luachra regional identity in the present and the ways in which that idea is represented and diffused. Influenced by modern historical geographies, particularly those outlined by Johnson (2000), I examine the role of the past in the present and, in particular, how musicians sound the region with reference to the historical musical soundscape of the region. Throughout this chapter I consider the music region as an economic resource and present an examination of the politics of identity in which the construction, promotion and diffusion of regional music identities are motivated by the economics of tourism and heritage. This chapter moves beyond the framework presented by Carney (1998) and is concerned with tourism geography as presented by Urry (1990; 1995; 1997) and Williams (1998) and the geographies of monuments and memory as presented by Johnson (1994; 1996; 1999; 1999a) and Whelan (2002; 2003; 2005).

The first section examines the ways in which the Sliabh Luachra region is represented. These representations inform the delimitation of the cultural region. Influenced by the work of Johnson (2000), this section focuses the articulation of a public memory concerned with the musical traditions of Sliabh Luachra and the rearticulation of a regional sound. Developing a theoretical framework for historical geographies of the present, Johnson (2000) highlights a number of questions relevant to this section. Johnson asks:

> How do we render extremely complex familial, political and geographical relationships of the past comprehensible? To what extent can the language and syntax of a different period be translated to audiences schooled in new modes of communication? How visible should the lens of interpretation be in any recounting of the past? (2000: 252).

The questions that Johnson identifies as impinging on "the approaches taken by the monument-maker, the artist, the museum curator, the historian or the geographer making sense of and translating the past to popular audiences" (2000: 252) are also relevant to the musician.

In studying the representations of the Sliabh Luachra region, I have identified three elements of research. The first part of this section considers a number of recordings

that seek to represent or are interpreted or promoted as having a connection to Sliabh Luachra. Amongst the foremost artists are Paudie O'Connor and Niamh Ní Charra, as well as the group *Sliabh Notes*. As well as diffusing the music of Sliabh Luachra to a wider audience, these artists make reference to a Sliabh Luachra community of musicians who remain located in counties Kerry, Cork and Limerick. The second part considers the large number of monuments that provide a visual reference and interpretation of the past. The third part considers the role of festivals in constructing and marketing an identity of place and regional culture. Monuments and music festivals have become an integral part of the political economy of music in Sliabh Luachra. Issues concerning memory and the role of tourism dominate the representation of Sliabh Luachra as a region of Irish traditional music. Monuments to musicians coexist with monuments to other aspects of Sliabh Luachra's history, heritage and identity. In many cases festivals have replaced the fair or pattern day and create a new social and economic network within the region that is connected to a wider Irish traditional music community. Recordings, monuments and festivals in the region are specific spaces that reaffirm and contribute to the identity of the Sliabh Luachra region as a region with a distinctive musical heritage.

The second section is concerned with the location of the Sliabh Luachra region and processes of diffusion of culture and regional identity from the cultural hearth. The delimitation of musical regions is a common theme in the paradigms of ethnomusicology (Nettl, 1964, 2005) and geography (Carney, 1998b). In examining the Sliabh Luachra region through the musical traditions of the region, this section examines the links of various towns and villages to Sliabh Luachra musical identity, principally through a consideration of the people who live(d) there and the musical events and spaces that are located there. There is an attempt to balance the past and the present in developing an understanding of the region as a continually evolving process shaped by various agents and processes at local, regional and national levels.

7.2 Recordings

In the previous chapter I examined a number of recordings from the latter half of the twentieth century that influenced the diffusion of Sliabh Luachra music and identity. In this section I focus on recordings from the first decade of the twenty-first century that

are connected to or represent the musical soundscape of the Sliabh Luachra region. There are two aspects to the study of recordings. The sounds presented on the recordings provide an aural representation of the regional musical soundscape arranged by the musicians featured. In addition, the packaging accompanying the recordings provides a visual dimension that communicates other aspects of the culture of the region. Farrell (1998) examines the role of recordings of local music in an Indian context, aware not only of the music on the recordings but also of the spaces in which the recordings were made, aspects of diversity not represented by a catalogue of recorded music and the use of images that become associated with the music. In this section, I examine a number of aspects of recordings that make reference to the Sliabh Luachra region.

Paudie O'Connor (b. 1975) is a relatively recent 'Sliabh Luachra artist' to gain prominence in the commercial Irish traditional music world. Paudie originally comes from Ballyhar, the next townland over from Scartaglen and learned much of his early music from Pádraig Moynihan and later Anne McAuliffe (wife of Nicholas). O'Connor released an album entitled *Different State*, with many visual, textual and musical references to the Sliabh Luachra region (Plate 35, 36). He refers to many of the local musicians who influenced him, making particular reference to Johnny O'Leary and Nicky McAuliffe, two musicians who represent different sides of the Sliabh Luachra soundscape. In an article by Ita Kelly, Paudie is quoted as saying "95% of the music I play, I learnt in pubs as a kid, especially the more interesting tunes, the ones you mightn't hear too often. You don't learn that stuff on CDs, you pick it up on the way" (2005a: 48). Paudie's sense of learning emphasises the role of live music in the sense of local identity and the evolution of a soundscape.

There is a sense of a bridge being maintained in the music and accompanying narrative presented by Paudie, as well as an understanding of the changing spatial conditions facing Irish traditional music. His connection to Johnny Leary provides a link to Denis Murphy and Pádraig O'Keeffe and the imagination of the vernacular region of Sliabh Luachra. In the sleeve notes to *Different State*, Paudie writes: "[Johnny] provided an invaluable link to the past for a younger generation of musicians like myself via versions of tunes learned from Pádraig O'Keeffe, Denis Murphy and their peers, or by dropping in his own subtle phrases where appropriate" (2005). In relation to his own style of playing the accordion, O'Connor refers to a 'new style of B/C playing' developed by

John Brosnan as well as the influence of Johnny O'Leary's C#/D system. He also credits Jimmy Doyle of Jib as influencing his music.

Plate 35 CD tray image for *Different State* by Paudie O'Connor.

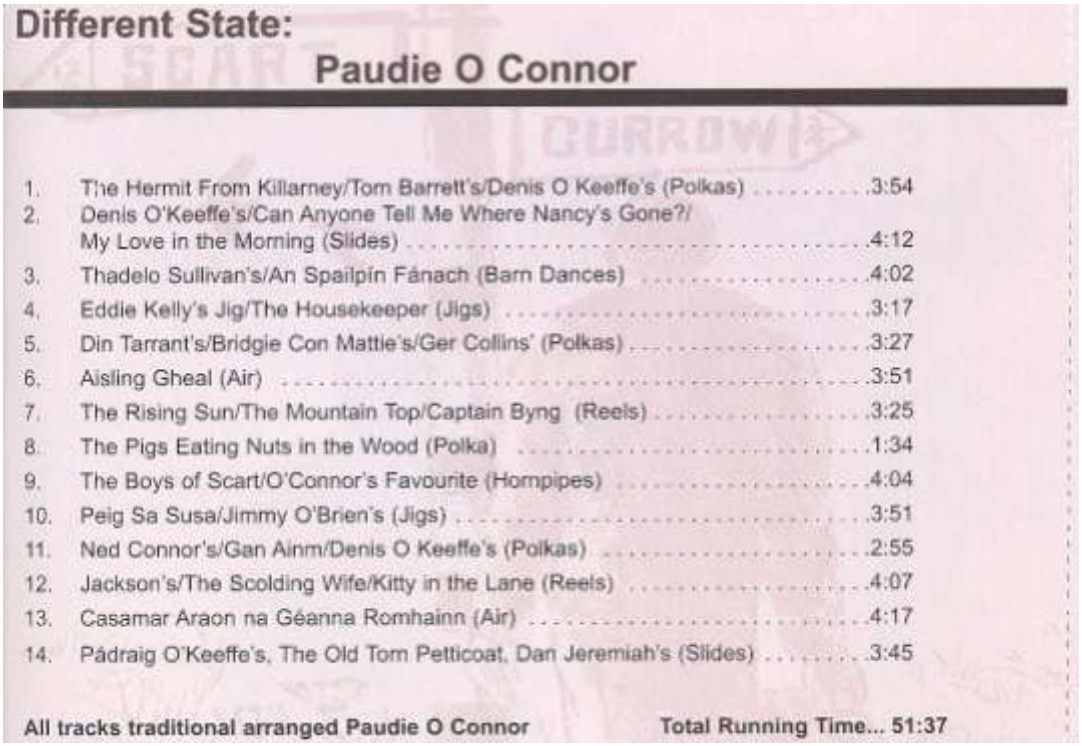


The signpost makes reference to Scartaglen and Currow, two villages in Sliabh Luachra near to Paudie's homeplace. **Source: Paudie O'Connor, 2005, *Different State* Push Button Records (PBCD1975). Author's collection.**

The track listings also point to an awareness of the past. Tune titles include references to Killarney and Scartaglen as well as many characters of the region: Rathmore accordion player Denis O'Keeffe, Thadelo O'Sullivan of Gneeveguilla; and the obligatory nod to Pádraig O'Keeffe. While maintaining and presenting a strong connection to the past, Paudie (2005) also recognises that, as a dynamic living tradition, the music of Sliabh Luachra, like Irish traditional music in general must continue to develop. Through both his playing and the narrative attached to his performances and recordings, Paudie presents a contemporary Sliabh Luachra musical tradition that is both introvert and extrovert, concurrently old and new. The soundscape is reinforced by the narrative. It gains

inspiration and repertoire from musical masters of both the past and present and intertwines music with a strong and dynamic sense of place.

Plate 36 Track listing for *Different State*



Different State:

Paudie O Connor

1.	The Hermit From Killarney/Tom Barrett's/Denis O Keeffe's (Polkas)	3:54
2.	Denis O'Keeffe's/Can Anyone Tell Me Where Nancy's Gone?/ My Love in the Morning (Slides)	4:12
3.	Thadelo Sullivan's/An Spailpín Fánach (Barn Dances)	4:02
4.	Eddie Kelly's Jig/The Housekeeper (Jigs)	3:17
5.	Din Tarrant's/Bridgie Con Mattie's/Ger Collins' (Polkas)	3:27
6.	Aisling Gheal (Air)	3:51
7.	The Rising Sun/The Mountain Top/Captain Byng (Reels)	3:25
8.	The Pigs Eating Nuts in the Wood (Polka)	1:34
9.	The Boys of Scart/O'Connor's Favourite (Hornpipes)	4:04
10.	Peig Sa Susa/Jimmy O'Brien's (Jigs)	3:51
11.	Ned Connor's/Gan Ainm/Denis O Keeffe's (Polkas)	2:55
12.	Jackson's/The Scolding Wife/Kitty in the Lane (Reels)	4:07
13.	Casamar Araon na Géanna Romhainn (Air)	4:17
14.	Pádraig O'Keeffe's, The Old Tom Petticoat, Dan Jeremiah's (Slides)	3:45

All tracks traditional arranged Paudie O Connor — Total Running Time... 51:37

The back cover from *Different State* by Paudie O'Connor. The track listings demonstrate the connection between Paudie's music and Sliabh Luachra. There are many references to Sliabh Luachra musicians including Denis O'Keeffe, Din Tarrant and Pádraig O'Keeffe. Thadelo Sullivan was a dancehall proprietor in Sliabh Luachra. Polkas, a tune type firmly associated with Sliabh Luachra, dominate the repertoire featured. Source: Paudie O'Connor, 2005, *Different State* Push Button Records (PBCD1975). Author's collection.

The musical activities of Paudie O'Connor also reflect the diffusion of Sliabh Luachra music. At the 2008 Pádraig O'Keeffe Festival in Castleisland, Paudie released a new album with John O'Brien and Jim Murray entitled *Wind and Reeds* (2007). Jim Murray, a guitar player from near Macroom in Cork is well known for his membership of

the Sharon Shannon band, his performances and recording with Séamus Begley (2001; 2009). The album was produced by Mick O'Brien, an older brother to John. Both Mick and John are uilleann pipers from a musical family in Artane, Co. Dublin. Mick O'Brien had previously released an album with fiddle player Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh, a Dublin fiddle player influenced greatly by recordings of Denis Murphy, entitled *Kitty Lie Over* (2003). *Kitty Lie Over* is a recording by two musicians from outside the region that evokes and makes reference to the Sliabh Luachra music tradition. Ó Raghallaigh spent much time listening to recordings of Denis Murphy in particular, attempting to reproduce Murphy's musical style in his own playing. A number of tracks on *Kitty Lie Over* echo the seminal recordings of *Kerry Fiddles* and *The Star Above the Garter* including track six (Rathawaun/The Hare in the Corn), which was the opening track of *The Star Above the Garter*.

The later recording, *Wind and Reeds* (2007) reflects the interaction of O'Connor with the Dublin community in which he is now located and contains a number of tracks that can be perceived aurally as homages to previous efforts. Track fourteen, an accordion and tin whistle duet in which Paudie and John perform two slides learned from Johnny O'Leary, stands out as echoing recordings of Johnny O'Leary performing with his daughter Ellen. As with O'Connors' solo album, the sleeve notes make a number of references to the Sliabh Luachra tradition and tune names refer to a number of important people and places in the tradition. Two thirds of the tunes on *Wind and Reeds* are sourced directly to the Sliabh Luachra tradition.

A number of groups have also used the concept of Sliabh Luachra as a unique and somewhat unexplored musical tradition in their presentation of Irish traditional music. *The Monks of the Screw*, featuring Paudie Scully, Raymond Sullivan, Dan Curtin, Tim Browne, John Drew and Timmy Connor, developed from regular sessions at Paudie Scully's pub in Newmarket where the back wall is still dominated by their image. The sleeve notes to the album *The Monks of the Screw Trio* featuring Paudie Scully, Dan Curtin and Tim Browne offer a rich source of reference for the musical traditions of Sliabh Luachra and was recorded in the kitchen of Paudie Scully's house. The band reflects the soundscape of the local community and has influenced other groups from outside the region who express aspects of Sliabh Luachra identity in their music and promotional material including *North Cregg* and individuals such as Tim O'Shea (Laffey,

2007). *The Monks of the Screw* are not a commercial band in the conventional sense and remain located within the regional soundscape, connected to the global networks of Irish traditional music through their influence on other musicians.

One of the most overt connections between a band and the Sliabh Luachra region is made by the group *Sliabh Notes*, formed in 1994 (Taaffe, 2003). Featuring the box and fiddle combination with the addition of guitar accompaniment, now seemingly ubiquitous in the performance of Irish traditional music, the band Sliabh Notes have constructed an identity based on the popularly perceived soundscape of the Sliabh Luachra region. Reviewing the groups third album, *Along Blackwater's Banks*, Wallis wrote: "Since their formation some seven or so years ago, Sliabh Notes have become well-known as the modern champions of Sliabh Luachra's music" (2002). Similarly, in relation to their album *Gleantáin*, Long writes:

> With their ears trained to the holy ground of Sliabh Luachra, they gathered up a gabáil full of the finest local tunes, much to the delight of the aficionado and beginner alike. With Gleanntan they continue on their peregrinations round that nepulous region that straddles the Cork, Kerry and Limerick, taking the odd detour to their spiritual brothers in Cúil Aodha en route. They take their title from the gentle rolling hill country that the great Sliabh Luachra fiddle master, Pádraig O'Keefe called home. Located on the bowl of a hill outside Castleisland, Gleanntán is granted the finest of accolades in this reflective collection. Fiddle, accordion and guitar and voice mesh effortlessly throughout, with Donal Murphy's accordion meriting particular mention for it's double-jointed manoeuvres that somehow sound like they were born and reared in the ether, with neither hide nor hair of human interference (4th August 1999).

Additionally, in reference to a live performance at Mother Redcaps in Dublin, Long states:

> Sliabh Luachra's identity has always been defined by the feisty combination of fiddle and box, but somehow Sliabh Notes have managed to introduce guitar and vocals into the equation without either upsetting the equilibrium of the regional style or diluting its concentrate (29th November 2003).

Both of these reviews reflect the evolving musical soundscape of Sliabh Luachra but are also part of that evolution. The success of Sliabh Notes reflects the opinion of Fintan Vallely who states: "Regional styles have developed a commercial value" (1997: 114). With an increasingly influential mass media, the process of discovering Sliabh Luachra that was begun, in part, by the visits of Ciarán MacMathúna and Séamus Ennis to Sliabh

Luachra, now extends the imagination of Sliabh Luachra musically and geographically. Through their performances, Sliabh Notes bring the evolving soundscape of Sliabh Luachra to new audiences and spaces.

The development of *Sliabh Notes* is influenced by the musical experiences of their members. Commenting on his experience of Sliabh Luachra music, fiddle player Matt Cranitch remembers visiting people and places in Sliabh Luachra, noting in particular a visit to Mick Duggan on the 5th of February, 1978, when Mick presented him with a pile of music that included original Pádraig O'Keeffe manuscripts in O'Keeffe's own writing. In an interview for *Fiddler Magazine* Cranitch stated:

> When I look back at it, that's the thing which fired me onto all of that; I became very interested in the whole Sliabh Luachra thing and spent nights and nights down in Knocknagree in particular. I suppose 'twas also the time that the Sliabh Luachra music was getting a bit more popular. The Kerry Fiddles record came out in 1977, and The Star Above The Garter had come out a bit before that. Jackie Daly and Seamus Creagh were playing wonderful music in that kind of style, and in Cork the set dancing revival had started, led initially in Cork by Timmy McCarthy, or Timmy the Brit as he is generally known, and also by Joe O'Donovan (quoted in Taaffe, 2003).

Cranitch reflects many of the processes outlined in previous sections that link people, spaces and places within a power geometry of musical performance, transmission and diffusion. Noting the diversity of music performed by the band, Cranitch also states:

> […] our repertoire is not exclusively Sliabh Luachra; well over fifty percent is Sliabh Luachra material, some of it from the O'Keeffe manuscripts. On each of the CDs, we've also included music by Cuz Teahan. There's such wonderful music there that we feel we're delighted, and indeed honored, to put this stuff on CD, and make it more available to the public. We are also conscious of giving credit where possible to the sources and people like Mick Duggan, Johnny O'Leary and Paddy Cronin, because for a long time they were never known about. In a way they're the forgotten heroes of this music -- the people who have passed this music on so generously (quoted in Taaffe, 2003).

Through the celebration of people from a regional tradition, as well as performing the music of a wider musical tradition, Sliabh Notes are locating and reinforcing the importance of the regional tradition within the wider tradition.

Niamh Ní Charra is a fiddle and concertina player from Killarney, Co. Kerry who released an album entitled Ón *Dá Thaobh / From Both Sides* in 2007. Learning from

Nicky McAuliffe, she notes the influence of Sliabh Luachra on her music. However, Ní Charra has been exposed to a global network of Irish traditional musicians, having performed as support to Noel Hill and the Chieftains in her pre-teens. She has won All-Ireland titles at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* and spent eight years as a soloist in *Riverdance* before returning to Ireland. She currently lives in Dublin and teaches at *Cultúrlann na hÉireann*, the headquarters of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in Monkstown, Co. Dublin. Her band for her 2009 engagements comprises of guitarist Mike Galvin from Kerry, Robbie Harris on percussion from Dublin and Cathal King on flute from Limerick (Copley, 2009). While the press material makes reference to her Sliabh Luachra connections, Ní Charra herself has stated:

> To me, I would not consider myself as being from Sliabh Luachra, even though I'm about two miles down the road from it and have been surrounded by Sliabh Luachra musicians. But at the same time you have people living further away and still going on about how much they're immersed in it (quoted in Copley, 2008).

Ní Charra's statement reflects the different imaginations of belonging to and location of Sliabh Luachra. Amongst the other groups that present a connection to Sliabh Luachra are Cork City based band, *North Cregg*.

North Cregg has evolved since their formation in 1996. They have always included a polkas and slides prominently in their repertoire which demonstrates diverse influences including Appalachian, French Canadian and, particularly in *Roseland Barndance* that is associated with American recordings of Irish traditional music in the 1920s. Commenting following the release of their fourth album, *Roseland Barndance*, accordion player and band leader Christy Leahy stated:

> Sliabh Luachra music is local to us. Slides and polkas are rarely a feature of new recordings these days but we love to incorporate them as much as possible into our repertoire (quoted in O'Regan, 2007).

Leahy's statement contrasts with the feelings of Ní Charra, from Killarney, on the edge of Sliabh Luachra in Co. Kerry. The current line-up of the band includes Christy and Martin Leahy from Carrignavar in north Cork, Liam Flanagan from Charleville, also in north Cork, Ciarán Coughlan and Claire Anne Lynch from Cork City. Sliabh Luachra is an identity tag that they can make reference to in their music without maintaining a strong connection to the region.

Other individuals groups may also be linked to aspects of a Sliabh Luachra identity. Examples include west Limerick concertina player Tim Collins and the group *Smokey Chimney*. *The Chieftains* sourced a number of tunes to Denis Murphy and helped popularise polkas and slides through the inclusion of these tunes on a number of their recordings. The influence of Jackie Daly on the various groups he has performed with including *DéDanann, Buttons and Bows* and *Patrick Street* may be considered as part of the diffusion of the musical traditions of the Sliabh Luachra region. Similarly Matt Cranitch's involvement with *Na Filí* and Donal Murphy's involvement with *Four Men and a Dog* reflect the opportunities for musical interaction beyond the boundaries of regional identity. Other groups, including *The Four Star Trio* also demonstrate the influence of the musical traditions of the Sliabh Luachra region. Rather than challenge a regional understanding of Irish traditional music, the interaction of musicians both musically and across space highlights the regional diversity in the tradition and draws attention to regional heritage.

Many of the musicians considered in this section are active at the periphery if not totally removed from the social networks of the region and the lifestyle historically associated with the region. Their location echoes Quinn's (2008) consideration of American based artists such as Michael Coleman and John McKenna in the 1920s and, more recently, Martin Hayes' complex relationship with the musical identity of east Clare. Hayes himself questions the importance of being from a particular region or even from Ireland, such has been the diffusion and reimagination of Irish traditional music. The identity of the groups here is mediated indirectly through various authors for a variety of publications and radio programmes, in part motivated by the need to develop a profile attractive to their audience. The creation of these profiles is itself a performance that is part of the construction of regions in Irish traditional music.

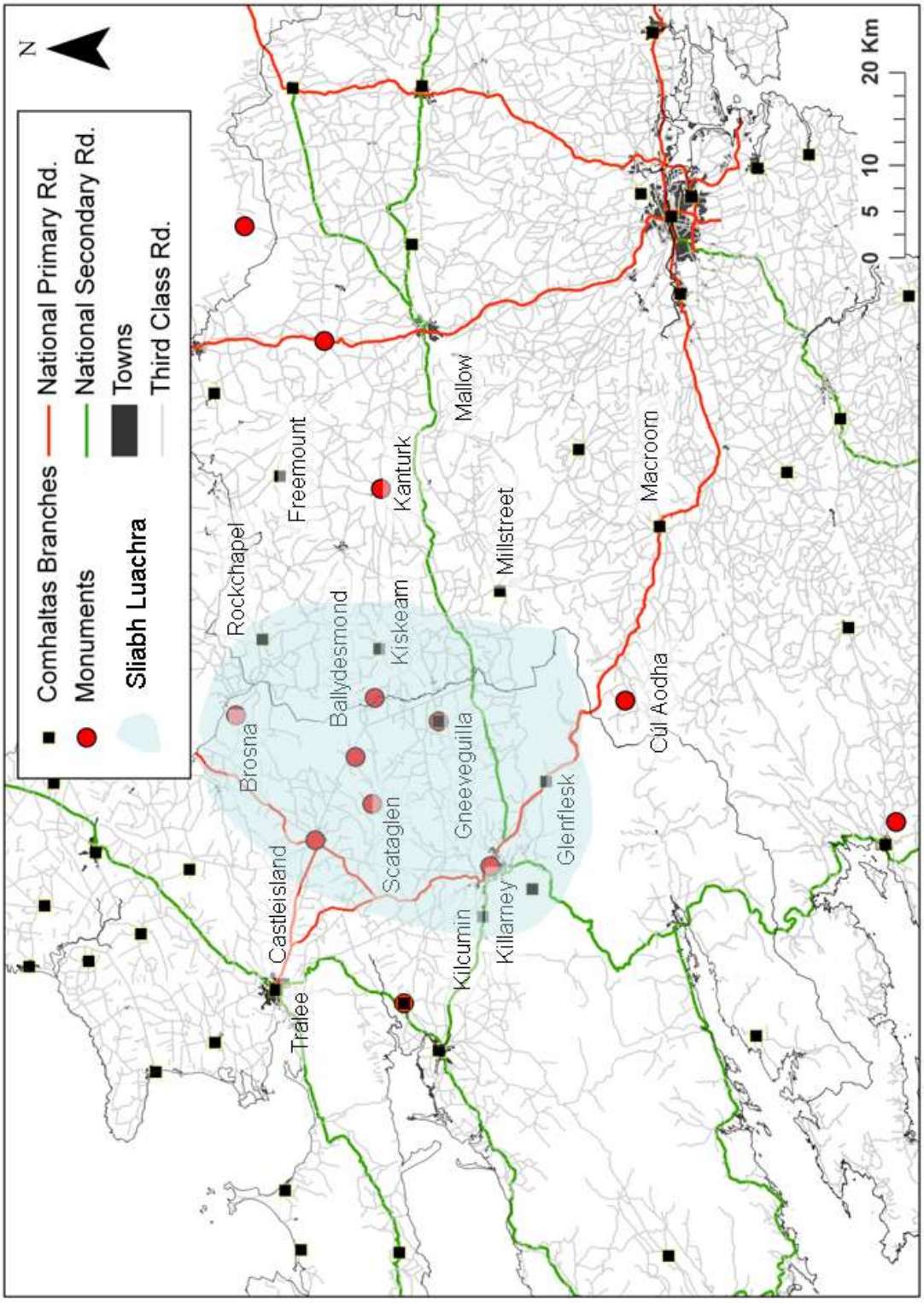
7.3 Monuments

A criticism of many studies of regions presented in previous chapters relates to the desire to present a region as a static, unchanging list of phenomena. The same may be said of studies of regions in Irish traditional music. Often the focus is on the description of a historical musical style and the failure to recognise the evolution and diffusion of regional

musical styles. Another approach would be to consider a region as a process, shaped by human action and a combination of forces from within and without the region. Regions in Irish traditional music, usually demarcated by subtle musical nuances, must also be considered as processes. The soundscape is shaped by the musicians and the political, economic, social and historical context in which the music is performed. Apart from musical style, other aspects of the musical tradition must also be considered. In this section the instruments and principal performers, as well as the spaces in which the music is performed are examined to present the uniqueness of the regional soundscape and musical style.

The monuments and public statuary located in Sliabh Luachra serve to locate the tradition and tell its story. Figure 23 highlights the location of monuments in the area outlined as Sliabh Luachra. The location of monuments, performance spaces and organisations reinforces the connection between music and place. The landscape remembers musicians of the past and assigns them status. These artistic representations are in many ways silent but are full of music. They also act to validate and reinforce regional narratives. Monuments, public statuary and other physical constructions are important spaces of the tradition that shape and represent the soundscape of the region. Johnson (1994) highlights the role of the creator in shaping a monument as a representation of culture. Reflecting on the monuments that refer to the 1798 rebellion in Ireland, she states: "They [monuments] represented self-conscious attempts to solicit public participation in the politics of the day" (1994:78). Similarly, Whelan highlights the role of public monuments as much more than ornamental features. Monuments are part of the creation of ideologically charged sites (Whelan, 2003; 2005). The monuments of Sliabh Luachra are part of the development and dissemination of Sliabh Luachra identity. It is, as reflected in the landscape, an evolving identity.

Figure 23 Map outlining the location of the Sliabh Luachra region.



Source: David Kearney and Katherine Cronin.

Monuments and public statuary create more permanent markers that help define the location of the region. The monuments featured in figure 23 represent not only the narratives of the Sliabh Luachra music region but also indicate musical activity in surrounding areas. The Hanafin Brothers of Milltown, Co. Kerry, who were important musicians in Boston at the beginning of the twentieth century, learned much music from travelling musicians in mid-Kerry before they left. They are located outside the areas visited by the principal Sliabh Luachra fiddle masters. Michael Cumbá O'Sullivan was a blind piper who represents the traditions of the Iveragh peninsula. The role of Kanturk as an important node in a network of towns in Munster is highlighted through the establishment of the Munster Council of the CCÉ in the town. The monument to Seán Ó Riada in Cúl Aodha, separated by the mountains from Sliabh Luachra is a reference to the regional music culture that he nurtured following his relocation there. Rev. Charles Bunworth of Buttevant in Co. Cork was well known as a harper and collector of harps, as well as an adjucator at poetry courts in counties Cork and Limerick. Patrick Weston Joyce was an important collector of Irish traditional music and a prominent scholar on Irish placenames. He collected much music from the Ballyhoura Mountains where he grew up but where there is little evidence of a regional tradition today. Another collector, Canon James Goodman, is commemorated in Skibereen (Plate 21, p. 265), though he also has strong connections with west Kerry. Thus, Sliabh Luachra does not exist in isolation but rather surrounded by other musical communities and regions.

As Whelan has pointed out, aspects of the past are distilled into icons of identity located in the cultural landscape, which highlight the historical trajectory of cultural groups in a process that reinforces narratives of group identity (2003, 2005). These sites may represent the centre or the edge for different conditions within the narrative and can also offer conflicting representations of the centrality of places in a culture. The signs and statues that often appear as visual markers for the tourist or visitor, may in fact serve the local population in a much more significant way. According to Ryden, who discusses the signs at the border points of states in America: "These signs are not all a matter of manipulation and salesmanship […] This is a statement of geographical distinctiveness" (1993: 4). The monuments on display are an assertion of local identity. Herbert (2000) also notes the role of time, noting that landscapes can be instructive and teach a lesson from the past because of events that occurred there. Monuments and public statuary also

contribute to the construction of myth and the simplification of the regional narrative. History (the past) and identity (the present) are intertwined in the experience of the field.

The role and construction of monuments is intertwined with institutions, organisations and community groups that are actively involved in the promotion of rural identities, community life and local history. A number of monuments are part of rural development programmes. The CLÁR Village and Countryside Enhancement Programme is one aspect of work of IRD Duhallow that has funded the construction of monuments in Sliabh Luachra. Sliabh Luachra is acknowledged as a region with a longstanding music tradition, part of which is located in the barony of Duhallow. Various aspects of local and regional culture and identity are acknowledged in these monuments. *Cumann Luachra* is another organisation involved in the existence of monuments in the Sliabh Luachra region. *Cumann Luachra* was founded in 1981 and has been involved in commemorating various historical events in the area, unveiling a number of plaques to mark aspects of Sliabh Luachra culture, heritage and history. It is based in Gneeveguilla and the majority of its members come from the Gneeveguilla, Rathmore area (Ó Suilleabháin, 1991). This has impacted upon the range of articles in a journal, also entitled *Cumann Luachra*. Amongst the first projects undertaken by *Cumann Luachra* was the signposting of sites related to the poets Eoghan Rua Ó Suilleabháin and Aodhgán Ó Rathaille as well as an tAthair Pádraig Ó Duinnín (Ó Ceilleachair, 1983; see plate 37, 38). The perceived importance of 'The City' to the location and identity of Sliabh Luachra is also evident in the articles published by the journal.

Plate 37 Monument to Aogán Ó Rathaille.



Located at his birthplace at Scrahanaveal, Gneeveguilla, Co. Kerry, the monument was unveiled on National Heritage Day, September 1992. Source: Author, 12th August, 2007.

Plate 38 Eoghan Rua Ó Suilleabháin monument, Co. Kerry



Source: Author, 12th August, 2007.

Like many parts of Ireland, older bardic, harping and piping traditions are part of the cultural narrative of the region. The poets Aodhgáin Ó Rathaille, Eoghan Rua Ó Suilleabháin, Geoffrey O'Donoghue and Piarais Ferritéir are part of the identity of Sliabh Luachra and surrounding regions. The Sliabh Luachra priest, An Athar Ó Duinín was an important activist in researching and celebrating these individuals and their poetry. They are remembered in Killarney where a statue entitled *An Spéirbhean* (Plate 39) stands near the bus and train station facing Gallows Hill where Piaras Ferritéir was executed in 1653. *An Spéirbhean* is a reference to the Aisling poetry of Ó Rathaille and, to a lesser extent, Ó Suilleabháin. The poets are also commemorated in nearby Muckross where three of the

four poets, Aodhagáin Ó Rathaille, Geoffrey O'Donoghue and Eoghan Rua Ó Suilleabháin, are reputedly buried (Barrington, 1976; Hayward, 1976; see plate 40). The Friary at Muckross was founded by the Mac Carthy's in 1448 (Hayward, 1976). Other references to the culture of the area note the talent of the piper James Gandsey (1767-1857) who is associated with Ross Castle and Aghadoe in Killarney (MacAulliffe and MacAuliffe, 1985; Herlihy, 2004). He has been commemorated in the landscape at Muckross Abbey where he is reputed to have been buried (Plate 41) but is disconnected from the musical tradition now associated with the region. These monuments, though somewhat disconnected from the identification of the Sliabh Luachra musical region with the fiddle tradition and Pádraig O'Keeffe in particular, remain part of the articulation of regional identity.

Plate 39 The monument entitled *An Spéirbhean*.



***An Spéirbhean*, located beside the bus and train station facing Gallow's Hill in Killarney, Co. Kerry, commemorates Piaras Feiritear, Seofraifh Ua Donnchadha, Aodhagháin Ua Rathghaile and Eoghan Ruadh Ua Súilleabháin with an inscription by An Athair Ua Dinín. Source: Author, 28th October, 2008.**

Plate 40 Plaque to the Kerry poets in Muckross Abbey, Killarney, Co. Kerry.



The poet Aodhgáin Ó Rathaille is reputed to be buried beneath this plaque. Source: Author, 28th October 2008.

Plate 41 Plaque commemorating James Gandsey at Muckross Abbey, Killarney



Source: Author, 28th October, 2008.

There are three monuments to Pádraig O'Keeffe in Sliabh Luachra that reflect the soundscape of the region and the complexity of the Sliabh Luachra narrative. One of these monuments to O'Keeffe is located on the main street of the town of Castleisland (Plate 42). Erected by the Patrick O'Keeffe Festival Committee, the monument makes reference to and reflects the evolution of the Sliabh Luachra soundscape. The monument points to an understanding of a musical region as a process. The monument features three instruments. The fiddle is a direct reference to Pádraig, the instrument with which he is most associated. In the centre of the monument sits a concertina. It is notable that Pádraig inherited much of his music from his Mother's side of the family, the Callaghan's of Doon. His mother herself played the concertina. In his second book of Sliabh Luachra Music Masters, Herlihy (2007) notes that the mothers of musicians Maurice O'Keeffe, Maureen O'Carroll (Cronin), Paudie Gleeson, the fathers of Tom Carroll and Con Curtain, and both parents of Patrick O'Connell's played concertina. Indeed Pádraig taught Lizzie Tarrant who was a pupil of Pádraig's in the school at Glounthane, Co. Kerry (Herlihy, 2007). The role of the concertina in the Sliabh Luachra soundscape is largely

unacknowledged. Unlike other places, such as county Clare, the concertina tradition was not sustained. Few concertina players are prominent in the Sliabh Luachra narrative, an exception perhaps being Terry 'Cuz' Teahan, whose name accompanies many local melodies. Cuz emigrated to America in 1928 and later released an album with the interesting title *The Road to Glountane*, a reference to the homeplace of Pádraig O'Keeffe and the narrative of Sliabh Luachra (McCullough, 1982). In contrast, the accordion represents the future as it was during Pádraig's lifetime. Pádraig himself taught the accordion, developing, as he did for the fiddle, a tablature or notation system for writing out the tunes. The tablature form of notation used by Pádraig O'Keeffe in teaching both fiddle and accordion feature on another monument, located at the crossroads where stand the remains of Pádraig's house (Plate 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48).

Plate 42 Patrick O'Keeffe Memorial, Castleisland, Co. Kerry



Source: Author, 10th January, 2006.

Plate 43 The derelict house that was once the home of Pádraig O'Keeffe at Glounthane Cross near Cordal, Co. Kerry



Source: Author, 10th May, 2006.

Plate 44 O'Keeffe home at Glounthane Cross



Source: Author, 28th October, 2008

Plate 45 Pádraig O'Keeffe Memorial, outside the home of Pádraig O'Keeffe at Glounthane.



Unveiled 12th September 1993. Source: Author, 28th May, 2006.

Plate 46 Fiddle tablature on plaque to Pádraig O'Keeffe at Glountane



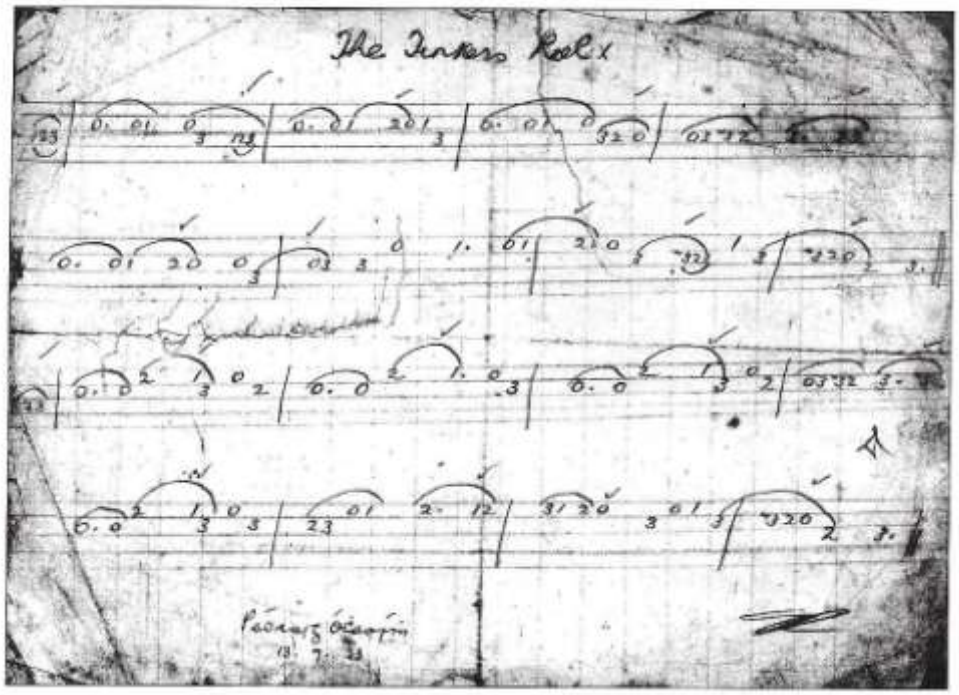
Source: Author, 26th May, 2007.

Plate 47 Accordion tablature on the plaque to Pádraig O'Keeffe at Glounthane Cross



Source: Author, 26th May, 2007.

Plate 48 Image of manuscript demonstrating the code used by Pádraig O'Keeffe. It was written and signed by Pádraig O'Keeffe and dated 13.7.35.



Source: Herlihy, 2003

Plate 49 Pádraig O'Keeffe monument, Glounthane, Co. Kerry



Source: Author, 26th May, 2007.

Plate 50 Monument to Pádraig O Caoimh in Scartaglen Village.



Source: Author, 2nd June, 2006.

The monument at Glounthane Cross reflects other processes in the evolution of Irish traditional music in Sliabh Luachra (Plates 45, 46, 47, 49). At the top and bottom of the monument, in two forms of notation, are inscribed two different polkas. The plaque features two instruments, the box and fiddle, by far the most popular instruments of the region and those with which the region is most associated but, as outlined previously, the accordion is a relatively recent instrument in Sliabh Luachra. O'Keeffe himself is acknowledged as "A Master of Traditional Music. Gifted performer, composer, arranger and teacher". There is recognition that O'Keeffe is part of the paradoxical process in Irish traditional music that includes change – the introduction of new tunes – while at the same time those who seek stability retain him as an icon.

Another day, because of an unfortunate event, I found myself tracing a path that Pádraig himself must have taken on his many trips walking from house to house. About a mile outside Castleisland, on the Scartaglen road, my car broke down. Having been told that I would have to wait a number of hours I set off walking, in the company of my sister, for Scartaglen to photograph the monument there. Wylie's reflections on the geographer Sauer, who believed that "getting out and about, preferably on foot with all senses alert, and as part of a group containing both experts and novices" became very immediate (2007: 19). The journey highlighted the topography of the area. From the elevated road it was possible to look back towards Castleisland and Tralee in the flat plains that led to the sea. In front of me was Sliabh Luachra, the hills rising as we walked. It was a pleasant experience, a warm summer's day but Pádraig had to walk these roads in all weather accompanied by his fiddle.

A statue of Pádraig O'Keeffe and his fiddle, sculpted by Mike Kenny of Castleisland, stands at the centre of Scartaglen, a small village now bypassed by the main road (Plate 51). He is well dressed with a youthful appearance and faces west across the valley. His name, in old script, appears as Pádraig Ó Caoim, accompanied by the phrase 'Sar mháistir cheoil', a master of music. There is a mistake in the inscription, related to the birthdate of Pádraig, resulting from human error (Kenny, interview 2006). He is, it tells us, 'Last of the Fiddle Master of Sliabh Luachra'. This echoes the title of a short memoir by Séamus Ennis, *Pádraig O'Keeffe, The Last of the Old Fiddle-Masters* (1963) and a radio programme produced by Ciarán MacMathúna entitled *The Last of the Fiddle Masters* (1963). According to Mike Kenny, the sculptor, it is a statement that not

everybody would agree with. Perhaps I am too late to find the Sliabh Luachra of my narrative for it no longer exists, having died, as the inscription suggests, with Pádraig in 1963. There are many fine fiddle players around yet this monument, a site of celebration of music, memory and tradition pays tribute to the last fiddle master of Sliabh Luachra. The monument constructs a narrative of Sliabh Luachra whereby it can only exist in the past yet it faces a building that attempts to preserve and develop the culture of Sliabh Luachra into the future.

Plate 51 Lyon's Public House, Scartaglen, Co. Kerry



Source: Author, 6th September, 2007.

The design and location of the statue exemplifies the importance of Pádraig O'Keeffe in the history of the area. The connection between Scartaglen village and Pádraig O'Keeffe emphasises the correlation of place and regional culture, suggesting in this instance the location of a cultural hearth. It is here in Scartaglen, in Lyons' Pub (Plate 51), that Séamus Ennis and Ciarán MacMathúna 'found' and arranged to meet with

Pádraig O'Keeffe. The soundscape of this bar pervades many of the recordings of Pádraig. The nearby cultural centre is titled 'The Sliabh Luachra Cultural Centre', also attempting to emphasise the ideological location of Scartaglen village at the core of the cultural region and further linking music, people and place.

The three monuments to Pádraig O'Keeffe create three different narratives. His name differs on each. At his birthplace he is Pádraig O'Keeffe, the name I have known him as. In Scartaglen the old Irish typescript is used and his name appears as Pádraig Ó Caoim. In Castleisland his name appears as Patrick O'Keeffe. Each place constructs a separate identity for the musician with whom they are connecting. In each space, particular instruments are prominent: the fiddle appears in all three, accompanied by the box at Glountane and both box and concertina at Castleisland. The Sliabh Luachra music tradition, which often begins its narrative with Pádraig O'Keeffe is a fiddle tradition that was supplemented by and arguably taken over by the button accordion in the latter half of the twentieth century. However Pádraig's music can be traced back to the concertina playing of his relatives. The narrative of time also differs in each space. In Scartaglen we are left mourning the 'last of the fiddle masters of Sliabh Luachra', signalling a lost culture. The appearance of notated music on the monument at Glounthane Cross invites the observer to engage with and play the music and continue the culture. The monument located on the main street of Castleisland symbolically brings Pádraig O'Keeffe into Castleisland town (Plate 43). The monument was erected by the Patrick O'Keeffe Festival Committee and contains a quote from *The Fiddler of Dooney*. From an artistic perspective, it is a two dimensional piece in a three dimensional space (Kenny, Interview, 2006). The quote creates a contrast between the local narrative and the popular narrative of a wider tradition. The text at Castleisland presents further hope for my quest in the search for Sliabh Luachra as the space celebrates 'a legacy', suggesting a culture that continues. The circumstances of its construction, by a festival organisation responsible for an annual celebration, add an additional layer of meaning, as there is an attempt to maintain a living culture in the region.

The monuments in the Sliabh Luachra landscape reflect both the increased awareness of regional culture and the evolution of that culture. A statue (Plate 52) dedicated to Johnny O'Leary was unveiled at Kenmare Place, Killarney on 28th April 2007 by then Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism John O'Donoghue. The sculptor for

the statue to Johnny is Mike Kenny of Castleisland, who had previously created the statue of Pádraig O'Keeffe in Scartaglen. There are a number of reasons behind the location of the statue at Kenmare Place. Killarney is a renowned tourist site and provides a larger audience for Johnny's memory than his homeplace might. Not that Johnny would be out of place here as, for many years, Johnny played a regular session in Jimmy O'Brien's pub, around the corner from where his statue now stands (Plate 53). The walls inside O'Brien's pub act as a museum of photographs to the many great musicians who performed there including Julia Clifford and Maurice O'Keeffe (Plate 54). The location of the statue also connects Killarney more closely with the hearth and concept of Sliabh Luachra. The presence of a Sliabh Luachra musical tradition adds another dimension to the Killarney product. Killarney can, arguably, provide an audience for Sliabh Luachra musicians in the nearby rural areas who are faced with rural depopulation and the closure of rural public houses. The representation of Johnny in Killarney points to a way forward for a continuously evolving musical tradition. The statue creates a link to a rural past but gazes at posters for modern commercial Irish dance shows including Riverdance and The Liam O'Connor Show, which are present in the town during the summer (Plate 55 and 56).

Monuments highlight the history and complexity of local musical traditions, as well as creating a statement of regional distinctiveness. Shows such as *Riverdance* and *The Liam O'Connor Show* are the result of the commercialisation of Irish traditional music in a mass-mediated market, from which regional traditions are not immune. Shows and festivals in the area are part of tourism driven, market motivated initiatives relating to Irish traditional music. The celebration of individuals such as Pádraig O'Keeffe, Tom Billy Murphy and Johnny O'Leary in the monuments located in the Sliabh Luachra region create a sense of heritage upon which regional identity and modern traditional music events are sold. Festivals act as a link between the celebration of the local and the attraction of musicians and audiences from a global Irish traditional music network. Artists such as Niamh Ní Charra have bridged the divide between local and global manifestations of Irish traditional music culture. The people who visit these sites, as a form of pilgrimage, are also, in many cases, attracted to these spaces from a global network of Irish traditional music events and spaces. However, there is an inconsistency between story, space and sound. On their own, monuments are insufficient to maintain the identity of musical regions.

Plate 52 Monument to Johnny O'Leary in Killarney, Co. Kerry.



Source: Author, 10th June, 2007.

Plate 53 Jimmy O'Brien's Lounge and Bar, Street, Killarney, Co. Kerry



Source: Author, 10th June, 2007.

Plate 54 Interior of Jimmy O'Brien's Bar



Inside, the walls of Jimmy O'Brien's display pictures of numerous musicians including Julia Clifford and Denis Murphy, as well as stories of Kerry football and other items of local interest. Source: Author, 10th June, 2007.

Plate 55 Poster for performances of *Riverdance* in Killarney for 2007 Summer Season



Source: Author, 10th June, 2007.

Plate 56 Poster for the Liam O'Connor Show on a wall facing the statue to Johnny O'Leary



Source: Author, 10th June, 2007.

7.4 Festivals

Irish traditional music festivals have become a key element of the Sliabh Luachra soundscape of the last number of years. In the past fairs and markets represented festive spaces where entertainment co-existed with the commercial activities largely concerned with the agricultural produce of the surrounding hinterland. Important market spaces, such as the village of Knocknagree, have changed because of the decline in these events. In some places they have been replaced by festivals that, initially at least, made reference to the agricultural calendar. Festivals are complex, multi-layered spaces that shape and present a variety of narratives. Festivals are a space in which various people come together. Festivals communicate meaning and images for the places in which they are located. Festivals celebrate aspects of a narrative and reinforce hierarchies within a culture. Festivals involve and exclude people and memories. Festivals in Sliabh Luachra include The Patrick O'Keeffe Traditional Music Festival in Castleisland, Co. Kerry, which has taken place every October since 1993 and The Maurice O'Keeffe Festival in Kiskeam, Co. Cork, which has taken place every Easter since 2001. These festivals make direct reference to the characters that shape the soundscape of Sliabh Luachra. The Sliabh Luachra Summer School in Rockchapel is a new development that seeks to create a new context for the dissemination of Sliabh Luachra music based on similar successful models located in other regions. It is organised by the local branch of CCÉ and takes place at *Bruach na Carraige* in Rockchapel, Co. Cork. Other festivals, such as The Gathering in Killarney, extend the geographical boundaries of the region by appropriating elements of the narrative. The musicians at these festivals impact on the soundscape of the area during the festival but also leave a legacy in the area for the value of music.

The Patrick O'Keeffe Festival in Castleisland is a very overt reference to the musical identity of the surrounding region. It is important to consider the value of music in society (Nettl, 2005). The festival places a cultural value on music as a local tradition but also makes reference to the economic value of the festival, being sponsored by Heineken, an alcoholic drink company, and Fáilte Ireland, the national body for the development of tourism in Ireland. The Pádraig O'Keeffe Festival is part of the evolution of Sliabh Luachra. It initially included the title of a harvest festival, making reference to the agricultural year. The festival, through its popularity, connects Castleisland and the surrounding region to the globalised realm of Irish traditional music while simultaneously seeking to present and celebrate local difference. A juxtaposition of musical identities

occurs during the festival. Though the festival succeeds in establishing, promoting and applauding local musical figures, such as Pádraig O'Keeffe and the recipients of the festival award, it fails to establish a Sliabh Luachra soundscape that differs substantially from other festival spaces identified by the performance of Irish traditional music. Though links are made, particularly through the presence of people such as Paddy Cronin, Paddy Jones and Mickey Duggan, to a regional tradition, all too often the sound is diluted by those whose musical interest, tastes and background relate to other regions and traditions.

Plate 57 Sign for Patrick O'Keeffe Traditional Music Festival



Source: Author, 10th September, 2006.

Festivals create particular spaces, motives and contexts for the public performance of music. Festivals are significant sites for the fieldworker. Bohlman notes:

> Musical performance in public spaces, too, acts aggressively to transform those spaces so as to act on history and consciousness. Public performance of music, whether that of eighteenth-century ballad hawkers or twentieth century rappers, is one of the most powerful means of arresting attention. By necessity, the fieldworker enters into these spaces in the present in order to have her attention arrested by the transformations that performers work on the spaces as historically shifting fields. Each performance, each moment shaped by musical practice, draws the fieldworker into a complex of meanings embodied by the physical spaces linking present to past (1997: 155).

The Patrick O'Keeffe Traditional Music Festival creates a space in which Irish traditional music is performed in the context of celebrating both the past and the present. It is a celebration of the life and legacy Pádraig O'Keeffe and an acknowledgement of the current strength and popularity of Irish traditional music. Sessions are held in places that Pádraig played in, including McCarthy's where he had his last drink. The music as it is performed differs from that performed in the past.

Duffy suggests that the relationship between music and place may be examined through participation in a community music festival (2000). Duffy notes:

> The community music festival […] can be seen as a means of promoting a community's identity, or at least how that community would like others to see it. There is a sense of the local at various levels: through performances, the audience and how the festival is organised (2000: 51).

Festivals such as The Patrick O'Keeffe Traditional Music Festival are constructed through the celebration of the past. Duffy notes that while a festival can articulate a local narrative of identity and place, they also include non-local participation. The Patrick O'Keeffe Festival creates spaces that focus on 'Sliabh Luachra performers' and musicians from outside the region. There is a contrast in the context of the music as performed by local and non-local musicians, particularly in consideration of the historical resonances in the musical performances.

The session creates a space that is controlled by and reveals the relative status of musicians (Hamilton, 1999). Indeed, the session trail list for any Irish traditional music festival presents an eclectic list of musicians that range from well known regulars on the international circuit to local musicians who play in the area all the time. The concept of status is different in each space. The audience, an active part of the soundscape, is also different in each scenario. At The Patrick O'Keeffe Traditional Music Festival, people

display a variety of motives in choosing a session to attend and join, be they musician or audience (see also Long, 2007a). O'Shea notes, in reference to Pepper's Pub in Feakle, that an influx of tourists and other outsiders, particularly those who join a session, can alter or 'ruin' the sound of a place (2006: 11). These people are often attracted by the historical narrative presented by the local community, often with business interests in mind. Through the course of my fieldwork I have encountered musicians from many different backgrounds who have become part of the soundscape of Sliabh Luachra.

The session has become central in the tradition and is at the heart of many of the Irish traditional music festivals. It is the sound of the ethnographic present yet it echoes with sounds from the past. Particular settings or groups of tunes are played similarly, though rarely the exact same, as they were recorded or performed previously by somebody else. That is the nature of the tradition in evolution. The session, like the festival, is also a site for the social construction of identity (Duffy, 2000; O'Shea, 2006).

A much smaller festival takes place annually in the village of Kiskeam and celebrates local fiddle player Maurice O'Keeffe. The event takes place each Easter and the main energy is evident in the sessions (Plate 58). The village itself is much smaller than Castleisland and does not have a large number of public houses or bed spaces in which to accommodate a large audience. Nevertheless it reinforces local identity through events including concerts and sessions and acknowledges the role of musicians such as Maurice O'Keeffe in the survival of Irish traditional music. The Maurice O'Keeffe Festival also highlights developments in the social structures of rural Ireland. In 2009 the festival was extended to include spaces in the village of Ballydesmond, partly in response to the closure of public houses in Kiskeam, a trend throughout rural Ireland in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

Plate 58 A session during the Maurice O'Keeffe Festival 2008



Musicians during session at the Maurice O'Keeffe Festival in Kiskeam, Co. Cork. Included are Séamus Creagh and Jackie Daly whose 1977 album was influential in the diffusion of Sliabh Luachra music and identity. Gerry Harrington from Kenmare was part of the group Smokey Chimney. Timmy Connors is a stalwart of the session at Scully's in Newmarket and a member of the group Monks of the Screw. Source: Andrew Kearney, April 2008.

The Gathering Festival in Killarney, located primarily in the Gleneagle Hotel, has become a significant festival on the Irish traditional music calendar. It makes explicit reference to Sliabh Luachra through its advertising and events. The Gathering Festival was first staged in February 2000. In 2003 it extended to include a tour of Sliabh Luachra and a talk by radio presenter Peter Browne entitled "Life, Times and Music of Pádraig O'Keeffe". Thursday night is usually a concert of local Sliabh Luachra musicians including Johnny and Ellen O'Leary, Jimmy Doyle and Paudie Gleeson. Other features of The Gathering have included a Sliabh Luachra Tour and schools outreach programme.

The launch of the 2005 festival took place in the Sliabh Luachra Cultural Centre, Scartaglen. *Céilí House* was presented on the night from the launch where much of the attention was given to the heritage of Sliabh Luachra with particular mention of Pádraig O'Keeffe and Johnny O'Leary (12th March 2005). The 2007 lecture by Jackie Small focused on the music collected by Breandán Breathnach in Sliabh Luachra. The link between the festival and Sliabh Luachra was further developed in 2008 when the first céilí of the festival was held in Scartaglen and a special dedication of the statue to Johnny O'Leary took place, fundraising for which was connected with the festival. The Gathering has also hosted the launches of a number of albums by local artists including Paudie O'Connor and Niamh Ní Charra. Though both artists are now based in Dublin, they represent the success achieved by musicians emerging from the Kerry soundscape. The Gathering Festival highlights the location of Sliabh Luachra within a wider power geometry of musical communities, media representations and industries.

Irish traditional music festivals in Sliabh Luachra create spaces in which Irish traditional music is performed in the context of celebrating both the past and the present and linking local and global narratives and networks of Irish traditional music. It is a celebration of the life and legacy local musicians such as Pádraig O'Keeffe, Maurice O'Keeffe and Johnny O'Leary and an acknowledgement of the current strength of the music. The festival presents an opportunity, like an urban space, for various musical styles, characters and narratives to come together. Regional music traditions can be compared and contrasted and a legacy exists that can shape the local music tradition after the festival is over.

7.5 Locating Sliabh Luachra

The region is developed from the social fabric of the people that live there. In this section I seek to define the location of the Sliabh Luachra region based on regional Irish traditional music culture. As identified in Chapter Two, there are difficulties in identifying the boundaries of regions and these boundaries are predominately subjectively defined. The various definitions presented relating to the position and context of Sliabh Luachra highlights the complexity and subjectivity involved in attempting to bound a cultural region. Dermot Hanafin (a local schoolteacher and author), relates the boundaries

of Sliabh Luachra to the popularity of the music: "it keeps expanding as its fame increases" (1995: 2). Meinig's model of culture regions, based on the core, domain, sphere and outliers, provides a useful framework for studying the region. The model presented in this study is influenced by both the historical connection between various places and musicians and their presence in the collective memory in the present.

It is important to focus on a range of criteria for the study of the region. From Hagerstrand it is observed that "everything that is present in a bounded part of the world has to be recognized as playing a role there" (1983: 378). From the previous sections, it is important to note the role and location of monuments and festivals relating to Irish traditional music in the region. A number of buildings and their absence also highlights aspects of regional identity and cohesion and evolution including village centres and derelict buildings. The simultaneous study of multiple aspects of the region and regional identity creates an opportunity for generating a cartographic representation of the region.

The history of music in Sliabh Luachra informs the location of the region. The importance of 'The Paps' and the patriarchal position of Patrick O'Grady in the musical lineage of Sliabh Luachra stretch the southern and northern boundaries respectively. The mountains to the south present a topographical boundary that has influenced the social, cultural and economic development and networks in the region. The musical heritage of the Sliabh Luachra region is developed from the activity and traditions of fiddle players and teachers in the area during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries which was influenced by O'Grady who died in Brosna and is reputed to be buried in Rockchapel. Despite the importance of O'Grady, the core is primarily associated with Pádraig O'Keeffe, though recognition is also given to other teachers including Tadhg Ó Buachalla, Tom Billy Murphy, Mike Noble O'Connor, Daniel Hartnett, Ellen Guiney and John Linehan. While the boundaries of the Sliabh Luachra region and its core, domain, sphere and outliers are primarily cultural, the Derrynasaggart Mountains are a significant topographical boundary at the southern edge of the region.

Central to the process involved is the recognition of the role of social relationships in constructing a region (Meegan, 1995). Lovering (1998) notes that music is part of the social culture of an area and Ó Suilleabháin emphasises the social aspect of music making in Irish traditional music (in O'Connor, 2001). The social relationships are shaped by the spaces in the region that facilitate and create social networks and the migration of people

beyond their region of origin. Social networks co-exist with economic networks and the role of agriculture and in particular the network of fairs and markets are significant for the social, cultural and economic development of the area. The public houses and dance halls and the increasingly prominent role of tourism connect social and economic processes that shape and contextualise local musical practices.

In consideration of the social networks that exist in the Sliabh Luachra region, it is also important to understand the power geometries and ideologies concerned with the construction of regional identity (Kearney, 1985). Power hierarchies are integral to identifying boundaries (Lomnitz-Adler, 1991). An understanding of boundaries, developed from Scruggs (1999) and Agnew (2007) recognises the possible elasticity of boundary lines drawn in relation to socio-spatial activity. Borders may be superimposed by forces from the outside or constructed from the inside (Ryden, 1993). Amongst the political forces that impact on an understanding of the Sliabh Luachra region are the Sliabh Luachra Local Development, Tuatha Chiarraí and IRD Duhallow. Sliabh Luachra Local Development (previously ADM) was formally incorporated as a company limited by guarantee (Kerry Rural Development, Sliabh Luachra Ltd) in August 1993. The 10 communities covered by Sliabh Luachra Local Development are Ballymacelligott; Brosna; Castleisland; Cordal; Currow / Currans; Farranfore / Firies / Ballyhar; Kilcummin; Knocknagoshel; Lyreacrompane; and Scartaglin (www.sliabhluachra.ie, 26th August, 2009). Tuatha Chiarrai was set up in 1995 to administer the EU LEADER II programme in North and East Kerry. It is a community and enterprise development company subcontracted by the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs to administer a range of rural development programmes on their behalf. Locally, it represents an amalgamation of community groups serving the town and hinterlands of Tralee, Listowel and Castleisland (www.northkerryleader.ie, 26th August, 2009). IRD Duhallow was set up in 1989 to tackle local economic concerns, rural isolation and support community groups (Herlihy, 2009). Duhallow in the IRD Duhallow context confirms approximately with the ancient barony of Duhallow, West Muskerry and parts of East Kerry covering the upper Blackwater River and surrounding hills. It is about 400 sq. miles in area and contains a population of some 30,000 people. Largely rural, there are four market towns, Rathmore, Kanturk, Millstreet and Newmarket and a number of villages (www.coillte.ie/community/community_partnerships/munster/, 26th August, 2009). Each of these organisations recognises the importance of musical heritage to the

identity and social activities of the region but place different boundaries on the cultural region. Tourism has also impacted on the region, particularly in Killarney. *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* as a national body seeking to promote Irish traditional music must also be considered in relation to the existence of the Sliabh Luachra region.

The relationship between and celebration of particular musicians is also important in understanding and deconstructing regional identity. McMenamin (1985) also notes the clash between individuality and regional identity, notable in the study of individual musicians (Ó Canainn, 1978). Gill (1995) focuses on the analysis of specific settings for social interaction in which regional identity and differentiation occurs. Thus, it is important to consider both the role of individuals and the spaces in which they interact. A number of musicians have been identified in previous sections including Pádraig O'Keeffe, the Murphys, and Johnny O'Leary. These musicians were an integral part of regional social networks, performing primarily in local dance halls, public houses and at various fairs, markets and festivals. The emergence of Jackie Daly, Séamus Creagh and others as musicians that represent the musical heritage of Sliabh Luachra highlights the changing contexts for music in and identified with Sliabh Luachra. Modern developments in information communications technology and patterns of globalisation challenge regional identity and regional boundaries (Newman, 2006). Recent artists that make reference to or seek to represent the musical culture of Sliabh Luachra, including Paudie O'Connor, Niamh Ní Charra, and the O'Briens challenge the identification of regions through association with a particular musician. In many cases they live far from the region and perform in a global network of spaces with varying degrees of connectivity to regional culture.

With the development of towns and villages as centres for social interaction and the performance of culture, they become places that inform attempts to locate the region. Donal Hickey, a local historian and social commentator, locates the region of Sliabh Luachra as:

> A bleak and wet stretch of countryside best known for its treasures of traditional music and poetry…Loosely outlined, the area is bordered by the towns of Killarney, Castleisland, Abbeyfeale, Newmarket and by the Paps (1999: 22).

Dan Herlihy, a local musician who has collected and documented many of the existing manuscripts written by Tom Billy Murphy and Pádraig O'Keeffe, two of the most important travelling fiddle teachers of the region, presents a more confined region:

> Sliabh Luachra is many things to many people but geographically it can be defined as an area from Ballydesmond west to Scartaglen across the border to Kerry, east to Kiskeam village, south west to Gneeveguilla, south towards Cullen, Rathmore and Baraduff, south east towards Knocknagree and northwards towards Brosna up near the Limerick border (2003:2).

While Killarney, Castleisland and Abbeyfeale are the major urban centres to which the region is connected, each of which is located at the edge of the topographically defined area, arguably the Paps, 'twin' mountains that may be seen from a great distance, lie outside the region. Like many cultures around the world, the view of the mountains has inspired local folklore and provides a mythical link to ancient gods (Viviano, 2004; Hickey, 1999). Hickey, like Hanafin and others, suggests that the area defined by features of physical geography is not broad enough to encompass that area which displays a common artistic culture developed through social networks.

The core of the region of Sliabh Luachra as defined in this study is primarily concerned with places associated with Pádraig O'Keeffe and includes the villages of Cordal, Scartaglen, Kiskeam, Knocknagree, Ballydesmond and Gneeveguilla. The Derrynasaggart Mountains to the south mark the boundary of the core. The musical heritage of the core developed in a post-famine context and flourishes until the 1980s. Cordal is the village nearest the birthplace of Pádraig O'Keeffe and it is here that O'Keeffe is buried. Cordal today is an eerily quiet village without a discernable streetscape and little evidence of music. Scartaglen is the location of Lyon's Pub where Pádraig often played and where he was recorded by Séamus Ennis in 1948 and 1949. A monument to Pádraig dominates the village green, a grassy area in the centre of Scartaglen. The Sliabh Luachra Cultural Centre is also located in Scartaglen. Galvin comments: "If there is anything that made Scart famous it must surely be its Fleadh Cheoil. Each August, thousands flock to the village green for the annual festival of music, song and dance organised by the local branch of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann" (1983: 61). The Scartaglen *Fleadh Cheoil* began in 1976 but no longer exists. The Sliabh Luachra Cultural Centre, initially supported by LEADER funding, has not been developed to its envisaged potential as a performance and archive space that would reinforce the location

of Scartaglen at the core of the Sliabh Luachra region. Despite the rich heritage of the village, the political economy of music has had an adverse affect upon the culture of this village.

Plate 59 Fiddler player Maurice O'Keeffe from Kiskeam, Co. Cork, playing at the Pádraig O'Keeffe Festival in Castleisland in October 2008.



Source: Louise Keating, 4th October, 2008.

Despite the strong connection between Pádraig O'Keeffe and east Kerry, it is acknowledged that he inherited much music and was heavily influenced by his mothers family, the Callaghan's from Doon, Kiskeam, Co. Cork. Important musicians in the nineteenth century included Corney Drew who settled in the area in 1863 and local musician John Linehan (1860-1932), who learned much music from Drew. The Callaghans also learned much music from Drew. Kiskeam achieved fame in the first half of the twentieth century for the Brass Band in the village. Today Kiskeam is the location of the annual Maurice O'Keeffe Festival in honour of another local fiddle player each Easter since 2001 (Plate 59). Knocknagree, also in Co. Cork, is the location of Dan O'Connell's Pub, an important space for the revival of set dancing (Ahern, 1999) and an important node in the social and musical networks of Sliabh Luachra in the latter half of the twentieth century. Knocknagree, now a quiet and isolated village, was the location of one of the largest animal fairs in west Munster in the early decades of the twentieth century and had a large number of public houses in the small village (Herlihy, 2007). Ballad sheet sellers were amongst the traders at the fairs, which were also frequented by musicians and dancers.

A number of spaces highlight the importance of Knocknagree in understanding the musical culture and identity of the Sliabh Luachra region. Near the church is a monument to Eoghan Rua Ó Suilleabháin, commemorating his death in a nearby fever hut. The monument marks the local connection to the poetic traditions of the Sliabh Luachra region. There were three dance halls in Knocknagree run by the O'Mahoney's, Dan Sheehan and Mick Herlihy. Herlihy's opened in 1928 and was later used as a cinema. O'Mahoney's remained open until the 1960s by which time the public house was becoming the primary space in which Irish traditional music is performed, experienced and represented and where its meanings and social histories are communicated. The publican is now a central character in the story of the region. In *The Companion to Irish Traditional Music*, Ahern writes, and I quote at length:

> The revival, and survival, of traditional music is very often associated with particular friendly 'houses' in the licensed trade. Such a spot in the Sliabh Luachra music area is 'Dan Connell's'. Bought by the present owner in 1964, on St. Stephen's Night of that year he invited Johnny O'Leary and Denis Murphy, two of the best-known Sliabh Luachra players, to host a regular session there. Denis died in 1974; Johnny has continued ever since. The bar has seen many noted musicians and media visitors over the years - Séamus Ennis, Willie Clancy, Ciarán MacMathúna and Eileen Ivers have

> all been through its doors. Julia Clifford often played there during her regular trips home from England. As set dancing activity expanded, so did the pub, with a middle bar and, later, a dance area added to the rear. Despite the fact that it has never advertised, the pub has attracted musicians and dancers from all over the world, and has featured on many television programmes. The album, I gCnoc na Graí by Tony MacMahon and Noel Hill, was recorded there, as was Dance Music from the Cork/Kerry Border by Johnny O'Leary (1999: 273).

Unfortunately, sessions at Dan O'Connells are a thing of the past and the pub closed in 2007 highlighting the evolution of the Sliabh Luachra region. The history of Knocknagree places it in the core of the region but the musical culture associated with the region is no longer evident.

Ballydesmond is located in Co. Cork on the border with Co. Kerry and the history of the town reflects the complex historical geography of the Sliabh Luachra region outlined in earlier sections of this chapter. Built as a model village as a result of the efforts of Richard Griffith and James Weale in the 1830s, Ballydesmond was initially called Kingwilliamstown (Moynihan, 2003). Ballydesmond takes its name from its association with Gerald, Earl of Desmond, who led the Geraldine rebellion in Munster in the sixteenth century. Though it is part of the diocese of Kerry, more than half of the parish of Ballydesmond is in County Cork. Ballydesmond is associated with the fiddle player and teacher Tom Billy Murphy, a near contemporary of Pádraig O'Keeffe but, unlike O'Keeffe, there are no audio recordings of Tom Billy's performances. Tom Billy has, however, contributed much to the musical traditions of Sliabh Luachra. In 2009, the Maurice O'Keeffe festival included public houses and events in Ballydesmond due, in part, to the closure of public houses in Kiskeam.

A number of notable musicians including Denis Murphy, Julia Clifford, Paddy Cronin and Johnny O'Leary, all protégés of Pádraig O'Keeffe lived in and around Gneeveguilla. A monument in the village reflects the culture of the area, displaying the Paps, books and a fiddle (Plate 60). The GAA hall in Gneeveguilla is named after Denis Murphy and Gneeveguilla was also home to the seanchaí and actor Éamonn Kelly (Plate 61) whose stories create outstanding representations of the way of life of the region. To the south is the town of Rathmore, where a railway station presents a link to places beyond the region. The Paps and the ancient city *An Cathair Craobh Dhearg* are distinctive features the skyline.

Plate 60 Monument to local culture in Gneeveguilla, Co. Kerry.



Source: Author, 10th June, 2007.

Plate 61 Statue of Éamon Kelly in Gneeveguilla, Co. Kerry. The line of sight of the sculpture gazes towards the Paps.



Source: Author, 10th June, 2007.

Plate 62 Edel Quinn Hall, Kanturk and the plaque commemorating the foundation of the Munster Council of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* here on 3rd June 1960.



Source: Author, 26th May, 2007.

While the core of the region is dominated by references to historical figures, the surrounding area, marked as the domain, maintains more evidence of a living culture but also involves links to other aspects of Irish traditional music culture. The musical heritage of the domain develops under the influence of the culture of the core in the twentieth century. The Cork villages of Kanturk, Rockchapel and Newmarket, as well as Kilcummin and Ballyhar in Co. Kerry, represent key points in the network of spaces in

Sliabh Luachra. A number of musicians from the Sliabh Luachra region, including Jim O'Keeffe who learned from Pádraig O'Keeffe, influenced the musical culture of Kanturk. Newmarket is the location of a weekly session that is often identified as representative of the musical heritage of Sliabh Luachra in the present. The session at Scully's Bar facilitates a social network that extends beyond the immediate locality. Though Rockchapel is connected to the travelling fiddle teacher Patrick O'Grady, it is not closely connected to the traditions of Pádraig O'Keeffe. Branches of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in Rockchapel and Kilcummin draw upon the musical heritage of surrounding areas and facilitate the transmission and recontexualisation of the tradition.

Kanturk is the homeplace of Jackie Daly, who learned much music playing for platform dances at Knocknacolan crossroads on the outskirts of the village and who becomes prominently associated with Sliabh Luachra from the 1970s (O'Keeffe, 1999). The platform at Knocknacolan was erected by Bill Sullivan, who owned the site. Sullivan was a nephew of the Sliabh Luachra fiddle player Din Tarrant and gives his name to a polka on the 1977 recording by Jackie Daly and Séamus Creagh. Kanturk is also the location of the Edel Quinn Hall with close connections to *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* (Plate 62). Kanturk was the location of the first branch of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in county Cork, founded in 1954. Irish traditional music was prominent in the area before the advent of CCÉ and Éamon de Valera visited a feis there in 1945, then considered the biggest in Ireland (Brosnan, 1980). The feis, literally "entertainment for the night" (Vallely, 1999j: 121), may have been organised by a local branch of *Conradh na Gaeilge* with the principal motivation of promoting Irish language related aspects of the culture. Though Kanturk did not have large numbers of musicians, Brosnan notes that the town's centrality and connectivity to the surrounding area made it a "very good centre" (Brosnan, 1980: 13). Though Kanturk is prominent in the identification of the Sliabh Luachra today, it is outside the core area from which the culture was diffused.

Scully's Bar in Newmarket, County Cork has arguably replaced Dan O'Connell's as the foremost public house space for sessions in Sliabh Luachra. Owned by musician Paudie Scully, it's importance is arguably borne out of its longevity in a region where public houses have struggled in the changing social and economic climate, as well as laws relating to drink driving limits and the presence of persons under the age of eighteen after 9pm. Recording for *Céilí House* on RTÉ, Kieran Hanrahan credited Scully's as "one of

the great traditional music houses in Cork" where a session had been going for over thirty years. Timmy Connors (see plate 58; plate 63) was featured on the programme and has also been an integral part of the *Seisiún* produced by the Rockchapel branch of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* over the past number of years. Another member of the Monks of the Screw, Tim Browne, has been instrumental in developing *Féile Dúthalla*, a festival of the traditions of the Barony of Duhallow, much of which makes up part of the region of Sliabh Luachra. Many cultural initiatives in the Cork area of Sliabh Luachra, including the *Bruach na Carraige* centre and *Féile Dúthalla* are supported by IRD Duhallow, the LEADER group in the area. The reinforcement of alternative boundaries and identities in Sliabh Luachra both challenges and reinforces the identity of Sliabh Luachra.

Plate 63 Timmy Connors (button accordion) and Denis O'Callaghan (fiddle) during a performance at *Bruach na Carraige* in Rockchapel, Co. Cork. Denis was a student of Daniel 'Saucepan' Hartnett.



Source: Author, 6th September, 2007.

The social networks that reinforce and promote musical activity in many areas of Ireland are reinforced by the activity at a local level of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. CCÉ has a complex relationship with the Sliabh Luachra musical region. Many of the most celebrated musicians applaud the work of CCÉ in developing the popularity of Irish traditional music in the area in the twentieth century (O'Leary, 1982; Duggan, 1983; Doyle, 1985). In the early development of CCÉ, there were few branches of the organisation in the Sliabh Luachra region, though the organisation was relatively strong in north Kerry (Ó Catháin, 1985). The involvement of the organisation in the culture of the Sliabh Luachra region peaked in the 1970s and the early 1980s. Galvin (1983) acknowledges the role of the Scartaglen branch and in particular the popularity of the Scartaglen *Fleadh Cheoil* which was begun in 1976. Cronin (2001) acknowledges the role of Shrone CCÉ, founded 1982, in reintroducing music and dance to May Day Festival at 'The City'. In many instances, music making continued in various parts of the region supported in some instances by the V.E.C. and teachers Nicholas and Anne Mac Auliffe. While *Comhaltas Ceoltoirí Éireann* is largely absent from the core of the Sliabh Luachra region, it is prominent in the domain. The Munster Council of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* was established in Kanturk, Co. Cork and notable branches are present in Rockchapel, Kilcummin and Gneeveguilla.

Rockchapel is the location of a branch of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and *teach cheoil, Bruach na Carraige* which has been identified as a regional outreach centre for the organisation. The branch website is www.sliabhluachra.com, their summer school is entitled the Sliabh Luachra Summer School and their *Seisiún* performances are dominated by reference to regional traditions. Button accordion player Timmy Connor and fiddle player Denis O'Callaghan provide important links to an informal, less institutionalised context for local musical traditions. Though not a musician, Jack Roche has played a particularly influential role in the development of the Rockchapel branch. His role in politics as a local representative and later his involvement in IRD Duhallow and LEADER is important in understanding the interconnected politics of music and rural development. On the walls of *Bruach na Carraige* are numerous images to musicians from Sliabh Luachra and references to people who have shaped the musical heritage of Sliabh Luachra. The annual Sliabh Luachra Summer School is also held here with the support of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. The Rockchapel branch of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* presents *Seisiún* each summer with an emphasis on local traditions. The

chairman, Jack Roche, has provided many articles to *Treoir* and has been a strong advocate of Sliabh Luachra history and identity (Roche, 1994; 1995; 2008). A number of the performers maintain links to older generations of musicians and some take part in the weekly session at Scully's Bar in Newmarket.

The Kilcummin branch of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in County Kerry has also done much to promote its connection to the traditions of Sliabh Luachra since its foundation in 1973 (see Herlihy, 2004). Kilcummin was part of the network of places in Sliabh Luachra that were visited by the various music teachers. Tom Billy Murphy regularly visited and taught in Kilcummin, though Pádraig O'Keeffe less so (Herlihy, 2004). The branch has been particularly successful in promoting set dancing and it recognises the movement of people in the parish beyond the current parish boundaries. In 2004 the branch published a history that employed a broader approach considering not only local history but also that of the Sliabh Luachra region and the role of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann (Herlihy, 2004). In the 1990s the branch depended on the skills of musicians from the north of the county, as well as Nicholas McAuliffe. The Kilcummin branch was also involved in producing Seisiún performances for a number of years. One of the main figures in the branch, John Moriarty, also taught set dancing in Barraduff and was influential in the re-establishment of a branch of *Comhaltas* in Gneeveguilla.

The establishment of the Sliabh Luachra branch of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in 2006 highlights the reconnection of the regions core with the national organisation and indicates some of the weaknesses of regional traditions. A branch of CCÉ existed in Gneeveguilla in the 1960s (Cronin, 1989) but subsequently ceased activities. More recently a new branch has been formed in the village. In 2006, John Moriarty of Kilcummin CCÉ organised for then county chairman Jackie Walsh to attend a meeting in the community centre, which was also attended by a number of local people whose children were learning music and dancing. The branch was formed on the night and chose to name the branch as Craobh Sliabh Luachra on the basis that no other branch had done so and they were, as they saw it 'in the heart of it' (Interview with Katie O'Sullivan, 3rd June, 2009). According to branch secretary, Katie O'Sullivan, there was plenty of music in the area largely due to the work of Nicky McAulliffe who had been teaching in the area for around thirty years. Amongst the members is Brian O'Leary, a grandson of Johnny

O'Leary. Since its establishment, the branch has entered a number of competitions and also hosts its own monthly session.

While musicians such as Jackie Daly and Paudie O'Connor have been critical of attitudes of CCÉ towards regional styles, a number of musicians and bands from the region have competed in competitions run by the organisation. At all times, the basic ideology of CCÉ as an organisation promoting Irish traditional music, song and dance has been adopted by local groups with little obvious connection to the activities of the organisation at large. In some cases, the organisation has been stronger in areas with weaker regional narratives. The heightened recognition of regions in Irish traditional music and, as a result, the greater profile of the musical traditions of Sliabh Luachra, has influenced the development of branches in the region.

Plate 64 Stone etching of fiddle and village name in the centre of Brosna, Co. Kerry.



Source: Author, 22nd June, 2007.

Places in the area identified as the sphere of the Sliabh Luachra musical region are often associated with or labelled as part of Sliabh Luachra. Amongst the most prominent places with strong musical heritage or vibrant music scenes are the villages of Brosna and Freemount. The towns of Castleisland, Tralee, Killarney and Abbeyfeale are also part of the sphere, acting as important urban centres and centres of employment and trade though the musical heritage of Sliabh Luachra is seldom identifiable. The sphere of the Sliabh Luachra region also stretches into the west Limerick cultural region, an area identified by Ó Riada in *Our Musical Heritage* (1962) but largely overshadowed by the popularity of the musical heritage of Sliabh Luachra in the interim. As well as the urban centres of Abbeyfeale and Newcastlewest, the parishes of Templeglantine and Tournafulla maintain strong musical traditions that are influenced by the musical heritage of Sliabh Luachra.

The village of Brosna is associated with fiddle playing and a number of polkas and slides. It was visited by the teacher Patrick O'Grady, who died there. O'Grady taught Ellen Guiney who passed on her music to the O'Connors of Brosna who were integral to the emergence of the Brosna Céilí Band. The reputation of Brosna was reinforced by the Brosna Céilí Band which was victorious at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* in 1972. Brosna is the homeplace of fiddle players Con Curtain, Patrick and Donal O'Connor and the village hosts an annual festival in honour of Con Curtain. A stone with the name of the village stands in the village square with a fiddle etched on its side (Plate 64).

Freemount, on the Allow River, is the location of a branch and *teach cheoil* of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. The Allow Céilí Band, representing the branch, won the Senior Céílí Band competition at *Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann* 2008, the first Cork band to achieve the accolade. *Craobh Chronáin*, the local branch of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, takes its name from the local saint, after whom the town was previously named. For many, Freemount lies outside the Sliabh Luachra region but many members have close cultural connections with the region and Sliabh Luachra identity.

The town of Castleisland marks the edge of the Sliabh Luachra region. The castle located here reflected its role on the edge of the region in the Norman era (Moynihan, 2003). Castleisland is important in the context of the economic and social development of Sliabh Luachra. It is an important urban centre with a number of public houses. Pádraig O'Keeffe is remembered here in a number of spaces including a monument and a festival. To the west is the town of Tralee, my home place and the town to which the ailing

Pádraig O'Keeffe was brought to hospital before he passed away in 1963. Seán Ahern of Moyvane in north Kerry remembers Denis Murphy and his sister Julia Clifford attending sessions at the O'Carroll house in Tralee during the 1960s (Interview, 17th February 2009). Killarney lies further to the south, on the edge of the Sliabh Luachra region but it is the site of a number of important spaces in the narrative of Sliabh Luachra including Jimmy O'Brien's, The Arbutus Hotel and a statue of Johnny O'Leary (Plate 59). Killarney is increasingly connected to Sliabh Luachra, as well as a global network of Irish traditional musicians, as highlighted in the next section. Through marketing initiatives and the performance of Irish traditional music, both connected to the tourism sector, the town of Killarney demonstrates a greater awareness of its connections to the Sliabh Luachra region than Tralee. A number of public houses in Killarney have provided session spaces for musicians from Sliabh Luachra, though many feature musicians from other places. Abbeyfeale is located in a zone of transition between the cultural regions of Sliabh Luachra and west Limerick. Prominent amongst the music community of Abbeyfeale are the Murphy family who, as well as owning a public house in the town, are popular performers and include Donal Murphy of the band *Sliabh Notes*.

Notable outliers include Cork City and Dublin City. Peter Browne has identified Cork city as an urban outpost of Sliabh Luachra, making particular reference to groups such as The Four Star Trio who make reference to the region through the sound of their music, their choice of repertoire and their recognition of tune sources and influential musicians (*The Rolling Wave*, 17th July 2004). Peter Browne, an uilleann piper and presenter with RTÉ, fiddle player Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh and the O'Brien family including Mick and John are Dublin born musicians who have become part of the processes that have shaped the Sliabh Luachra musical tradition. Peter Browne, both as a musician and through his role as producer and presenter on RTÉ Radio, has helped disseminate and popularise the musical heritage of Sliabh Luachra. Caoimhín Ó Raghallaigh, Mick O'Brien and John O'Brien have recorded albums and perform music that is heavily influenced by the musical heritage of Sliabh Luachra, which they refer to in the album notes and live performances. Ballyhar accordion player Paudie O'Connor is now resident in Dublin where he performs regularly in a distinguishable Sliabh Luachra style.

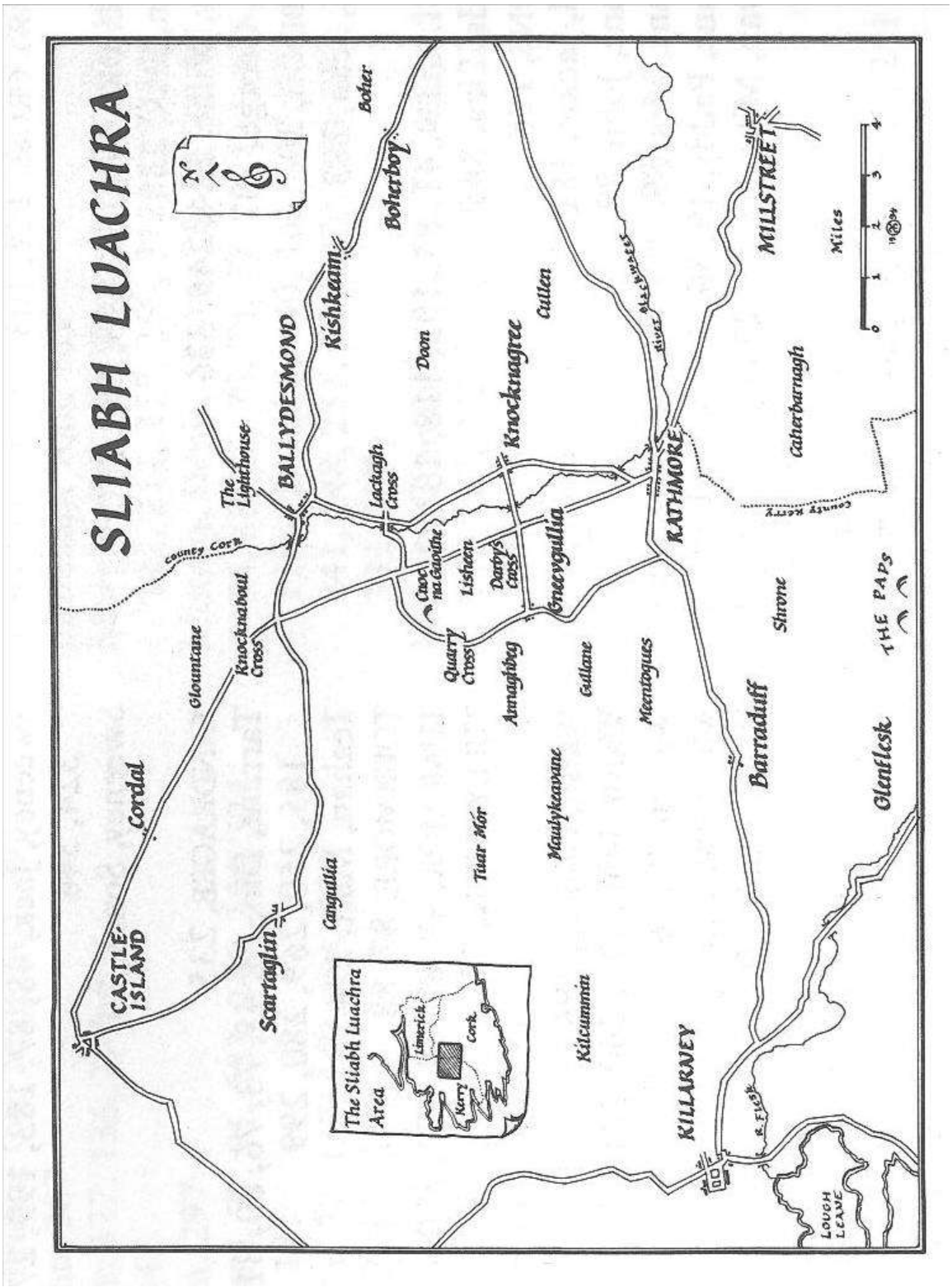
The location of Sliabh Luachra is defined in part through the identification of other regions. The culture of these regions and the networks that exist within these regions contrast with those of Sliabh Luachra and reinforce the identity of Sliabh Luachra. The first issue of a publication entitled *Ceol agus Craic: A traditional music and cultural events journal for Sliabh Luachra and the surrounding areas* from December 1995 seeks to create a context for understanding the social and cultural regions in Kerry, north and west Cork and west Limerick. It identifies Scartaglen as the heartland of Sliabh Luachra which "runs south to the mountains, stretches east almost to Banteer, west to Killarney and north to Brosna" (Ó Síodcháin, 1995: 7). To the south east, the rich singing traditions of Cúl Aodha and Baile Mhúirne and continuing use of the Irish language are in contrast to the decline of the Irish language in Sliabh Luachra where the fiddle and accordion dominate the soundscape. In the west is the Corca Dhuibhne peninsula and the Blasket Islands with their rich literary tradition in the Irish language and repertoire of Irish language songs. Ó Síodhcáin places Dingle at the centre of this region that he claims influences everything from Kerry Head to Killorglin and includes Tralee. To the north west is the region of North Kerry with its rich literary traditions, distinctive traditions of step dancing and farmlands. Ó Síodhcáin identifies Finuge as the hub though this quiet village is overshadowed by the nearby town of Listowel. Though Finuge is the location of a *Teach Siamsa*, a training centre for Siamsa Tíre, and a statue to the poet and balladeer Seán McCarthy, Listowel is the urban centre that, since the 1990s, has developed a number of public centres and spaces that celebrate and represent the culture and heritage of north Kerry. To the north of Sliabh Luachra is the region of West Limerick, whose identity has been highlighted at various stages by Seán Ó Riada in *Our Musical Heritage* (1962), local branches of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and recordings by local musicians. Ó Síodhcáin identifies a region stretching from Newmarket to Abbeyfeale to Ballingarry with Tournafulla as the cultural centre, though he also recognises the possibility for two regional identities here influenced by those who attend events and spaces in Newmarket such as Scully's Bar and Tournafulla/Templeglantine. There is a thriving branch of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in Tournafulla. There are other nearby branches of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* in Kileedy and Templeglantine. The branch in Templeglantine was founded in 1971 and is the second oldest in Co. Limerick. The identity of West Limerick musical tradition is further explored by the album by Diarmuid O'Brien from Glin, *Cáirde Cheoil* (2006). The conceptualisation of the neighbouring region allows the recognition of a border area, described as a buffer zone between Sliabh

Luachra and county Clare. Abbeyfeale is important in the context of this thesis as the home town of my mother who was aware of the music of west Limerick to the north and Sliabh Luachra to the south. Ó Síodhcáin's regions leave gaps but also, through their inclusion in the one publication, recognise the overlapping communities and the connected musical network that exists.

The collection of the music of Johnny O'Leary by Terry Moylan (1994) also sought to represent the location of Sliabh Luachra. O'Neill (1994) creates a representation of Sliabh Luachra that focuses on the Rathmore/Ballydesmond axis, locating Gneeveguilla at the centre of this cultural world (fig. 25). Millstreet, Killarney and Castleisland are to the outer reaches of the region. The Paps are indicated as the southern boundary. Townlands are named but undefined, their names directly related to the tunes and people outlined in the book. Absent is the north of the region including Brosna and Rockchapel while to the east, Newmarket and Kanturk are also beyond consideration. The map emphasises individuals such as Johnny O'Leary and his neighbours Denis Murphy and Julia Clifford, recognising also the townlands of Doon and Glountane that are associated with Pádraig O'Keeffe. It neglects older musical heritage explored in Chapter Six of this study.

Another challenge to the location of Sliabh Luachra is the boundaries of the barony of Duhallow and the strengthening of a Duhallow identity. A significant part of this has been the role of the LEADER agency IRD Duhallow in supporting cultural initiatives in the Cork barony. Though located in Cork and excluding important villages in Sliabh Luachra such as Gneeveguilla and Scartaglen, the barony extends much further to the east towards Mallow in north Co. Cork. However, the musical heritage of Duhallow overlaps greatly with that of Sliabh Luachra, particularly evident in the development of *Féile Dúthalla*, a festival centred in Kanturk preceded by a series of lectures. These lectures included talks on Julia Clifford and Pádraig O'Keeffe and failed to create a separate musical identity for Duhallow. As a result, the boundaries of Sliabh Luachra continue to be stretched eastward into the barony of Duhallow. In contrast, the LEADER agency dealing with the Kerry part of Sliabh Luachra, has become part of Tuatha Chiarraí, which encompasses two fifths of the area of Kerry located in north and east Kerry. With a sub-office in Castleisland, Tuatha Chiarraí's role includes the promotion and facilitation of rural development in its widest sense.

Figure 24 Map of Sliabh Luachra as published in *Johnny O'Leary of Sliabh Luachra*.



Source: Tim O'Neill in Moylan (1994).

Figure 25 Map of the Barony of Duhallow and surrounding baronies.



Source: Michael Murphy.

The boundaries of Sliabh Luachra remain difficult to locate and define. Con Houlihan has noted:

> I know of no other region in Ireland that has been as romanticised in this generation…The sticklers for accuracy who will always be with us tell you that Sliabh Luachra is merely the name of a rushy hill whence flows the infant Blackwater…It now embraces a considerable expanse of territory along by the Kerry-Cork border and is expanding rapidly into both counties (1989; 2002: 121, 122).

Elsewhere Houlihan describes Sliabh Luachra as a region that in recent years has become a moveable feast and is now threatening to embrace all Munster" (1995; 2002: 104). Sliabh Luachra is both an ancient identity and a cultural reality in the present. In contrast to Houlihan, Kenny relates the concept of Sliabh Luachra to an older identity. He remarks:

> ‘tis disappearing. The concept of Sliabh Luachra as a place where outlaws took refuge, where of course t’was impassable for much of the year by the forces of the crown, and of course because it was ignored because of that terrain. That’s gone, isn’t it (interview, 2006).

Sliabh Luachra has not forgotten its ancient heritage but it has been written into a reimagination of the region in the present. With the development of musical heritage as an economic resource, the branding of local traditions and their promotion has taken on added importance. This process has involved a revision of the past and the coming together of memory and identity in the construction of more concrete, institutionalised representations of regional identity in relation to musical heritage. The preceding sections highlight the interconnectivity of various processes including recording, broadcasting, institutionalisation and marketing Irish traditional music. The construction and recontextualisation of the musical heritage of Sliabh Luachra requires a new understanding drawn from historical and cultural geographies.

7.6 Conclusion

The Sliabh Luachra region is constructed through the celebration of the musical heritage of the area in official narratives, commemorated in the landscapes and streetscapes of Sliabh Luachra, and remembered in a variety of musical events. In part, there is a filiopietistic motive behind the narratives of Sliabh Luachra – the glorification of the forebears of the tradition such as Pádraig O’Keeffe in an effort to glorify the present. A number of issues remain central to a geographical understanding of the region, notably its location and boundaries, the distinctiveness of its music and soundscape and the reaffirmation of regional identity. The inconsistencies between the historical soundscape and contexts for music making, which are placed centrally in the construction of regionally identity, and the soundscape and contexts for music making in the region in the present, complicate the understanding of Sliabh Luachra as a discernable region in the geography of Irish traditional music in the present.

The importance of Sliabh Luachra in the context of this thesis, as a place and regional entity in the narratives of Irish traditional music, is based on the celebration of a particular soundscape, repertoire and musical style associated with a number of celebrated musicians. The region in Irish traditional music is a process that is constructed through a

reading, interpretation and narration of the past. In attempting to locate Sliabh Luachra, it is important to understand the historical geography of the region. The concept of Sliabh Luachra has adapted to remain relevant in a modern world with different socio-economic forces at play. The history of the region provides some of the energy that supports the ongoing relevance of Sliabh Luachra as both a region and a 'state of mind'.

Sliabh Luachra emerges as a local reaction to global forces and, in particular, the greater connectivity between the region and the outside world. As a place it acts as a reference for a deterritorialized, imagined community that is diffused globally and demonstrates little connectivity with the everyday culture of the region. The role of time is significant as the simultaneous embracing of past and present in the construction and maintenance of place meanings at the individual and collective levels is evident in the constructed identity of the Sliabh Luachra region. Sliabh Luachra is a repository of memories. Music acts as a form of encoded memory. Sliabh Luachra is developed from a combination of memories of the past and experiences of the present. The history, memories and folklore of Sliabh Luachra have become institutionalised to a certain degree. The Sliabh Luachra region as it exists at the beginning of the twenty first century is constructed through a variety of media by a number of agents that present particular aspects of the past in radio programmes, sound recordings, newspaper reports, monuments and festivals. The institutions involved in the writing and dissemination of Irish traditional music include *Radió Éireann* and *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* and, more recently, various third level institutions in Ireland and abroad (Herlihy, 2004; Roche, 2008).

Many aspects of the emergence of Sliabh Luachra as a region with a strong and distinctive musical identity are depended on external forces. The particular musical sounds and style associated with the Sliabh Luachra region may be examined through various recordings that represent the musical soundscape of the region. In the 1950s and 1960s, recordings of Pádraig O'Keeffe and some of his students, notably Denis Murphy and Julia Clifford, brought added attention to Sliabh Luachra (Lyth, 1996). They were disseminated initially by radio programmes and this process of dissemination owed much to the work of Séamus Ennis and Ciarán MacMathúna. As Johnny O'Leary noted, before Séamus Ennis arrived in Sliabh Luachra, the region was hardly recognised (O'Leary, 1997). Later the set dance revival also brought added attention to this music. Recordings

initially made for radio were later released as records from the 1970s, providing additional impetus to the recognition and identification of a Sliabh Luachra musical region. Other commercial recordings by Jackie Daly, Séamus Creagh, Sliabh Notes and Paudie O'Connor have also brought attention to the region from the Irish traditional music audience. More recently, producer and presenter Peter Browne has been to the fore in the continuing inclusion of Sliabh Luachra music on RTÉ. These recordings also highlight the changing musical soundscape of Sliabh Luachra and the role of instruments and spaces in that soundscape.

Notated collections also play an important role in diffusing the musical heritage of the Sliabh Luachra region. Breandán Breathnach is particularly influential through his own personal interest in the music of the region and friendship with musicians there. The inclusion of much music from the region in the *Ceol Rince na hÉireann* series created greater access to the repertoire of Sliabh Luachra. Breathnach also began the project, completed by Terry Moylan, to publish a collection of the music of Johnny O'Leary. The particular style of fiddle playing associated with Pádraig O'Keeffe was also featured in a book published by *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* that examined bowing patterns in the playing of various Munster fiddle players (Lyth, 1997).

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann has had a complex relationship with the Sliabh Luachra region, celebrating the lives and music of the musicians of the region without promoting the style within the national canon. Branches of the organisation have been unevenly spread throughout the region and have rarely been well established. The development of *Bruach na Carraige* and the activities of the Rockchapel branch highlight the importance of bottom up development within the organisation through which local and regional identities are promoted and maintained. Other local organisations, including Cumann Luachra and IRD Duhallow have also promoted local musical heritage and have been influential in the development of monuments and public statuary in the region that reflect upon the musical heritage of Sliabh Luachra. The interpretation and rewriting of the past is not a simple exercise. As Bohlman (1997) notes in his development of the ethnomusicological past, the past is a contested space. While the history and folk memory of Sliabh Luachra celebrates Pádraig O'Keeffe the master and genius, folk memory also contains references to O'Keeffe the bum and, musically, a terrible scratcher – though people are quick to point out that they do not wish to speak ill of the dead. Ó Duinnin

notes how the onset of time has "transformed one who at one time was regarded as a social disgrace, other than for his musical ability" into an almost legendary folk hero (1993: 25). O'Keeffe dominates a story that is often simplified from a complex narrative of characters and sounds that existed in the region.

There are many sites of memory that celebrate Pádraig O'Keeffe as an iconic element or heroic figure in the narrative of Sliabh Luachra. O'Keeffe represents one aspect of Sliabh Luachra. The image of Pádraig O'Keeffe has become iconic, his name symbolic and the sound of his music a point of reference for the Sliabh Luachra musical region. Images and references to Pádraig O'Keeffe are located in numerous townlands, villages and public spaces. The monuments impose an identity on occupants of the region as well as identify the region as a place of rich regional musical heritage that is linked to Pádraig O'Keeffe, a musician now celebrated in the wider narrative of Irish traditional music. The landscape also presents different stories about Pádraig O'Keeffe and Sliabh Luachra that shape the process of the region in Irish traditional music.

Despite some diversity in the musical soundscape of the Sliabh Luachra region, the identity of the region in the context of Irish traditional music became firmly associated with the fiddle playing of Pádraig O'Keeffe and his students. However, even as it was being identified, the musical soundscape of Sliabh Luachra was continuing to evolve in defiance of the processes of institutionalisation and associated stultification of musical development. The evolution of the musical traditions of the area was closely associated with the changing socio-economic environment in which the music existed. Irish traditional music was no longer part of the ritual of rural life as other forms of entertainment became more accessible. New spatial contexts for Irish traditional music, changes in rural lifestyle and extended social and communication networks for musicians facilitated these changes.

One of the most challenging aspects of the study of regions in Irish traditional music is the definition of boundaries and locations, geographically, historically and musically. The chapter concluded with an examination of the location of Sliabh Luachra the role of boundaries in the conceptualisation of the region. Sliabh Luachra is represented by various authors and commentators as a place whose boundaries do not match those of political administration (Ó Duinnín, 1982; Houlihan, 1989; Hickey, 1999; Herlihy, 2004; Cranitch, 2006). It does not conform to parish or county boundaries. It is

pay, as derived from the French geographies of the Annales School of Geography. A complexity in presenting a geography of Sliabh Luachra is the discourse concerning the location of the region and its boundaries which are often represented as expanding (Houlihan, 1989, 2002). A number of maps and statements are presented in this chapter that outline the malleability of the boundaries of Sliabh Luachra and the reality of the region as an evolving set of networks and processes. Thus, the boundaries of the Sliabh Luachra region must be experienced and performed.

The final stages of my thesis were also informed by the shadow of death. Elder figures that feature prominently in the institutionalised stories of Sliabh Luachra, Séamus Creagh, Con Curtin and Dan O'Connell, all passed away within a relatively short period. They represented different aspects of the Sliabh Luachra story and the evolution of culture. Séamus Creagh, who passed away in March 2009, had come from Westmeath to settle in Co. Cork where he recorded an album with Jackie Daly that informs a reflection on the soundscape of Sliabh Luachra. Con Curtin, who passed away in June 2009, was born into a social network in Brosna in which music was being handed on within the family before he emigrated to London. As part of a different set of networks, Curtin became somewhat disconnected from the Sliabh Luachra story, returning in more recent chapters and influencing the performance of culture in the area again. Dan O'Connell inadvertently provided part of the motivation for this thesis, partly through his premise "that enjoyment should never be sacrificed for perfection" (see Hickey, 25th May, 2009). As both a publican and dance teacher, Dan O'Connell made a significant contribution to the revival of set dancing and the evolution of the Sliabh Luachra region. Another tragic death during the summer of 2009 was that of Stephen Carroll, a young accordion player from Maulykevane near Killarney. Aged just twenty three, Stephen represented the next generation of musicians in the Sliabh Luachra region. Their deaths do not signify the death of the region but rather contribute to the evolution of culture in the Sliabh Luachra region.

In dealing with death and change, it is useful to return to Roach who sees death, or rather substitution after death as part of a three-sided relationship with memory and performance. In *Cities of the Dead*, Roach states:

> Culture reproduces and re-creates itself by a process that can be best described as surrogation. In the life of a community, the process of

> surrogation does not begin or end but continues as actual or perceived vacancies occur in the network of relations that constitutes the social fabric. Into the cavities created by loss through death or other forms of departure, I hypothesize, survivors attempt to fit satisfactory alternates. Because collective memory works selectively, imaginatively, and often perversely, surrogation rarely if ever succeeds (1996: 2).

Monuments are an integral part of the process of surrogation. Individuals who have inherited a tradition must make decisions in the way the tradition evolves and how their predecessors will be remembered in that process. So too are albums and festivals but it is through the everyday acts of performance and transmission that the region gains meaning as a living entity and not merely a representation.

The Sliabh Luachra region is constructed out of a particular constellation of relations. It is constructed through the diffusion of stories and music, which provide contexts and motivation for some of the social networks and the creation of particular spaces within the region. The Sliabh Luachra region is dependent on stories, legends and tradition in maintaining a sense of identity during periods when the performance of regional culture is less prominent, sometimes subsumed within a larger, global and commercial Irish traditional music culture. The identity of the Sliabh Luachra region is strengthened by the interest shown in local and regional cultures in response to the globalisation of Irish traditional music and the reference to and performance by groups outside of the region of aspects of the regions musical culture. The Sliabh Luachra region has been the location of an important poetic tradition and a way of life but it is through the distinctive musical traditions of the area that it now attracts attention. Though Sliabh Luachra has become deterritorialized to some extent, the celebration of people and places through the construction of monuments and public statuary allows for the creation of a sense of pilgrimage. As the distinctive musical style and repertoire of the region becomes diffused and diluted, the identity of the Sliabh Luachra musical region is maintained through stories, the landscape and social networks, as well as the institutionalisation of that identity.

Chapter 8

Conclusions

Noting the importance of regions in understanding Ireland, Horner states: "It is a basic fact that there are significant regional contrasts within modern Ireland" and: "Geographers need to bear witness to these contrasts" (2001: 361). As highlighted throughout this study, there is great regional variation and diversity in Irish traditional music. Though my research began as a study interested in the concept of regional styles in Irish traditional music, it has broadened to recognise a number of social, economic and spatial processes that have shaped the tradition. Developments in geography have influenced the approaches used throughout this study. The cultural turn in geography placed greater emphasis on the study of cultural interaction and politics that highlight the role of social relationships. Stories, central to the humanist approach to geography, have informed the investigation of regional identities. There is also an awareness within ethnomusicological research of the importance of understanding the context in which music is created, performed and transmitted. Ethnomusicology is also concerned with musical change and the changing contexts for music. The connection between music and place and the recognition of regions is central to both geography and ethnomusicology.

In this dissertation I have highlighted the various ways in which regional patterns in Irish traditional music may be identified. Acknowledging the development of various scholars on the subject of regional style, I have placed the concept of regional musical styles in the wider geographical context of place and society. In Chapter One I recognised my own positionality and the importance of geography in the development of my own interest in and understanding of Irish traditional music. The uniqueness of each individual marks the individuality of their research and approaches and thus allows the author to present a different perspective on a popular research topic. In Chapter Two I examined the paradigms of geography and ethnomusicology, highlighting shared approaches and areas of interest that inform and enhance this study. In Chapter Three I examined a number of contexts for the study of music and the interrelationship of music and society. In particular I explored the role of representation, memory and power and the influence of economic and social conditions on the development and diffusion of musical traditions.

In Chapters Four and Five I focused on Irish traditional music and attempted to deconstruct the existing regional understanding of Irish traditional music. Despite the interest in regional musical styles and regions of Irish traditional music, few studies have assessed the development of a regional understanding and the influence of various

individuals and processes on such an understanding. My research proposes a holistic study of Irish traditional music, recognising the multitude of processes and factors involved in the development and diffusion of the tradition. In particular, I noted the power geometries of the tradition and the role and motivations of various groups in shaping a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. Though O'Shea (2008) has presented a similar approach to Irish traditional music, her book is very much influenced by her experience of Irish traditional music as an outsider and is heavily weighted towards an exploration of the musical traditions of east Clare. O'Shea fails to place this in the wider context of processes of development, diffusion and institutionalisation as presented in this dissertation.

In Chapters Six and Seven I focused on the Sliabh Luachra region. Despite the recognition given to the Sliabh Luachra region as an area of musical distinctiveness, many of the existing studies of Irish traditional music are limited in their exploration of the region. Though Hickey (1999) makes reference to ancient customs, poetry and the musical traditions that centred around Pádraig O'Keeffe, he does not recognise the developments in the region and the changing contexts for understanding the region. Cranitch has examined the music of Pádraig O'Keeffe and provides in depth biographical information on the man and the social milieu in which he worked but Cranitch is focusing on a limited part of the Sliabh Luachra narrative. I have expanded the conventional understanding of the Sliabh Luachra region to include an understanding of the commemoration and institutionalisation of the past and the emergence of new personalities in the narratives of the regional music tradition.

Integral to the research presented in this dissertation is the acknowledgement that both regions and traditions are considered as processes (Paasi, 2003) shaped by power geometries and social networks of which music can be representative or assigned meaning. Regions contain spaces that are the focus of the study of music within the social sciences (Jazeel, 2005). The sounds produced in and evoked by these spaces are part of the distinguishable musical soundscape of the region. Regional identity is constructed and performed by groups of people in a society or community who attach significance to particular places. Memory plays an important role in shaping regional identity.

The central issue of concern within this thesis is the importance of location, the role of distance and patterns of diffusion. The cultural region is based on a series of social

networks and interlinked spaces in which culture evolves and is transmitted or diffused. Greater communications, recording technologies and increased travel and tourism have played an important role in negating the significance of distance on cultural difference yet distance remains a significant factor in the development and evolution of local and regional cultures. While elements of the soundscape and the practices of music making may have become more homogenised, the role of individuals and the individuality of each performance and performance context reinforces the uniqueness of each region. The concept of a sense of place is integral to the narratives of Irish traditional music. The combination of music and place in the design of heritage, the celebration of place within the Irish music tradition and the development of places of pilgrimage present new contexts for a regional understanding of Irish traditional music.

Old ideas of the geography of Irish traditional music that focussed on the connection between Irish traditional music and rural societies located in western counties are still relevant to a new regional understanding of Irish traditional music. A series of maps were presented in this dissertation that highlight the different ways in which regions may be identified and their prominence at different points in time. The maps underline the importance of understanding the perspective from which the region is identified and the motivations in the construction of regions. Collectors of music, intending to publish and broadcast music, selected areas of the country from where they sourced Irish traditional music. In each individual instance, collectors focused on particular regions. The decisions of these collectors have shaped the geography of Irish traditional music, particularly for their immediate audience. A study of participants at *fleadhanna cheoil* also demonstrates patterns that can inform a study of the geography of Irish traditional music but it is heavily influenced by the role of a particular organisation, *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*. It is evident, from the research carried out in the development of this study that regions of Irish traditional music have changed greatly over time and the focus has shifted, though some regions have remained the focus of study and commentary across a number of studies. Perhaps the greatest single change, highlighted by the maps, has been the development of a Dublin based community of Irish traditional musicians that reflects the urbanisation of Irish traditional music, concurrent with other changes in Irish society.

Despite the urbanisation of Irish society and the decline in agriculture and rural communities, many of the most successful musicians in competitions organised by

Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann continue to come from counties on the western seaboard, perpetuating the romanticism of national myth-making from a century ago. However, Irish traditional music is changing as the contexts and social networks that sustain it change. Dublin based competitors have always won a significant percentage of medals in competitions and have made significant contributions to the institutionalisation of the tradition, through their involvement in various organisations and publications, as well as various radio, television and commercial recordings. The principal agents in the construction of regional identities are not necessarily located within the core of the region and regional identities are influenced by agents and processes that exert pressure from the outside.

The transmission process is central to the development of new geographies of Irish traditional music. The act of transmission and the transmission of tradition are critical aspects of regional culture as musical style is renegotiated by the learner who also learns how to organise their musical experience and express a particular identity (Keister, 2008; Guest-Scott, 2008). The act of transmission influences the future representation and transmission of regional culture. Music is then diffused across space and time, supported and challenged by various agents and organisations. The approach presented in this study has been influenced by but goes beyond the geography of American bluegrass music by George Carney and examines aspects of the music as well as people, spaces, media, the music industry and memory. Noting Jones' (2003) critique of the study of personal stories without understanding the context in which something is said or presented, this study focuses on the context for the expression of Sliabh Luachra identity and the realisation of this expression through performance and representation. There is an emphasis, emanating in particular from the humanist tradition in geography, on how place is experienced and remembered (Ryden, 1993; Massey, 2005). Stories and literature, as well as music, are part of the expression of regional identity in Irish traditional music.

New spaces and contexts for the transmission of Irish traditional music are integral to a new regional understanding of the tradition. The various sources involved in the transmission of the tradition are integral elements of the transmission process and these include books and other publications, as well as radio and television programming. These sources are influenced by various individuals and organisations who become the principal agents in shaping the geography of Irish traditional music. In themselves, these sources

reflect aspects of regional difference and diffusion in Irish traditional music. These sources also inform attempts to provide particular regions with historical meaning and legitimacy.

The development of regional identity contributes to empowerment and contestation, the transformation and reproduction of identity, and the inclusion and exclusion of social groups, individuals and their stories (Graham, 1997). Memory and history play a crucial role in understanding the region in Irish traditional music. Regional identities depend on historical validation, often through the reinterpretation of regional histories in their translation into heritage. Musicians often communicate an appreciation of the processes of transmission within the tradition, most obviously through the use of people's names as tune titles. Increasingly, individual musicians are celebrated in the landscape of memory that includes monuments and memorials that create more obvious links between people and place, sometimes resulting in rituals of pilgrimage and celebration of place.

A number of agents and processes have contributed to the development of a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. Individuals are integral to understanding the development of musical traditions and regional identities. Musicians from some areas of the country contributed to various collections made, connecting Irish traditional music to particular places or suggesting some places as particularly rich sources of music. The investigation of differences in musical style within a regional framework was initiated by Seán Ó Riada who experienced the coming together of musicians from different musical and geographical backgrounds in Dublin city before later travelling around the country to hear musicians in their own locality. The development of mobile recording units and the employment of collectors such as Séamus Ennis and Ciarán MacMathúna increased the role of the radio in the awareness and diffusion of regional difference in Irish traditional music. The emergence of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* as an organisation promoting Irish traditional music around Ireland, and indeed globally, challenged older geographies of Irish traditional music. The role of the organisation in celebrating particular individuals and rewarding performers of Irish traditional music, often through competitions at fleadhanna cheoil, influences attitudes towards particular styles and highlights geographical imbalances in the performance of Irish traditional music. The use, performance and exploitation of Irish traditional music for commercial gain has also

motivated the development and promotion of regional identities that attract audiences and tourists to places associated with Irish traditional music. These places become part of the branding of Irish traditional music recordings, performances and festivals that, in turn, influence the identity of places and regions.

There is a clash between the institutionalised culture found in archives and presented by a study of the past with the constantly evolving cultures within regions. As the cultures of regions change, so too do their boundaries and the ways in which the region is defined. The people or characters are ascribed a position in the story. Some are forgotten, others become an integral part of the construction of stories that perpetuate the memory of place and inform the continuing performance of culture. Institutionalised cultures are slower to recognise the inherent changes in culture and the impact of those changes on regional identities and social networks.

The development, decline and revival of various groups, bands and branches of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* demonstrates the cyclical evolution of music regions and traditions. As Irish traditional music becomes increasingly commercialised and institutionalised, regions become identified through myth and ideology rather than the reality of networks of musicians and music making that exist in specific locations. Memory and history are integral to the construction of regional identity and a historical perspective can inform and understanding of the development of regions in Irish traditional music.

The penultimate chapter on the Sliabh Luachra region highlights many aspects of a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. The changing social and spatial contexts for the performance and consumption of Irish traditional music have impacted upon the construction and meaning of regional identities within the tradition. To the fore has been the translation of Irish traditional music into heritage for consumption by tourists but that was preceded by the selection of musicians and their music for collection, recording and broadcasting. The celebration of historical figures through processes of naming, public statuary and festivals contributes to the regionalisation of Irish traditional music.

Regions in Irish traditional music have been challenged by geographies of mobility and diffusion and the globalisation of the tradition. However, in response to the

discourse on and challenges by processes of globalisation, Horner states: "geography (in the sense of 'place') may now be more, not less important than in the past" (2001: 356). Regions in Irish traditional music are shaped by a series of interrelated processes and agents and are not dependent on either isolation or the performance of a particular musical style. Regions in Irish music are given histories that often focus on one particular musician ignoring the complexity of the transmission and evolution of Irish traditional music. The region and the music performed in a region are subject to change, largely influenced by changing social networks, the institutionalisation of culture and the attachment of economic value to culture in a place. Regions exist within a global network of musicians and as a label in a global marketplace.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, the geography of Irish traditional music is being reconstructed through a process of intense regionalisation based on the interpretation of history and memory in response to the challenges of globalisation. A regional understanding of Irish traditional music requires an understanding of local traditions, sounds and stories within a global network of people and spaces. This thesis demonstrates the complex web of interconnected processes and agents and their impact on a regional understanding of Irish traditional music. There remains a need for a greater understanding of these processes and the interrelationship of regions in Irish traditional music, as well as a more informed conceptualisation of regions in the discourse of Irish traditional music as presented herein. A number of maps in this dissertation present patterns of musical activity and diversity at a county level, inviting future research that examines Irish traditional music within the county. In developing an understanding of the Sliabh Luachra region from the periphery, influenced by the interpretation of the region by people from outside the region, an opportunity remains to further explore the Sliabh Luachra region in the context of the regions that surround it. This dissertation provides a framework for the further study of regions in Ireland and a greater regional understanding of Irish traditional music.

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Radio Programmes

The comments and observations of a number of people made on various radio programmes provide valuable information about Irish traditional music. Many of the programmes referenced in my research have been produced by Peter Browne and broadcast on RTÉ Radio 1. The list provides a brief summary of the contents of each programme.

Céilí House

Céilí House is one of RTÉ Radio's most popular programmes of traditional Irish music and song. The programme is now over 40 years on the air and has broadcast from every county in Ireland, from the major cities in Britain and from events such as Provincial Conventions of Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann in the USA and Canada. Programmes have been recorded in a variety of spaces including community halls, universities and colleges, festivals and fleadhanna, and as a curtain raiser to major sports events such as the All-Ireland Football and Hurling Finals and the Special Olympics. During the summer months, Céilí House searches the RTÉ Archives for rare and celebrated performances of traditional music from past years and there have been tribute programmes to honour various musicians. *Céilí House* is presented by Kieran Hanrahan and produced by Peter Browne.

9th July 2005
The programme featured the Kilfenora Céilí Band in concert in the National Concert Hall, recorded on the 16th March 2005. The master of ceremonies was band historian and flute player Gary Shannon.

12th March 2005
The programme was recorded at the launch of The Gathering Festival in Co. Kerry, one of the major traditional music festivals in Co. Kerry. In 2005 the launch of the festival was held in The Sliabh Luachra Heritage Centre, Scartaglen, Co. Kerry with Donie Nolan and friends and a number of Sliabh Luachra musicians.

26th May 2007
The programme featured The Brosna Ceili Band from Co. Kerry and preceded the Con Curtin Festival.

The Rolling Wave

The Rolling Wave is named after a famous traditional Irish tune and features reviews of newly released CDs and new publications, interviews with musicians and singers about their music and song, where they learned and how they like to sing and play. The series also features rare recordings from the RTÉ Sound Archive and older commercial recordings, which are not widely available. Feature items and discussion of current issues form part of the programme brief. *The Rolling Wave* is presented and produced by Peter Browne.

17th July 2004
A concert in honour of accordion player Johnny O'Leary, recorded at *Scoil Samhradh Willie Clancy*.

10th January 2007
Accordion player Dan Herlihy was the featured guest on the programme and spoke about his life in Sliabh Luachra and London and the musical traditions of Sliabh Luachra.

18th April 2007
A programme to mark the 100th anniversary of the publication in 1907 of a famous collection of traditional music "O'Neill's 1001" with Nicholas Carolan, Caoimhín MacAoidh, Zoe Conway, Mick O'Brien and Emer Mayock.

August 2007

1st August, 8th August, 15th August, 22nd August

The Séamus Ennis Story. A four part documentary series to mark the 25th anniversary of the death in 1982 of the famous uilleann piper, singer, music collector and broadcaster.

15th July 2009, first broadcast 31st January 1988

A programme first broadcast on 31st January 1988 with two legends of Sliabh Luachra music: Julia Clifford (fiddle) and Johnny O'Leary (accordion).

12th August 2009

A visit back in time to Dan O'Connell's pub in Knocknagree, Co. Cork for a session of music and song recorded in 1992 with musicians of Sliabh Luachra.

19th August 2009

The second part of the 1992 session and also music and speech from accordion player Jacky Daly and fiddle player Séamus Creagh recorded at the Cork Folk Festival of that year.

29th July 2009

Memories of Denis Murphy - Part One. The first of two documentary programmes on the life and music of a uniquely talented Sliabh Luachra fiddle player as remembered by those who knew him.
(First broadcast on 5th August 1995)

5th August 2009

Memories of Denis Murphy - Part Two. The second of two documentary programmes on the life and music of a uniquely talented Sliabh Luachra fiddle player as remembered by those who knew him.

The Late Session

Each week on *The Late Session*, there are interviews with many of today's players and singers, listings of upcoming events and news in the world of traditional music and

recordings made specially for the programme at some of the important festivals and gatherings which take place during the year such as Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy. All areas of the music are catered for; from old archive recordings of the past to modern commercial releases of traditional music and song of which well over one hundred are issued every year. *The Late Session* is presented by Áine Hensey and produced by Peter Browne.

1st August 2004
Nicholas Carolan, director of the Irish Traditional Music Archive to discusses *Seoltaí Séidte - Setting Sail*, a historic set of 78 rpm recordings of traditional music and song re-issued by Gael Linn.

Websites

During the course of my research I utilised information from a number of websites. These were visited regularly and contain valuable information that informed my research.

www.comhaltas.ie

www.cullenpipeband.ie

www.failteireland.com

www.rte.ie

www.rte.ie/radio1/ceilihouse/

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www.sliabhluachra.com

http://www.coillte.ie/community/community_partnerships/munster/

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