



Barraigh Barra

Árainn Mhór Arranmore



## BUIDHEACHAS

Air fhoillseachadh an 2012

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## CREDITS

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# Dùthchas na mara

A' sgrùdadh nam freumhan cultarail ri strì-mara ann an coimhearsnachdan Gàidhealach ann an Alba 's ann an Èirinn

# Dúchas na mara

Ag iniúchadh na bhfréamhacha cultúrtha le coimhlint mhuirí i bpobail Ghaelacha in Éirinn is in Albain

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Dealbhan / Grianghraif / Photography

# Belonging to the sea

Exploring the cultural roots of maritime conflict on Gaelic speaking islands in Scotland and Ireland



## CÙL-FRAOIN

Tha an obair-sgrùdaidh seo a’ togail cheistean mu ghnè bhunaiteach na strì sa bheil dà choimhearsnachd Ghàidhlig ann an eileanan — an dara tè ann an Alba is an tè eile ann an Èirinn — air a bhith an sàs o chionn beagan bhliadhnaichean a-nis. Ann an 2012, tha an dà choimhearsnachd seo a’ cur gu dubh an aghaidh mhodhan a thaobh co-dhùnaidh aig buidhnean-riaghaltais aig a bheil mar raon-ùghdarrais nithean ceangailte ris an àrainneachd nàdarra sa bheil na h-eileanaich a’ fuireach a dhìon.

San dà eilean, tha iasgairean den bheachd gu bheil an teachd-an-tìr is an dògh-beatha aca fo bhagairt aig buidhnean cumhachdach nach eil a’ toirt cluas-ri-claisneachd dhaibh. Ann am Barraigh, buinidh an strì ri molaidhean le buidheann gleidheadh-nàdair Riaghaltas na h-Alba, Dualchas Nàdair na h-Alba, dà àrainn gleidheadh-mara ainmeachadh ann an uisgeachan far an eilein (a chaidh anon dhiubh a cheadachadh anns an Ògmhios 2012 gus a bhith air ainmeachadh le Riaghaltas na h-Alba agus thathar a’ feitheamh air co-dhùnadh mun tè eile). Aig an aon àm sna h-eileanan ann an Tìr Chonaill — Arainn Mhòr nam measg — buinidh an deasbad ris an dàil a chuir Riaghaltas na h-Èireann air iasgach-nan lìon-siabaidh agus na bacaidhean mòra a rèir nan eileanach a chaidh a chur air a’ chomas a th’ aca iasgach le lìn nan cuid uisgeachan fhèin.

Chan e adhbhar na h-obrach seo beachdan nan eileanach fhìreanachadh seach brìgh a thoirt air falbh bhuapa gu bheil iad fo bhagairt; cha mhotha chan e argamaid taobh seach taobh mun dòigh sa bheil iad a’ freagairt air a’ bhagairt a bhios iad a’

### CÙLRA

Cuireann an saothar taiscéalaíoch seo ceisteanna fá ghné níos doimhne den choimhlint a deachaigh dhá chomharsanacht Ghaelacha - cionn in Èirinn agus cionn in Albain - i ngleic léi le blianta beaga anuas. In 2012, tá an dá chomharsanacht seo ag cur go gníomhach in éadan phróiseas cinnteoireachta comhlachtaí rialtais a bhfuil de shainchúram orthu gnéithe den timpeallacht nádúrtha a bhfuil cónaí ar na hoileánaigh a chosaint.

Isan dá oileán, creideann na hiascairí go bhfuil a ngléas beatha is a slí mhaireachtála fá bhagar ag institiúidí cumhachtacha nach mbíonn ag éisteacht leofa. In Oileán Bharra, baineann an t-aighneas le moltaí de chuid comhlachta caomhnaithe dúlra Rialtas na hAlbana, Oidhríocht Dúlra na hAlbana, dhá limistéar caomhnaithe mara a ainmniú in uiscí amach ón oileán (a bhfuil cionn amháin acu i Meitheamh 2012 ceadaithe fá choinne ainmniúcháin le Rialtas na hAlbana cheana féin agus an cionn eile ag feitheamh ar chinneadh). San am chéanna ar oileáin Thír Chonaill — Árainn Mhór san áireamh — baineann an t-aighneas le moratorium Rialtas na hÉireann ar iascach an bhradáin le srúthlfonta agus na srianta militeanacha de réir na n-oileánach a cuireadh ar a gcumas iascach le heangacha ina gcuid uiscí féin.

Chan é feidhm na hoibre seo mothúcháin na n-oileánach go bhfuiltear ag bagar orthu a fhírinniú ná a neamhbhailiú, ná argáil ar son ná in éadan an bhealaigh

### BACKGROUND

This exploratory work asks questions about the deeper nature of conflict that two separate Gaelic-speaking island communities — one in Ireland and one in Scotland — have become embroiled in during recent years. In 2012, both these communities find themselves actively opposing decision-making processes of government bodies whose remit is to protect aspects of the natural environment in which the island people live.

On both islands the fishermen believe that their livelihood and way of living is being threatened by powerful institutions who are not listening to them. On Barra the dispute centres around proposals by the Scottish Government’s nature conservation body, Scottish Natural Heritage, to designate two European marine conservation areas in waters off the island (one of which, at the time of writing in June 2012, has already been approved for designation by the Scottish Government while the other awaits a decision). Meanwhile on the Donegal islands — including Arranmore — the dispute is about the Irish Government’s moratorium on drift-net fishing for salmon and on what the islanders feel are crippling restrictions that have been placed on their ability to fish with nets in their local waters.

It is not the purpose of this work to either justify or invalidate the island people’s feelings of being under threat;

faireachdainn a th’ ann. An àite sin, tha an tuairisgeul seo a’ sealltainn air cùlaibh an nàimhdeis phoilitigich gus dualchas is beachdan a bhuineas ris a’ mhuir san dà choimhearsnachd Ghàidhealach seo a sgrùdadh — is iad air an dealachadh le crìochan-stàite ach air an toirt còmhla a thaobh nithean ceangailte ri cànan is cultar - a dh’fhaodas brosnachadh mar a tha an dà eilean gu follaiseach a’ cur an aghaidh reachdas nan stàitean a tha gan riaghladh. Tha i cuideachd na sgrùdadh air reachdas eadar-nàiseanta mu phoileasaidh a tha ceangailte ri eòlas dùthchasach agus dualchas cultarail.

Tha an rannsachadh againn a’ cur an cèill go bheil aig cridhe nam beachdan is a’ ghiùlain seo dòigh-labhairt a tha gu sònraichte Gàidhealach mu fhaireachdainn a tha an comas mhic-an-duine air feadh na cruinne-cè: an fhaireachdainn a thaobh a bhith a’ buntainn ri àite, agus an t-uallach a th’ ort airson an àite sin. A thaobh na Gàidhlig dheth, tha an fhaireachdainn seo - air an do ghabh an sgoilear mòr Gàidhlig Iain Mac Aonghuis seòrsa de ‘lùth-mothachaidh’ — air a glacadh leis an fhacal nach gabh tionndadh gu furasta, ‘dùthchas’ (ann an Gàidhlig) no ‘dúchas’ (ann an Gaeilge).

Ged a tha ‘dùthchas / dúchas’ ceangailte ris an fhearann — tha e a’ tighinn bhon fhacal Ghàidhlig ‘dùth/dú’ aig a bheil a’ bhrìgh ‘talamh’ no ‘fearann’ - tha an rannsachadh againn a’ cur an cèill gum buin an lùth-mothachaidh is an t-uallach an lùib an fhacail ris na h-uisgeachan timcheall air an dùthchas.

Mar sin dheth, ‘s e na tha sinn a’ feuchainn ri cur ann am briathran san aithisg seo ‘dùthchas/dúchas na mara’ — an

ina bhfuil siad ag freagairt ar an bhagar a mhothaíonn siad. Ina áit sin, amharcann an cuntas taobh thiar den naimhdeas pholaitiúil le cleachtaí comónta muirí agus prionsabail fá chreidiúint is iompar sa dá phobal Ghaelacha seo a chíoradh — deighilte le teorainneacha stáit ach aontaithe i ngnéithe de theanga is de chultúr — a d’fhéadfadh a bheith ag spreagadh na frithbheartaíochta isan dá oileán in éadan reachtaíocht na stát a rialíonn iad. Pléann sé ionstraimí idirnáisiúnta beartais fosta a bhaineann le fios traidisiúnta agus le hoidhríocht chultúrtha.

Cuireann an taighde s’againn i gcéill go bhfuil ag croí na dtuairimí is an iompair seo modh labhartha Gaelach le mothúchán uilíoch daonna a chur in iúl: an mothúchán go mbaineann tú le háit, agus do fhreagracht as an áit sin. Ó thaobh na Gàidhlighe de, glactar an mothúchán seo — a chuir an fear léinn Gàidhlighe cliúiteach Iain Mac Aonghuis in iúl mar ‘fuinneamh mothúcháin’ — leis an fhocal nach dtig a aistriú go furast ‘dúchas’ (sa Ghaeilic) nó ‘dùthchas’ (sa Ghàidhlig).

Gidh go mbaineann an focal ‘dúchas/ dùthchas’ leis an talamh - thig sé ón fhocal Gaeilice ‘dú/dùth’ a chiallaíonn ‘talamh’ nó ‘tír’ - cuireann an taighde s’againn i gcéill go síneann an fuinneamh mothúcháin fá bhaint is fá fhreagracht a chuireann an focal in iúl go dtí na huiscí thart fán dúchas.

Ar an ábhar sin, is é an rud atá fáidear dúinn cuntas a thabhairt ar sa tuarascáil seo ‘dúchas/dùthchas na mara’ — an mothú go mbaineann tú leis an fharraige — agus an ról a imríonn an mothú seo le saol

nor is it to argue for or against the way in which they are responding to the threat they are feeling. Instead, this account looks behind the political antagonism to explore shared maritime traditions and principles of belief and conduct in these two Gaelic speaking communities — divided by state boundaries but united in aspects of language and culture — that may be motivating the resistance manifest on both islands to the legislation of the states that rule them. It also examines international policy instruments that are relevant to traditional knowledge and cultural heritage.

Our research suggests that at the heart of these beliefs and conduct is a particular Gaelic expression of a feeling that is universally potential in human beings: the sense of belonging to a home place, and of responsibility for that place. In the Gaelic context, this feeling — described by the great Scottish Gaelic scholar John MacInnes as a form of ‘emotional energy’ — is encapsulated by the not easily translateable word ‘dúchas’ (in Irish) or ‘dùthchas’ (in Scottish Gaelic).

While ‘dúchas/dùthchas’ is a word of the land — it is derived from the Gaelic word ‘dú / dùth’ which can mean ‘earth’ or ‘land’ — our research suggests that the emotional energy of belonging and responsibility the word conveys extends to the waters around the homeland.

Therefore, what we are seeking to describe in this report is ‘dúchas /

fhaireachdainn gum buin thu ris a’ mhuir — agus an t-àite a tha an fhaireachdainn seo mu bhuntainn ann an saoghal nan eilean is nan eileanach seo. Mar a tha Mac Aonghuis ga mhineachadh, do dh’inntinn a’ Ghàidheil, ‘s e na th’ ann an dùthchas/dúchas raon-tuigse làn anns a bheil “barrachd na uachdar na dùthcha no cruinn-eòlas leotha fhèin, na faireachdainn dìreach mun eachdraidh, ach rian-fiosrachaidh foirmeil san tig iad seo uile còmhla”.

Faodaidh an rud air a bheil an coltas ann an sùilean a’ choigrich a bhith na fhàsach falamh — eireachdail no gun bhrìgh a rèir nam beachdan a tha an uachdar — a bhith na fhearann beothail, ‘s dòcha fiù ‘s gaisgeil is a’ cur thairis le pearsaichean eachdraidheil - don luchd-dhùthchais (Mac Aonghuis 2006: 29).

Dh’èirich an t-iomradh a leanas às a bhith ag èisteachd ri eileanaich Ghàidhlig agus a bhith a’ cluinntinn bhuaibh beagan mun eòlas bheò a th’ aca air a’ mhuir: mun àite a th’ aice nan cuid sgeulachdan, sheanchasan is eachdraidhean; a thaobh mar a thug iad teachd-an-tìr bhon mhuir; mar a dh’ainmich iad i a rèir nam feumalachdan a th’ aca air is às a’ mhuir; a thaobh mar a chuidich i gus cruth a chur air an cuid giùlain is bheachdan; mun atharrachadh a thug teicneòlas air a’ chàirdeas a th’ aca rihte.

Tro chòmhràidhean agus tron ùine a chaidh a chur seachad le iasgairean ann am Barraigh ‘s ann an Arainn Mhòr, tha an rannsachadh seo a’ feuchain ri dòigh àrsaidh a tha air leth bho, ach a dh’fhaodadh seasamh còmhla ris, an dòigh-eòlais a tha air a cruthachadh air a’ chuid as motha le foghlam nan leabhraichean

na bpobal oileánda seo. De réir is mar a mhíonon Mac Aonghuis é, do mheon na nGael, is é an rud is dúchas/dùthchas ann réimse iomlán tuisceana, a thugann le chéile “cha tírdhreach, cha mothú fá thíreolas amháin, ná stair amháin, ach ord foirmiúil d’eispeireas ina dtig siad seo le chéile”.

Thig leis an rud atá don strainséir ina réimse fholamh tire — maorga nó marbhánta ag brath ar na tuairimí atá i réim - a bheith don lucht dúchais ina réimse bhagánta, ghaisciúil féin, líonta lán le pearsanna ón stair is ón fhinnscéalaíocht (Mac Aonghuis 2006: 29).

D’eascair an cuntas seo a leanas as éisteacht le hoileánaigh Ghaelacha agus ag cluinntinn uathu beagán fán eolas bheò atá acu ar an fharraige: fán áit atá aice ina gcuid scéaltaí, eachtraí is finnscéaltaí; fá dtaobh de goidé mar atá maireachtáil bainte amach ón fharraige acu; goidé mar a d’ainmnigh is a d’athainmnigh siad í le fóirstean dá gcuid riachtanas ar agus as an fharraige; mar a chuidigh sé lena gcuid iompair is tuairimí a mhúnlú; fán athrach atá tugtha ag teicneolaíocht ar an ghaol atá acu léi.

Fríd chomhráite agus am a caitheadh le hiascairí ar Oileán Bharra is Árainn Mhór, féachann an taighde seo le dóigh níos ársa is níos doimhne le eolas a chur ar an fharraige a léiriú do dhaoine ar an taobh amuigh, atá ar leith ó, ach a d’fhéadfadh a chur in éineacht le, dóigh feasa a mhúnláitear den chuid is mó de le léann na leabhar agus modhanna foirmiúla oiliúna

dùthchas na mara’ — the sense of belonging to the sea — and the role this sense of belonging plays in the life of these island communities. As MacInnes explains it, to the Gaelic mind, dúchas/dùthchas is a total field of understanding, encompassing “not so much a landscape, not a sense of geography alone, nor of history alone, but a formal order of experience in which all these are merged”.

What is to a stranger an expanse of empty countryside — magnificent or drab according to prevailing notions — to the native sensibility can be dynamic, perhaps even heroic, territory peopled with figures from history and legend (MacInnes 2006: 29).

The narrative that follows has emerged from listening to Gaelic-speaking island people and hearing from them a little of their living knowledge of the sea: of its place in their stories, histories and legends; of how they have made a living from the sea; of how they have named and renamed it to suit their needs on and from the sea; of how it has helped to shape their conduct and beliefs; of the change that technologies have brought to their relationships with it.

Through conversations and time spent with fishermen on the islands of Barra and Arranmore, this research seeks to make visible to outsiders an older and deeper way of knowing the sea which is distinct from, but potentially complementary to, a way of knowing





is oideachadh foirmeil air am bi luchd-poileasaidh is luchd-reachdais eòlach a nochdadh ri feadhainn air an taobh a-muigh.

Gus an rannsachadh againn a tharraing a-mach, chuir sinn fios air iasgairean nas sine is air feadhainn eile a bhios a' gleidheadh an dualchais aca san dà eilean, agus dh'iarr sinn orra ainmean-àite air a bheil iad eòlach, no a bhios iad a' cleachdadh, ceangailte ris a' mhuir. Chuir sinn feum air clàran-dùthcha is air cairtean-cabhlaich — air am bi na h-iasgairean eòlach is leis am bi iad cofhurtail (aig amannan bidh iad gan ceartachadh) — gus an ceasnachadh mu na h-ainmean-àite seo. Ri linn na h-obrach seo, chaidh a chur air chomas dhuinn beagan den eòlas mara na h-àiteachan seo a thional, a chuidicheas gus 'dòigh-eòlais' air leth air àrainneachd na mara a bhuineas ris na h-eileanaich seo a chur an cèill is a sgaoileadh.

### EILEAMAIDEAN DE DHÒIGH-EÒLAIS NAS DOIMHNE

Ged as dòcha nach bi an cruinneas mas fhior an lùib na tuigse a th' aig saidheans nàdarra air saoghal na mara an lùib an eòlais a th' aig na h-iasgairean air a' mhuir, dh'fhaodte agairt gu bheil eòlas nan iasgairean nas coileanta seach gu bheil e nas fhaisge air raon-tuigse làn, leis an dà chuid cumhachd phractaigeach agus a thaobh mothachaidh. Fad nan ceudan de bhliadhnaichean, tha àite bunaiteach air a bhith aig an eòlas seo mar thaic ri cosnadh is ìomhaigh shònraichte nan eileanach.

Mar eisimpleir de seo, mhinich iasgairean ealanta air a bheilear gu math measail à sliochd cliùiteach Barrach, Dòmhnall

agus a bhfuil lucht beartais is reachtaíochta níos eolaí air.

Chun ár gcuid taighde a dhéanamh, labhair muid le hiascairí níos sine, agus daoine eile a chothaíonn an cultúr traidisiúnta isan dá oileán, agus d'iarr muid orthu logainmneacha a bhfuil eolas orthu acu, nó a mbaineann siad feidhm astu, i dtaca leis an fharraige. Bhain muid feidhm as léarscáileanna agus cairteanna cabhlaigh — a bhfuil na hiascairí eolach orthu cheana féin agus sócúlach leofa (in amannaí ceartaíonn siad iad comh maith) — le fiafraí díobh fá dtaobh de na logainmneacha seo. Le linn an phróisis seo, d'éirigh linn beagan den eolas fá ná háiteanna seo a chruinniú, rud a chuidíonn chun 'dóigh feasa' shonraíoch fá thimpeallacht na mara a bhaineann leis na hoileánaigh a chur in iúl is a scaipeadh.

### GNÉITHE DE DHÓIGH FEASA NÍOS DOIMHNE

Gidh go mb'fhéidir nach mbeidh an cruinneas oibiachtúil mar a shíltear ag an fhios atá ag na hiascairí ar an fharraige atá mar chomhartha sóirt den tuiscint ag eolaíocht nádúrtha ar thimpeallacht na mara, d'fhéadfá argáil go bhfuil fios na n-iascairí níos iomláine cionn is go bhfuil sé níos deise do réimse iomlán tuisceana le cumhacht phraiticiúil is mhothúchánach beirt aige. Ar feadh na gcéadta bliain tá ról bunúsach imeartha ag an fhios seo le tacú le cothú is sainaitheantas na n-oileánach..

Mar shampla, mhínigh iascaire féithiúil a bhfuil an-mheas air de theaghlach cáiliúil

which is mainly informed by book learning and formal education processes and is more familiar to the world of policy-making and legislation.

To carry out our research we approached older fishermen, and others who are maintaining the traditional culture in both the island communities, and asked them for place-names which they know of, or make use of, in relation to the sea. We used maps and admiralty charts — which the fishermen are already familiar and comfortable with (on occasions they also correct them) — to ask about these place-names. Through this process we have been able to gather a little of the information about these places that helps to express and transmit a unique 'way of knowing' the marine environment that belongs to the island people.

### ELEMENTS OF A DEEPER WAY OF KNOWING

While the fishermen's knowledge of the seas may not have the perceived objective precision that is characteristic of natural science's understanding of the marine environment, the fishermen's knowledge is, arguably, more complete in that it is closer to a total field of understanding, having both practical and emotional power. For many hundreds of years this knowledge has played a key role in supporting the island people's subsistence and distinct identity.

As an example of this, a gifted and



Uilleam MacLeòid (air a bheilear a' gabhail 'Coppertop') dhuinn mar a chuidicheas na h-ainmean a thug iasgairean air àiteachan aig muir gus gnè nan àiteachan, agus na cunnartan a dh'fhaodas èirigh, sam bi iad ag obair a thuigsinn.

Dh'innis e dhuinn mu sgrìob-uisge air a bheil 'Caolas boga' mara' [*Caolas bogadh na mara*] eadar Fuidheigh is Flodaigh far taobh an ear Bharraigh. Rachadh an caolas seo a chleachdadh le iasgairean à Bruairnis no Àird Mhìdhinis a' dol gu Caolas Bharraigh sa cheann a tuath no a' tilleadh às, do nach b' urrainn, ri linn staid na mara no ìre an làin an uair sin, feum a chur air fasgadh nan caol nas fhaighe air Barraigh. Seach sin rachadh iad na b' fhaide sear, tro Chaolas boga' mara agus a-steach ann an àite far am biodh iad, mar a thigeadh iad na b' fhaighe air taobh a deas a' chaolais, agus aghaidh aca ri fairge a' Chuain Sgìth. Mar a mhìnich Coppertop:

Air taobh a tuath a' chaolais, tha i daonnan ciùin, ach ma bhios gaoth sam bith bhon cheann a deas no bhon cheann an ear-dheas, bidh e gu math diofraichte air an taobh eile. Tha an t-ainm na thuairisgeul, oir faodaidh tu smaoinichadh gu bheil thu a' bogadh ann an sròn na fairge. San t-suidheachadh seo, bho a bhith ciùin gu gun a bhith cho ciùin air an taobh a deas, chan eil ann ach faid beagan eathraichean. Cha rachadh caolas sam bith ann an uisgeachan far a bheil fasgadh ainmeachadh mar sin. (Ní Bhraonáin 2011<sup>a</sup>)

Ann an car an aon dòigh, thuirt cuideigin à fear de na teaghlachan-iasgaich stèidhichte ann an Arainn Mhòr, Gearóid Ó

iascairí as Oileán Bharra, Dòmhnall Uilleam MacLeòid (a ngairtear de 'Coppertop'), dúinn mar a thig leis na hainmneacha a thug na hiascairí ar réimsí farraige timpeall orthu chun nádúr na n-áiteanna, agus na guaiseanna ag siúl leofa, a mbíonn siad ag obair a thuigbheáil.

D'inis sé dúinn fá dtaobh de réimse uisce a dtugtar 'Caolas boga' mara' [*Caolas bogadh na mara*] air eadar oileán Fuidheigh is Flodaigh amach ó chósta thoir Oileán Bharra. Bhaineadh na hiascairí as Bruairnis nó Àird Mhìdhinis feidhm as an chaolas seo ag gabháil go dtí nó ag pilleadh as Bealach Bharra ó thuaidh nach raibh, de thairbhe staid na farraige nó na taoille ag an am, i ndán feidhm a bhaint as an chaolas níos foscúla níos deise do thír mór Oileán Bharra. Ina ionad sin, ghabhadh iad ní b'fhaide soir, fríd Chaolas boga' mara agus isteach i réimse a mbíodh siad, mar a bhainfeadh siad an taobh ó dheas den chaolas amach, lena n-aghaidh le haibhléis mhór Chuan Scíth. Mar a mhínigh Coppertop:

Ar an taobh ó thuaidh den chaolas, bíonn sé ciúin i dtólamh, ach le gaoth ar bith aneas nó aniar aneas, beidh sé duifriúil go maith ar an taobh eile.. Is cur síos é an t-ainm, cionn is go dtig leat samhlú a bheith ag tumadh isteach i bhfarraige i d'éadan. Sa chás seo, óna bheith ciúin go gan a bheith comh ciúin sin ar an taobh ó dheas, chan fhuil ann ach faid traidhfil bád. Ní thabharfá ainm dá leithéid sin ar bhealach ar bith in uisic le foscadh. (Ní Bhraonáin 2011<sup>a</sup>)

Ar an dóigh chéanna, mhínigh duine de

much respected fisherman from a famous Barra fishing lineage, Domhnall Uilleam MacLeod (known as 'Coppertop'), explained to us how the names fishermen have given to areas of the seas around them can help them to understand the nature, and the potential dangers, of the places they are working in.

He told us about a stretch of water called 'Caolas boga' mara' [*Caolas bogadh na mara — the dipping narrows of the sea*] which lies between the islands of Fuidheigh and Flodaigh off the east coast of Barra. This narrows would be used by fishermen from Bruernish or Àird Mhithnis going to or returning from the Sound of Barra in the north, who, because of sea conditions or the state of the tide at that time, were not able to use the more sheltered narrows closer to the mainland of Barra. Instead they would journey further east, through Caolas boga' mara and into an area where, as they reached the south side of the caolas [*narrows*], they would be facing the open waters of the Minch. As Coppertop explained:

On the north side of the caolas, it is always calm, but with any south or south-east wind, it will be very different on the other side. The name is descriptive, as you can imagine dipping into a head sea. In this case, from calm to not so calm on the south side, being a few boat lengths. No channel in sheltered waters would be named as such. (Brennan 2011<sup>a</sup>)



hlarlatha, gum bi fios aige bho ìre an làin a chì e bhon taigh aige air taobh an ear Arainn Mhòr am bi e comasach dha iasgach an latha sin san taobh an iar, grunnan mhiltean air falbh agus a-mach à sealladh bhon dachaigh aige.

Chan eilear ris an aon ìre den iasgach air taobh siar Arainn Mhòr mar as trice seach, mar a thuir Gearóid, “gu bheil barrachd cunnairt ann gun tèid rudan a chall”. Tha e agus aghaidh aige ris a’ Chuan Siar agus ris na gaoitean buadhach. Fhad ‘s a sheall e dhuinn feadhainn de na creagan air taobh siar an eilein, thuir fear à teaghlach-iasgaich ainmeil eile ann an Arainn Mhòr, Niallaí Caomhánach, àite far an deach clèibh is ròpaichean a sgapadh gu h-àrd ann an aodann na creige an dèidh do ghailleann mòr a bhith ann.

Mas e, bhon taigh aige air taobh fasgail an ear an eilein, gum faic Gearóid Ó hlarlatha gu bheil an t-uisge a’ briseadh gu geal air Carraigeacha na mBallach, mar a tha aig muinntir an àite orra, bidh fios aige an uair sin gum bi aige ri iasgach an latha sin air taobh an ear an eilein, ach mura bi na sumainnean a’ briseadh air na creagan, faodaidh e iasgach nas fhaide siar an uair sin. Tha na chitheadh neach-tadhail mar ‘s dòcha ataireachd nan tonn a’ bualadh an aghaidh nan creag mar chomharradh deatamach don iasgair mar obair an latha.

Is e an t-ainm a th’ air cairtean a’ chabhlaich air na creagan seo ‘Ballagh’. Faodaidh gu bheil seo mar riochd Beurla den fhacal Ghaeilge ‘bealach’ a’ ciallachadh ‘caolas’ no ‘slighe’ agus is cinnteach gu bheilear a’ cur feum air na creagan seo — a tha solas beag air aonan dhiubh a-nis — mar chomharradh-stiùiridh gus slighe thèarainte a ghabhail tro na h-uisgeachan

theaghlaigh iascaireachta mór le rá as Árainn Mhór, Gearóid Ó hlarla, goidé mar a thig leis tabhairt fáidear ó staid an uisce atá le feiceáilt óna theach ar an taobh thoir d’Árainn Mhór an mbeidh sé ábalta iascach an lá sin san iarthar, cuid mhaith de mhílte ar shiúl agus as amharc óna theach.

Ní dhéantar go hiondúil oiread iascaireachta ar oirthear Árainn Mhór de thairbhe, mar a dúirt Gearóid, “go bhfuil baol níos mó ann go gcaillfear rudaí”. Tá aghaidh leis an Atlantach aige agus leis na gaotha bunáiteacha. Le linn dó cuid de na haille ar an taobh thiar den oileán a thaispeáint dúinn, shín duine de theaghlach cáiliúil iascaicigh eile as Árainn Mhór, Niallaí Caomhánach, méir ionsar réimse a raibh potaí is rópaí scuabtha suas go hard ar aghaidh na haille i ndéidh garbhadais ar na mallaibh.

Más rud é, óna theach ar an taobh is foscúla ar oirthear an oileáin, go bhfeiceann Gearóid Ó hlarlatha an t-uisce ag briseadh go geal ar Charraigeacha na mBallach mar a thugann muinntir na háite orthu, beidh fios aige ansin go mbeidh feidhm air iascach an lá sin ar an taobh thoir den oileán ach mura mbíonn an mórtas farraige ag briseadh ar na carraigeacha thig leis iascach níos faide thiar. Is é atá sa rud a d’fhéadfadh cuairteoir meas mar mhaorgacht na dtonn ag tuairteáil in éadan na gcarraigeacha, comhartha ríthábhachtach fá choinne imeachtaí an lae don iascaire.

Is é an t-ainm a thugann cairteanna an chabhlaigh ar na carraigeacha seo ‘Ballagh’. Thiocfadh dó seo a bheith ina

In a similar fashion, a member of one of the experienced Arranmore fishing families, Jerry Early, explained how he is able to tell by the state of the water visible from the kitchen window of his house on the east side of Arranmore, whether he will be able to fish that day to the west, several miles away and out of sight from his home.

The west side of Arranmore is generally less fished because, as Jerry said, “the chances of loss are greater”. It faces the Atlantic Ocean and the prevailing winds. While showing us some of the cliffs on the west side of the island, a member of another renowned Arranmore fishing family, Neily Kavanagh, pointed to an area where pots and ropes had been strewn high up on the rock face after a recent storm.

If, from his house on the more sheltered east side of the island, Jerry Early sees the water is breaking white on what are locally called the Mallagh Rocks, then he knows he will need to fish that day to the east side of the island, but if the swell is not breaking on the rocks then he can fish further to the west. What to a visitor might be perceived as the grandeur of waves crashing against rocks is, for the fisherman, a vital sign for the day’s activity.

The name that the admiralty charts gives to these rocks is ‘Ballagh’. This may be an anglicised version of the Irish word ‘bealach’ meaning ‘channel’ or ‘pass’, and certainly the rocks — which now have a small light on one of



cunnartach eadar an t-eilean agus tìr-mòr.

## ‘SÌOS GU TUATH’ AGUS ‘SUAS GU DEAS’ — DÒIGH-EÒLAIS AIR A CUR AN CÈILL ANNS A’ CHÀNAN

Chan e iongnadh a th’ ann ged a ghleidheadh na h-ainmean-àite Gàidhlig seo fiosrachadh le brìgh mun mhuir timcheall orra; brìgh a tha am falach air an neach a tha gun Ghàidhlig. Ach a thaobh a’ chàirdeis a th’ aca ris a’ mhuir, tha dualchas-cànain coitcheann an dà eilein a’ dol nas doimhne na ainmean-àite. Tha dòighean-labhairt sònraichte na lùib cuideachd a chuidicheas agus a dh’fhaodas rud beag den t-sinnsearachd àrsaidh choitcheann a nochdadh.

Mar eisimpleir, ann an cuid a dh’àiteachan anns na h-Eileanan Siar, cluinnear eileanaich a-mach air a bhith a’ dol `sìos’ gu tuath agus ‘suas’ gu deas - thug am pìobaire cliùiteach à Uibhist a Deas, Fred Moireasdan, an t-ainm ‘Suas gu Deas’ air port fiù. Nuair a bha sinn a’ bruidhinn ri fear de na h-iasgairean as sine ann am Barraigh, thug e dealbh air turas a ghabh e bho Cheann Ghrinn sa cheann a tuath gu Bàgh a’ Chaisteil sa cheann a deas. ‘S e na ghabh e air seo a’ dol “suas” an t-eilean.

Thathar a’ cur feum air an dòigh seo gus àird a chur an cèill an an Àrainn Mhòr cuideachd far an tuirt fear de na h-iasgairean as sine nuair a bha e na dhiùnlach òg gun rachadh e a dh’iasgach “sìos a Mhàlainn” - a tha tuath air Àrainn Mhòr - agus “suas gu ruige Maigh Eo” a tha sa cheann a deas.

leagan Béarlaithe den fhocal Gaeilice ‘bealach’ agus leoga baintear feidhm as na carraigeacha - a bhfuil solas beag air chionn amháin acu anois - mar chomhartha fá choinne bealaigh shábháilte fríd na huiscí contúirteacha eadar an t-oileán is tír mór.

## ‘THÌOS Ó THUAIDH’ AGUS ‘THUAS Ó DHEAS’ — DÒIGH FEASA Á CUR IN IÚL SA TEANGA

Ní nach ionadh é, tá faisnéis bhríomhar sna logainmneacha Gaelacha seo fá dtaobh de na farraigí thart orthu; brí atá folaithe ar an té atá gan Ghaeilic. Mar sin féin, maidir lena ngaol leis an fharraige, gabhann oidhríocht choiteann teanga an dá oileáin níos doimhne ná logainmneacha. Tá cur in iúl sonraíoch ó thaobh gramadaí aice a chuidíos le dóigheanna smaointeoireachta a mhúnlú agus a d’fhéadfadh rud inteacht den tsinsearachd choiteann teanga a thabhairt le fios.

Mar shampla, in áiteanna áithrid in Oileáin Thiar na hAlbana, chan annamh a chluintear oileánaigh ag caint ar ag gabháil ‘síos’ go dtí an tuaisceart agus ‘suas’ go dtí an deisceart — thug pìobaire cáiliúil Uibhist Theas, Feardorcha Ó Muireasáin an t-ainm ‘Thuas ó Dheas’ ar phort, fiú. Nuair a bhí muid ag labhairt le duine de na hiascairí is sine in Oileán Bharra, thug sé iomrá ar thuras a rinne sé ó Cheann Ghrinn i dtuaisceart an oileáin go dtí Báighe an Chaistil ó dheas. Thug sé air seo ag gabháil “suas” an t-oileán.

Baintear feidhm as an dóigh chéanna le

them — are used as a marker for safe passage through the dangerous waters between the island and the mainland.

## ‘DOWN NORTH’ AND ‘UP SOUTH’ — A WAY OF KNOWING EXPRESSED IN THE LANGUAGE

It is not surprising that these Gaelic place-names contain meaningful information about the seas around them; meanings which are hidden to the non-Gaelic speaker. However, in terms of their relationship to the sea, the shared linguistic heritage of the two islands goes deeper than place-names. It contains distinctive grammatical expressions that help to shape patterns of thought and may reveal something of their shared cultural ancestry.

For instance, in some parts of the Western Isles of Scotland, it is not uncommon to hear islanders talking about going ‘down’ to the north and ‘up’ to the south — the renowned South Uist piper Fred Morrison even named a tune ‘Up South’. When we were speaking to one of the older Barra fishermen, he described a journey he took from Greian Head in the north of the island to Castlebay in the south. He called this going “up” the island.

This same way of describing direction is also used on Arranmore where one of the older fishermen said that, as a young man he used to fish “down to Malin” — which is to the north of Arranmore — and “up as far as Mayo”

Faodaidh e bhith gu bheil an tuairisgeul seo air àird nàdarra ann an suidheachadh far nach robh na clàran-dùtcha (far a bheil tuath ‘shuas’ agus deas ‘shìos’) mar an goireas as bunaitiche gus fiosrachadh fhaighinn mu shiubhal. Seach seo — mar a leigeas an saidhbreas de dh’fhiosrachadh a th’ aig na h-iasgairean as sine am follais - bha mòran den eòlas a bha dhith gus siubhal gu tèarainte aig muir air a ghleidheadh anns a’ chlaigeann agus air a thogail bho amharc geur air an t-saoghal nàdarra. Faodaidh e bhith gun tug àird nan gaoitean buadhach (bhon cheann an iar-dheas) buaidh air na beachdan aca. No ‘s dòcha gum bite a’ sealltainn ‘suas’ air a ghrèin mar chomharra — agus airson a’ Ghàidheil, nuair a nochdas i sna speuran idir, mar as trice ‘s ann sa cheann a deas a bhios a’ ghrian.

Bho shean, thug na Gàidheil adhradh don ghrèin agus tha iomadh cleachdadh na lùib, nam measg gun a bhith a’ tionndadh eathraichean ach ‘deiseil’ (‘s e sin a rèir rian na grèine). ‘S e an dòchas a th’ ann gun cuidich a bhith ag obair ‘deiseil’ bho thùs gus fallaine a dhéanamh cinnteach agus gun soirbhich le iomairt. Ghabh an sgoilear Iain MacGriogair Caimbeul san 19mh linn “am fear as cudromaiche de na cleachdaidhean air fad” air (Mac IlleDhuibh deas. 2008: 125). Ann am mòran de na seann ùrnaighean, orthachan is eòlasan, tha a’ chomhairle ann dol ‘deiseil’ nuair a thathar ag ullachadh gu gnìomh: sealgaireachd, iasgaireachd, curachd is an leithid. Ann an Gàidhlig na h-Alba, tha uimhir a chuideam aig a’ chleachdadh seo, fiù san latha a th’ ann an-diugh, nuair a chanas duine gu bheil iad ullamh gus rudeigin a thòiseachadh: “Tha mi deiseil”. Bidh feadhainn de na h-iasgairean as sine a’

iomrá a dhéanamh in Àrainn Mhór inar dhúirt duine de na hiascairí is sine nuair a bhí sé ina stócach óg gur ghnách leis iascach “sìos go Málainn” — atá thuaidh ar Àrainn Mhór - agus “thuas chomh fada le Maigh Eo” - atá ó dheas.

Thiocfadh dó a bheith go bhfuil cuntas ar aird ar an dóigh seo nádúrtha i gcultúr nach raibh fáil ar éarscáileanna (a mbíonn thuaidh ‘thuas’ agus theas ‘thíos’ orthu) mar an phríomhfhoinsé fá choinne eolais ar chúrsaí taistil. Ina áit sin — mar a thugann an saibhreas faisnéise atá ag na hiascairí is sine le fios — coinníodh a lán den eolas a bhí de dhíobháil le bealach sábháilte a chinntiú ar fharraige sa chloigeann agus cruinníodh é ó ghéaramharc ar an tsaol nádúrtha. Thiocfadh dó a bheith go deachaigh aird na ngoatha bunáiteacha (aniar aneas) i gcion ar a gcuid smaointeoireachta. Nó b’fhéidir go mbíodh siad ag amharc ‘suas’ ar an ghréin mar chomhartha tagartha — agus don Ghael, nuair a nochtann sí sa spéir ar chor ar bith, is gnách leis an ghréin a bheith sa deisceart.

Rinneadh an ghrian a adhradh riamh i gcultúr na nGael agus tá neart cleachtaí gaolta léi, ina measc gnáth gan a bheith ag tiontó bád ‘deiseal’ (is é sin, ag leanstan rian na gréine). Is é an rud atáthar ag súil go gcuideoidh a bheith ag obair ‘deiseal’ i dtoiseach báire le folláine is bail fiontair a chinntiú. Thug an béaloideasóir sa 19ú céad Iain MacGriogair Caimbeul iomrá air mar “an cionn is tábhachtaí de na gnáthanna uilig” (MacIlleDhuibh eag. 2008: 125). Ina lán de na paidreacha, orthaí is briochtaí fadó, déantar an treoir gabháil ‘deiseal’ mar chuid den ullmhúchán go gníomh:

— which is to the south.

It may be that describing direction in this way is natural in a culture in which maps (where north is ‘up’ and south is ‘down’) were not the primary source of travel information. Instead — as the wealth of information carried by the older fishermen testifies to — much of the knowledge needed to ensure safe passage at sea was held in the head and gathered from careful observation of the natural world. It may be that the direction of the prevailing winds (from the south-west) influenced their thinking. Or perhaps the sun, as a point of reference, was looked ‘up’ to — and for the Gael, when it appears in the sky at all, the sun is generally in the south.

Traditionally, the sun has been venerated in Gaelic culture and a host of practices made in relation to it, among them a custom of only turning boats ‘sunwise’ (i.e. following the course of the sun). The hope is that working ‘sunwise’ at the outset will help to ensure the well-being and success of a venture. The 19<sup>th</sup> century folklorist John Gregorson Campbell described it as “the most important of all the observances” (Black ed. 2008: 125). In many of the old prayers, charms and incantations the instruction is made to go ‘deiseil’ — ‘sunwise’ — as part of the preparation for action: hunting; fishing; sowing the seed etc.. In Scottish Gaelic the importance of this observance is such that, even today, when a person says that they are prepared to start something, they say: “tha mi deiseil”



dèanamh cinnteach gum bi iad a' dol deiseil nuair a bhios eathar ga tionndadh aca.

### A' CUR RIS AN AINMEACHADH

San dà chuid ann an Arainn Mhòr agus ann am Barraigh, thathar fhathast a' cur ri ainmeachadh àiteachan anns a' mhuir, ged a tha na h-ainmean ùra seo buailteach a bhith car falbhanach, air nach eil ach taghadh beag de dhaoine eòlach le càil-àbhachdais làidir nan lùib - a' toirt tarraing aig amannan air clibist a dhèirich do neach sònraichte. Rud eile a tha cumanta san dà eilean, 's e an claonadh a th' ann gun a bhith a' meas nan ainmean seo mar ainmean 'ceart'. Thathar a' gabhail ris a rèir choltais nach seas na h-ainmean ùra seo fada. Tha seo a' leigeil fhaicinn mar a tha spèis do na h-ainmean as sine ach tha e cuideachd a' togail na ceiste an deach feadhainn de na seann ainmean stèidhichte a chruthachadh leis an aon fhaireachdainn de dh'fhalbhanachd.

Ann an Arainn Mhòr, chaidh a ràdh mu aon ainm "nach robh e fìor" seach gu bheil e mar chuimhneachan air nuair a chaidh eathar air na creagan, agus chan eil ach buidheann bheag dhaoine aig a bheil fios air an t-seanchas ga chleachdadh. Chaidh a ràdh mun ainm seo gu bheil e "mar fhar-ainm, aon uair 's gu bheilear air a thoirt seachad...."

Ann am Barraigh, chaidh innse dhuinn le fear de na h-iasgairean gu bheil sgeir-bhàthte air a bheil dà ainm. Thuirt e gun robh "ainm ceart" air, a tha a' toirt tarraing air fear de na comharraidhean-stiùiridh a thathar air a bhith a' cleachdadh bho shean gus a shuidheachadh, agus cuideachd ainm a bhios buidheann bheag de dh'iasgairean a'

sealgaireacht, iascaireacht, cur an tsíl is mar sin ar aghaidh. I nGaeilic na hAlbana, tá oiread tábhachta ag baint leis an ghnáth seo is go mbíonn duine ag rá, fiú sa lá atá inniu ann go bhfuil siad réidh le chun tús a chur ar rud inteacht: "Tha mi deiseil" [Tá mé ullamh]. Féachann cuid de na seanascairí chuige fós go ngabhann siad deiseal nuair a bhíonn an bád á tiontú acu.

### AG LEANSTAN AR AGHAIDH LEIS AN AINMNIÚ

In Árinn Mhór is Oileán Bharra beirt, leantar den nós a bheith ag ainmniú réimsí is comharthaí ar farraige inniu, cé gur béas leis na hainmneacha úra seo a bheith sealadach, gan a bheith ar eolas ach ag scaifte roghnaithe daoine agus le féith an ghrinn go láidir mar fhoins leofa - in amannaí ag tagairt do bhamba a déirigh do dhuine inteacht.. Rud eile atá comónta sa dá oileán an nós gan na hainmneacha seo a mheas mar ainmneacha 'cearta'. De réir chosúlachta, déantar talamh slán de nach bhfuil na hainmneacha is úire ach sealadach. Nochtann sé seo an-mheas ar na seanainmneacha ach cuireann sé an cheist fosta ar múnlaíodh cuid de na seanainmneacha bunaithe leis an talamh slán céanna fá dtaobh de shealadacht..

In Árinn Mhór, cuireadh síos ar ainm amháin "gan a bheith fíor" ós rud é go bhfuil sé mar chuimhneachán ar eachtra nuair a chuaigh bád ar na clocha ann, agus ní bhaintear feidhm as ach le díorma beag daoine a bhfuil fios an scéil acu. Cuireadh síos ar an ainm seo a bheith "mar leasainm, chomh luath is a thugtar é...."

[I am ready]. Some of the old fishermen still make sure they go sunwise when they are turning the boat.

### CONTINUING THE TRADITION OF NAMING

In both Arranmore and Barra the tradition of naming areas of the sea and features in it continues today, although these newer names tend to be transient in nature, known to a select group of people and with a strong sense of humour underlying their creation — sometimes referring to a particular character's misadventures. Also common to both islands is the tendency to regard these names as not 'real' names. There seems to be an assumption that the recent names are transient in nature. This reveals a real respect for the older names but also begs the question as to whether some of the older, established names were formed with a similar assumption of transience.

On Arranmore one name was described as "not true" because it commemorates an incident where a boat ran aground on the rocks there, and is only used by a small group of people who are 'in' on the joke. This name was described as being "like a nickname, once it's given...."

On Barra we were told by one of the fishermen that there is a reef which has two names. He said there was a "proper name" for it, which refers to one of the geographical landmarks that has traditionally been used to locate it, and

gabhadh oirre an dèidh eathar a chaill a cuid lion oirre 's iad làn leis an sgadan aon mhadainn.

### AINMEAN MAR FHIANAIS AIR ATHARRACHADH SÒISEALTA?

Tha ainm ùr eile sa Bheurla air raon-iasgaich ann am Barraigh a' toirt tarraing air sgìre nan siùrsaichean ann an Amsterdam. 'S e an Dam (Amsterdam) an t-ainm air àite-giomadaireachd beag mu chairteal mìle cèarnach. Chaidh seo a thoirt air nuair a dh'aontaich na h-iasgairean sna trì eathraichean a bha ris na giomaich anns an raon seo eag-V a chur air giomaich sam bith le uighean a ghlac iad agus an tilgeil air ais. Seach nach eil fèill air giomaich eagaichte, bidh an eag-V (ann an earball a' ghiomaich) a' dìon na tè bho bhith ga cur air tìr gus an nochd na h-uighean aice, nuair a bhios an eag air a spionadh. 'S e am beachd a bh' aig na h-iasgairean "ma bhios na boireannaich ann, coisichidh na fireannaich" ('s e sin, gun dèanadh na giomaich fhìreann imrich dhan àite san robh na boireannaich cruinn còmhla). A rèir duine den fheadhainn a bha an sàs anns an oidhirp, shoirbhich leatha. A' bhliadhna an dèidh dhaibh tòiseachadh air seo "dh'fhaodadh tu dol a-mach le lion-cinn is ghlacadh tu dusan ghiomach". Chan eil an Dam ann tuilleadh, ge-tà. Nuair a thòisich fear de na h-iasgairean a' gleidheadh nan giomach le uighean, thuig na h-iasgairean eile nach dèanadh e feum a bhith gan eagadh bho nach robh an obair gu feum dhaibh tuilleadh, le nas lugha de bhoireannaich gan eagadh is gan tilgeil air ais. A rèir aon de dh'iasgairean an 'Dam', thuit an rian am broinn a chèile "mar thoradh air an t-sannt a bh' air aon iasgair.... Chan eil e fiù

In Oileán Bharra, hinsíodh dúinn le duine de na hiascairí go bhfuil sceir ann ar a bhfuil dhá ainm. Dúirt sé go raibh "ainm ceart" uirthi, a dhéanann tagairt do chionn de na comharthaí tìreolais ar baineadh taca as ariamh chun í a aimsiú, agus ainm fosta a thug líon beag iascairí di ar siocair gur chaill bád a cuid líonta lán leis an scadán uirthi aon mhadain amháin.

### AINMNEACHA MAR FHIANAISE AR ATHRÚ SÓISIALTA?

Níonn ainm ùr Béarla eile air limistéar iascaigh tagairt do cheantar stríopachais Amsterdam. Is é an Dam (i ndéidh Amsterdam) an t-ainm a thugtar ar limistéar beag gliomadóireachta thart fá cheathrú míle cearnach. Tugadh seo air nuair a d'aontaigh na hiascairí ag obair sna trí báid sa réimse seo iog V a chur ar ghiomaigh ar bith le huibheanna a ghlac siad agus iad a chaitheamh ar ais. Ós rud é nach féidir gliomaigh le hiog a dhíol, cosnaíonn an iog V (i ruball an ghiomaigh) an ghirseach ó bheith á cur i dtír go dtí go mbeidh a cuid uibheanna ligthe amach aice, fán am a mbeidh an iog caite. Is é an tuairim a bhí ag na hiascairí "má bhíonn na girseachaí ann, siúlóidh na gasraí" (is é sin, go mbogfadh na gliomaigh fhìreanna ionsar mar a raibh plód gliomach baininn). De réir duine amháin a raibh baint aige leis an turgnamh, d'éirigh leis. An bhliain i ndéidh díofa toiseacht ar seo a dhéanamh "thiocfadh leat gabháil amach le heangach gruaige agus ghlacfa neart gliomach". Ní hann don Dam tuilleadh, áfach. Nuair a thoisigh duine de na hiascairí ag coinneáil na ngliomach a raibh uibheanna acu, thug

also a name given by a smaller number of fishermen because a boat had lost its nets full of herring on it one morning.

### NAMES AS EVIDENCE OF SOCIAL CHANGE?

Another recent English name for a fishing area at Barra refers to Amsterdam's notorious red light district. The Dam (after Amsterdam) is the name given to a small creeling area about a quarter of a mile square. It was called this when the fishermen in the three boats creeling this area agreed between them to V-notch and return any berried lobsters (females carrying eggs) they caught. As notched lobsters are not marketable, the V-notch (a 'V' cut into the lobster's tail) protects the female from being landed until her eggs have hatched, by which time the notch has grown out. The fishermen's theory was that "if the women are there, the boys will walk" (i.e. the male lobsters would migrate towards a concentration of females). According to one of those involved in the experiment, it worked. The year after they started doing this "you could go out with a hairnet and catch a dozen lobsters". However, the Dam no longer exists. When one of the fishermen started keeping the unnotched berried lobsters, the other fishermen decided there was no point in continuing with the notching as the effectiveness of the whole scheme had decreased for all of them, with fewer berried females being notched and returned overall. According to one of the



‘s a’ smaoineachadh air a mhac fhèin gun tighinn air clann-daoine eile no na glùintean gun tighinn seach gu bheil e ga ghlacadh uile dha fhèin an-dràsta. Chan eil ann ach sannt diabhalta” (Ní Bhraonáin 2011<sup>b</sup>). Ainm ùr eile a th’ ann, ‘s e ‘The Supermarket’ air àite-giomadaireachd dìreach air cùlaibh Suidheachan (an taigh a thug an t-ùghdar Compton MacCoinnich) air taobh a tuath an eilein. Thathar a’ gabhail The Supermarket air seach, mar a thuirtear fear de na h-iasgairean, “gum faodadh tu dol ann Diluain agus cha bhiodh càil ann agus Dimàirt bhiodh e a’ cur thairis”. Rinn an t-iasgair a chruthaich an t-ainm a leithid seach gun canadh e “tha e nas miosa na Co-op na croiche ann am Bàgh a’ Chaisteil!” ‘S e an duilgheadas a th’ ann nach bi càil a dh’fhios agad cuine a bhios ‘latha-libhrigidh’ san Supermarket ann (Ní Bhraonáin 2011<sup>b</sup>).

Faodaidh gun nochd feadhainn de na h-ainmean as ùire beachdan ag atharrachadh mun iasgaireachd mar dhreuchd. Ann am Barraigh, buinidh mòran de na h-ainmean as ùire, leithid ‘Smash and Grab’ ri slighean-sgrìobaidh agus tha iad sa Bheurla — air an cruthachadh gu tric le iasgairean bhon taobh an ear.

### GUTHAN BHO GHLÙIN NAS SINE

Chaidh faireachdainn mu bheachdan ag atharrachadh a chur an cèill leis an iasgair a bu shine ris an do bhruidhinn sinn anns gach eilean — an dithis aca sna ceithir-ficheadan agus spèis mhòr dhaibh anns na coimhearsnachdan aca fhèin chun na h-ìre ‘s gum faodar am meas mar fhoirfich sna coimhearsnachdan sa bheil iad.

Do dh’fhear de na seann iasgairean seo,

na hiascairí eile fáidear nach raibh maith ar bith ann a bheith ag leanstan ar aghaidh leis na hiogaí óir bhí an scéim imithe ó rath díofa uilig, agus iogaí á gcur ar níos lú de ghiomaigh is a bheith á gcaitheamh ar ais. De réir duine d’iascairí an ‘Dam’, thit an córas as a chéile “de thairbhe sainte le hiascaire amháin.... Chan fhuil sé fiú ag smaointiú ar a mhac féin chan é amháin ar daoine eile ná na glúnta romhainn cionn is go bhfuil sé á ghlacadh uilig dó féin. Níl ann ach saint amach is amach” (Ní Bhraonáin 2011<sup>b</sup>).

Ainm úr eile ‘The Supermarket’, atá mar chuntas ar an limistéar ghliomadóireachta díreach taobh thiar do Shuidheachan (an teach a thóg an t-údar Compton MacCoinnigh) i dtuaisceart an oileáin. Tugtar The Supermarket air cionn is, dúirt duine de na hiascairí, “go bhféadfá dul ann maidin Dé Luain agus cha bheadh a dhath ann agus Dé Máirt bheadh sé ag cur thar maoil”. Rinne an t-iascaire a thug an t-ainm air amhlaidh ós rud é gur ghnách leis a rá “tá sé níos measa na Co-op na mallacht i mBáighe an Chaistil!” Is é an fhadhb atá ann nach mbeadh a dhath de bharúil agat cá huair a mbeadh ‘lá seachadta’ sa Supermarket ann (Ní Bhraonáin 2011<sup>b</sup>).

Thiocfadh go nochtfadh cuid de na hinmneacha is ùire dearcadh ag athrú ar iascaireacht mar cheird. In Oileán Bharra, baineann a lán de na hainmneacha is ùire, ar nós ‘Smash and Grab’ le bealaigh trálaerachta agus is sa Bhéarla atá siad - cumtha go minic le hiascairí ón oirthear.

‘Dam’ fishermen, the system fell apart “because of one fisherman’s greed.... He’s not even thinking of his own son let alone other people’s children or future generations as he’s taking it all now for himself. It’s just pure greed” (Brennan 2011<sup>b</sup>).

Another more recent name is ‘The Supermarket’, which describes a creeling area just behind Suidheachan (the house that the author Compton MacKenzie built) on the north of the island. It is called The Supermarket because, said one of the fishermen, “you could go in there on a Monday and there’d be nothing there and on Tuesday it would be teeming”. The fisherman who coined the name did so because he used to say “it’s worse than the bloody Co-op in Castlebay!” The problem is you never knew when ‘delivery day’ in The Supermarket was (Brennan 2011<sup>b</sup>).

Some of these newer names may indicate changing attitudes towards fishing as an activity. On Barra many of the newer names, such as ‘Smash and Grab’, are for tows (trawling routes) and are in English — often coined by east coast fishermen.

#### VOICES FROM AN OLDER GENERATION

A sense of changing attitudes was expressed by the oldest fishermen that we spoke to on each island — each of them in their 80s and greatly respected in their respective communities to the

thug e tarraing air an atharrachadh mar seo:

Bha an saoghal cruaidh an uair sin ach bha fealla-dhà ann seach gun robh a h-uile duine san aon eathar. San latha a th’ ann an-diugh, tha a h-uile duine na eathar fhèin agus sin agad far a bheil an t-atharrachadh.

Airson an fhir seo, a chaidh a chuimhne air ais do na làithean nuair a dhèante an t-iasgach le seòl is ràmh, thàinig atharrachadh le dòighean-iasgaich tionnsgalach nuair a chaidh cumhachd nan eathraichean am meud gus am faodadh iad “lin cho mòr ri raointean ball-coise” a shladadh. Bha e den bheachd gum b’ e seo, le “sannt mhic an duine” a bu choireach ri call an stuic.

Shaoil na seann iasgairean eile cuideachd gum b’ e am pòsadh eadar teicneòlas agus claonadh mhic-an-duine gu sannt a dh’adhbharaich crìonadh iasgach an sgadain is a’ bhradain mun eilean aige. Bha iasgach an sgadain mu Arainn Mhòr, thuirtear e, ga mhilleadh le nochdadh nan sgrìobadairean mòra ag obair a-mach às na Ceallan Beaga ann an ceann a deas Thìr Chonaill.

Ma chì iad iasg sam bith a-muigh an sin, ‘s e an ath rud a nì iad na lìn aca a chur is glacaidh iad a h-uile mac màthar aca. Mar sin tha iad dol a chur air tìr sna Ceallan Beaga is chan e sia croinn *[tomhas de dh’iasg mu 28 clachan de sgadan (FAO 2012)]* a bhios aca idir, bidh sia ciad tunna no mìle tunna air gach eathar aca. Mar *sin, ma tha ceithir no còig de na bàtaichean mòra ud ag obair fad seachdain no dhà*, is a’ cur air tìr sna Ceallan Beaga le

#### GUTHANNA Ó GHLÙIN NÍOS SINE

Cuireadh mothúchán fá dtaobh de dhearcadh ag athrú i gcéill leis an iascaire is sine lenar labhair muid ar achan oileán — lán na beirte acu sna hochtóidí agus meas as mìosúr orthu i bpobal a chéile sa mhéid gur féidir iad a mheas mar sheanóirí ina bpobail féin.

Dúirt duine de na seaniascairí seo agus é ag caint ar athrach:

An saol an tráth sin, bhí sé cruaidh ach bhí greann ann cionn is go raibh achan duine sa bhád chéanna. Sa lá atá inniu ann bíonn achan duine ina bhád féin agus sin é an duifear.

Don fhear seo, a chuaigh a chuimhne siar don am a dhéantaí an iascaireacht le seòl is rámhaí, tháinig athrach le teicnící tionsclaíocha iascaigh nuair a chuaigh cumhacht na mbád i méid ionas go mbeadh siad in inmhe “líonta comh mór le páirceanna peile” a tharraingt. Shíl sé gurbh é seo, agus “saint an duine” ba shiocair le cailliúint líon an éisc.

Shíl seaniascaire eile ar an dóigh chéanna gurbh é an pòsadh eadar teicneolaíocht agus claonadh an duine le saint a tharraing meath iascach an scadáin is an bhradáin thart fá oileán a dhúchais. Bhí iascach an scadáin thart fá Árainn Mhór, dúirt sé, á scrios le teacht isteach na dtrálaer móra ag iascach amach as na Cealla Beaga i nDeisceart Thír Chonaill.

Más rud é go bhfeiceann siad iasc ar bith amach anseo, is é an chéad

extent that they may be thought of as elders in their community.

For one of these older fishermen, the sense of change was prefaced with the remark:

Life then, it was hard but it was fun because everyone was in the same boat. Nowadays everyone is in their own boat, and that’s the difference.

For this man, whose memory extended to the time when fishing was done by sail and oar, a change came with industrial fishing techniques when the power of the boats increased so that they could tow “nets the size of football pitches”. He believed this, combined with “the greed of man”, was responsible for the loss of stocks.

The other older fisherman similarly felt that it was the marriage of technology and a human propensity for greed that had contributed to the demise of the herring and salmon fisheries around his island. The herring fishery around Arranmore, he argued, was being destroyed by the incursion of large trawlers operating out of Killybegs in south Donegal.

If they see any fish out here, the next thing they’ll do is shoot their nets and they’ll swipe every one of them. So they’re going to land in Killybegs and they’re not going to have ten cran *[a measure of fish approximately equivalent to 28*



mìle tunna am bàta — no sia ceud tunna am bàta — fad seachdain no dhà, agus tha fios agad dè na tha iad dol a dhèanamh. Tha iad dol a sgapadh an èisg is aon uair 's gu bheil an t-iasg air a sgapadh, aon uair 's gu bheil an t-iasg air a bhriseadh suas bidh 'n t-iasg a' sgapadh air feadh an àite is chan eil tomad sam bith de dh'iasg a' tighinn a-steach an seo a thuilleadh.

Ged nach do bhuin na sgrìobadairean mòra do na h-eileanan, ann am beachd an t-seann iasgair, bha an t-aon atharrachadh ann am beachdan air buaidh a thoirt air eileanaich cuideachd: na linn, 's e na chiad bhàtaichean ùra a nochd anns an eilean na 'half-deckers' "agus an uair sin cha robh na half-deckers mòr gu leòr dhaibh. Fhuair iad sgrìobadairean". Thug seo air na h-eileanaich iasgach na b' fhaide 's na b' fhaide air falbh bhon eilean, cho fad' air falbh ri cladaich na h-Alba.

Thug an t-atharrachadh seo buaidh air lìn-siabaich a' bhradain cuideachd:

Bha iad a' glanadh suas a' bhradain gu lèir. Bha math dh'fhaodte dà fhichead no leth-cheud a dh'èathraichean ris an dol-a-amach seo a bha a' tighinn a-steach. Cha b' ann le ceud bradan a bha iad a' tighinn a-steach idir, bha iad a' tighinn a-steach le mìle bradan.

Nuair a chaidh a' cheist a chur air an robh sannt mhic-an-duine an sàs, thuirt an seann iasgair:

An sannt. Abair thusa. Shin agad e a-nis. 'S e 'n fhirinn a thuirt thu. An sannt.

rud eile a ní said, a gcuid líonta a chaitheamh agus glacfaidh siad ach an chionn acu. Mar sin tá siad ag dul a chur i dtír sna Cealla Beaga agus ní deich gcrann [tomhas éisc thart fá 28 clocha de scadán (FAO 2012)] a bheas acu ar chor ar bith, beidh sé chéad tonna nó míle tonna acu ar ach an bhád. Mar sin .... tá ceithre no cúig cinn de na bádaí móra seo ag obair ansin ar feadh seachtaine nó dhó, agus ag cur i dtír sna Cealla Beaga le míle tonna an bád - nó sé chéad tonna an bád — ar feadh seachtaine nó dhó, agus tá a fhios agat goidé atá siad ag dul a dhéanamh. Tá siad ag dul a scaipeadh an éisc agus comh luath agus a bheas an t-iasc scaipthe, comh luath is a bheas an t-iasc briste suas, scaipeann an t-iasc ar fud na háite agus chan fhuil méid mhór éisc ag teacht isteach anseo tuilleadh.

Gidh nár bhádaí de chuid an oileáin iad na bádaí móra seo, i mbarúil an tseaniascaire, himríodh tionchar ar na hoileánaigh fosta leis an athrach chéanna ar dhearcadh: lena linn b' iad na chéad bháid úra a tháinig chun an oileáin na "half-deckers" agus ansin cha raibh na half-deckers mór a sáith díofa. Fuair siad trálaeir". Thug sé seo ar na hoileánaigh iascach níos faide is níos faide ar shíúl ón oileán, a fhad ar shíúl le cladaigh na hAlbana.

Chuaigh an t-athrach seo i gcion ar iascairí bradáin na sruthlíonta fosta:

Bhí siad ag glanadh suas an bhradáin go léir. Bhí b'fhéidir dhá scór nó

stone of herring (FAO 2012)] at all, they are going to have six hundred tonne or a thousand tonne on each boat. So, you take...four or five of them big boats working there for a week or two, and landing in Killybegs with a thousand tonne a boat — or six hundred tonne a boat — for a week or two, and you know what they are going to do. They are going to scatter up the fish and once the fish is scattered, once the fish is broke up the fish scatters all over and there is no bulk of fish coming in here anymore.

Although these big trawlers were not local island boats, in the older fisherman's opinion, islanders had also been affected by the same change in attitudes: in his time the first new boats that arrived on the island were the half-deckers "and then the half-deckers wasn't big enough for them. They got trawlers". This led to the islanders fishing further and further away from the island, as far away as the coast of Scotland.

The salmon drift-netters were also affected by this change:

They were cleaning up all the salmon. There was maybe forty or fifty boats at this carry-on that were coming in. They weren't coming in with a hundred salmon at all, they were coming in with a thousand salmon.



Thuir e cuideachd, ge-tà, gun deach “an sannt” na b’ fhaide na iasgairean nan lion-siabaidh, don fheadhainn a bha ‘g iasgach a’ bhradain air aibhnichean na h-Èireann, agus cuideachd do thuathanaich a chuireadh stuth ceimigeach air na raointean aca gun smaoineachadh air a’ bhuidhe a bheireadh e.

Bidh am bradan...a’ dol a-steach sna h-aibhnichean, a-steach ann an abhainn a tha salach is grod is air a truailleadh, le tuathanaich a’ tilgeil an stuth air an fhearann agus thig an t-uisge ‘s thèid a h-uile càil a sguabadh a-steach dhan abhainn. Tha am bradan an dèidh tighinn às a’ mhuir is bidh e a’ fuireach anns an t-suidheachadh seo, agus bidh e ‘g òl sin. ‘S e an ath rud a bhios an, seallaidh iad dealbh le ‘s dòcha dà fhichead no leth-cheud bradan marbh ann an linne. Am bradan a bu chòir a bhith a’ siolachadh. Shin agad na h-aibhnichean againn.

Teachdaireachd chudromach ann am fianais an t-seann iasgair, ‘s e cho domhainn agus a tha iasg is iasgach fuaighte ri saoghal an eilein.

A-nis bha sinn a’ tighinn beò air an eilean seo. Chaidh an t-eilean seo ann seo a bhreith ‘s a thogail air iasg... Mhair sinn air iasg. Bha iasg againn seachd latha san t-seachdain.

Tha eagal dha-rìribh air eileanaich ma thèid an cothrom gus iasgach a dhèanamh a thoirt air falbh, gun tèid an t-adhbhar a th’ aig an eilean a bhith mar àite-fuirich do chlann-daoine mu sgaoil.

leithchéad bád i mbun na hoibre seo a bhí ag teacht isteach. Chan é le céad bradán a bhí siad ag teacht isteach ar chor ar bith, bhí siad ag teacht isteach le míle bradán.

Nuair a cuireadh an cheist air an raibh saint an duine i gceist, dúirt an seanascaire:

An tsaint. Dúirt tú é. Sin é anois. An rud ceannann céanna. An tsaint.

Dúirt sé fosta ina dhéidh sin go deachaigh an tsaint ní b’fhaide ná iascairí na sruthlonta, don dream a bhí ag iascach an bhradain ar aibhneacha na h-Èireann agus fosta d’fheirmeoirí ag cur ceimicíochta ar a gcuid páirceanna gan an rian a chur san áireamh.

Théid an bradán isteach sna haibhneacha, isteach in abhainn shalach, lofa, thruaillithe, le feirmeoirí ag caitheamh ceimicíochta ar an talamh agus thig an bháisteach uilig agus glantar é sin uilig isteach san abhainn. Tá an bradán i ndéidh teacht isteach ón fharraige agus tá sé ag maireachtáil sa chompal seo, agus ólann sé é sin. Is é an chéad rud eile a ní siad pioctúr a nochtadh agus b’fhéidir dhá scór nó leithchéad bradán marbh i linn a thaispeánt duit. Sin bradán ar cheart díofa a bheith ag sceitheadh. Sin na haibhneacha s’againne duit.

Teachtaireacht thábhachtach i gcuntas an tseanascaire comh fite fuaite agus atá éisc is iascaireacht le saol an oileáin:

On being asked whether human greed played a part, the older fisherman continued:

The greed. Now you are talking. Now you have it. You hit it right there. The greed.

However, he added tellingly that “the greed” extended far beyond the drift net fishermen, to those who were fishing for salmon on Irish rivers, and also to farmers putting chemicals on their fields without taking into account the consequences.

The salmon...go into the rivers, into a dirty, rotten polluted river, with farmers throwing out stuff on the land and all the rain comes and all that is washed into the river. The salmon is after coming in from sea and he is living in this atmosphere, and he is drinking that. The next thing they’ll turn on a picture and they’ll show you maybe forty or fifty salmon dead in a pool. That’s salmon that should be spawning. That’s our rivers.

An important message in the old fisherman’s testimony is how deeply woven fish and fishing are in the fabric of island culture:

Now we lived off this island. This island here was born and raised on fish... We lived off fish. We had fish seven days a week.

Chaidh cho bunaiteach is a tha an t-iasgach do dh'iomhaigh an eilein a chur an cèill cuideachd leis a' Chanon Aonghas MacCuithein a th' air a bhith a' fuireach is ag obair ann am Barraigh fad mu leth-cheud bliadhna. Chuimhnich e air a bhith a' siubhal le iasgairean eile gu àite air a bheil an Tabh gus "na h-èisg-mhòra" — an langa is an trossg — a ghlacadh nuair a bha e na shagart ann an Eireisgeigh an dèidh an dara chogaidh mhòir. Gus na h-èisg-mhòra a ghlacadh dh'fheumadh tu dà thuras air leth a dhèanamh: an toiseach, dh'fheumadh tu am maghar — leathagan — a ghlacadh ann an Caol Bharraigh; an uair sin "bhiodh tu air falbh chun an Taibh" air druim a' Chuain Mhòir siar air Barraigh.

.... Chleachdadh iad an seòl gus a dhol a-mach cho fada ri sin.... 'S ann dìreach nuair a bhios tu 'g èirigh suas, an sianar agaibh ag iomramh, nuair a ruigeas tu bàrr nan sumainnean, bidh thu coimhead is chì thu dìreach mullach nan cnoc ann am Barraigh - agus tha fios aig Dia gu bheil iomadh cnoc ann am Barraigh! - shin agad an Tabh. A-nis, b' e sin saoghal nan iasgairean.... 'S e uisge gu math domhainn a bh' ann is nuair a ràinig tu e, leigeadh tu an seòl a-nuas agus dh'fheuchadh tu ri thomhas airson tràghadh no lìonadh an làin, oir cuidichidh neart an làin thu gus na lìn-mhòra a chur. 'S ann ac' a bha fios ciamar a chuireadh tu iad.... Agus chuireamaid na lìn seo is rachamaid an uair sin a laighe sìos air do dhruim-dìreach ann am Miùghalaigh no ann an Sanndraigh no gin de na h-eileanan fad 3 uairean a thìde gus an tilleadh an làn.... An dèidh thèid no cheithir uairean a thìde thòisicheadh

Anois thug muid ár mbeo ón oileán seo. An t-oileán seo anseo, rugadh is tógadh ar an iasc é .... Mhair muid ar iasc. Bhí iasc againn seacht lá in aghaidh na seachtaine.

Tá eagla i ndáiríribh ar mhuintir an oileáin más rud é go ndéantar an cumas iascaireacht a dhéanamh a bhaint de, go dtosóidh bunrúta an oileáin a bheith mar chónaí do dhaoine ag titim as a chéile.

Cuireadh a lárnaí agus atá an iascaireacht d'aitheantas oileáin i gcéill leis an Chanónach Aonghas MacCuithein fosta, a bhfuil thart fá chaoga bliain tugtha aige ina chónaí agus ag obair in Oileán Bharra. Chuimhnigh sé siar ar turais a dhéanamh le seaniascairí go háit ar thug sé 'an Tabh' uirthi leis na héisc mhóra - langa is trossg - a ghlacadh nuair a bhí sé ina shagart paróiste in Eirisgeigh i ndéidh an Dara Chogaidh Domhanda. Leis na héisc mhóra a ghlacadh, bhí feidhm ar dhá thuras ar leith: i dtoiseach báire, bhí ort an baíte — leathóga de chineálacha éagsúla — a ghlacadh i mBealach Bharra; ina dhéidh sin "bheifeá ar an bhealach go dtí an Tabh" amuigh ar an aibhléis mhór thiar ar Oileán Bharra.

.... Bhainfeadh siad feidhm as an seòl chun a ghabháil amach a fhad leis sin.... Is díreach nuair a bhíonn tú ag éirí, an tseisear agaibh ag iomramh, leis na líonta a chur, nuair a bhaineas tú barr na roisteacha amach, amharcann tú agus tchífidh tú díreach barr na gnoc in Oileán Bharra — agus tá a fhios ag Dia go bhfuil moll cnoc in Oileán Bharra! - sin é an Tabh. Anois b'é sin saol na n-iascairí....

There is a real fear among island people that if the ability to fish is removed, the island's very reason for being a place of human habitation begins to unravel.

The centrality of fishing for island identity was also expressed by Canon Angus MacQueen who has lived and worked in Barra for around half a century. He recalled making journeys with older fishermen to a place he called 'the Haaf' in order to catch the 'big fish' — ling and cod — when he was parish priest in Eriskay after the second world war. Catching the big fish entailed two separate journeys: first the bait — various kinds of flatfish — had to be caught in the Sound of Barra; then "you'd be en route to the Haaf" in the open Atlantic to the west of Barra.

.... They would use the sail to get out that far.... It's only when you rise up, the six of you rowing, to set the nets, when you get up to the top of the swell, you look and you just see the very top of the hills of Barra —and God knows there are plenty hills in Barra! — that's the Haaf. Now that was the world of the fishermen.... That was really deep water and when you got there you let down the sail and you'd try and gauge it for the ebb or the flow of the tide because the tide, the strength of the tide is going to help you to set the longlines. *They* knew how to set them.... And we would set these nets and then go and lie down on your back on Mingulay or Sandray





tu a’ cur nan lion-mòra a-steach, an trosg, an langa is an leithid, sin a bha dhìth ort agus sin a rachadh a reic is a reisgeadh is a chleachdadh. B’ e an Tabh buillsgean saoghal an èisg. Sin far an do thòisich e gu lèir... Shin agad mar a bha an t-iasg ma-thà, bha gaol agad air an iasg, gaol mòr, b’ e an t-iasg am balach... Na h-Uibhistich is eileanaich eile, cuid anns an Eilean Sgitheanach, bhiodh tu ceangailte ris an fhearann, dìreach sin is ‘s e obair chruaidh a th’ ann, chan eil togail-intin sam bith na lùib.’

Nuair a mhinich an seann iasgair gum b’ e saoghal an iasgaich bho latha gu latha obair a bha fuar, cruaidh ‘s cunnartach, chuir an Canon MacCuitheìn cuideam gun sgar air cho làidir is a bha an càirdeas is a’ choimhearsnachd a bhios cosnadh mar sin a’ cruthachadh: ged a tha e fuar, cruaidh ‘s cunnartach, tha e cuideachd coitcheann, dlùth is ceangaltach.

Gus a bhith ag obair còmhla, feumaidh sibh a bhith air an aon ràmh mar bhuidheann, mar theaghlach, agus seo nuair a bhios tu air eathar gu math beag, dlùth air a càch-a-chèile, agus ma tha strì eadaraibh feumaidh sibh bruidhinn mu dheidhinn. ‘S a bhith a’ bruidhinn ‘s ag obair còmhla mar sin a bheir dhut an neart an lùib a bhith còmhla ‘s tarraing air an aon ràmh. Chan eil creideamh Crìosdaid gu dad an seo... bidh neart ann an colainn ‘s inntinn a’ dol còmhla, mar eisimpleir dà làimh air ròp còmhla [*leig an Canon MacCuitheìn air gun robh e a’ tarraing air ròp*] ... bha seo mar chuid den bheatha aca....

Uisce iontach domhain a bhí i gceist agus nuair a shroich tú é ligfeá an seol anuas agus d’fhéachfá len é a thomhas ó thaobh líonadh is tráigh na taoille ós rud é go gcuideoidh an taoille, neart na taoille tú leis na líonta móra a chur. Is iad a bhí in inmhe a gcur.... Agus chuirfeadh muid na líonta seo agus ghabhfhadh muid a lúí síos ar shlat do dhroma i Miùghalaigh nó Sanndraigh ar feadh trí uaire an chloig go dtí gur chas an taoille aríst.... I ndéidh trí nó ceithre uaire an chloig, thoisigh tú ag cur na líonta móra isteach, an trosc, an langa agus eile, sin a bhí de dhìth ort agus sin a díoladh is a tiormaíodh is a úsáideadh. B’e an Tabh ceartlár shaol an éisc. Sin mar a thoisigh sé uilig... Sin é mar a bhí an t-iasc mar sin, thug tú grá don iasc, grá mór, b’é an t-iasc an buachaill... Na daoine in Uibhist agus oileáin eile ar nós Uibhist, áiteanna san Oileán Sciathánach, bheifeá ceangailte leis an talamh, is is cruaidh an obair í, níl tógáil chróí ar bith ag baint léi.’

Gidh gur chuir na seanascairí béim gurbh é saol na hiascaireachta lá i ndéidh lae obair fhuar, chruaidh is chontúirteach, luaigh an Canónach MacCuitheìn neart an ghaoil is na comharsanachta a chothaíos a leithéid d’obair go mion minic: gidh gur obair fhuar, chruaidh is chontúirteach í, is rud coiteann, dlùth is ceangaltach í fosta..

Le bheith ag obair le chéile, caithfidh sibh réiteach lena chéile, mar theaghlach, óir tá sibh ar bhád thar a bheith beag, i ndeas dá chéile,

or any of the islands there for 3 hours until the tide turned again... After 3 or 4 hours of that you started putting in the long lines, the cod, the ling and that, that’s what you went for and that’s what was sold and dried and used. The Haaf was the centre of the world of fish. That’s where it all began... So that was fish, you worshipped fish, you just adored fish, fish was of the essence.... The Uist people and other islands like Uist, parts of Skye, you’d be tied to the soil, just that which is hard slog, no excitement in it.’

While the older fishermen emphasised that the physical reality of fishing day after day was, and is, cold, hard, dangerous work, Canon MacQueen repeatedly raised the strength of relationship and community that such work generates: though it is cold, hard and dangerous, it is also shared, intimate and binding.

To work together you actually have to gel together as a group, like members of a family, as this is where you are on a very small boat — close to each other, and if you have differences you have to talk about it. It is that talking and acting together that gives you the absolute strength of being together and gelling. Christian religions make no difference here...Mental and physical closeness go together, for instance two hands on a rope

## A’ TREÒRACHADH NAN GLÙINTEAN AIG MUIR

Tha e ri thuigsinn às na thuirt an Canon MacCuitheìn gu bheil feum air càirdeas làidir am measg iasgairean. Tha an t-iasgair à Arainn Mhòr, Niallaí Caomhánach, air eisimpleir practaigeach de mar a bhios càirdeas math ga chumail nuair a tha e a-mach air na ‘maidean dan’ — cuilcean-bamboo a chleachdas na h-iasgairean ann an Arainn Mhòr gus a shealltainn far a bheil na clèibh aca nan laighe. Cuiridh a h-uile h-iasgair dath sònraichte air na cuilcean a leigeil fhaicinn gur h-ann leis a tha na clèibh. Bidh seo a’ cuideachadh nan iasgairean gus na clèibh aca fhaighinn nuair a bhios gaileannan gam fàgail an aimhreit air a’ chladach.

Cuideachd, cuiridh a h-uile h-iasgair comharradh air a’ mhaide aig ceann siar a’ chabhlaich aige le luid le aon dath agus am maide sa cheann an ear le luid air a bheil dath eile. Bidh na luidean nan stiùireadh do dh’iasgairean eile a tha eòlach air an rian, a’ lùghdachadh a’ chunnairt gun ruith iasgair na clèibh aige thairis air na clèibh aig iasgair eile, “agus mar sin” thuirt Niallaí san dealachadh, “cha tèid sinn an aimhreit agus bidh sinn nar deagh nàbaidhean fad an fheasgair”.

Aonan de na nithean as cudromaiche ceangailte ris an eòlas bho shean a th’ aig iasgairean, ‘s e na “comharraidhean” mar a th’ aca orra ann am Barraigh agus “marcanna an talaimh” ann an Arainn Mhòr. Tha iad seo nan stiùireadh cuideachd — comharraidhean-stiùiridh air an cleachdadh le, mar eisimpleir, iasgairean-giomaich gus an treòrachadh dhan ghrinteal chruaidh a chleachdas iad mar iolladh a’ ghiomaich.

agus má éiríonn eadraibh beidh oraibh caint fá dtaobh de. Is é an chaint is an cur le chéile a thugann duit an neart a bheith le chéile is réiteach lena chéile. Ní dhéanann creideamh Críostaí duifear ar bith anseo....gabhann dlúithe inntinne is chorpartha le chéile, mar shampla, dhá lámh ar rópa le chéile [*ligeann an Canónach macCuitheìn air go bhfuil sá ag tarraingt ar rópa*]...Bhí seo mar chuid dá slí bheatha...

## AG TREORÚ NA NGLÚNTA AR FARRAIGE

Tá sé le tuiscint ó ráiteas an Chanónaigh MacCuitheìn go bhfuil feidhm ar chaidreamh láidir i measc iascairí. Thug iascaire Árainn Mhór, Niallaí Caomhánach, sampla praiticiúil de goidé mar a chothaítear caidreamh maith nuair a thug sé iomrá ar na ‘maidí dan’ — slata bamboo tomhaiste go speisialta as a mbaineann iascairí Árainn Mhór leas le teaispeáint cá bhfuil a gcuid cliabh curtha. Cuireann ach an iascaire dath áithrid ar na slata le tabhairt le fios gur leis féin na cléibh. Cuidíonn sé seo na hiascairí lena gcuid cliabh a thabhairt ar ais nuair a fhágann stoirmeacha in aimhréit ar an chladach iad.

Fosta, cuirfidh ach an iascaire marc ar an mhaide ag cionn thiar an chabhlaigh le bratóg le dath amháin agus an maide thoir le bratóg a bhfuil dath eile uirthi. Feidhmíonn an bhratóg mar threoir d’iascairí eile a bhfuil an córas ar eolas acu, ag laghdú na contúirte go rithfidh iascaire amháin a chabhlaich cliabh thar chléibh iascaire eile, “agus mar sin”, dúirt Niallaí, “ní

together [*Canon MacQueen made a mime of drawing on a rope*]...This was part of their way of being....

## GUIDING GENERATIONS AT SEA

Implicit in Canon MacQueen’s statement is the need for strong social relations among fishermen. Arranmore fisherman Neily Kavanagh gave a practical example of how good relations are maintained when describing the ‘dan sticks’ — specially weighted bamboo rods that the Arranmore fishermen use to show where their fleets of creels are lying. Each fisherman will paint the bamboo rods with a certain colour to indicate that the fleet is theirs. This helps the fishermen to retrieve their creels on occasions when storms leave them entangled on the shoreline. Furthermore, each fisherman will mark the dan stick at the west-lying end of their fleet with a rag of one colour and the east-lying dan stick with a rag of another colour. The rags act as a guide for other fishermen who know the system, reducing the risk of one fisherman running his fleet of creels over the creels of another, “and so”, concluded Neily, “we won’t get fouled up and we’ll all be good neighbours for the evening”.

One of the most functionally important aspects of fishermen’s traditional knowledge is what are called ‘comharra’ on Barra and ‘marcanna na talamh’ on Arranmore. These are also guides — landmarks that are used by,



Bidh feadhainn de na comharraidhean a thathar a' cleachdadh gus aon sgeir-iasgaich shònraichte a sheòladh mar an ceudna airson caochladh iasgairean, ach ann an cuid de shuidheachaidhean bidh a chuid chomharraidhean fhèin aig gach iasgair.

Thug fear de dh'iasgairean Bharraigh, Calum MacNèill (air a bheil 'Calum a' Chal'), iomadh bliadhna seachad sa chabhlaich-mharsantachd, ach an dèidh dha fàgail chaidh e ris na giomaich mar chosnadh. Ged a tha tomhas-doimhneachd aige a-nis a leigeas leis dealbh dealanach a dhèanamh den doimhneachd, bidh e a' cleachdadh nan comharraidhean gu cunbhalach fhathast. Tha e ag ràdh ann an cuid de shuidheachaidhean gu bheil na comharraidhean nas fheàrr na an teicneòlas, agus an dèidh dha an tomhas-doimhneachd fhaighinn gun tàinig air ìre nan cliabh-giomaich aige a ghearradh ann an aon àrainn bho 25 gu 20.

B' àbhaist dhomh 25 clèibh fhaighinn le bhith a' cleachdadh nan comharraidhean air a' ghrinneal seach gun tòisichinn a' cur cho luath 's a bha mi air comharradh sònraichte a ruigsinn. Bhithinn air an iomall agus bha fios agam nam b' urrainn dhomh an lùb obrachadh gun cuirinn na 25 clèibh mus fhaighinn a-mach às a' chomharradh...leis an tomhas-dhoimhneachd, tha thu a' feitheamh gus an tig e suas leis an tomhas. Mun àm a thig thu suas leis an tomhas is a thèid thu a-mach a chur nan cliabh, tha thu air cuid dheth a chall cheana. Tha thu air cuid dheth a chall cheana. Shin agad cho cugallach is a bhios e a' fàs.

ghabhfaidh muid in aimhréidh agus beidh muid mar scoith na gcomharsan an oíche go léir”.

Cionn de na gnéithe is tábhachtaí ó thaobh oibriúcháin a bhaineas le fios feasa na n-iascairí na rudaí ar a dtugtar 'marcanna an talaimh' in Árainn Mhór is 'comharraidhean' in Oileán Bharra. Is treoracha iad seo fosta — comharthaí tire as a mbaintear taca le, mar shampla, gliomadóirí ar farraise lena dtreorú don talamh chruaidh a mbaineann siad feidhm as mar bhráití gliomadóireachta. Beidh cuid de na comharthaí as a mbaintear feidhm chun seoladh go sgeir áithrid iasgaigh mar an gcéanna d'iascairí éagsúla, ach i gcuid de chásanna beidh a fhoireann féin de chomharthaí ag achan iascaire.

Chaith duine d'iascairí Oileán Bharra, Calum MacNèill (ar a dtugtar 'Calum a' Chal') neart blianta sa chabhlaich trádála ach i ndéidh é fágáil chuaigh sé i mbun na nglomach mar shlí mhaireachtála. Gidh go bhfuil fuaimnitheoir aige anois a chuireas ar chumas dó an doimhneacht a tharraingt go leictreonach, baineann sé feidhm as na marcanna go rialta go fóill. Deir sé i gcásanna áithrid go mbíonn na marcanna níos fearr ná an teicneolaíocht agus i ndéidh é an fuaimnitheoir a fháil nár mhór dó líon na bpotáí ina chuid cabhlach gliomadóireachta i réimse amháin a ghearradh ar ais ó 25 go 20.

Ba ghnách liom a bheith i ndán 25 de chléibh a fháil ag baint feidhme as na marcanna ar an talamh siocair go dtosóinn ag caitheamh comh luath agus a bhí comhartha áithrid

for example, lobster fishermen while at sea to guide them to the hard ground that they use as lobster fishing grounds. Some of the marks used to navigate to one particular fishing reef will be the same ones for different fishermen, but in some cases each fisherman will have his own set of marks.

One of the Barra fishermen, Calum MacNeil (known as 'Calum a' Chal'), spent many years in the merchant navy, but after leaving he became a full-time lobster fisherman. Although he now has a sounder which allows him to chart depths electronically, he still uses the marks regularly. He says that in some cases the marks are actually better than the technology, and that after getting the sounder he had to cut the number of pots in his lobster fleets in one area from 25 to 20.

Well I used to be able to get 25 creels by using the landmarks onto the ground because I would start shooting as soon as I reached a certain landmark. I would be at the edge of the weed and I knew if I could work the zigzag I would put the 25 creels before I got out of the mark...With the sounder, you are waiting for it to come up with the sounder. By the time you come up with the sounder and go out to shoot the creels you have already lost part of it. You've already missed part of it. That is how critical it gets.



Coltach ri seann iasgair eile sna h-eileanan, dh'ionnsaich Calum a' Chal na comharraidhean bho sheann iasgair a bhiodh ag iasgach gun teicneòlas idir. Rinn caraid cairt an dèidh sin den doimhneachd anns an raon a' cur feum air uidheam dealanach. Air a' chairt, sheall a h-uile fear de chomharraidhean an t-seann iasgair grinneal cruaidh. Thuir Calum a' Chal:

Bha fios aca dìreach far an robh an grinneal cruaidh ach fhathast chan fhaca iad grunn na mara riamh. Bha iad air grunn na mara fhaicinn anns an tanalach. Ach bha for aca. Bha a h-uile mìr den ghrinneal chruaidh a fhuair mi fhìn aca.

Agus e air a thogail air a' chuid as motha dheth bho na sinnsearan aige is air a neartachadh le chuid rannsachaidh fhèin, tha eòlas gun chrìochan aig Calum a' Chal air dùthchas-mara an eilein. Ann an aon agallamh fad trì uairean an uaireadair, a thug sinn gu crìch a' faireachdainn nach fhaodamaid fiosrachadh sam bith eile a làimhseachadh, thug e dhuinn còrr is dusan a chomharraidhean, fuaighte ri eachdraidh, sloinntearachd, imrich, òrain is àrsaidheachd Bharraigh, cho math ris na ficheadan de dh'ainmean eile air àiteachan aig muir a tha mar chuid den eòlas dhùthchasach a th' aig na h-iasgair eile air àrainneachd na mara. Tha mòran de seo fighte ri eachdraidh a bheatha fhèin ris an eòlas chultarail a th' aige san fharsaingeachd. Tha e a-nis a' toirt an eòlais seo do mhac a mhic a tha seachd bliadhna dh'aois.

Nuair a thug e dhuinn comharraidhean airson tè de na sgeirean air a bheil Fiacan a' Mhìn, thuir e:

tíre bainte amach agam. Bheinn ar an imeall agus bheadh fhios agam dá mbeinn i ndán an fiarlán a oibríú go gcuirfinn na 25 cléibh sula bhfuair mé amach as an mharc... Leis an fhuaimnitheoir, bíonn tú ag feitheamh air teacht aníos leis an fhuaimnitheoir. Fán am a thig tú suas leis an fhuaimnitheoir agus a ghabhas tú amach leis na cléibh a chur tá cuid de cailte cheana féin agat. Tá cuid de cailte cheana féin agat. Sin comh contúirteach agus a éiríonn sé.

Dálta seaniascairí eile sna hoileáin, d'fhoghlaim Calum a' Chal na marcanna ó sheaniascaire a rinne a chuid iascaireachta gan tacaíocht teicneolaíochta. Rinne cara cairt ina dhéidh sin den doimhneacht sa limistéar ag baint taca as trealamh leictreonach. Ar an chairt, thaispeáin achan chionn de mharcanna an tseaniascaire talamh chruaidh. Deir Calum a' Chal:

Bhí fhios acu go díreach cá háit a raibh an talamh chruaidh ach ina dhéidh sin chan fhaca siad grinneall na mara ariamh. D'fheiceadh siad an grinneall in uisce ní ba thana. Ach bha fhios acu. Bhí achan mhír den talamh chruaidh a fuair mé féin acu.

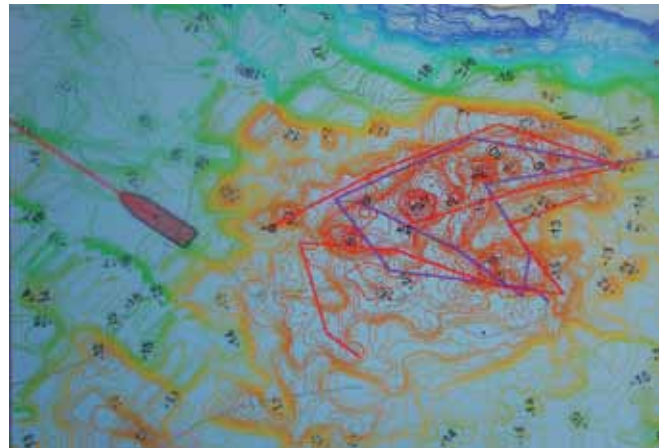
Agus é tugtha den chuid is mó óna shinsear féin agus curtha leis fríd a chuid taighde féin, tá eolas as cuimse ag Calum a' Chal ar dhúchas mara a oileáin féin. In agallamh amháin a mhair trí uaire an chloig, a thug muid chun críche, ag mothú nach mbeadh muid i ndán tuilleadh eolas a láimhseáil, thug sé corradh le duisín de

In common with other older island fishermen, Calum a' Chal learned the marks from an old fisherman who had fished without the aid of technology. Later a friend made a chart of depths in the area using electronic equipment. On the chart, every one of the old fisherman's marks showed hard ground. According to Calum a' Chal:

They knew exactly where the hard ground lay and yet they never saw the seabed. They would have seen the seabed in shallower water. But they knew. They had every bit of hard ground that I got.

Learned for the most part from his own elders and augmented by his own research, Calum a' Chal has an encyclopaedic knowledge of the island's dùthchas na mara. In one three hour interview, which we brought to an end, feeling we could not process any more information, he gave us more than a dozen marks, interspersed through an account of Barra's history, genealogy, in and out migration, song traditions and archaeology, as well as dozens of other names of places at sea which are part of the traditional ecological knowledge of the fishermen. Much of this is bound up in his own life story and wider cultural experiences. He is now passing this knowledge on to his seven year old grandson.

When giving us one of his marks for a reef called Fiacan a' Mhìn he said:



Sin am fear a dh'ionnsaich mi do mhac mo mhic, nuair a thug mi a-mach o chionn dà bhliadhn' air ais e. Agus tha e aige air a theanga a-nis aig aois seachd bliadhna.... Tha iad aige agus a Dhia tha e eòlach air na comharraidhean.

### AN CRUTH AIR AN ÀRAINNEACHD MU PHOILEASaidh AG ATHARRACHADH

Sa chiad leth den fhicheadamh lin, chaidh gearan a thogail ann am Barraigh le iasgairean às na h-Eileanan Siar an aghaidh briseadh-a-steach le iasgairean à taobh a-muigh nan eilean a bha a' milleadh nan iollaidhean aca. Chaidh Dionnasg na Mara a chur air bhonn leis an sgrìobhadair Compton MacKenzie agus an sgoilear Fear Chanaigh agus fhuair e taic làidir bho na h-iasgairean iad fhèin. B' iad na h-amasan a bh' aca dèanamh cinnteach gum biodh smachd aig iasgairean nan eilean air na còraichean air uisgeachan nan eilean agus iasgairean nan eathraichean-sgrìobaidh a chumail a-mach. An-diugh chan e feadhainn thaiceil a thàinig a-steach, mar a thàinig Fear Chanaigh is MacCoinnich, a tha an ceann nan iomairtean am measg iasgairean sna h-eileanan Gàidhealach, ach iasgairean nan eilean iad fhèin.

Bha Fear Chanaigh den bheachd gun do dh'fhairtlich air Dionnasg na Mara sna 1930an a chuid amasan a thoirt gu buil seach gun robh beachd nàimhdeil mu na h-eileanan an taobh a-staigh Riaghaltas na Rìoghachd Aonaichte aig an àm. An-diugh tha caochladh uallachaidhean is dhleastanasan air Riaghaltas na Rìoghachd Aonaichte agus Riaghaltas na h-Èireann fo lagh eadar-nàiseanta. Tha

mharcanna dúinn, fite le hìomrá ar stair, ghinealeolaíocht, an imirce isteach is amach, amhráin is seandálaíocht Oileán Bharra, diomaite de neart ainmneacha eile ar áiteanna ar farraige atá mar chuid d'eolas éiceolaíoch traidisiúnta na n-iascairí.. Tá a lán de seo ceangailte lena scéal féin agus lena chuid eispéireas cultúrtha go ginearálta.. Tá sé anois ag tabhairt an eolais seo dá gharbhac a bhfuil seacht mbliain slánaithe aige.

Agus é ag tabhairt dúinn cionn dá chuid marcanna fá choinne sceire ar a dtugtar Fiacan a' Mhìn [?], dúirt sé::

Sin an cionn a d'fhoghlaim mé don gharbhac nuair a thug mé amach dhá bhliain ó shin é. Agus tá sé aige ar a thoil anois in aois seacht mbliain dó.... Tá siad aige agus a Dhia tá na marcanna ar eolas aige.

### CUMADH TIMPEALLACHTA BEARTAIS AG ATHRÚ

Sa chéad leth den 20ú céad, rinneadh agóid in Oileán Bharra le hiascairí sna hOileáin Thiar in aghaidh trálaer ag briseadh isteach ón taobh amuigh a bhí ag milleadh a gcuid bráití. Cuireadh Conradh na Mara ar bun leis an scríobhneoir Compton MacCoinnich is an fhear léinn Fear Chanaigh agus fuair sé tacaíocht láidir ó na hiascairí iad féin. B' iad a gcuid sprioctha cinntiú go mbeadh smacht ag iascairí na n-oileán ar na cearta ar uiscí na n-oileán agus na trálaeir a choinneáil amach. Inniu, ní le dream tacúil a tháinig thar tír isteach ar nós MhicCoinnich is Fear Coinnigh a

That is the one I taught the grandson, when I took him out two year ago. And he knows it off by heart now at seven... He's got them and by God he knows the marks.

### THE CHANGING SHAPE OF THE POLICY ENVIRONMENT

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Barra was the centre of a protest by fishermen in the Western Isles against the incursions of trawlermen from outside the islands who were destroying their fishing grounds. The Sea League was set up by the writer Compton MacKenzie and the scholar John Lorne Campbell and received strong support from the fishermen themselves. Their aims were to ensure that the island fisherman controlled the rights to island waters and to keep the trawlermen out. Today activism among fishermen on the Gaelic speaking islands is not being led by supportive incomers, such as Campbell and MacKenzie, but by island fishermen themselves.

John Lorne Campbell believed that the failure of the Sea League of the 1930s to achieve its ambitions was because of hostile attitudes to the islands within the UK Government of the time. Today the UK and Irish Governments have a range of responsibilities and obligations under international law. Some of these international policy instruments expressly recognise and support the more complex 'way of knowing' the

cuid den reachdas eadar-nàiseanta seo ag aithneachadh gu follaiseach is a’ cur taice ri ‘dòigh-eòlais’ nas toinnte mun àrainneachd a chaidh a nochdadh gu soilleir leis na h-eileanaich ann an Arainn Mhòr is ann am Barraigh.

Tha Treòrachadh Gnàthagan na h-Eòrpa (92/43 EEC), a dh’fheumas na Buill-stàite cur an gnìomh, mar chuid de fhreagairt an AE mu thoirt a-mach gheallaidhean mun àrainneachd a chaidh a dhèanamh aig Co-labhairt nan Dùthchannan Aonaichte an an 1992 air Àrainneachd is Leasachadh (air a bheilear a’ gabhail mar as trice “Tional Cruinneadail” Rio). Aig an Tional Chruinneadail, chaidh an Cùmhnant mu Bhith-Eugsamhlachd (CBD) a thionnsgain na Dùthchannan Aonaichte, fhosgladh gus ainmean a chur ris.

Ann an 2000, ghabh an Còigeamh Co-labhairt aig Partaidhean CBD ri “Prionnsapalan Mhalawi” a tha a’ mìneachadh CBD le tuigse gu bheil mac-an-duine is an nàdar ann an rian-beatha ceangailte ri chèile. Tha eisimpleir den tuigse seo mu na ceanglaichean follaiseach ann an tuairisgeul na Co-labhairt air dòigh rian-beatha mu rianachd, a tha a’ gabhail a-steach gu follaisach a’ cheangail ri eugsamhlachd chultarail.

Tha an dòigh mu rian-beatha na ro-innleachd gus rianachd amalaidhte a dhèanamh air fearann, uisge is goireasan beò a chuireas air adhart gleidheadh is cleachdadh seasmhach ann an dòigh a rèir Cothrom na Fèinne.... Tha dòigh rian-beatha...ag aithneachadh gu bheil clann-daoine, len cuid eugsamhlachd chultarail, nan cuid bhunaiteach de dh’iomadh rian-

threoraítear an t-aighneas i measc iascairí sna hOileáin Ghaelacha ach le haisacairí na n-oileán iad féin.

Bhí Fear Chanaigh den bharúil gur sháraigh ar Chonradh na Mara sna 1930anna a chuid spriocanna a bhaint amach de barr an naimhdís fá dtaobh de na hoileáin a nochd Rialtas na Ríochta Aonaichte san am. Inniu tá réimse freagrachtaí is oibleagáid ar Rialtas na hÉireann is Rialtas na Ríochta Aontaithe fá dhlí idirnáisiúnta. Aithníonn is tacaíonn cuid de na hionstraim idirnáisiúnta bheartais seo an dóigh níos duibheagánaí chun eolas a chur ar an timpeallacht go follasach, rud atá léirithe go flúirseach leis na hoileánaigh in Árainn Mhór is in Oileán Bharra.

Tá an Treoir Eorpach um Ghnáthóga (92/43 CE), a bhfuil d’oibleagáid ar Bhallstátaí a fhorghníomhú, mar chuid de fhreagar an AE ar choilíonadh na dtiomantas timpeallachta a rinneadh ag Comhdháil na Náisiúnta ar an Timpeallacht is Fhorbairt (a ngairtear de go hiondúil “Cruinniú Mullaigh” Rio). Ag an Chruinniú Mhullaigh fosclaíodh an Coinbhinsiún ar Éagsúlacht Bhitheolaíoch (CBD) ar chuir na NA tús leis, le ainmneacha a chur leis.

In 2000, thacaigh an Cúigiú Comhdháil de Pháirtithe an CBD ‘Prionsabail na Maláive’ a léirmhíonann an CBD le tuigbheáil go bhfuil daoine is dúlra in éiceachóras ceangailte le chèile. Tá sampla den tuigbheáil seo fá cheangal le feiceáilt i gcuntas na Comhdhála ar chur chuige an éiceachórais i dtaca le bainistíocht, ina bhfuil nasc dearfa le héagsúlacht chultúrtha:

environment which has been richly illustrated by the islanders of Arranmore and Barra.

The European Habitats Directive (92/43 EEC), which Member States are obliged to implement, is part of the EU’s response to meeting environmental commitments made at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (commonly known as the Rio “Earth Summit”). At the Earth Summit, the UN-initiated Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was opened for signature.

In 2000, the Fifth Conference of the Parties to the CBD endorsed the ‘Malawi Principles’ which interpret the CBD with an understanding that humans and nature in an ecosystem are interconnected. An example of this understanding of interconnectedness is evident in the Conference’s description of the ecosystem approach to management, which explicitly includes a link to cultural diversity:

The ecosystem approach is a strategy for the integrated management of land, water and living resources that promotes conservation and sustainable use in an equitable way.... An ecosystem approach...recognizes that humans, with their cultural diversity, are an integral component of many ecosystems (COP 2000: 103-104).

Article 8(j) of the CBD also requires its

beatha (COP 2000: 103-104).

Tha Alt 8(j) de CBD cuideachd ag iarraidh air na stàitean a chuireas làmh ris “spèis a ghabhail do dh’èolas, do thionnsgnaidhean is do chleachdaidhean choimhearsnachdan dùthchasach is ionadail sa bheil dòigh-beatha a bhuineas ri gleidheadh is cleachdadh seasmhach eugsamhlachd a thaobh beatha, an caomhnadh is an cumail suas....” (CBD 1992: 6).

Bho 2006, tha an seòrsa de dh’èolas dualchasach beò a fhuair sinn ann am Barraigh is ann an Arainn Mhòr air a bhith air a dhìon gu dìreach fo lagh eadar-nàiseanta. Roimhe seo, cha robh ach oighreachd chultarail ris an gabh beantainn air a dhìon — chaidh Còmhhdhail Oighreachd an t-Saoghail a stèidheachadh air beachd an t-Saoghail an Iar air oighreachd chultarail mar thoradh stuthail à ealain is ailtireachd (Lenzerini 2011: 103). Tha Còmhhdhail UNESCO ann an 2003 mu Dhìon Oighreachd Chultarail ris nach Gabh Beantainn (Còmhhdhail ICH) a’ toirt dìon eadar-nàiseanta do nithean ris nach gabh beantainn ceangailte ri eugsamhlachd chultarail. Thàinig Còmhhdhail ICH ann an gnìomh air 20 Giblean 2006 ged nach eil i air a daingneachadh fhathast leis an Rìoghachd Aonaichte no le Èirinn. A rèir Alt 2(1) de Chòmhhdhail ICH:

‘S e na tha ‘oighreachd chultarail ris nach gabh beantainn’ a’ ciallachadh na cleachdaidhean, na riochdachaidhean, na dòighean-labhairt, an t-eòlas, na sgilean — cho math ris na h-innealan, na nithean, na buill-ealain is na h-àiteachan cultarail ceangailte rin leithid — a bhios coimhearsnachdan, buidhnean agus,

Is straitéis é an cur chuige éiceachórais mar mhaithe le bainistíú comhcheangailte ar thalamh, uisce is acmhainní beo a chuireas caomhnú agus úsáid inbhuanaithe ar aghaidh ar dhóigh chothromasach.... Aithníonn cur chuige éiceachórais go bhfuil daoine, lena gcuid éagsúlachta cultúrtha, ina gcuid riachtanach d’iomaí éiceachóras (COP 2000: 103-104).

Iarrann Alt 8(j) den CBD ar státaí a shínithe fosta “eolas, nuálaíocht agus cleachtaí pobal dúchasacha is áitiúla ina bhfuil slí bheatha thraidisiúnta a bhaineas le caomhnú is feidhm inbhuanaitheach as éagsúlacht bhitheolaíoch a mheas, a chaomhnú agus a chothú....” (CBD 1992: 6).

Ó 2006 i leith, táthar i ndéidh an cineál feasa a d’aimsigh muid in Árainn Mhór is Oileán Bharra a chosaint go díreach fá dhlí idirnáisiúnta. Roimhe seo, cha dearnadh ach oidhríocht intadhaill chultúrtha a chosaint — bhí an Coinbhinsiún Oidhríochta Domhanda bunaithe ar dhearcadh an Iarthair fá dtaobh d’oidhríocht chultúrtha mar ábhar ealaíne is ailtireachta (Lenzerini 2011: 103). Tugann Coinbhinsiún UNESCO ar Chosaint Oidhríochta Dholáimhsithe Chultúrtha 2003 (Coinbhinsiún ICH) cosaint idirnáisiúnta fá choinne na ngnéithe doláimhsithe a bhaineann le héagsúlacht chultúrtha. Thàinig Coinbhinsiún ICH i bhfeidhm ar 20ú Aibreán 2006 gidh nár daingníodh le hÉirinn ná leis an Ríocht Aontaithe go fóill é. De réir Ailt 2(1) de Choinbhinsiún ICH:

Is é an rud is ciall leis an “oidhríocht dholáimhsithe chultúrtha” na

signatory states to “respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity....” (CBD 1992: 6).

Since 2006, the kinds of living traditional knowledge we have found on Barra and Arranmore have been directly protected under international law. Prior to this, only tangible cultural heritage was protected — the World Heritage Convention was based on the Western-rooted idea of cultural heritage being the material products of art and architecture (Lenzerini 2011: 103). The UNESCO Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage 2003 (the ICH Convention) provides international protection for the intangible aspects of cultural diversity. The ICH Convention entered into force on 20 April 2006 though it has not yet been ratified by the UK or Ireland. According to Article 2(1) of the ICH Convention:

The ‘intangible cultural heritage’ means the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills — as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith — that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to

ann an cuid de shuidheachaidhean, daoine air leth ag aithneachadh mar chuid den oighreachd chultarail aca. Tha an oighreachd chultarail seo ris nach gabh beantainn, ga toirt bho ghlùin gu glùin, ga cruthachadh às ùr uair is uair le coimhearsnachdan is buidhnean mar fhreagairt air an àrainneachd aca, a' cheangal a th' aca ri nàdar is ris an eachdraidh aca, agus tha e a' toirt dhaibh faireachdainn mu ìomhaigh is leanmhainneachd, rud a chuireas air adhart spèis do dh'èugsamhlachd chultarail is do chruthachalachd dhaonna (Còmhhdail ICH 2003: 11).

Tha Alt 2(2) cuideachd ag ràdh gum faighear oighreachd chultarail ris nach gabh beantainn ann an caochladh riochdan, leithid aithris-bheòil is dòighean-labhairt (cànan nam measg), cleachdaidhean sòisealta agus eòlais is cleachdaidhean mu nàdar is mun chruinne-chè (Còmhhdail ICH 2003: 11).

Nas giorra air ais, tha Plana Ro-innleachdail airson Bith-eugsamhlachd 2011 gu 2020 ceangailte ri CBD mar “chuireadh do Phartaidhean toirt an aire do Dhearbhadh nan Dùthchannan Aonaichte ann an 2008 air còraichean Dhaoine Dùthchasach, ann an cur an gnìomh a' Phlana Ro-innleachdail airson Bith-eugsamhlachd 2011 gu 2020, mar as iomchaidh, agus a rèir reachdais nàiseanta” (COP 2010). Tha an Dearbhadh mu Dhaoine Dùthchasach mar bhonn-stèidh ris an lagh eadar-nàiseanta. Gu ruige seo, sheall an lagh eadar-nàiseanta ri còraichean dìreach mar rudeigin a dh'fhodadh neach-aonair cur an gnìomh mar dhìon an aghaidh a' chumantais. An aghaidh seo, bidh an Dearbhadh a' faicinn chòraichean gan

cleachtaí, na léiriúcháin, na modhanna labhartha, an t-eolas, na scileanna — diomaite de na hionstraim, na réada, na déantáin agus na spásanna cultúrtha comhcheangailte leofa — a aithníonn pobail, grúpaí agus, i gcásanna áithrid, daoine aonair mar pháirt dá gcuid oidhríochta cultúrtha. Déantar an oidhríocht dholáimhsithe chultúrtha seo, tugtha ó ghlúin go glúin, a athmhúnlú arís is arís le pobail is grúpaí mar fhreagar ar a dtimpeallacht, ar a n-idirghníomhú le dúlra is lena gcuid staire, agus tugann sé dóibh mothú aitheantais is leanúnachais, mar mheas dá réir sin ar éagsúlacht chultúrtha is ar chruthaitheacht dhaonna (Coinbhinsiún ICH 2003: 11).

Deir Alt 2(2) fosta gur féidir oidhríocht dholáimhsithe chultúrtha a fháil i bhfoirmeacha éagsúla, ar nós béaloideas agus modhanna labhartha (teanga san áireamh), cleachtaí sóisialta agus eolas is cleachtaí fá dtaobh den dúlra is den chruinne (Coinbhinsiún ICH 2003: 11).

Ar na mallaibh, tugann an Plean Straitéiseach coibhneasta leis an CBD fá choinne Éagsúlachta Bitheolaí 2011 go 2020 “cuireadh do Pháirtithe tabhair fáidear do Dhearbhú na Náisiún Aontaithe in 2008 ar Chearta Daoine Dúchasacha, ar chur i bhfeidhm an Phleana Straitéisigh fá choinne Éagsúlachta Bitheolaí 2011 go 2020, de réir mar is cuí, agus ar aon dul le reachtaíocht náisiúnta” (COP 2010). Is mór an borradh fán dlí idirnáisiúnta é an Dearbhú um Dhaoine Dúchasacha.

generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity (ICH Convention 2003: 11).

Article 2(2) adds that intangible cultural heritage can be found in a variety of forms, such as oral traditions and expressions (including language), social practices and knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe (ICH Convention 2003: 11).

More recently, the CBD-related Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 “invites Parties to take note of the United Nations 2008 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in the implementation of the Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020, as appropriate, and in accordance with national legislation” (COP 2010). The Indigenous Peoples Declaration marks a major point of departure for international law. Up to this point, international law had viewed rights solely as something capable of being exercised by an individual in defence against the collective. In contrast, the Declaration envisages rights as capable of being exercised as part of a collective ‘whole’ (Lenzerini 2010).

This shift in international law is in line with the spirit of the Indigenous



cleachdadh mar chuid de ‘iomlan’ cumanta (Lenzerini 2010).

Tha àm mùthadh seo air an lagh eadar-nàiseanta a rèir spiorad Cairt-talmhainn nan Daoine Dùthchasach ann an 1992 a tha a-mach air an cuid chòraichean mar eileamaidean deatamach de bhith air leth air a bheil iad a’ gabhail cearcall na beatha, far an toir atharrachadh air aon de na h-eileamaidean aice buaidh air a’ chòrr. Tha e cuideachd mar sgall-creige de na thuir na seann iasgairean Barrach a chuir saoghal dualchasach san robh a h-uile duine san aon eathar an coimeas ri saoghal an latha an-diugh far an robh a h-uile duine ag iarraidh gum biodh eathar aige dha fhèin, agus iasgair òg à Barraigh a thug dealbh den tuigse a bh’ aige air a mhuir mar a leanas:

Tha a h-uile càil ceangailte ri chèile, chan urrainn dhut an dealachadh, is chan urrainn dhut beantainn ri cuid dheth gun buaidh a thoirt air a’ chòrr dheth.... (Ní Bhraonáin 2011<sup>a</sup>)

## CO-DHÙNADH

San rannsachadh againn, bha sinn ag iarraidh faighinn a-mach a bheil freumhan cultarail nas doimhne ris an strì phoilitigeach a tha a’ tachairt an-dràsta sna h-uisgeachan timcheall air Barraigh is Arainn Mhòr. Tha sinn den bheachd gu bheil an rannsachadh seo a’ cur an cèill gu bheil an leithid a fhreumhan ann, agus gu bheil e cuideachadh gus nithean de shealladh-saoghail Ceilteach beò, ann an suidheachadh practaigeach a bhuineas dhan latha an-diugh, a chur ann am briathran. Bidh sgrùdaidhean mun t-seòrsa seo de dh’eòlas a’ cumail mar as trice ri

Gostrásta, d’amharc an dlí idirnáisiúnta ar chearta díreach mar rud inteacht a d’fhéadfadh duine aonair feidhmiú mar chosaint in aghaidh na cohoitiantachta. Ós a choinne seo, feiceann an Dearbhú cearta a bheith i ndán a bheith feidhmithe mar chuid de ‘iomlán’ i gcoitinne (Lenzerini 2010).

Tá an bogadh seo sa dlí idirnáisiúnta ar aon dul le meanma Cairt Talún Daoine Dúchasacha 1992 a ní trácht ar a gcuid cearta mar ghnéithe riatanacha d’aonán sonraíoch ar a dtugann siad ciorcal na beatha air, ina n-imríonn athrach ar chionn amháin dá gcuid gnéithe rian ar an iomlán. Tá sé mar gháir chreag den mhéid a dúirt an seaniascaire Barrach a chuir an saol fadó nuair a bhí achan duine sa bhád céanna i bhfarradh is saol an lae inniu agus achan duine ag iarraidh báid dó féin, agus iascaire níos óige as Oileán Bharra a thug iomrá ar an tuigbheáil a bhí aige ar an fharraige mar seo a leanas:

Tá achan rud ceangailte, cha tig leat iad a scaradh, agus cha tig leat baint do chuid de gan dul i bhfeidhm ar an chuid eile de.... (Ní Bhraonáin 2011<sup>a</sup>)

## CONCLÚID

Inár gcuid taighde, theastaigh uainn fiafraí an bhfuil fréamhacha cultúrtha níos doimhne leis na coimhlintí polaitiúla atá ar siúl san am i láthair ar na huiscí thart fá Oileán Bharra is Arainn Mhór. Creideann muid go gcuireann ár gcuid taighde i gcéill go bhfuil a leithéidí de fhréamhacha ann, agus go gcuidíonn sé, i comhthéacs

Peoples’ Earth Charter 1992 which talks about their rights as essential elements of a unique entity that they describe as the circle of life, where a change to one of its elements affects the whole. It also echoes the comment of the older Barra fisherman who contrasted a traditional society where everyone was in the same boat, with a modern society where everyone wanted their own boat, and a younger Barra fisherman who described his understanding of the sea as follows:

It’s all intertwined, you can’t separate it, and you can’t tamper with some of it without affecting the rest of it.... (Brennan 2011<sup>a</sup>)

## CONCLUSION

In our research we wanted to inquire into whether there are deeper cultural roots to the current political conflicts taking place on the waters around Barra and Arranmore. We believe this research suggests that there are such roots, and helps to articulate, in a contemporary and practical context, aspects of a living Celtic worldview. Studies of this kind of knowledge are usually confined to the fields of ethnology and folklore with no significant place in the considerations of governments and policymakers. Seen from this new perspective, the fishermen’s testimonies reveal an appreciation of the natural world that is immediate, functional and practical — a natural world in which the island people are an integral and necessary part. This appreciation, in turn, reflects

eòlas-chinnidhean is aithris-bheòil gun àite cudromach sam bith nuair a bhios luchd-riaghaltais is luchd-poileasaidh a’ beachdachadh. A’ sealltainn ris bhon taobh ùr seo, tha fianais nan iasgairean a’ nochdadh tuigse air an t-saoghal nàdarra a tha luath, feumail is seaghach - saoghal nàdarra sa bheil na h-eileanaich nan cuid gu math feumail is deatamach. Tha an tuigse seo an uair sin a’ nochdadh mìneachadh àrainneachd-poileasaidh na cruinne air a’ Chòmhdhail mu Bhith-eugsamhlachd a thuigeas gu bheil clann-daoine is nàdar ceangailte ri chèile san aon rian-bheatha.

Tha de chomas aig cruinneachadh làidir den eòlas dhùthchasach sna h-eileanan Gàidhlig seo a dh’èirich às a’ chàirdeas fhada ‘s dhlùth aig na h-eileanaich ris an nàdar, cho math ri ullachadh san lagh eadar-nàiseanta a bheir luach don eòlas seo, ceangal ri caochladh dhòighean gus eòlas a chur air àrainneachd na mara. ‘S coltach gu bheil an dìth ceangail a th’ ann an-dràsta eadar na dòighean seo gus an saoghal a thuigsinn a’ cur gu bunaiteach ris an strì a tha a’ dol air adhart sna h-eileanan. Tha sinn den bheachd ma lorgar àite airson a h-uile gin de na ‘saoghail’ seo gum faodte dòigh nas saidhbhre gus eòlas is tuigse fhaighinn air a’ mhuir dham buin sinn a chruthachadh.

reatha is praiticiúil, le gnéithe de dhearcadh domhanda Ceilteach beo a chur in iúl i bhfocail. De ghnáth, coinnítear taighde den chineál seo le heitneolaíocht is béaloideas gan áit ar bith mór le rá i dtuairimí luchd rialtais ná lucht déanta beartas. Ag amharc air ón dearcadh ùr seo, nochtann a bhfuil le rá ag na hiascairí tuigbheáil ar shaol an dúlra atá ann ar an bhall, feidhmeach is praiticiúil - saol an dúlra a bhfuil na hoileánaigh ina gcuid riachtanach. Nochtann an tuigbheáil seo í féin léirmhíniúchán luchd beartas timpeallachta na cruinne ar an Choinbhinsiún um Éagsúlacht Bhitheolaíoch a thuigeas go bhfuil an duine is an dúlra ceangailte lena chéile san éiceachóras chéanna.

Tá de chumas ag an chorp láidir seo isna hoileáin Ghaelacha seo d’eolas traidisiúnta a d’eascair as an ghaol dhlúth a bhí ag muintir na n-oileán leis an dúlra, diomaite den chreat sa dlí idirnáisiúnta a bheireann luach don eolas seo, dóigheanna éagsúla le eolas a chur ar thimpeallacht na mara a nasc. Is dóiche go gcuireann an díth naisc eadar na bealaí éagsúla tuigbheála i láthair na huaire go bunúsach leis na coimhlintí atá ar siúl go fóill isna hoileáin.. Creideann muid fríd áit a chur ar fáil d’achan chionn do na ‘saolta’ seo sa chionn eile dóigh níos saibhre a chruthú le eolas is tuigbheáil a bheith againn ar na farraigí a mbaineann sinn leofa.

the international policy environment’s interpretation of the Convention on Biological Diversity which understands humans and nature as interconnected within the same ecosystem.

The existence on these Gaelic-speaking islands of a strong body of traditional knowledge that has emerged from the island people’s long and close relationship with nature, alongside the existence in international law of a framework which gives value to this knowledge, has the potential to connect different ways of knowing the marine environment. It is likely that the current lack of connection between these different ways of understanding the world contributes fundamentally to the ongoing conflicts on the islands. We believe that finding a place for each of these ‘worlds’ within the other could give rise to a richer way of knowing and understanding the seas to which we belong.





## BUIDHEACHAS

'S e ùine is fialaidheachd nan daoine ann am Barraigh is ann an Arainn Mhòr as coireach gu bheil an sgrìobainn seo ann. Gu sònraichte, tha sinn fo chomain aig an fheadhainn a leanas, ann an Arainn Mhòr, Francie Mac Cnàimhsí, Séamus Mac Cnàimhsí, Aindriú Ó hIarlatha, Gearóid Ó hIarlatha, Niallaí Caomhánach, Séamus Caomhánach, Seán Mac Eachmharcaigh agus a h-uile duine a bha an làthair aig a’ choinneimh aig stèisean bàta-teasairginn Arainn Mhòr. Agus ann am Barraigh, bu mhath leinn taing a thoirt do Lachaidh Dùghlas, Màiri Ceit NicFhionghain (Màiri Ceit Bell), Dòmhnall Uilleam MacLeòid (Coppertop), Dòmhnall MacLeòid (Dòmhnall Beag), Calum MacNèill (Calum a’ Chal), Niall MacNèill (Niall Handie), an Canon Aonghas MacCuithein, Steafan Manford, Rodaidh MacNeacail (Roddy Choy) agus Iain Mac na Ceàrdaich (Iain Dubh).

Chan eil san fhiosrachadh san aithisg seo ach mìr beag de na thug na h-iasgairean dhuinn, agus tha sinn mothachail cuideachd san ùine ghoirid a bh’ againn ann an Arainn Mhòr is ann am Barraigh, nach b’ urrainn dhuinn ach liomhadh air uachdar eòlas dhùthchasach nan iasgairean.

Ri linn seo, tha sinn toilichte, mar thoradh gu ìre air ar cuid rannsachaidh, gun do chuir Barraich romhpa, còmhla ri Steafan Hurrel a bha an sàs ann an rannsachadh is dealbhadh na sgrìobhainn seo, tionnsgnadh mòr a thòiseachadh a nì clàr digiteach de dh’eòlas dualchasach an àite.

Thèid an obair seo a stiùireadh leis na h-eileanaich agus tha sinn an dòchas gun cuidich e gus an t-eòlas-sònrachaidh cudromach seo a chur bho ghluìn gu gluìn. Ann an Arainn Mhòr, tha na h-eileanaich cuideachd a’ sealltainn air dòighean sam faodadh iad an obair seo a thoirt air adhart.

Tha sinn den bheachd gun cuidich seo gus an taic a chuir am maoiniche Colmcille ris an tionnsgnadh a dhaingneachadh, aig a bheil mar chuid den raon-ùghdarrais ‘aca a bhith a’ brosnachadh deasbaireachd air ceistean coitcheann, sòisealta, cultarail is eaconomach ann an coimhearsnachdan Gàidhealach ann an Èirinn is Alba gus fèin-mhisneachd a thogail. Bu mhath leinn taing a thoirt do Cholmcille airson taic a chur rinn. Bu mhath leinn taing a thoirt cuideachd do Chomharchumann Forbartha is Fostaíochta Árainn Mhór, Gnìomh Saor-thoileach Bharraigh, Siar Media, Ionad-ionnsachaidh Bharraigh, Leabharlann Bharraigh, a h-uile duine aig Ionad-dualchais Bharraigh, Liam Caimbeul, an t-Àrd-oll. Laurence Mee, Mairead Bennett, Ùisdean Cheape, Gerard Dòmhnallach, Niall Pòl MacIlleathain, Gabhan Mac a’ Phearsain, Susan Walker, Fearghas Walker, agus Cairistiona Cain is Greg MacThòmais san leabharlann aig Sabhal Mòr Ostaig san Eilean Sgitheanach.

## BUÍOCHAS

Is é an t-am is an tsoicheallacht a chaith na daoine in Árainn Mhór is Oileán Bharra is siocair leis an chaipéis seo. Go háithrid, ba mhaith linn buíochas a ghlacadh leis an dream seo a leanas: in Árainn Mhór, Francie Mac Cnàimhsí, Séamus Mac Cnàimhsí, Aindriú Ó hIarlatha, Gearóid Ó hIarlatha, Niallaí Caomhánach, Séamus Caomhánach, Seán Mac Eachmharcaigh agus achan duine a bhí i láthair ag an chruinniú ag stáisiún bhád tarrthála Árainn Mhór. Agus ar Oileán Bharra, ba mhaith linn buíochas a ghlacadh le Lachaidh Dùghlas, Màiri Ceit NicFhionghain (Màiri Ceit Bell), Dòmhnall Uilleam MacLeòid (Coppertop), Dòmhnall MacLeòid (Dòmhnall Beag), Calum MacNèill (Calum a’ Chal), Niall MacNèill (Niall Handie), an Canónach Aonghas MacCuithein, Steafan Manford, Rodaidh MacNeacail (Roddy Choy) agus Iain Mac na Ceàrdaich (Iain Dubh).

Chan fhuil san fhaisnéis sa tuarascáil seo ach rud beag den mhéid a thug na hiascairí dúinn agus aithníonn sinn fosta san am ghearr a chaith sinn ar Árainn Mhór is ar Oileán Bharra nár éirigh linn ach teacht ar giota beag dá bhfuil ar eolas ag na hiascairí.

As siocair sin. tá áthas orainn, de bheagán de thairbhe ár gcuid taighde, go bhfuil beartaithe ag daoine ar Oileán Bharra, maille le Stiofán Hurrell a raibh baint aige le taighde is deardh na caipéise seo, tús a chur le tionscadal mór a ní léarscáil dhigiteach de ghnéithe d’eolas is de sheanchas na háite. Déanfar an obair seo a stiúradh

le hoileánaigh agus tá súil againn go gcuideoidh sé le seachadadh eadar na glúnta den fhaisnéis thábhachtach seo. Ar Árainn Mhór, tá oileánaigh fosta ag amharc ar dhóigheanna a bhféadadh siad an obair seo a thabhairt ar aghaidh.

Tá muid ag déanamh go gcuidíonn seo chun an tacaíocht a thug an maoineoir Comcille don tionscadal a dhearbhú, a bhfuil de shainchúram acu díospóireacht a spreagadh air cheisteanna comónta sóisialta, cultúrtha is eacnamaíochta i pbobail Ghaelacha in Éirinn is Albain le cur le muinín. Ba mhaith linn buíochas a ghlacadh le Colmcille as a gcuid tacaíochta. Ba mhaith linn buíochas a ghlacadh fosta le Comharchumann Forbartha is Fostaíochta Árainn Mhór, Gnìomh Saor-thoileach Bharraigh, Siar Media, Ionad-ionnsachaidh Bharraigh, Leabharlann Bharraigh, achan duine ag Ionad-dualchais Bharraigh, an t-Oll. Liam Caimbeul, Laurence Mee, Mairead Bennett, Ùisdean Cheape, Gearóid Mac Dónaill, Niall Pól MacIlleathain, Gabhán Mac an Phearsúin, Susan Walker, Fearghas Walker, agus Christine Cain is Greg Mac Thomáis ag leabharlann Sabhal Mór Ostaig ar an Oileán Sciathánach.

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The information contained in this report represents only a small fraction of what the fishermen imparted to us, and we recognise also that in our short time on Arranmore and Barra we were only able to scratch the surface of the traditional knowledge the fishermen hold.

Because of this we are pleased that, partly as a result of our research, islanders on Barra, along with Stephen Hurrel who was involved in the research and design of this document, have decided to initiate a major project which will digitally map aspects of the traditional knowledge and lore of their locality. This process will be led by the islanders, and we hope it will help with intergenerational transmission of this important identifying information. On Arranmore, islanders are also looking at

ways in which they might take this work forward.

We believe this helps to vindicate the faith shown in the project by its funder, Colmcille, whose remit includes encouraging debate on common concerns in social, cultural and economic issues in Irish and Scottish Gaelic speaking communities with a view to building self-confidence. We would like to thank Colmcille for their support. We would also like to thank the Arranmore Development and Employment Cooperative, Voluntary Action Barra and Vatersay, Siar Media, Barra Learning Centre, Barra Library, all at the Dualchas Heritage Centre on Barra, Liam Campbell, Prof. Laurence Mee, Margaret Bennett, Hugh Cheape, Gerard MacDonald, Neil Paul MacLean, Gavin Parsons, Susan Walker, Fergus Walker, and Christine Cain and Greg Thompson at the library of Sabhal Mor Ostaig on the Isle of Skye.

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