

# **The Red and Green “Problem Peoples”: Shared Cross-Cultural Affinity of Native Americans and Irish**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

While this paper explores various legacies and prospects of Native Americans in the 21<sup>st</sup> century via the lens of a shared historical and contemporary, cultural “affinity among Native American and Irish Peoples (Treuer, A., 2019), more context is warranted in terms of the impetus for such an exploration prior to systematically laying out the framework for the paper. Two primary catalysts are credited with giving more depth, direction and structure to this exploration. First, a recommendation to read Brian Dooley’s work (1998) *Black and Green: The Fight for Civil Rights in Northern Ireland and Black America* led to an eventual meeting with Dooley in Washington, D.C., in the very Irish pub in which his idea for the book was sparked, interestingly enough, by a portrait of Frederick Douglass hanging in a place of prominence. It was compelling to be in the actual place where Dooley began his research on two cultural groups, Irish and African Americans, that most would assume lack not only shared parallel experiences relative to colonization and oppression, but also direct encounters with one another in terms of the struggle for civil rights.

As I considered Dooley’s (1998) profound work, I began to consider my own encounters with researching cultural groups that may share similar parallels and direct encounters. Armed with some anecdotal evidence and preliminary research contributing to a nascent sense of such a connection, I questioned Dooley not only regarding his initial thoughts, but also if I could utilize his work as a guide to my own exploration. While he was supportive, as we conversed at this iconic pub near the political heartbeat of DC, he also was skeptical of what I might uncover in terms of additional cultural connections. Since I was confident in my initial findings, and appreciative of both Dooley’s caution and advice, I left our encounter with a sense of purpose and competitive zeal, hoping to delve deeper into the research, including my own direct experiences with both cultural groups, Native Americans and Irish. I cannot deny that Dooley’s friendly skepticism did get my intellectual and competitive juices flowing, providing fuel for at least three years of persistent research, if not for the rest of my research years.

The second catalyst for this research is bookended by the pioneering work and cultural guidance by Anton Treuer. After venturing west from Wisconsin to Bismarck, North Dakota and the University of Mary, I had the challenge of teaching undergraduate

and graduate courses with two components that I had an appreciation for, but not necessary a depth of experience as an academician, cultural diversity and Native American Studies. As I ascended my steep learning curve in preparation for teaching such courses, I resorted to my instincts to reach out directly to those best positioned to recommend culturally relevant approaches. Treuer was the first academic I met as I traveled areas of North Dakota, South Dakota and Minnesota gathering as much cultural knowledge as possible. Treuer’s (2012) text *Everything You Wanted to Know About Indians But Were Afraid to Ask*, along with his visit to the University of Mary campus, when he accompanied myself and undergraduate students to the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) protest area in the fall of 2016 (Taylor, 2017), and continued virtual visits with UMary undergraduate students nearly rounded out the depth of my understanding and acumen with which to explore the cross-cultural relationships between Native Americans and Irish.

What completed and focused this exploration was a more recent exchange with Anton Treuer when struggling to find the word or phrase encapsulating this cultural relationship. Once again, after reaching out to him, Treuer (2019) offered the word “affinity” to describe the historical and contemporary cultural relationship between Native American and Irish peoples. Initially when considering the word ‘affinity’, it is difficult to find resonance with the term, but as a quick search among synonyms produces terms like empathy, kinship, and sympathy, the word not only resonates when focusing research formally, but also in consideration of personal experiences from childhood to today, engaging both cultures in terms of travel, ancestry, and living in community while traveling Ireland pre- and post-Troubles (Taylor, 2018, 2019), or spending months serving children at the Oceti Sakowin DAPL protest camp’s Learning Resource Center (LRC), among additional experiences on and off several Native American reservations (Taylor, 2017).

All of these learning occasions, previous and accumulating to date, have also led to a deeper understanding of one more contextual consideration embedded in the title of this publication, “problem peoples.” As this paper will elaborate in more detail relative to mutual cultural affinity, it will do so by delving into examples of why such an affinity has developed over the centuries. One example of “problem peoples” is found in Coleman’s (2007) significant work, describing the role that education – either as established by the British government to deal with the Irish, or as a model for the United States government relative to Indian children – played in laying the groundwork for

a systematic campaign to assimilate...‘problem peoples’... where one’s language was not spoken and... local culture almost erased. In absolute terms the campaigns failed, yet the schools deeply changed Indian and Irish peoples in ways unpredictable both to them and to their educators (p. 1-10).

Taken another way, the process of assimilation, driven most consistently through education, which as Coleman (2007) opines “failed,” and others like Vine Deloria (1969) in the seminal work *Custer Died for Your Sins: An Indian Manifesto* posits that, in the case of Native American people,

the very real and human problems of the reservation were considered to be merely by-products of the failure of a

warrior people [in this case Oglala Sioux] to become domesticated... [by] the creation of a type of education which claimed to make ‘modern Indians’ out of these warriors (p. 91-92).

Deloria goes further to postulate that the failure projected on tribes like the Oglala Sioux is a phenomenon “that plagues every Indian tribe in the nation, if it will closely examine itself” (p. 92). While this paper will highlight cases in which this examination is underway and flourishing in some cases, the weight of assimilation is as much a challenge in a historical context as it is today. In fact, Deloria illuminates a stark analogy that is apt when emphasizing the importance of “closely examining itself” as opposed to the crushing weight of assimilation by means of “re-indianizing according to a white man’s ideal of what they were like in the past and should logically become in the future” (p. 92). Deloria poses the question to all other cultures, including the Irish, by asking,

Would they submit to a group of Indians coming to Boston and telling them what a modern Irishman was like? Expecting them to dress in green and hunt leprechauns so as to live on the leprechauns’ hidden gold would hardly provide a meaningful path for the future (p. 92-93).

Herein, via images and explications from theorists like Coleman (2007) and Deloria (1969), are the complexities and perspectives that crystalize the rationale for exploring the mutual cross-cultural affinity of Native American and Irish. These two groups who, by all rights, should be nearer to extinction due to brutal attempts to assimilate by arguably the author of brutality, the British government, via education and other means, have in fact persevered with a resiliency almost unfamiliar to most cultures. This resiliency is compelling, if not heroic, in the face of a global superpower like Great Britain – a superpower, who for centuries colonized vast areas, in particular North America and Ireland. In the 1600’s, Oliver Cromwell led British initiatives like the Irish policy as part of a “general imperial policy” in which “‘native Irish were treated much as the original settlers of New England treated the Indians. Cromwell wrote to New England to try to persuade ‘godly people and ministers’ to move to Ireland.’ Presumably their experience of civilizing the Indians would come in handy with the Irish.” This suffering caused by the British plantation strategy (O’Toole, 1994, p. 123) perhaps helps to account for the trans-Atlantic affinity that we will examine in this paper.

Furthermore, this paper, via the following historical and cultural encounters, will attempt to understand this paradox of resiliency displayed by both cultures amidst assimilation “campaigns” that failed in “absolute terms” yet changed those on both ends. We will explore, and even offer, implications historical, present and for future examination of the “unpredictable” ways, as Coleman (2007) stated, that Native Americans, Irish and their assimilators were deeply changed. As a way of unpacking the ways in which crystallization has and continues to occur, this paper will explore the various legacies and prospects of Native Americans in the 21<sup>st</sup> century via the lens of a shared historical and contemporary, cultural “affinity” among Native American and Irish peoples (Treuer, 2019). The approach to this exploration is an integration of research comprised of personal

narrative experiences complemented by a variety of researched source materials both foundational, historical and contemporary in nature.

In order to establish this exploration historically to demonstrate an emerging cross-cultural affinity, this paper will examine the “Irish Indians” (or Duhare) in the 1500’s in what is now the South Carolina/Georgia border area. Further historical development will occur with an assessment of the assistance offered by the Choctaw to the Irish during, and subsequent relations after, the 1840’s Potato Famine. As this exploration moves from the 1800’s to the 1900’s, cross-cultural visits of Irish political dignitaries such as Dublin Mayor Briscoe with the Cheyenne, and President of Ireland Eamon de Valera’s with the Ojibwe, will be elucidated. Along with additional cross-cultural ties in the 1900’s to 2000’s, emerging, historically contemporary activism among such groups as the American Indian Movement (AIM) and the Irish political party *Sinn Fein*, and significant protests of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) and Corrib Gas will be investigated. The culmination of the paper will feature a summary of personal narrative experiences, and researched source materials foundational, historical and contemporary in nature, with additional contemporary research highlighting present and future implications of a shared cross-cultural affinity between Native Americans and the Irish.

### **EARLIER HISTORICAL EXAMPLES OF SHARED CROSS-CULTURAL AFFINITY: MEDIEVAL TO LATE 1800’S**

In consideration of most history shared among Native American and Irish Peoples, Morton and Wilson’s (2013) volume has succinctly recapitulated it as:

the single period of land theft, cultural pillage, and casual genocide in world history (p. 25). [While some Irish] attempted to understand Indigenous society rather than destroy it... others incorporated a romanticized view of Natives into a radical critique of European society, and others still empathized with Natives as fellow victims of imperialism (p. 7-8).

Nevertheless, there have been moments when such examples of imperialism were not shared. Rather, within the limits of this research bracketing this brutal treatment of two cultures, there were times, the past evolving to the present, when both Native American and Irish peoples expressed an affinity for each another that merits a hint of romanticizing. Such romanticizing is not in the context of Morton and Wilson’s apt work in terms of a ‘radical critique’ of a European social strata that arguably wrote the book on imperialism. Rather, early and then contemporary history, as explicated later in this paper, took on more of the root meaning of radical or *radix*, meaning a return to the roots – or in terms of this section, emerging at an earlier stage from the roots of this cross-cultural relationship.

#### ***Duhare – the place of the Irish (Indians)***

Evidently, Native American and Irish, within the confines of this research, met prior to Columbus’ journey and even contemplation of America in 1492 (O’Shea, 2018). In fact,

Native American, Irish, Scottish, and even Spanish corroborating sources have consistently identified a tribal people living as early as the medieval period in the coastal area that would become Georgia and the Carolinas, although their existence has generally been ignored (Millanich, 1998; Thorton, 2018).

Beyond the scope here, but still interesting nevertheless, researchers have made similar claims of taller, brown- to red-haired people integrated with Native American tribes as far west as the Missouri River in the Dakotas. This assertion, drawn both from indigenous and more “dominant” forms of research, seems to corroborate such integration throughout North America. Again, while this presents an opportunity for future research, it nonetheless requires a pause and even a reconsideration of the often compulsory history imparted to younger and older alike, an education that encourages a narrower sense of continental history. More and more research is coming to consider Indigenous sources, enabling researchers both to represent multiple perspectives on a phenomenon and to highlight the partial nature of all claims of truth (Ellingson, 2009). Such an approach can be applied to a particular phenomenon like the Duhare and others like them spotted “in America,” by the Mandan and French in areas of what is today North and South Dakota; the Paitue of Nevada, and Midwest tribes of the Great Lakes and southern Canada all similarly described “natives... that had fair, pigmented skin with red, yellow or blonde hair and blue or grey eyes” (Weiser – Alexander, 2018, p. 3; O’Toole, 1994).

If only eye-witness accounts of Native peoples spanning the North American continent were enough to start with the case of cultures in general coexistence, with a sense of shared affinity (Irish included), there would be enough to question how this apparent coexistence changed to an imperialism that *nearly* wiped out both cultures in their particular regions of the world. ‘Nearly’ is the key here, because, considering the additional evidence connecting language and other expressions between these two cultures, language was the primary tether to cultural identity that hindered cultural extinction all together.

The Duhare coexisted as a blend of cultures during medieval times up until more formal European contact, with Spanish contact at various times in Columbus’ era and beyond. People of One Fire, a nationwide team of Native American scholars, conducts comprehensive research to obtain more accurate and detailed knowledge of North American pre-European history. When considering multiple North American languages – particularly those germane to the southeastern reaches – these researchers were surprised that “every single Native American word [from the province of Duhare] that was included in the transcripts of colonial powers... defied translation...” It was not until several years ago, when research was expanded to other cultures’ languages like Gaelic that “translations for many of the Duhare words were found...” Also of interest are the South Carolina rock carvings similar to those found on Ireland’s southern coast, and “an ancient Irish lullaby entitled *Bainne nam fladh* which translates to ‘On the milk of deer I was reared. On the milk of deer I was nurtured. On the Milk of deer beneath the ridge of storms on crest of hill and mountain’” (Thornton, 2015, 2017, 2018).

And why is it significant in terms of an earlier developed thought about cultural identity and survival, coupled with language cross-referenced, leading to something as biologically challenging as milking a deer? In this particular case, there exists no hard evidence during this time period of area indigenous domesticating deer to the point of

mirroring those herding techniques used in Europe at the time, such as using dogs to herd the deer similar to cattle, but anecdotes indicate that they

also milked the deer and made cheese from the milk... the excess male deer population was fattened with corn for butchering. Corrals were built... where they stayed at night, but were allowed to roam during the day, accompanied by the herders... While dairy deer seems impossible, it is known that several Gaelic tribes in Ireland and Scotland had domesticated dairy deer before dairy cows. Deer milk has been celebrated in Gaelic poetry (Weiser – Alexander, 2018; O’Shae, 2018; Millanich, 1998).

While the significance of the evidence, along with lessons learned for additional investigation of language and related artifacts, inspires thoughts for at least this researcher to consider how such evidence can bring a fuller sense of who we are in relation to others, and therefore possibly break down cultural barriers, it is also important to highlight in this particular case involving the Duhare how the Irish during this medieval time period were also influenced by indigenous practices of the Duhare people. For example, as this cultural relationship recorded by several Spanish explorers and research artifact accounts in an area as particular as the mouth of the present-day Altamaha River in Georgia, similar and distinctive lifestyles were shared. Along with an example of livestock aforementioned, the Duhare shared other similarities with the Irish, including houses and pottery, along with farming practices such as planting and harvesting “Indian corn, plus another grain, which the Spanish did not recognize. They also grew several varieties of potatoes and all the other vegetables that had been developed in the New World” (Swanton, 1922; Millanich, 1998; Morton & Wilson, 2013; People of One Fire, 2006). What is at tension here, after in-depth review of scholars who have studied both these cultures distinctive prior to and during their cross-cultural relations, is just how distinctive are the cultural practices?

Furthermore, when considering how almost seamlessly the evidence demonstrates the synthesis of cultural practices, it causes one to wonder whether cultural engagements such as these historically where more of some kind of return to what may have been our origins initially. Or, as some contemporary theorists such as Junger (2016), who combined history, psychology, and anthropology, argue, tribal society impacted “Westerners” for centuries, and the reason lies deep in our communal, evolutionary past. In a way possibly distinctive to Junger’s theory, he offers contemporary examples of veterans who come home to find themselves missing the bonding that occurs in military life, and equates this loss of intimacy to an understanding of the high rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). With this example in mind, Junger mulls over the irony of both military and civilians feeling “better” collectively in times of war than peace, almost as if times of calamity pull people together tribally as some kind of blessing in which the disaster is remembered more positively than those things that would appear more positive and peaceful, like the birth of a child.

While Junger (2016) is not advocating for war over peace, he is pointing out that collectively, just as the Duhare people forming cross-culturally from across the vast

Atlantic Ocean, we have within our “DNA” the drive to be tribal. As Junger points out, if we are brought together only through these moments of disaster, due to the key qualities aforementioned, and we are, as he opines, stronger when we come together even in today’s divided world, will we survive as a people to even have the opportunity to experience this tribal metanoia? Vine Deloria’s (1969) work *Custer Died for Your Sins* addresses the latter question of how and when an “Indian” considers the modern world and the inevitability of being drawn into social structures in which tribalism is the only valid form of “supra-individual participation”:

The humor becomes apparent when the Indian realizes that if he simply steps to the sidelines and watches the rat race go past... soon people will be coming to him to advise him to return to tribalism. It appears to many Indians that someday the modern world will be ready to understand itself and, perhaps, the Indian people (p. 226).

As this paper transitions into how Native Americans and Irish, while maintaining an affinity for one another, seemed be more distant and less tribal than the Duhare example, this paper concludes with the recognition that a more contemporary notion of Junger’s sense of tribal or even tribalism may be closer than realized.

### ***AN GORTA MÓR (THE GREAT FAMINE OR HUNGER), TRAIL OF TEARS & CIVIL WAR***

While a return to a sense of tribal modeled by the Duhare and theorized by Junger (2016), did see a brief resurgence centuries later, during the 1920’s (see in the next section), evidence of such tribal cultural affinity took on a different feature due to distinctive historical events, near apocalyptic, if not near genocidal outcomes, such as The Great Famine or Hunger in Ireland, otherwise known outside of Ireland as the Potato Famine, and the Civil War in the United States. These two historically significant events not only shaped both Native American and Irish cultures for generations, as Coleman (2007) noted earlier with unpredictable outcomes both for the oppressor and oppressed, but also in terms of the ways in which cross-cultural affinity – or as Mulraney (2017) called it, sensing “a solid companion” – was expressed between Native Americans and Irish.

#### **Trail of Tears**

In fact, the transition from more harmonious medieval times to shared centuries of colonization – primarily at the hands of the British – saw the reestablishment of this cultural companionship fostered conspicuously and most likely inadvertently by the son of Irish immigrants, US President Andrew Jackson. Prior to his presidency, General Jackson enjoyed the allegiance of the Choctaw during the War of 1812, together fighting (ironically enough) against the British, less than thirty years prior to Jackson’s brokering the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek, which essentially set in motion the Trail of Tears, over which Choctaw and other tribes were relocated 500 miles from present day northeastern Florida and Mississippi, west to Oklahoma. It was a forced migration under military supervision

in which many succumbed to “malnutrition, disease and exposure... due to one of the coldest (winters) on record...” (Mulraney, 2017, p. 1; Lynch, 2018). Awaiting at the end of the Trail of Tears was unfortunately further hardships brought about by adopting a foreign culture in a variety of fashions, such as homestead, education, and religion. All were relatively new to this territory as the nickname would tell (“Sooners”), and some who were part of the welcoming, assimilation party, interestingly enough, were Irish.

As Barrett (2012) describes in his work focused on how some Irish became American during this historical time period of the 1800’s, while Irish did at times assimilate to the point of disenfranchising ‘others’ like African and Native Americans, Irish immigrants still were not assimilated enough in the eyes of those dominant, as the Irish still carried the stigma of racial slurs such as “nigger or smoked Irish” (O’Toole, 1994, p. 4). So while the complexity of levels of assimilation developed with examples of shared cultural affinity and at times an aversion particularly by the Irish, due to attempts to be fully accepted into a growing United States, as the fate and twists of history would have it, Irish in the United States would be jarred by news from back home in Ireland. Just a few short years following the arrival of Choctaw and other tribes into Oklahoma, Irish and Native Americans would share more experiences of the brutality of colonization with news of a famine in Ireland.

### ***An Gorta Mór (The Great Famine or Hunger)***

The Irish Famine occurred over a ten-year period from 1845 to 1855, due to a series of crop failures brought about by a potato blight and by a lack of additional food supplements from the British Empire. *An Gorta Mór* (as the famine is known in Gaelic) was responsible for the deaths of over a million people and resulted in the emigration of two million people (Donnelly, 2002; Kinealy, 2012 & 2013). The most intense year of the famine, known as Black ’47 (1847), was strikingly similar to the Trail of Tears, with those in the Irish county Mayo roaming the area seeking basic assistance like scarce food from either officers from Poor Relief, or from their landlords. In both cases, after miles of walking while literally starving to death, some died “with grass in their mouths from attempts to stave off hunger”; due to misinformation and outright callous disregard for life, both outlets for food turned up empty, and the starving returned home after walking miles (Mulraney, 2015, p. 2). Another striking similarity was the way in which the Irish were perceived after the famine; according to the *London Times*, a commentator “remark[ed] with some satisfaction that ‘an Irishman on the banks of the Shannon will soon be as rare as an Indian on the banks of the Manhattan’” (O’Toole, 1994, p. 127).

Due to Irish living among and near the Choctaw people, news of the famine in Ireland spread quickly. As news circulated among the Choctaw for example, even though the historically traumatic sting of the Trail of Tears and continued oppression persisted, efforts began to assist the starving Irish in Ireland. In fact, as multiple accounts would explicate, the Choctaw led the way to aid the starving Irish with a monetary donation of \$170, a figure “equivalent to tens of thousands of dollars in today’s currency” (Mulraney, p. 2, 2017). It is important to note that the Quakers provided services to the Irish unconditionally by facilitating such aid from North America to Ireland, and were likely appealing to the Choctaw people who struggled to send aid directly to the Irish (Kemp, 2015).

In the scheme of history and cross-cultural relations, it would appear that the significance of this donation by the Choctaw over a century ago to the famine-stricken Irish would fade away due to all the other history that has transpired. Nevertheless, at least among the Choctaw and Irish peoples, this slice of history has remained significant and forged a deepened cross-cultural affinity.

In fact, with broader research beyond the Choctaw and Irish, according to Frost’s (2018) estimation, approximately “118 shipments to Ireland valued at around \$550,000 in 19<sup>th</sup> Century dollars [were sent]... [D]onations came from every corner of American society” (p. 2). So prevalent and significant is this history today, that for Choctaw and Irish this “incredible act of generosity... [has] never [been] forgotten and to this day the two communities retain a bond” (Callan, p. 5, 2015). For example, both hold commemorative events to continue to recognize this historical act of generosity. More recent acknowledgements include: a plaque at the Lord Mayor’s Mansion in Dublin, works of art such as the *Kindred Spirits* sculpture by Irish artist Alex Pentek in Bailic Park, Midleton, County Cork, and America Meredith’s work symbolizing aid given to the Irish, *An Irish Choctaw Thanksgiving* at Queens Museum and Queens Theatre, an Irish scholarship program for Choctaw youth, and even more symbolically evident, nearly yearly cultural exchanges with Irish representatives walking the Trail of Tears with the Choctaw people, and Choctaw walking the Famine Walk in Ireland (Kemp, 2015; Skwait, 2015; Callan, 2015; Lynch, 2018; Frost, 2018; Native News Online, 2019; Donnan, 2019).

Overall, one final and possibly the most compelling example of continued, mutual cross-cultural affinity expressed in this particular context over the past 170 years, was personally witnessed in active research in Ireland and accounted for succinctly by a newspaper reporter near the Choctaw Nation in Oklahoma, “The selflessness of the Choctaw Nation still is taught in Irish schools with an emphasis on the fact that they gave even when they couldn’t afford to do so” (Kemp, 2015, p. 2; Lynch, 2018; Taylor personal journal notes, 2018).

Teaching the selflessness of people like the Choctaw is no doubt a noble and needed pedagogical approach in schools globally due to continued tension among cultures. Any question of such tension seems to ignore each historical decade that produces such evidence via holocaust, genocide, ethnic cleansing, civil war, etc. If more students within an educational context could learn about this historical tension embracing multiple contexts shared by those most compellingly impacted by the tension, it is possible such students may ascend to leadership roles local and otherwise that may subscribe to guiding the tension from cultural violence to an affinity similar to that developing in this work among Native American and Irish peoples. As dour as it may appear, in the midst of such cultural violence is unfortunately where affinity has developed for the case of this paper. One such example, on a large scale, was the Civil War in the United States during the latter half of the 1800’s.

### **Civil War in the United States**

Micro-tensions leading to more macro-tensions, triggered by matters such as acquisition, caused the wholesale movement of cultural groups such as the Choctaw and others. Furthermore, tensions surrounding land acquisition eventually defined territories

called states (portions of the United States) that perpetuated slavery of people originally from Africa, versus economically superior states that possessed a more diversified industrial economy relative to “slave states,” and thus had less of a need for slavery.

Due to an impasse over whether or not the young United States would be slave-holding, and on seriously contested grounds of states’ rights as outlined in the U.S. Constitution, a second revolution (as understood by many from southern states), or Civil War (as more commonly perceived) swept all cultures into its grip as over half a million souls perished during the 1860’s. Native Americans and Irish fought and died along with those of other cultural groups who were either conscripted or otherwise embroiled in this Civil War. All told well over 100,000 Irish and 20,000 Native Americans fought on both sides, sometimes tragically directly opposed to one another, in battles spanning multiple states and territories. According to Shields (2017), a Wisconsin infantry group “regarded as the most Irish... with a distinct Irish character...”, also included members of Wisconsin’s Native American community, estimated to be nearly 600 members, “all the more remarkable given the majority of them did not have citizen status” (p. 6). No doubt cultural tension existed where “conscripts could be assigned to formations with which they had no specific connections. Some of these men who fought shoulder to shoulder... were not even native English speakers” (p. 2); but somehow what also existed was a tremendous sense of service and self-sacrifice exhibited by both Native American and Irish, who were in combat conditions as far south as Georgia.

In the end, shared cross-cultural affinity in this particular context may be in question; in fact Shields (2017) posed the question: “Did any of them [the Native soldiers] establish an affinity with the Irishmen with whom they fought?” (p. 6). Based on the emerging historical contextual examples unfolding, it would appear the answer is in the affirmative with a qualification darkened by war. Similar to the opening of this particular section, though more dour in nature given the trauma and death that is the outcome of war, in the end both Native American and Irish shared this time of tumult. In fact, as Shields (2017) explicated in his work, both cultures stood “shoulder to shoulder”, without a common language other than the trauma experienced and the face that Native Americans “lost their lives – along with many of their Irish comrades as a result of severe fighting...” (p. 2), in one of the more culturally concentrated Union army regiments in the Civil War.

As the 1880’s came to a close, following calamity and continued challenges associated with the assimilation of both Native Americans and Irish, it would appear at times that these challenges seemed to cause a chasm between these two cultures. It could not completely sever the ties of cross-cultural affinity during and following such significant poxes on history. In fact, while famine, displacement and civil war were emphasized, according to O’Toole (1994), western expansion and colonization also left Native Americans in great peril once again, as they were confronted by General Philip Sheridan, a military leader with Irish roots. Sheridan, whose “reputed birthplace” is Killinkeere, County Cavan, Ireland, coined the phrase, “the only good Indian is a dead Indian” (p. 121). Even with this history and its byproduct of generations of historical trauma, evidence of reconciliation and affinity have surfaced in places like Sheridan’s birthplace, where in 1991 both a tree was planted and a plaque was dedicated by both Irish and Native Americans to

“reconcile this strange fact of Irish history... and to exorcise a painful past” (p. 121; donmullan.org; Rolston, 1999; Lynch, 2018).

As the century came to a close, Jeremiah Curtin was born in Detroit, Michigan of Irish parents, and raised on a farm near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, undergraduate student at Harvard, and later becoming a professor at Milwaukee University, particularly studying Irish and “aboriginal American” folklore and mythology. Comparatively, like the language synthesis shared earlier with the Duhare, aka Irish Indians, Curtin’s work explored mythology via a unified theory in which “he argued for a ‘common origin for human consciousness accessible through the applied and scientific study of mythology.’” Curtin set about collecting stories, i.e. Native American creation mythologies. “By adding Irish stories to this broader canvas, he was able to step back and recognize the deep and ancient roots that were still discernible in contemporary oral folk tales” (Thompson, 2015, p. 2).

### **“TRIBAL TWENTIES” (1920’S) TO GREEN & “RED POWER” (1960-70’S)**

With Curtin’s broader canvas in mind, examining roots both ancient and contemporary, examples that came to the fore as the 19<sup>th</sup> century passed demonstrate a century of a Trail of Tears, Irish Famine, and US Civil War. With the coming of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we find a relatively brief time of intermittent peace in which alternatives to war are explored.

#### **“Tribal Twenties”**

Following yet another war “to end all wars,” World War I, examples of mutual cross-cultural affinity occurred in the the “tribal twenties” in the United States, a time period in the 1920’s of “anti-colonial movements” conjoined with “social eruptions around the world... [which] brought into contact racial and ethnic groups...” (Barrett, 2012, p. 242).

Many leaders, political and otherwise, surfaced during this early period on both ends of World War I, from the early 1900’s to the 1920’s, in the United States and in various parts throughout the globe. Patrick Ford, a newspaper editor and Irish Nationalist, also known as “The Aging Radical,” advocated for “colonial peoples.” Though Ford’s “conservative turn” toward the end of his life may have reflected the United States’ disposition as it entered World War I, he nonetheless “embraced causes” for Native Americans, along with candidates for President like William James Bryan, who also opposed “imperialism and the formal acquisition of colonies.” Following Ford’s death, Irish continued to “oppose immigration restriction and sympathized with the world’s oppressed, owing to their own nation’s plight, militant Anglo-Saxonism, and anti-Catholicism” (Barrett, 2012, p. 250-251).

With the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century coming to a close, followed by world war, revolution, and labor mobilization, a progressive zeal evolved politically in the United States. While Irish-Americans were lukewarm to such politics, due to their emerging nationalistic tendency for assimilation, the tide began to change toward recognition of struggles domestically, and at home in Ireland with the 1916 Easter Rising against British

imperialism. As the labor movement in the United States broadened with lengthened strikes, more joined the progressive movement and “Socialist Party, especially its left wing,” in an effort for political reform. As more synchronous characteristics were recognized within in movements opposed to the “brutal suppression of the Easter Uprising” in Ireland (Barrett, 2012, p. 256-257) and labor challenges in the United States, Irish political leadership saw an opportunity to build on momentum in Ireland following its revolution against British imperialism, by coming to the United States to tap into the progressive, global fervor. They came not only to generate support monetary and otherwise for the cause in the Irish homeland, but also specifically to coalesce support among all oppressed people, and most notably in the United States, Native Americans.

### **Eamon de Valera – *The Chief***

Following centuries of imperialism and colonization most notably by the British, and initially what was billed as a “failed” 1916 revolution called the Uprising, Ireland’s struggle for independence was gaining momentum during an area of progressivism. Even as this momentum hinted at an Irish civil war due to a deal with the British government that resulted in the ceding of six counties in the north of Ireland to Great Britain in exchange for an independent Irish Republic, Ireland was hopeful that the entire island would soon be free.

Prior to the formal settlement, and with a civil war brewing between those satisfied and those dissatisfied with the partition of the northern counties, a surviving member and one of the key leaders of the 1916 Uprising, Eamon de Valera, returned to the country of his birth to embrace both the international, progressive zeal in the face of shared oppression, and also to solicit support for the fledgling Irish revolution. It is understandable that de Valera would visit key metropolitan areas like Boston and New York, along with notable United States politicians, and that he would appear in prolific parades and gatherings attended by millions of Irish who immigrated to the United States. Nevertheless, while such events did occur and have their place in history, de Valera and his delegation’s visit to Wisconsin, one the newer US states, drew attention due to the company he kept during various stops on his way to another, newer, US State, Minnesota.

As historical accounts identify de Valera’s efforts in the US as mixed since he received no formal recognition from religious and political leaders, most notably from President Wilson’s administration, and no support in calling a European peace conference to apply “the doctrine of national self-determination” in Ireland (Donnan, 2019, p. 2). Even though those holding the greatest power to directly aid to the Irish engaged in an emerging struggle against British imperialism did not formally respond to de Valera’s lobbying, the people of the United States did take notice of the Irish cause for self-determination, in particular those who continued to be under oppressive, imperialistic means, Native Americans.

While Native Americans did not formally respond to de Valera’s call for monetary aid and other supplies, there was broader recognition by Native people and non-Native of not only the Irish revolutionary cause across the Atlantic, but also issues challenging self-determination in the United States. The Irish revolutionary leaders visited the Objive Nation in northwestern Wisconsin, along with the Twin Cities (Minneapolis – Saint Paul),

to express what most articulately identifies an emerging affinity during the 20<sup>th</sup> leading into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. De Valera’s words best exemplify such shared cross-cultural affinity as he spoke with thousands gathered, who once hearing his words translated into Objjwe “cheered him wildly”:

I speak to you in Gaelic, because I want to show you that though I am white I am not of the English race. We, like you, are a people who have suffered and I feel for you with a sympathy that comes only from one who can understand as we... can. You say you are not free and I sympathize... because we are making a similar fight. As a boy I read and understood of your slavery and longed to become one of you... I call upon you, the truest of all Americans, to help us win our struggle for freedom (HistoryHub.ie, 2013, p. 3-4; Donnan, 2019, Harte, 2019).

### **Green & “Red Power”: Imprisonment, Hunger Strike, and Emerging Ideologues**

Since the early part of the twentieth century’s dynamism consisted of extremes in terms of world war, nationalism, progressivism/socialism, revolution, and at times in the case of Ireland civil war in terms of how Ireland will proceed as a republic, patterns persisted for decades proceeding during the century. With yet another world war, and still more bouts of nationalism, revolution and even civil war in certain corners of the globe, Native American and Irish survived often as patriots fighting politically and militarily against foreign oppressive regimes like Germany and the Soviet Union, despite the fact that at home they still struggled to be recognized as full-fledged citizens due to existing remnants of imperialism and colonialism. It is hard to image the resiliency of a people to the point of patriotism, who were free enough to die for their country against foreign oppressors, yet not free enough to enjoy the fullness of citizenship due to similar expressions of oppression.

One significant change for both cultures that led to movements calling on more full-fledged citizenship in both the United States and Ireland – particularly Northern Ireland – was the impact of education. Prior to moves by both governments to educate all of its populace in some semblance of equity, Native American and Irish people received little if no formal education supported by the government. If there was support, it came in the form of boarding and/or residential schools, or possibly missionary education, solely focusing on what General Henry Pratt symbolized in the Native American context (and can be fairly said for Irish as well): “kill the Indian, save the man” (Treuer, 2012; Coleman; 2007; Trafzer, et. al., 2006; Pratt, 1964). True to Coleman’s (2007) work on the impact of such an “educational” approach with both cultures, it “deeply changed Indian and Irish peoples in ways unpredictable both to them and to their educators” (p.1-10).

An example of a profound “unpredictable” change by approaches to education in both contexts progressed away from the boarding/residential, assimilating approach, to that of a more progressive education with a more localized approach to all communities. As progressive in nature as this new approach was, there were still tides of nationalism due to World War II and the perceived threat of communism, which began in earnest in the

1950’s. Most evident in this tension between progressive educational approaches and nationalistic tendencies was broader access not only to the “technologies” necessary to combat the threat of communism, but also to past and present historical events, such as civil disobedience led by Gandhi in India, and in the United States, Martin Luther King. Though inequities still existed in terms of how broad this access to learning was in an educational context, in both the Native American and Irish contexts progressing from the 1950’s into the 1960’s, emerging ideologues included Bernadette Devlin, Gerry Adams, Bobby Sands, Leonard Peltier, Vernon and Clyde Bellecourt, Floyd Westerman, Waylon Gary White Deer, Dennis Banks, and Russell Means.

This representation of leading voices, as they progress through their respective educational journeys both formally in classrooms, including the college setting for some, and the broader classroom of life as experienced during various expressions of civil rights, had their particular expressions of advocacy when it came to addressing civil rights; but they also directly joined as yet another example of this shared cross-cultural affinity, echoing Eamon de Valera’s words spoken in the north woods of Wisconsin nearly 50 years prior: “...we are making a similar fight” (HistoryHub.ie, 2013, p. 3-4).

With previous elements of this paper established in terms of shared cross-cultural experiences of affinity and examples of a “similar fight,” primarily due to imperialism by similar oppressors Britain and the United States, during this time period the fight took on a different context. In any conflict, political or otherwise, radical elements can emerge and often define a cause or movement trying to express a particular set of grievances, both Native American and Irish movements that emerged in the 1960’s and became more established in the 1970’s, grew stronger roots than aforementioned cross-cultural expressions of affinity if not also solidarity.

It would appear that the imprisonment of two prominent emerging ideologues listed above would not be the rationale for such a lasting mutual cross-cultural affinity – especially since one died in a hunger strike, and another remains in federal prison becoming arguably history’s longest serving “political prisoner” since the release of Nelson Mandela in the 1999’s (Davey, 2019). Yet, when considering the grim yet resilient history of both Native American and Irish people, Bobby Sands and Leonard Peltier appositely symbolize this affinity in the final decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and therefore they set the table for the final section of this paper, which summarizes and synthesizes in a contemporary context such shared cross-cultural affinity.

### **The Rise of Green & “Red Power”: Bobby Sands & Leonard Peltier**

Sands and Peltier, though living in separate countries, were impacted similarly by government assimilation policies, first distilling and separating Native American and Irish cultures (among others), then in the 1940’s and beyond, to more ghettoized in urban centers. Even though youth such as Sands and Peltier experienced intense segregation growing up, each still had access to education, along with others they would eventually cross paths with who began to recognize other options to assimilation, such as advocating for basic human and civil rights. For example, Leonard Peltier grew into what David Treuer (2019) identifies as *The Rise of Red Power*. With a watchful and hopeful eye on the progress of African Americans via the National Association for the Advancement of

Colored People (NAACP), Native Americans were also beginning to organize with the assembly in the 1940’s of delegates from fifty tribes “to form the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)... to work together to resist bad federal policy, and, in response to the 1934 Indian Reorganization Act, to strengthen the ties between tribal governments” (p. 289).

In addition, similar to the struggles facing African Americans, Native Americans were organizing to address additional forms of unequal treatment impeding their opportunity to get ahead, such as significant unemployment housing, and education in terms of segregation. What became formative for young Native Americans like Peltier and others who eventually formed the American Indian Movement (AIM), was the National Indian Youth Council (NIYC). NIYC leaders such as Clyde Warrior recognized the need for a more intensive movement where “...being Indian was good, and culture and tradition Indians maintained were good as well, and sufficient to the task of being Indian in the twentieth century and beyond” (Treuer, D., 2019, p. 291). As this movement matured and materialized, further adaptation was needed as demographics continued to shift, and by 1970 approximately half of Native Americans lived in urban areas instead of on the reservation. Other demographics and statistics were also challenging if not dire, often exceeding 3-4 times as whites, in terms of infant mortality rates, suicides on the rise, and other medical conditions like diabetes (Treuer, D., 2019).

Compared to urban centers where African Americans were forming organizations such as the Black Panthers to address similar concerns as aforementioned, with demographics growing in urban areas such as the Twin Cities (Minneapolis & Saint Paul), AIM started as a movement in the late 1960’s to address at a grass roots level challenges such as “economic independence and freedom from police brutality” (Treuer, D., 2019, p. 296; Matthiessen, 1983).

As a young teenager following dropping out of school, located in the northern reaches of North Dakota on the Turtle Mountain Reservation, Peltier’s encounters with Treuer’s (2019) description of “AIM’s orbit” initially occurred on the West Coast, with AIM leader Dennis Banks. Peltier’s travels in a relatively short period of time would take him from coast to coast within this orbit. While many endeavors during this time period by groups like AIM and their ability to be distinctive in their efforts and also to emulate groups like the Black Panthers were meritorious in terms of addressing significant primary needs in the areas of housing, medical and more focused culturally relevant education, often these fatuitous gains were overshadowed by what Deloria’s (1969) “Indian Manifesto” foreshadowed,

For Indians to walk the steps of the black militants would be a disaster. The problems of Indians have always been ideological rather than social, political, or economic. Simply to invite violence upon oneself for the sake of temporary concessions seems ridiculous and stupid (p. 256 – 257).

One can only wonder when Leonard Peltier read these words – maybe when he was in Minneapolis visiting the origins of AIM; or in the north woods of Wisconsin taking over an abandoned novitiate in an effort to support the rights of the Menominee tribe; or on the

Trail of Broken Treaties across the United States, bringing attention to the countless binding treaties ignored if not violated by the United States Government; or possibly during the takeover of Wounded Knee for over two months in the early 1970’s, once again drawing attention to Native rights and sovereignty; or finally before his own trial following extradition from Canada over the alleged murder of two FBI agents on the Pine Ridge Reservation (Treuer, 2019; Matthiessen, 1983). Ironically, if not tragically, Leonard Peltier may have read Deloria’s (1969) words distinctively during an imprisonment that now infamously surpasses, historically any “political prisoner” (Davey, 2019).

Bobby Sands, though he never formally met Leonard Peltier, in spirit and through the Native American and Irish artists and fellow civil rights advocates, expresses an affinity in the ways in which these two men were formed from their young teenage years to their imprisonment, more political in nature, and it would seem than pure criminally based. One example of this affinity is the Bobby Sands Trust, which was established to promote and keep Bobby Sands’ writings. Similar to Peltier, due to imprisonment, Sands became an international figure inspiring people at home and abroad in their pursuit of freedom. More recently, the Trust honored Peltier throughout Northern Ireland during the annual February 4<sup>th</sup> International Day of Solidarity with Leonard Peltier (Trust, 2012).

Sands’ writings from the H Blocks of Long Kesh Prison in Northern Ireland give further insight into not only the context in which Sands was formed, but also the ideological predecessors he studied in detail and discussed among his compatriots prior to and while imprisoned (Sands, 1998; Na Heireann, 2010). One predecessor, leader of 1916 Uprising and future President of the Republic of Ireland, was Eamon de Valera. While it is not clear whether Sands would have been aware of the mutuality of affinity expressed between de Valera and the Ojibwe while in the northwoods of Wisconsin, Sands and de Valera did share a strikingly similar, deep understanding of the plight of both Native Americans and Irish under the thumb of imperialism. Sands’ artistic expression via volumes of writings penned in prison, in particular poetry like an excerpt from *The Rhythm of Time* is an example of such affinity:

...It died in blood on Buffalo Plains,  
 And starved by moons of rain,  
 Its heart was buried at Wounded Knee,  
 But it will come to rise again. It screamed aloud by Kerry lakes,  
 As it knelt upon the ground,  
 And it died in great defiance,  
 As they coldly shot it down. It is found in every light of hope,  
 It knows no bounds nor space,  
 It has risen in red and black and white,  
 It is there in every race. It lies in the hearts of heroes dead,  
 It screams in tyrants eyes,  
 It has reached the peace of mountains high,  
 It comes searing cross the skies. It lights the dark of this prison cell,  
 It thunders forth its might,  
 It is ‘the dauntable thought,’ my friend,  
 That thought that says ‘I’m right! (Sands, 1998, p. 187-188).

The parallel tracks of Peltier are strikingly similar, and also distinctive in terms of their adoption into roles of advocacy in the face of a history of colonization and assimilation. For Sands, he was living in an area of the island of Ireland that was no longer Ireland, but Great Britain. In fact, while his culture appeared Irish, straddling both sides of the partitioned border of the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, the expectation of Sands, and of all young “Republicans” or Irish “Nationalists” growing up in Northern Ireland, was to acquiesce to the British culture’s language, religion and education. This culture was enforced with the support of the British military in collusion with the local police force called the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC), and often a form of government controlled solely from across the sea in London. Though Sands was essentially forced to cede his cultural instincts for that of another, the history of his people, who over the centuries failed (though at times succeeded) to retain their cultural identity was again in a bitter political and violent struggle formally called the Troubles, for nearly 40 years (1960’s to 1998) and several thousands dead, and many more impacted by the sheer trauma of violence among paramilitary groups, and the British military, to retain their cultural identity. Even though the education system skewed British in nature denying Sands and his generation a more cultural relevant education, Sands did get a window into the rest of the world who was experiencing their brand of Civil Rights (Taylor, 2018, 2019; Sands, 1998).

Whereas Sands may have been more militant in his brand of civil rights than others in Northern Ireland who were attempting to mirror similar tactics employed by Gandhi in India and Martin Luther King in the United States, as a historical bystander or even member of the British Government, it may be a lack of historical context that leads to the labeling of Sands and others in his peer group as militant or even terrorist. This is not to say that the Irish Republican Army (IRA), along with other paramilitary organizations in Northern Ireland during the Troubles, fueled with nationalistic fervor for either Great Britain or a reunited Ireland, did not subscribe to violence leading to the deaths of thousands and the wounding of more, along with lingering trauma today persisting across generations. Rather, both Peltier and Sands, mere teenagers at the time, were faced with difficult choices, some voluntary, others more duty-driven, reminiscent of conditions in which civilians are either drafted or volunteer to defend their country (Taylor, 2018, 2019; Sands, 1998).

Both Sands and Peltier, when reading their respected artistically expressed thoughts from prison, share these sentiments not in an attempt to excuse violence; rather, the point is to provide a deeper context in an attempt to understand and possibly consider other cultures in a fashion that may play a role in possibly avoiding violence when some may view it as the only recourse in the face of perceived imperialism. And in the wake of this context each man ended up in prison in response to a particular path taken which they understood to be political in nature, and in the defense of an oppressed people. As aforementioned, Peltier remains in prison, while Sands died 38 years ago (1981) during a prison hunger strike. Sands was one of a dozen men, like dozens more in Ireland, who died believing starving to death was the only way to bring to light the transgression of human rights by what they would deem a foreign oppressor. Most notably in Sands’ case, while starving to death, he stood for and was elected to the British Parliament. While many

viewed this as a ridiculous ploy due to Sands not being able to serve as a Member of Parliament (MP), Sands’ election to political office, coupled with the persistence of the cause for civil rights, and along with Pope John Paul II’s visit just a year prior, represented a subtle shift and powerful alchemy of political and religious leadership eventually leading to a series of ceasefires and eventually the Good Friday Peace Agreement in 1998 (Taylor, 2018, 2019; Sands, 1998). While relative peace remains in Northern Ireland today, anxiety grows among a shifting demographic, as by 2021, one hundred years after the partition of Ireland, Northern Ireland will be more Catholic, Nationalist, and Republican (Irish unification) than Protestant, Unionist, Loyalist (Great Britain) (Taylor, 2019). Since relative peace remains, what impact could such a small area of the world have on those who remain without shifting political and demographics to their benefit?

To the naked eye, it would appear no benefit would be enjoyed, but to an eye focused on cross-cultural expressions of affinity, the impact has been and continues to be significant, as encapsulated in two instances following Bobby Sands’ death due to his hunger strike. The first was a visit by Peltier’s fellow AIM members who went to Belfast, Northern Ireland in 1985 to the Milltown Cemetery to commemorate the deaths of Republican hunger strikers as was reported by the *Irish Times*. The following day the AIM group, led by Clyde Bellecourt, attended the Bloody Sunday march in Derry and once more laid a wreath and sang in memory of those who died, this time at the hands of British soldiers, a decade earlier during a civil rights march. Bellecourt announced that the reason for AIM activists’ attendance was to “come to pay respects to people who had given their lives for peace, equality and liberty in their homeland, the aspirations for which American Indians were struggling in their homeland” (Rennard, 2018). This gesture of affinity embodied in a common struggle was also echoed by Leonard Peltier and shared with the world from prison in honor of Bobby Sands decades following his death:

When Bobby Sands died on May 5, 1981, millions of people from around the world joined their voices together to condemn the British government that allowed him to perish. I joined my voice to theirs. I fasted in solidarity with the Hunger Strikers for forty days during that dreadful year. Fasting is something that I have done many times, when I was a free man, while participating in our sacred Sun Dance. The sufferings of our relations in Ireland are pains that we as Indian people know all too well. Our suffering, our fasting and our struggling links us together with a common bond. That is why I say to you, there in Ireland, you are my relatives. As your relative, let me join my thoughts, tears, and prayers with yours as you commemorate your fallen, especially those who died on Hunger Strike in 1981. My family and your families, my pain and your pains, my peoples struggle and the struggles of your people are all connected. We truly are all related (*Liberation News*, 2006).

### **THE PERSISTENCE AND RESILIENCY OF CONTEMPORARY SHARED CROSS-CULTURAL AFFINITY**

As this paper begins to synthesize the historical varieties of shared cross-cultural affinity between Native American and Irish peoples within the contemporary context, Leonard Peltier’s sentiments expressed toward Bobby Sands and others set forth the proper

context in terms of the ongoing struggles and the continued connections. In the case of Leonard Peltier and Bobby Sands, the connection is still very much alive, as with artists like Jan Attridge, Paul Muldoon, Waylon Gary White Deer, and activists like Robert Kelly, who have worked with others past and present to hold up the struggle and expressed affinity as a collective way to address lingering and at times strong expressions of imperialism. After personal communication (July 2, 2019) with Kelly, he had shared the construction of a mural on Whiterock Road in West Belfast focused on such affinity, featuring Leonard Peltier’s incarceration, and additional efforts with Gerard Kelly on the Leonard Peltier protest on Black Mountain. As was reminiscent in the words shared by Sands and Peltier, Kelly also expressed thoughts that seem to symbolize the contemporary efforts to sustain and build on this affinity: “...ever since the death of Bobby Sands, I have been actively involved in bringing Native American and Irish Republicans together in our common struggle for freedom and sovereignty.”

In this final section, the contemporary examples of affinity will be explored further in terms of: seminal expressions of common struggle for freedom and sovereignty embodied in protests recently centered on oil: the Corrib Gas protest in County Mayo, Ireland, and the Dakota Access Pipeline protest near the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota, USA. The paper will conclude by concentrating on three key areas: education, art, and tribalism, in an attempt to consider future if not present implications of mutual cross-cultural affinity among Native American and Irish peoples per se and possibly others who may be “fragile” in nature.

### **Oil & Water: DAPL and the Corrib Gas Protests**

When considering examples of shared cross-cultural affinity in a contemporary sense, two recent protests may seem most remote, being rural in nature, and, in terms of location in the United States and Ireland, in terms of their proximity to one another.

Nevertheless, the Corrib Gas protest in County Mayo, Ireland, and the Dakota Access Pipeline protest near the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota, have become more recent nuanced approaches to protest on primary grounds economic, environmental and cultural in nature. Theorists capture this nuance best by describing such approaches to protests with camps as work centered on “ecological thinking” and “epistemological system” as a way of understanding and drawing importance to protest camps in general as a “movement innovation, non-linear exchanges of knowledge and practice, and the complexity of enmeshed human and non-human networks, that are far more than a concern for the environment, but in fact evolves to an epistemological system.” Further, in terms of infrastructures and practices of protest camping, this nuanced approach in both cases was comprised of “ephemeral structures for ongoing protest and daily living with spaces for well-being... [i.e.] prayer, meditation, entertainment, socializing, education, and cultural exchange” (Feignbaum, Frenzel and McCurdy, 2013, p. 41-42; Fuller, 2005; Guattari, 2005; Taffel, 2008).

This nuance is most recognizable beyond the strong theoretical support bolstered by personal experience as a participant-observer in both areas where such protests occurred, first in assisting educational needs of children at the Learning Resource Center (LRC) for several months at the primary DAPL protest camp called Oceti Sakowin or the

historic gathering of the Seven Council’s Fires. As far as the Corrib Gas protest, while I was not in the midst of this struggle in Ireland as formally as at the DAPL, I have been in the area and know the land. Furthermore, during the Troubles, I did witness other forms of protest in Northern Ireland that are very reminiscent of the resiliency and effort put forth in County Mayo, Ireland (Taylor, 2017, 2018). Beyond the personal experience of this researcher, even more compelling is that of Choctaw artist Waylon Gary White Deer (2012) whose work speaks volumes for those still facing the impact of colonization worldwide, and whose direct experience historically with cultural affinity specifically between his people and Irish which sets the context for this particular example via the protests over oil. While participating in the Afri Famine Walk in Ireland, which was to acknowledge the Irish history of the Great Famine of the mid 1800’s, and also support present day struggles with famine in Africa, White Deer was acquainted with the Corrib Gas protest in nearby Rossport in County Mayo at a meeting with,

...ordinary men and women who were resisting a high-pressure gas pipeline through dangerously unstable boglands and a refinery that could spew deadly toxins into the bay; a remote place where there were endangered species, including people who lived there (p. 181).

Even though the start of the Corrib Gas protest predates DAPL by several years, they do intersect in terms of ongoing issues reverberating through their immediate communities and beyond, along with fitting a pattern that reaches back centuries in terms of the need of powerful governments to harvest various ingredients to fuel things that conspicuously enough happen to be located on or near enough to “people who lived” there that are not in a position of power to directly influence the potential ill effects of harvesting such “ingredients.”

White Deer (2012) foreshadows what is to come at DAPL: “First Nations peoples also face powerful forces intent on exploiting lands and resources. Similarities are easy to see” (p. 196). The similarities White Deer shares further foreshadow the struggle that will ensue with the DAPL protest in terms of the billions of dollars/euros to be realized by companies associated with the Corrib Gas Field and the DAPL, along with “tax write-offs”, meaning less revenue to the Irish government who ironically opposed the non-violent campaign comprised in Rossport, County Mayo, Ireland of “farmers, fisherman, and school teachers...” (p. 181). Representative of those who are not only opposed to the development of the Corrib field and pipeline by Shell, but have lived for generations what journalist what the director of documentary *The Pipe* called “a cruel parable of our times.” A parable eerily similar to the DAPL and other protests, one which was most cogently recapitulated to a reporter for *The Guardian*, by one of the “school teachers” aforementioned, Maura Harrington from the village of Inver, retired and one of the protest’s most outspoken voices:

This is about a sense of place and its people. We may not qualify as indigenous people, but we have our land and culture, to which we belong. All those people who emigrated from Erris [the area in question per the Corrib Gas Pipeline] through history, Erris never left them. They say we are opposed to progress, and laugh at us. But to me, progress

is the ability to sustain yourself, and those who come after you. It’s nature and nurture: what we call *muinhin*, which means place, and *cointeann*, which means to get a little awkward when that place and its people are about to be torn apart (Vulliamy, 2011, p. 2).

And just north of the Standing Rock Reservation border “upstream” and protesting a pipeline proposed underneath the mighty Missouri River, the Dakota Access Pipeline, are primarily those most indigenous and spiritually harmonious with the land, with also a concern for the “place” in terms of the environment and species, including the people who live closest to DAPL “about to be torn apart,” and the millions living “down” the Missouri River. Or, as Standing Rock Tribal Chairman Dave Archambault said to reporter Stuart Munckton from the *Green Left Weekly* (2017):

Creating a second Flint does not make American great again. Americans know this pipeline was unfairly rerouted towards our nation and without our consent. The existing pipeline route risks infringing on our treaty rights, contaminating our groundwater of 17 million Americans downstream.

In consideration of more contemporary expressions of shared cross-cultural affinity between Native American and Irish in terms of struggles with multinational corporations and gas production, Irish media covering the DAPL protest seemed to capture the foundational elements of such affinity, such as *An Sionnach Fionn*, an award-winning independent publication [loosely translated as ‘white fox’], that reminded Irish readers that its multiple articles “are not talking about the controversial Corrib gas project” but instead are talking about the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) project,

a similar enterprise in the United States, and another form of native culture corralled into delineated reservations. A culture... which executives and politicians in faraway cities expected to remain quiescent to the environmental destruction taking place around them. (*An Sionnach Fionn*, 2016, p. 1-2).

While some may argue the radical nature of such Irish press leanings, context is important when considering the shared history of both cultures germane to this paper. Debate on the installation of pipelines and economic windfalls are understandable in isolation, nevertheless, when considering centuries history of both Native American and Irish cultural oppression, the, focused language of the Irish press may not only appear most discernable given the cultural context, but also those who are penning the stories from Ireland and the world surrounding. Interestingly, when considering some media in closest proximity to protests like DAPL, it was uncanny to someone at the site weekly for several months how inaccurate media accounts could be, including the inability to grasp the voice and context of those with the most to lose: the members of the Standing Rock Reservation (Taylor, 2017). When faced with particular instances formed by history and current contemporary struggles like DAPL in the wake of similar experiences like the Corrib Gas protest, such as

facing down what has become an occupying army of local and state police working in cooperation with private security contractors [reported by]... the handful of journalists recording demonstrations and subsequent... levels of violence and intimidation by the authorities both public and private, unprecedented in the *modern history of the region*. (*An Sionnach Fionn*, 2016).

Italics emphasized the “modern history of the region” to reiterate the keen sense of contextual perception certain media had of protests like Corrib Gas and DAPL due to which journalists were covering the stories, and also which oppressed places these journalists hail from. Continued evidence of such affinity in the media also comes from *Irish Republican News* (IRN), clearly established to tell the Irish nationalist perspective in terms of the controversy surrounding the existence of a British territory on an island that was once entirely Ireland; nevertheless, the story, though distant, is told accurately not only from those oppressed but also when considering history fully in light of the story told. This story is echoed in IRN’s (2016) coverage from afar in Northern Ireland of DAPL by describing the protest as “a true symbol of unity and defiance of corporate interests being put before the people and the planet” (p. 5).

While coverage from afar seemed to express a particular affinity due to shared cultural and historical experiences of imperialism, closer to the DAPL protests, accounts seemed to be in less of a rush to let the gravity marinate in a way that does not isolate the history, but in fact connects it to events past and present and into the future. In terms of recent history, David Treuer (2019) pertinently traces the origins of this particular protest to the initial placement of the pipeline route near Bismarck, North Dakota, which was rejected both because “it was too close to the municipal water supply.” Interestingly enough, the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation, who although their argument was similar to that of Bismarck, due to its designation as the “alternative route” and a “fast-tracked... permitting process... was not subject to the usual permitting process... except where the pipeline was to cross major bodies of water... historically important, religiously significant tribal lands...” All of this meant that cultural and environmental impact surveys by state and federal entities, which were pre-empted by Energy Transfer Partner’s (ETP) “extensive surveying”, in the end compounded matters due to the damage done, according to tribal officials (and later fines levied by the State of North Dakota), to culturally significant, and religiously sacred burial groups (Treuer, 2019, p. 432).

Contrary to many pundits far and near, but not near enough to actually be near the grounds of the pipeline production or protest encounters, who speculated on the varied and irrelevant, if not radical, means grounding the DAPL protest, it is the nature of the process leading to the construction of the pipeline, and previous similar historical events mirroring a long line of broken treaties and laws prohibiting religious practices, and mandatory boarding schools, that was the catalyst for the protest. There was a reason why the Oceti Sakowin – the Seven Councils Fire – gathered formally for the first time in over 100 years to stand in opposition to DAPL: to face history’s incessant need to represent itself despite all offered by modernity. Bottom line, similar to the concerns regarding the possible contamination of the water supply of people and officials living in Bismarck (where I live),

“the Mni Wiconi protest (...means ‘water is sacred’ in Lakota language) was primarily about fighting the danger to drinking water by the pipeline” (Treuer, 2019, p. 435). Folks like myself and fellow Bismarck residents did not have to combat a pipeline in our immediate backyard by employing “anti-violence and pro-peaceful direct action” as the construction was being protected by “private security teams... attack dogs... [and] pepper spray...” Unless we chose, we were not “arrested, hosed down with water cannons, and shot with rubber bullets... [while] government officials and security officials and company representatives decried how the Indians were trespassing on private property, as though this was the greatest crime one can engage in in a society shaped by ownership...” (p. 435).

Similar to the Corrib Gas protest in Ireland, DAPL more or less ended the same way. As David Treuer (2019) would say, the story of the protest is largely a story heard before, as the government historically has and continues to undervalue the rights of indigenous people despite being “stewards of the land.” Treuer’s key point in terms of implications of historic protests like DAPL and Corrib Gas “to the rest of the story would be to miss the bigger and more fundamental one.” In fact, these protest stories and the affinity between the two cultures are analogous to what Treuer says is “not another iteration of the ‘Indian problem’: that Indians, sadly, lost, and with them having lost, it’s hard to know what to do with them, especially when they are in the way” (p. 436).

What is distinctive, possibly once and for all shattering centuries of history for both cultures, may be the lessons learned that are shared in these recent protests by Native American and Irish “problem peoples” that is as Treuer identified as “manner and reach,” and the fact that there was no “titular head.” Personally, in both cases, directly in the case of DAPL and more broadly in Ireland pre- and post-Good Friday Peace Agreement, this emerging phenomenon aforementioned is keenly accurate in a paradoxically subtle, “collective determination, surging... more constellatory than uniform fashion,” so subtle that at times it can be overlooked even by those within this emergence (Treuer, 2019, p. 443; Taylor, 2017, 2018). And while both protests divined their cultural history pre- and post-imperialism, no longer can this advocacy be viewed or manipulated by corporate and/or government entities properly as singular in initiative. In fact, as Treuer (2019) pointed out, Indians are and “have always been a plurality... ‘still here’... working to undo the violence of the ages... united by the legacy (and current practices) of colonialism to be sure... forging international alliances...” (p. 438-440).

### **PRESENT AND FUTURE IMPLICATIONS OF SHARED CROSS-CULTURAL AFFINITY BETWEEN PEOPLES**

Reaching back to the inception of this paper and considering this mutual cross-cultural affinity between “the problem peoples”, namely Native American and Irish, since this historical and contemporary analysis has produced “evidence” demonstrating such affinity in the face of arguably the most intense examples of imperialistic “push back”, the remaining point to be addressed draws from examples of such affinity both in the historical and contemporary context while considering present and future implications with aid of the following question: What is the cosmic glue that will keep these and speculatively other

cultures together in Treuer’s (2019) conceptualization of an “international alliance” without a collapse back to what appears to a vicious cycle of imperialism?

As an educator for the majority of my adult life, I would be remiss if I did not take the medicine prescribed by my autoethnographic research, and did not lean on the student of self in relation to culture via shared lived experiences, and examine the result of several months spent at least once a week assisting the educational needs of children at Oceti Sakowin DAPL protest camp – a sense of *visionary pragmatism* (Taylor, 2012, 2017). In the case of this paper, it would appear in considering the alchemy of self, cultural, shared lived experiences, and a sense of the hope for what is to come balanced with the reality of today, initial understandings of the question regarding cosmic glue surface in three areas: education, art, and tribalism.

### **Education**

I would be further remiss, if, as an academician, specifically an associate professor of education, I did not consult the contemporary technical educational vocabulary in order to address the question posed regarding cosmic glue holding together an international alliance of emerging cultures, which rises from the ashes of imperialism. Nevertheless, aside from educational titans such as: Paulo Friere, John Dewey, Donald Shoen, Elizabeth Harrison, Gloria Ladsen-Billings, Michael Apple, and William Pinar, another surfaces as an alchemist offering the necessary adhesive: Patrick Pearse. Pearse known for his involvement in the 1916 Uprising as an Irish revolutionary hero, who paid the ultimate sacrifice at the hands of British military firing squad for his belief in Irish freedom from imperialism. While not minimizing his contributions to the Uprising, arguably his greater revolutionary activity was as a teacher arming young Irish with knowledge instead of arms. Pearse viewed England’s educational approach thrust upon the Irish people as a “disaster worse than even the Famine... a ‘murder machine’ that deliberately created human debris.” Reminiscent of Pratt’s approach to assimilation via education in the United States with Native American children and his oft-credited statement, “Kill the Indian, save the man” (Treuer, A., 2012), Pearse viewed the English education system as “civilizing the Irish by destroying the Irish civilization, absenting the Irish from their national heroes and saints, and robbing them of their language.” His efforts to educate Irish children at Saint Edna’s School against the tidal wave of British assimilation was, in Pearse’s thinking, analogous to the educational system established by the Romans and Greeks to educate slaves. This analogy is crystalized in meeting of the minds of Pearse and Eoin MacNeill in which the free children were taught to be strong, proud and valiant, and all things “noble and goodly”, consequently such knowledge was considered “dangerous knowledge” hidden from children of slaves, who were taught to be “sleek... obsequious... dexterous,” all in an effort to “make them good slaves. And so in Ireland” (Dougherty, 2019, p. 195-199; Taylor 2018, 2019).

Saint Edna’s became the birthplace of an approach to education forming the character as the “crucible of the school... as a tool of decolonization” with an innovative focus on bilingual education. Such was the formation of character in the face of prevailing winds of British imperialism, Partrick Pearse and the school’s only sacrifice would realize the true end of the means was such formation of character. Pearse not only penned the following but embodied the ultimate of end of sacrifice in the following:

...It would have been so each to die before a hostile crowd: but to die before that silent, unsympathetic crowd... No one can finely live who hoards life too jealously: that one must be generous in service, and withal joyous, accounting even supreme sacrifices slight (Dougherty, 2019, p. 195-199).

In this silent, unsympathetic crowd across the Atlantic, the person who shared with me the term “affinity” to originally describe this cross-cultural relationship Anton Treuer (2019) in a sense “divines” Pearse a years later:

The United States Government spent two hundred years trying to kill us, trying to take our land, language, and culture... Why would we look to them to fix it? We must look to ourselves to do that (Treuer, D., 2019, p. 401-402).

And in terms of “that,” Anton’s brother David adds later in his recent work – specifically his chapter called “Digital Indians: 1990-2018” – advancing the lessons from Brown’s seminal work leading to Wounded Knee, “I can’t help feeling we are using modernity in the best possible ways; to work together and to heal what is broken” (p. 443).

## Art

The best possible way to work collectively and to heal what is broken in terms of what modernity has to offer is the rationale, while summarizing this sense of shared cross-cultural affinity, for why one like Paul Muldoon comes to the fore instead of the typical cadre of Irish poetic titans like Yeats, Wilde, and Joyce. Muldoon seems to divine Patrick Pearse’s sense of not only recognizing the historical and contemporary challenges in the face of imperialism, but also the resiliency and hope in his country’s own plight, and that of Native Americans, with whom he not only sympathized and identifies with as America’s silenced minority. And as Kathleen McCracken, another promising Irish poet in touch with such affinity, stipulates in her essay *Two Streams Flowing Together: Paul Muldoon’s Inscription of Native America*, says, “it is hardly surprising... that some of these earliest poems attempt to give a presence, and a voice, to Native America... [His voice] has developed during the past two decades, challenging and enlarging both Irish and Native American literary perspective,” a perspective that Muldoon conceded started “out in a fairly romantic way... in crude parallels with the Irish situation” (As cited in Muldoon, 2006).

This is a perspective, no doubt, that if we were all honest is one in which most began when considering a maturing sense of cross-cultural affinity, or as McCracken points out, Choctaw-Cherokee-Irish theorist Louis Owens described as a “‘richly hybridized dialogue’ between cultures, a dialogue that takes place within ‘frontier’ space’ in a ‘transcultural zone of contact’ wherein discourse is multidirectional and hybridized.” Herein, a terrain is negotiated by Muldoon’s poetry both linguistic and political. As McCracken highlights, in its collision of both Irish and Native American cultures, this affinity could be described as “always vulnerable, easily penetrated, and in endless flux”; and while a pluralist vision may emerge with this sense of aforementioned cultural hybridity, “it remains consistently critical of colonization” (As cited in Muldoon, 2006).

And why so critical or even cynical some may ask when modernity has taken us so far? Muldoon’s poem *Promises, Promises*, where Sir Walter Raleigh may be the artistic response to the question posed, as history and its incessant ability to cycle colonialism stands to bear in the following excerpt:

He will return, years afterwards,  
To wonder where and why  
We might have altogether disappeared,  
Only to glimpse us here and there  
As one fair stand in her braid,  
The blue in an Indian girl’s dead eye.

And even if Muldoon (2006) was isolated in drawing attention to cyclical colonialism in the case of America as a land “not borrowed but purloined,” he nonetheless requires a critical eye, because it is likely colonialism will rear its head again or just progress from stages already rooted strongly and conjointly like the an imperialistic brand of the “three sisters” of beans, squash and corn protruding deeply into the ground with centuries of nutrients cloaked in oppression, assimilation, and even genocide.

Nevertheless, as this sense of affinity blossoms, transgressing the imperialism which once could feed on isolation, modernity now challenges paradoxically with what Jacqueline McCurry (1992) identifies as, “...natives of America and, by implication, the native of Ireland, are yoked together in a way that shatters preconceptions.” Owens (1998) identifies this image of shattering via “fracturing the self-reflective mirror of the dominant center, deconstructing rigid borders... and contradicting across every boundary.” Preconceptions of colonialism, must be challenged by artists like Muldoon in particular and artistry in general; Pearse’s sense of education needs to be cultivated globally to stimulate what McCracken astutely describes in Muldoon’s poetry as a sense of “post-colonist presence that gives voices to the margins... through dialogue between cultures...[:] a human universal that transcends difference; having listened in, there is no returning silence” (As cited in Muldoon, 2006).

No returning to silence is something one other artist, Waylon Gary White Deer appears again in this paper as a cultural medium, acting as an exemplar of cross-cultural affinity. Yet, not returning to the silence for its own sake would be to miss something tragically in what White Deer and Muldoon not only share as artists, but more fundamentally rooted culturally in terms of having listened in. White Deer, whose artistry and formative years come from the Choctaw Nation, despite now calling “Ireland home,” having “settled... permanently in 2012,” is no doubt also rooted traditionally. As Choctaw, he shares such traditional influence on his work as a painter, based on the belief that “we dwell in tandem with the spirit world who will inspire if you know how to listen.” White Deer models this traditional, spiritual balance of “listening in” via the medium of his artwork, which acts as a cross-cultural catalyst to avoid being silenced by colonial influences. For example, it did not take long for his presence in Ireland to cause the “making of waves in Donegal,” and other places in Ireland, as he only embraced a shared affinity with natives in Ireland and the United States, maintaining an identity tethered by

his native language. While “his ethnicity... [was] a source of confusion for Irish people..., [but] he takes it all in stride” (Meath, 2017; White Deer, 2012).

The exemplar of White Deer has furthered and deepened mutual cross-cultural affinity via the initial recognition and cultural exchange among Choctaw people and Irish in the 1990’s over aid given to the Irish during the Famine in the 1840’s, along with broadening this sense of this affinity beyond the two cultures to actively participating and leading “several Afri Famine walks” in Ireland that drew and continues to draw attention to issues of famine globally, in particular areas of Africa (Meath, 2017; White Deer, 2012). Due to White Deer’s involvement in with the Afri Famine walks in places like County Mayo, Ireland, he also encountered the Corrib pipeline protest in Rossport, where he empathetically engaged those protesting in the installation of a pipeline that arguably risked natural and human habitat on the coastline as he heard the grievances of local, indigenous Irish gathered to share their concerns.

White Deer’s artistic expression, as an exemplar of affinity, extended in many additional directions in Ireland, while remaining connected to his original roots with the Choctaw Nation; but two final examples may be best summarized in his artistry as a painter and his soulful expression as a Choctaw. The impetus for White Deer’s paintings are songs and stories, which are reminiscent of foundations for Irish sessions in the public house when artistry is shared (Taylor, 2019). White Deer notes in those stories,

we feel, and those we know because they happened to us...  
we carry both kinds beneath our skull like hidden tattoos...  
We don’t chase after stories or songs. They come around to  
where we are. Just like an arrow shot through time which I  
depict in one of my paintings. (Meath, 2017; White Deer,  
2012).

Such paintings White Deer has created in more traditional fashion “on canvas” such as the strikingly, seminal work, *Choctaw Donation to Ireland*, and public displays of painted murals on walls, which he was commissioned to paint by the Irish State and Donegal County Council, and also on the walls of Derry. It was in Derry, Northern Ireland where White Deer’s work reveals the strongest sense of his nature as a cross-cultural exemplar in terms of affinity seemed to blossom as he shared thoughts about nationalism, sovereignty and tribalism:

While working on the mural in Derry, the nationalism there influenced my own sense of tribal sovereignty, just as it does today... Among other things my paintings try to show how alive with spirit our tribal ways are, and to help move them forward into other generations. The beautiful ancient culture of Ireland that was once suppressed should also be cherished. (Meath, 2017; White Deer, 2012).

### **Tribalism**

As in the culmination of a journey that strives for an authentic research investigation, often there is an unintended outcome or pathway which may challenge the ego or enlighten an academic. An example of this for me during the DAPL protest and

research was coming away from the experience steeped in community with elements of tribalism, a sense of visionary pragmatism (Taylor, 2017). As someone always more prone to the visionary instead of the pragmatic, somehow during weekly service to the educational needs of children and staff at the Learning Resource Center at Oceti Sakowin protest camp, tribalism became the ‘cosmic glue’ congealing visionary pragmatism. This process began several years earlier with my autoethnographic dissertation, as I explored a journey to the self or as originally intended, the soul (Taylor, 2012).

We consider the path of this paper from historic to contemporary explorations of modernity. In terms of historicity, there were hopeful signs of breaching the cyclical nature of the imperialist, colonialist hold on indigenous cultures such as Native American and Irish. It would appear that both the Duhare and the present generation, with the “peppered” and “seasoned” generation’s support, may have the necessary alchemy to generate a sense of tribalism that Deloria (1969) foreshadows as “the strongest force at work in the world today...”:

...And Indian people are the most tribal of all groups in America. They are also in the most advantageous position of any tribal people in the world. Using modern technical knowledge and having tremendous natural resources, Indian people can combine urban and rural life in a nationalistic continuum. An understanding of the forces and ideas brought forward by Indian people to solve particular problems... should prove to be useful information for solving similar problems elsewhere in the world. The eventual movement among American Indians will be ‘recolonization’ of the unsettled areas of the nation by groups of Indian colonists... As Indians become more and more aware of what they are doing the pressure on leadership will become less and less... The natural tendency of Indians to withdraw will force them back upon themselves and act as a catalyst in hastening the time for recolonization” (p. 263-267).

It is fascinating, when exploring more contemporary thoughts about tribalism, for the term would appear to be a more pejorative term for a variety of reasons. There is no doubt that while groups tend to isolate “tribally”, this can be a recipe for misunderstanding on a variety of intense levels. In terms of non-Native “tribes”, it would appear that theorist Robin DiAngelo (2018) has captured something with the term *White Fragility*.

DiAngelo (2018) argues that white people, particularly in North America, reside in social environments that are protected and insulated from the kind of race-based stress both Native American and Irish have historically and contemporarily endured, as highlighted via examples in this paper. Interestingly and strikingly apropos as only a self-identified “white” theorists like DiAngelo can credibly theorize, this environment that is insulated and protected from race-based stress, building expectations for comfort racially, at the same time lowers the ability to tolerate such stress. And as DiAngelo concedes, some of this insulation is mediated by social class. The social environment at large insulates and

protects whites as a “tribe” via a plethora of examples ranging from media and school textbooks to movies and advertising. As a result of such insulation and comfort regarding conceptions of race, when racial stress is encountered by whites and therefore interrupts what is familiar racially, there can be an inability to respond in constructive ways, due primarily to not adequately having built the “cognitive or affective skills to develop the stamina that would allow for constructive engagement across racial divides,” leading to what DiAngelo calls *White Fragility*. A state of fragility that can exhibit a whole range of actions triggered by racial stress defensive in nature from silence and fear, to outright anger; of which the expression of these behaviors function to bring “white racial equilibrium.”

Using DiAngelo’s (2018) work to identify conceptions like racial stress and white fragility, I would argue there are ways in which “tribes,” particularly white tribes and those native in origin, can examine tribalism beyond the current pejorative orbit to one in which DiAngelo’s work aspires: “the on-going work towards racial justice.” Easier said than done, indeed! Yet perhaps the academy can work in more constructive harmony with education K-12 to high education, and those who tend to dominate education at all levels who are most familiar with aforementioned *White Fragility* can actually recognize and begin to transcend “white racial equilibrium,” toward a sense of racial justice that is transracially balanced, where racial stress is recognizable by more, not as a weapon to entrench this contemporary conception of tribalism, but as a pathway to unearthing more exemplary of a cross-cultural affinity similar to that of Native Americans and Irish.

A pathway not to be ignored, I would add, that Thomas Cahill (2015) offers in his work *How the Irish Saved Civilization*: “as we, the people of the First World, the Romans of the twentieth century, look out across the Earth, we see some signs for hope, many more for despair” (p. 216). I am not one to amplify despair over hope; I have professed in this paper to be a *visionary pragmatist*. Therefore as Cahill concludes by “landing the plane” of his critical offering to scholarship, looking into the future and the role of technology and its key role as a “marvel that knit our world together...” (p. 216), with his metaphor of Romans and catholics (small for reasons of universality), he considers what will be lost, and saved, of our civilization as something “beyond our powers to decide,” because, “No human group has ever figured out how to design its future” (p. 217). Building on his metaphor, Cahill’s speculation is that “the world may be divided among Romans and catholics, modern day Romans believing there will never be enough to go around, and catholics... as universalists who instinctively believe that all humanity makes one family, that every human being is an equal child of God and that God will provide” (p. 218). Cahill deepens his speculation about the future via the “prophecy” of Andrea Malraux, French writer and statesman, of whether the twenty-first century will be spiritual or not. Finally, Cahill adds that,

if our civilization is to be saved – forget about our civilization, which, as [Saint] Patrick would say, may pass ‘in a moment like a cloud or smoke that is scattered by the wind’ – if we are to be saved, it will not be by Romans but by saints (p. 218).

I would add in full respect – but also in trickster-like jest learned best by encounters with Native American and Irish, that can also contribute to addressing the seriousness of the future and present implications of such broadened work in terms of the role of shared cross-cultural affinity – perhaps Romans can be supplanted by Revelations (7: 9-17), penned by a saint offering great hope for those fragile in nature, along with *Red and Green “Problem Peoples”* echoing such spiritual hope and promise by the witness of *Shared Cross-Cultural Affinity of Native American and Irish*,

9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, 10 and crying out with a loud voice, “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” 11 And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures, and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, 12 saying, “Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever! Amen. 13 Then one of the elders addressed me, saying, “Who are these, clothed in white robes, and from where they have come?” 14 I said to him, “Sir, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation. They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. 15 “Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence. 16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any scorching heat. 17 For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. (biblegateway.com).

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