Place and the art of belonging

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This paper explores the connections among place, identity and visual art with reference to the Harris Tapestry, created to mark the beginning of a new Millennium on the Isle of Harris, Outer Hebrides, Scotland. I focus on the material practices through which the Tapestry was created and the historical and cultural metaphors evoked through its embroidered motifs with a view to considering what it means to belong on the island. As a site where people's stories of the past and present are translated into the visual field, the Tapestry is a deeply politicized aesthetics, making visible social relations through which both island and aesthetic spaces are constituted. Centrally, these concern rights to land, the Tapestry exposing tensions through which metaphors of belonging have been challenged and resisted through time. In this sense, the Tapestry is iconic of a 'culture of resistance' (Said, 1994) whose geography is island-centred rather than globally peripheral.

rusgadh, *-aidh*, *s.m.* Peeling. 2. Act of peeling, fleecing, or taking the bark or any covering. 3. Discovering. 4. Act of discovering, disclosing or revealing. 5. Driving thatch off. 6. Shelling. 7. Fleece. 8. Husk. 9. Stripping, undressing, making bare or naked. 10. Unsheathing.[1]

Conceived to mark the Millennium, the Harris Tapestry was completed in the summer of 2001. Through eight panels, it portrays life and legend associated with the Isle of Harris, Outer Hebrides, from the Neolithic midden, the standing stones of Traigh Iar, Scarasta and Horgobost and the Viking longship, to such present-day motifs as the Scalpay Bridge, a fish farm in West Loch Tarbert, and the *Loch Bhrusda*, the ferry which crosses the Sound of Harris. The original idea, of Gillian Scott-Forrest, resident of Northton, South Harris, had been to create a tapestry commemorating the passage from one millennium to the next. She had read about a tapestry in England that had been 'a huge success as a tourist project' and wanted to create something for Harris that would 'add to the list of attractions' – an amenity for 'a rainy day'[2] – and that would pay tribute to the island.[3] Her vision was of a tapestry in five rectilinear sections, historical content being organized chronologically, as in the Bayeux Tapestry, from left to right. The main events would be arranged against a backdrop of the Harris hills, the intent being to demonstrate passage and progress through time – 'a history of pictures and stitches'.[4]

But Margaret Mackay, who agreed to design the tapestry, substituted place for time as the primary organizational principle. Hence, each of the panels denotes a particular geographical area, as conceived by someone standing in the centre of the island and looking outwards – with the exception of the introductory panel, where the view from

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Loch Seaforth directs the gaze south towards the snow-capped Clisham. From the Tarbert and Scalpay panel in the north, clockwise around the island, there are six panels named the Golden Road (Figure 1); the Bays; Rodel and Leverburgh; Northton (Figure 2); the West Side (Figure 3); and the Huisinis Road (Figure 4). Accompanying each is a written guide which identifies, briefly, the scenes on each hanging.

For Mackay, what is privileged through this design is an island-centred conceptualization of the past and present to which the everyday narratives of people who live and have lived on the island are central.[5] Although chronological order is attempted in two of the panels (The Golden Road and Northton) through the historical sequencing of houses from top to bottom, the designer's main concern was one of aesthetics. Thus, even on these two panels, 'everything else is jollied around', placed where it 'fitted' aesthetically.[6] Similarly, perspective and scale as far as they concern the whole panel

FIGURE 1 The Golden Road panel

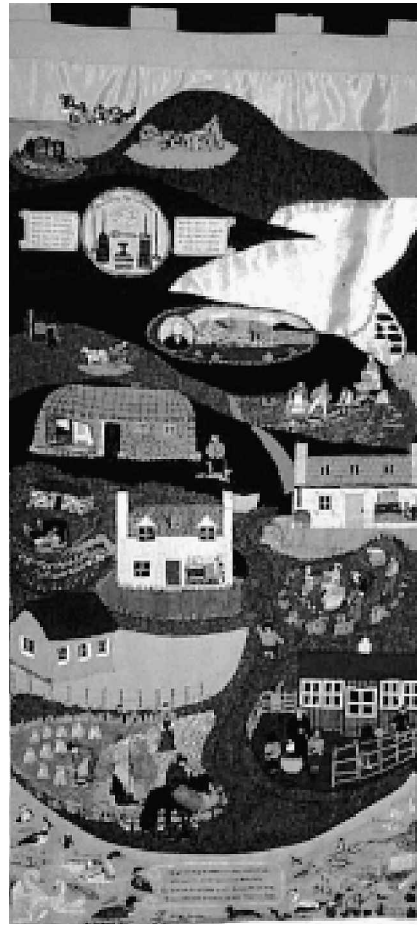

FIGURE 2 The Northton panel

FIGURE 3 The West Side panel

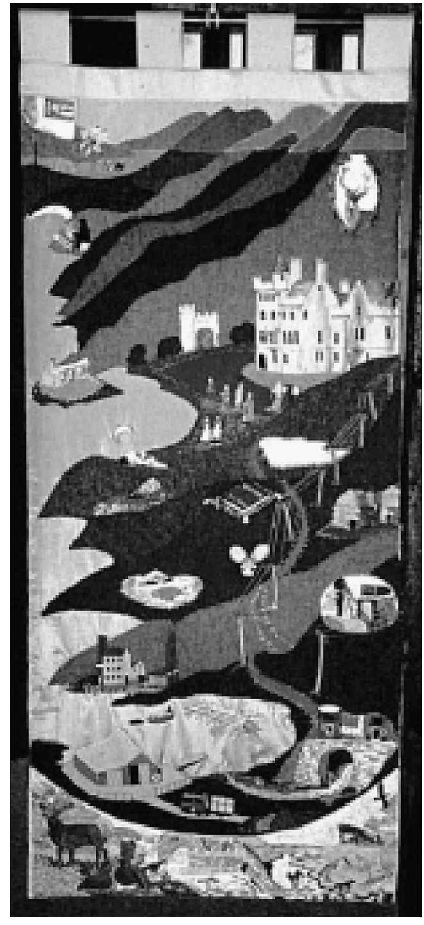

FIGURE 4 The Huisinis Road panel

are sacrificed, although each individual scene, each 'cameo of history',[7] has internal consistency in these respects. The result, in the words of someone who contributed to the sewing, is 'delightfully naive. . . like a child's drawing, with bits all over the place, its effect being immediate. [You] have to search in it as for treasure to find out what's going on.'

The opening event for the Tapestry in Seallam!, Northton, in June 2001, was marked by much excitement. Over 100 people had been involved in its creation over the previous six years and many were present to celebrate its completion. People drew each other eagerly to the different panels where a scene they had embroidered was placed, owning their individual contribution to the collective enterprise. Councillor Morag Munro, who launched the event, commented that at no time previously had so many people joined together in one project on the island. She spoke of the historical and cultural

depth of the Tapestry, viewing it as the history of the community. What had been conceived as a tourist attraction by one individual had evidently become a piece of visual art towards which there was a strong sense of collective ownership.

This paper focuses on the material practices associated with the creation of the Tapestry and its metaphorical significance in light of the evident and ongoing sense of collective ownership and its role as a constituent of island politics in the period that has followed the public inquiry (1993–95) into the location of a superquarry at Lingerbay, South Harris. With a view to exploring what it means to belong on the island, I trace the connections among the Tapestry as visual art, conceptualizations of place and political struggle within the community of Harris. I am interested, first, in understanding the ways through which the Tapestry, as art, mediates the relationship between people and place, how it becomes a site through which a politics of place is reworked. If, as Rosalyn Deutsche suggests, such art 'participates in, or creates, a political space ... where we assume political identities',[8] then I wish to examine how, through the micro-practices involved in its creation and the historical and cultural metaphors evoked through its embroidered motifs, the Tapestry is implicated in the negotiation of a place-specific identity, how images of the past and present 'construct meanings and mediate power relations'.[9] I will argue that the historically disruptive design of the Tapestry, where narratives are located with an eye to geographical accuracy rather than in terms of temporal linearity or continuity, suggests the possibility of repositionings of people vis-à-vis place. There are neither 'ponderous *temporal* "great units"' into which historical time has been periodised nor a '"hierarchialising" of things'[10] through which an exclusionary politics could be furthered. This possibility of repositioning is also achieved through the metaphorical slippage between authentic signifiers of the past, specifically as they concern the land, and a contemporary island-centred discourse that resists definition of the island by outside interests through claims to the land. I suggest that, if the Tapestry 'writes against' history as its ordering appears to do, so also does it write against culture in the sense of a fixed, place-bound identity that has travelled undisturbed through the millennia. To belong is to become – or, rather, belonging is always in a process of becoming.[11]

Second, I am concerned to connect the relationship between people and place conjured by the Tapestry with the practice of politics which has characterized the period following the Lingerbay public inquiry. Following an argument explored elsewhere regarding the ambiguous engagement of this politics with circuits of global capital,[12] I suggest that the Tapestry is visually iconic of an attempt on the island to resist those 'political technologies' [13] and that 'scopic regime'[14] that would produce the island as a site whose future sustainability rested on the deployment of large-scale intervention in the form of multinational capital from outwith the island. If a political technology or scopic regime proceeds through discourse – by division, detail and visibility to map onto a particular site specific relations of power and knowledge – so it may be argued that resistance may be construed as a reversal of these practices. A counter-cartography would then take issue with the relations of power and knowledge through which boundaries of otherness are constituted (divisions of who belongs and who does not), with 'the world of details'[15] through which the island is 'disciplined' (as one

instance, the quantification of people unemployed, or who have migrated) and with those practices which have sought to render Harris 'seeable in a specific way'[16] (as through the optics of a multinational corporation).

It is not a matter of just deconstructing the map. But, as Said suggests, it has to do with re-imagining the land – creating a 'culture of resistance' which reclaims, renames and reinhabits the territory concerned.[17] At risk in the process, in the search for culturally authentic symbols and practices to achieve a renewed sense of identity, in the bid to counter ongoing processes of dispossession, is the creation of a past 'that stands free from worldly time itself', that renders 'belonging' in terms of 'unsullied ... essences'.[18] The way beyond such construction of identity, Said theorizes, is to recognize identity as neither fixed nor exhaustive, neither stable nor singular.[19] It is to expose as mythical a bounded island identity which is not 'encumbered, or entangled and overlapping with what used to be regarded as extraneous elements'.[20] The practices and the aesthetics of the Tapestry, I am suggesting, not only are emblematic of new political spaces created in the aftermath of the public inquiry, but are a constituent element of them.

By demonstrating visually through geographically disrupted histories that there is what Doreen Massey refers to as 'a multiplicity of narratives' through which place is performed,[21] fixed identities of islander and incomer – lines or divisions which define who belongs and who does not – invoked during the public inquiry and in minor political frays since – are called into question. The detail of the Tapestry, interweaving story, historical event and legend, produces a counter-space where alternative configurations to those of a community 'dying on its feet' are emplaced. Practices through which people have worked the land and through which they establish a close attachment to the land are in evidence; community is made visible through the collective daily tasks employed in farming, fishing or weaving; and acts of resistance in that era of enclosure, the Clearances,[22] portray a people active in asserting their rights to the land. A 'discipline of detail' [23] is, in short, invoked to demonstrate visibly an island-centred way of seeing.[24]

Politics and place

In order to undertake what Griselda Pollock refers to as an 'historically located and positioned reading' of a 'historically located and positioned text',[25] I turn now to trace briefly the contours of political spaces on the island that have assumed increasing visibility since the mid-1990s, at which time a corporate proposal to establish a superquarry at Lingerbay brought into stark relief latent tensions among Harris residents. I am interested in how the island is produced through the discourses of a multinational, then Redland Aggregate Limited (RAL), and the Harris-based Coastal Quarry Local Supporters Network (CQLSN), on the one hand and, on the other, by the community-led Harris Development Limited/Adhartas na Hearadh Earranta (HDL), and how ideas of place and belonging are reworked through these political spaces. I suggest that HDL is involved in counter-cartography, a process that resists the construction of the island as a place in a state of crisis from which it could not recover should such

a massive venture of corporate capital as the proposed superquarry be disallowed. This discourse, ambiguous though it may be with respect to the island's engagement with global forces, reverses such spaces of 'constructed visibility' [26] as those imagined through the corporation and its local supporters' group. The Tapestry, as I show later, is an integral part of this narrative.

Social differentiation on the island, specifically as it concerns the categories 'islander' and 'incomer', did, of course, pre-date the Lingerbay public inquiry. 'Localness' was one of several axes of differentiation, which included gender, age, wealth, social standing and religious status, through which society was fractured and community created. But it was through exploitation of that particular axis of differentiation between the 'islander' who needed a job and the 'incomer', or 'white settler' (in the language of the corporation's Queen's Counsel (QC)), who did not need employment and could therefore afford the 'luxury' of environmentalism that legitimation of the multinational's case proceeded. A discourse of 'modernity', 'sustainable development' and 'progress' became the means or political technology through which RAL sought to legitimate a large-scale corporate economic venture.[27]

In common with other colonizing discourses, the creation of knowledge about Harris – social, economic, environmental – was linked in the inquiry to the deployment of corporate power. Defining the debate in terms of 'scientific norms' and incontrovertible truths, and silencing local expertise, the QCs recast a deeply political question – the extension of corporate power and the interests of private property – as a technical matter, the responsibility of planners, not politicians or local people, who were asserted to be incapable of bringing 'objectivity' or 'rationality' to the hearings. Harris was shown to be 'poor', 'very depressed', 'undeveloped' and in danger of becoming 'a museum piece' if it did not subscribe to the corporate vision of the future. A parade of 'experts' – a planner, an economist, a geologist, an ecologist, a sea captain, a landscape architect, a hydrologist, to name a few – presented 'facts' detailing, for instance, the precise numbers of jobs that would be created with a quarry and, with reference to environmental impact, regimes of ballast water exchange that would protect the waters of the Minch from imported microbes and numerical calculations of 'Zones of Visual Influence'. A computer-generated postquarry landscape was argued to be visibly superior to the coast's current configuration. A world of details was used, in other words, to legitimate the reduction of a mountain, Roinebhal, whose summit offers unparalleled views of the Outer Hebrides, the Cuillins of Skye, and thence to the hills of the mainland, to gravel intended for the repair of roads in England's southeast.[28]

This way of seeing, 'a scopic regime of modernity',[29] is emplaced in Harris in the postinquiry period through an alliance between the multinational that has now become Lafarge RAL and the local quarry supporters' network, the CQLSN. Claiming pre-eminence in the struggle to define a sustainable future for the island's residents, one of its early office-bearers, John Archie Mackenzie, wrote of the spectre of St Kilda, an 'abandoned' island, or of 'a twenty-first-century folk museum' as the alternative future facing Harris should the quarry not proceed. The environment continues to be pitted against numbers of jobs which could be created; and despite some reworking of the binary 'incomer' /'islander' constructed by RAL, onto which categories these issues were

mapped, the simplification of identity characterized by an 'us'/'them' dichotomy masks the far more intricate and complex interplay of social relations on the island and fosters a deeply divisive politics. Evidence comes from such minor political skirmishes as those surrounding the Amenity Lighting Programme in Strond/Borisdale in the summer of 1998. The CQLSN claims the symbolic resources of 'culture' and 'community' in a narrative of sustainability in order to achieve popular support, in contradistinction to RAL's representations at the inquiry; but, allied to a discourse of private rights, these notions become part of a political technology furthering the interests of corporate capital.[30]

Countering this narrative is a politics which insists on the centrality of collective rights to land and the specificities of place, refusing to consign to the past ongoing practices of political, economic and cultural dispossession. For many, the Lingerbay proposal echoed earlier Clearances, captured by one resident with the words 'The cheviot, the stag and ... the white, white, rock', a play on the title of John McGrath's play *The cheviot, the stag and the black, black, oil*. Epistemologically at odds with the notion of private rights to land, this alternative narrative draws implicitly on the concept of *dùthchas* which has for so long been central to a culture of resistance in the Highlands.[31] A 'hereditary right',[32] *dùthchas* refers to people's inalienable right and a sense of belonging to the land congruent with Tim Ingold's conceptualization of an ontology of dwelling.[33] The notion derives from a set of territorial principles quite at odds with a property regime which recognizes private rights. While I do not suggest thereby that this narrative constitutes some romantic removal from the constellation of global forces, I do think that there is ambiguity such that local identity is negotiated in this context and is not subsumed in what Alf Hornborg has referred to as 'membership in supra-sectors of meaning production'.[34]

Contemporary expression of this narrative is found in the political spaces created through the practices of HDL. At a moment of deepening political conflict on the island in 1994, HDL was established as a community-led Company Limited by Guarantee. Its primary objective is to promote initiatives to provide 'an economic, natural and social environment that will result in a more balanced and stable level of population'. Its remit specifically includes the promotion of employment opportunities 'that will maximise the potential of the natural and human resources of Harris' and the Gaelic language, island culture and the environment. Its principles of action include an emphasis on community participation, valuing local knowledge and resources, and lobbying about issues of concern to Harris.[35] Its island-centred initiatives remap the land in ways that emphasize the specificity of the island and the diversity of its heritage and contribute to the creation of a political space through which notions of belonging, of what it means to belong on Harris, are reworked.

Undoubtedly by far the most historically significant event in which HDL has been immersed is the process leading to the decision in September 2002 to put in a bid to purchase the North Harris Estate (including mineral and shooting rights but excluding Amhuinnsuidhe Castle and the fishing rights) on behalf of the residents, crofters and noncrofters, of the estate. The opportunity to purchase the land, following Jonathan Bulmer's decision to sell in May 2002, had been greeted with delight, excitement and not a little fear. In the words of one member of the steering group, the decision

was a 'huge undertaking' but, citing the words of Mairi Mhor nan Oran, 'Big Mary of the Songs', the poet of the nineteenth-century Land League, she expressed her sense of debt to forebears who had fought for the land during the Clearances: 'We owe it to our ancestors [to take over the land]'. HDL became the initial means through which the option to purchase was explored. Following a ballot of residents of the estate, 75 per cent of the 75 per cent of those eligible voting in favour, a steering group constituted through HDL was replaced by the North Harris Trust. The successful outcome of the bid, announced in March 2003, places Harris among the growing number of crofting estates which have spearheaded the collective buy-out of land 'owned' by individuals but to which people of genealogical depth in the areas claim a hereditary and collective right. Other sites include the first, Assynt, and Borve-Annishader, both of which involve crofters only, and Knoydart, Eigg, Bhaltos and, most recently Gigha, where membership is open to all residents. The purchase of the estate has occurred two months after the passage of the Land Reform (Scotland) Act, a piece of legislation of which The Crofting Community Right To Buy is an integral part. The issue of rights to land held in common thus has significant current national visibility.[36] The point, in terms of the argument of this paper, in addition to the momentous symbolic and material significance of such an event, concerns first the visibility of collective ownership and management of land in the face of the CQLSN's support of a multinational's interest in exploiting privately held mineral and land rights and second, the opening up of a political space where what it means to belong – broadening a claim to the land through membership in a Trust – is open to negotiation.

A collective claim to land is evident elsewhere on the island through other initiatives supported by HDL. One example is a woodland at Ardvourlie establishing crofter forestry rights on the North Harris Estate, funded through a Millennium Forest Award. As a second, Frith-Rathad na Hearadh/The Harris Walkway project, completed in 2001, makes a visible claim to the land through the restoration of a network of paths from the Clisham in the north to the bays of the east and the *machair* of the west. These routes, used from times immemorial, recall the bond between people and place. The landscape along their routes – the parallel lines of the rigs from the previous practice of run-rig, the *feannagan*,[37] as well as the piles of stones of ruined dwellings – signifies the intensive engagement with the land. Place names give evidence of a Norse as well as Gaelic heritage,[38] the diversity of the past and of the island's relationship with peoples from beyond its shores over the millennia. The pathways may further the tourist's gaze, particularly as their extension and connection to a West Island Way is planned. But they also visibly document the detailed passages of people through time. They assert a daily connection to and production of the land. Other initiatives undertaken with support from HDL build on people's close attachment to the sea, and its centrality in sustaining local livelihoods.[39]

HDL's socially inclusive practices are reflected in the board of directors and a membership drawn widely from among residents of Harris, and in the principles that inform the initiatives it supports. The board as well as the membership includes those whose claim to belong on the island has generational depth as well as those whose claim to localness is more recent, Gaelic speakers and those without that skill, younger and

older women and men. There is a focus on employing people regardless of age and upgrading locally valued skills. In this context, HDL becomes a site where, through the everyday practices of the initiatives it supports, community is recreated. Through action, boundaries which define such categories as 'local' or 'incomer' become less certain. Identity 'becomes' through doing, through involvement in and commitment to the daily practices of working towards a more island-centred way of seeing, of a sustainable future. In turn, through doing, through action, one belongs. Belonging is in process, continuously and contestably; any stable or essentialized meaning attached to it is displaced. This is not to deny that genealogical depth is not at times, by some individuals, used strategically to further political interests, as indicated earlier. But it is to suggest that another discourse coexists with it – one which views an island identity as neither fixed nor bounded, and constantly subject to change.

Whether the initiatives supported by HDL directly concern a collective heritage based on a close bond between people and the land or whether they provide for income-earning jobs off the croft on which crofters have always relied, they detail a culture of resistance, a very precise attachment to and identification with place which confounds attempts to create Harris in the image of outside, corporate interests. This is 'process cartography', a remapping of the island in ways that are 'open-ended' and 'ongoing',[40] charting with precision the occupation of space and people's close attachment to place. The detailed plans with which it works pose 'alternatives to the languages and images of [in this case, corporate] power'; they are used by people 'to control representations of themselves and their claims to resources',[41] countering the world of details of RAL's 'expert' witnesses at the Lingerbay public inquiry. The Tapestry, as I now show, is iconic of this process.

The Harris Tapestry

Practising place

Informed by poststructural, postcolonial and feminist theorizing, critical scholarship moved during the 1980s from viewing visual art as reflective of meaning to viewing it as constitutive of meaning. This shift allowed a reading of visual art, as Irit Rogoff proposes, 'in nonessentialist ways, to designate them as sites at which a whole range of complex activities can take place'.[42] Whereas the subject of her work concerns 'the endless displacement of meaning in the field of vision',[43] the politics through which this occurs, the boundaries that are called into question and the works of art chosen are, with one exception, products of individual artists. Before examining how the Tapestry itself is implicated in the production of the relationship between people and place and the displacement of stable meanings of belonging, I examine here the micropractices through which it was created, connecting these to the production of place. I argue that, although it was the idea of one person and designed by another, the practices employed in its design, from the stories collected from island residents to the embroidery of the historical and contemporary motifs by a broad cross-section of the community, contributed to a strong sense of collective ownership. In this context, the

Tapestry becomes a site through which there is a reworking of boundaries of belonging, of identity and of place – of community.

After 'sounding out' with two other Harris residents the idea of creating a Tapestry to mark the Millennium, Gillian Scott-Forrest approached Callum Macdonald, then manager of Harris Development Limited (HDL), for advice with respect to financing the project. Crucially, he encouraged her to involve as many local organizations drawn from as wide an area within Harris as possible. The resulting steering group included herself, the Harris Disabled Group, the Harris Historical Society, the two branches of the Scottish Rural Women's Institutes (Tarbert and Leverburgh), a local business person and HDL. Later, Margaret Mackay, the designer of the Tapestry, became the final member. A trust, Urras Colmhnearsnachd Na Hearadh/Harris Community Trust, was duly constituted, its primary purpose being 'to advance the education of the public about the culture, history and heritage of the Isle of Harris' through the creation of a tapestry telling 'the story' of Harris, a 'product of the combined effort of the local people'.[44] What had begun as one person's idea thus became a collective responsibility.

To this project, Margaret Mackay brought her experience as an artist with particular expertise in the creation of wall hangings using wool primarily from Harris sheep and dyes from local plants. Her interest lay in creating a tapestry which was people-centred rather than event-driven, 'a domestic history' of the island where people's stories were told. Her 'instinctive' design of the Tapestry from a position in the centre of the island looking out, she explained, was an integral part of her sense of belonging to the island. 'People and place are the important things', she remarked. This was a place where she was 'at home', 'comfortable with people ... aware that you had to listen'. 'Had I not thought that way,' she said, 'the design of the banners would not have come to me that way... I see it as part of me belonging to the place'. In response to my question: 'You keep referring to yourself as "English". Do you find this a difficulty?', she replied: 'It's not who you are, but the way you are that's important here. I've always felt at home here ... There's a need to listen ... I've never felt that I didn't belong.' 'Because of that approach [and] the time involved in putting together the scene,' she added, '[the Tapestry] became like family ... It became like a landscape I was inhabiting.' The Tapestry became an expression of her sense of place, of belonging, and the viewer is invited into the centre of the island to participate in its creation.[45]

Mackay's decision to privilege people's stories in the creation of the island's past and present followed from this understanding. Her collection of people's narratives and their translation into the visual field was bound up with her individual process of belonging – to a place, and to a community through which place was constructed. She talked with people across the island, initially drawing on her husband's relatives, she herself having lived on the island about 14 years. And it was these people – some with generational depth on the island, others of more recent provenance – who produced photographs of their families and stories or myths that had been handed down through the generations. A photograph of her husband's grandparents standing in front of the bakery in Tarbert – he is wearing an Arran jumper and holding a boot and she is wearing a wraparound apron – is one example (Tarbert and Scalpay panel). As she explained, 'songs, stories, tales, and creatures of other words [are] all part of the life

here . . . It all comes down as a bundle.' Listening to people relate stories not only gave her a much more intricate understanding of the intertwining of people and place, it also ensured that the evidential base of the Tapestry was securely fastened to local experience and embedded widely within the community.

In turn, privileging the stories of women and men as the lens through which historical and contemporary narratives were revealed and using them as the basis on which to construct the Tapestry contributed to the strong sense of collective ownership evident at the opening event, and ensured that the Tapestry itself was integral to the working, or becoming, of community. 'During the process [of making the Tapestry],' she said, 'people became more aware of their history and very proud of it.'[46] In all its complexity and, at times, ambiguity, the Tapestry became a means through which people asserted their claims to knowledge and to history, 'a resource for cultural accounting'[47] through whose images a collective identity was fostered.

Mackay also spent considerable time consulting primary and secondary written sources, mostly in Stornoway Public Library, to gain an understanding of Harris's past and such events as the Lewis/Harris boundary dispute, and to obtain accurate information about such details as the tartan of the soldiers who were called in to quell 'a conspiracy and riot' in Borve in 1839, and the number of funnels of the *Dunara Castle*, built in 1875 and used to collect smoked herring from Malcolm Campbell of Carragreich in the 1880s. She sketched the curves and contours of shore and hill, trying to distil 'the essence of a place', which then became the background for the scenes displayed on the panels. In all, such was the time expended on the Tapestry over a four-year period that, she commented, the lives of herself and her husband, Donald, were 'put aside. Life was just doing the banners . . . I became so wrapped up in [it] as the portrayal of a people and a place.' Even the peats on which they had previously relied for much of the heating were not cut.[48]

Scott-Forrest retained responsibility for the actual embroidering of the scenes drawn by Mackay. These motifs from the past and present were to be placed onto the Harris tweed, woven on single-width Hattersley looms by six weavers from Luskentyre, Drinishader, Plocropol and Finsbay, giving material substance to the embroidered world of the island. In the words of Scott-Forrest, the tweed was 'evocative of Harris'; it provided 'a rough textured finish' rather than something 'neat and conventional'. Recognizing that 'the tweed absorbed everything. . .soak[ing] up our sewing [and, in the words of Margaret Mackay] making it look like we've "thrown a lot of currants at it" ', they decided to create 'a scene out of each thing'.[49] Using a shade card of the wide range of colours that Mackay could produce with locally available plant dyes, Scott-Forrest creatively translated Mackay's drawings into individual sewing kits.

One advantage of the length of time for completion was that the network of people involved in sewing the scenes 'got wider and wider as time progressed [and] as time went by [the Tapestry became more firmly established in the community'. Whereas only a few people had been involved in the first panel, between 18 and 20 embroidered the scenes in the subsequent ones. Showing the first complete panel, 'The Golden Road', at the South Agricultural Show in 1999 increased the visibility of the Tapestry and widened the circle of those participating. A sense of collective ownership of the project was also

furthered, first by Mackay's practice of inviting to Soay Cottage those who lived nearby and who had agreed to sew. For her, sewing was 'a communal activity'. Although Scott-Forrest had planned to coordinate work elsewhere on the island, this did not materialize; instead she worked with people individually, giving instruction as necessary in various sewing skills. Second, collective ownership was fostered by giving to those with an interest in, or personal connection with, an event the task of embroidering that scene. People were thus matched with place. For example, the minister's wife embroidered the church and manse at Scarasta, an archaeologist had responsibility for the neolithic building in Northton, and, coincidentally, the granddaughter of the man who built the school in Tarbert sewed the motif of the school house.

In total, 75 people sewed scenes for the Tapestry, their names recorded on the introductory panel. Three of these were men, one through single-thread cross-stitch meticulously portraying the stamp commissioned to mark the ill-fated launch of the rocket post from Scarp to Harris in 1934. A second, by means of collage, created the flags on boats in East Loch Tarbert which spelled out 'Welcome to Your Majesty', commemorating the Queen's visit in the late 1950s. Others – women and men – contributed to the project by providing the tweed and linen, by supplying carpentry materials and carrying out the necessary carpentry and metalwork. A visually connective theme is provided by the border of Scalpay linen at the base, embroidered with appropriate flora and fauna and excerpts from local Gaelic songs and poems which evoke the sense of the land, chosen by Morag MacLennan. Their translation into English is found on the accompanying interpretive text. A CD, produced locally by Scalpay Digital Audio, now accompanies the Tapestry, each of the songs 'match[ing] the area or the mood or the mountain', some being composed by Angus Macleod, a bard of Harris, others also being of local provenance. Sung in Gaelic by women and men, they are connected through sounds found in the Harris landscape, an 'intricate embroidery of sounds'[50] paralleling a dense embroidery of stitches.

The practices of producing the Tapestry drew deeply on a wide diversity of local skills – of design, embroidery, weaving of wool and linen, carpentry, songs and a repertoire of storytelling, the last evidence in itself of a strong oral, Gaelic heritage. It may be the case, as one informant pointed out, that the idea for the Tapestry and responsibility for its design came from two women whose residence on the island was of relatively short duration. But instead of suggesting that this signified 'a lack of confidence' on the part of 'islanders', to use her phrase, it might be closer to the mark to reflect that visual art on the island has historically been inseparable from everyday life – the line of a boat, the warp and weft of a tweed, or the woven willow of a creel – and thus part of an ontology of dwelling where it is not a matter 'of making a view *of* the world but of taking up a view *in* it.'[51] In this context it is perhaps paradoxical, given the creation of the Tapestry as a work of art, that the use of tweed as the predominant fabric suggests what Michele Dominy calls an 'embodied' connection with the land[52] – literally as the sheep from which it is produced convert the grass of the common grazings or the *machair* into a commodity, and figuratively as, through sheep, collective and individual rights to the land are effected under crofting tenure, a central means through which identity continues to be constructed.[53] The production of tweed is thus one of those

'mutually inscriptive processes'[54] through which people are linked to the land, to place, and the land is in turn linked to people.

Further, rather than defining boundaries between 'islanders' and 'incomers', the experience of the designer herself, negotiating the boundaries of belonging through the creation of the Tapestry, and the degree of collective ownership evident at the opening event, demonstrate that it provided one of those everyday political spaces through which categories of belonging, identity and place are reworked. In parallel with crofting, with its continued reliance on such collective practices as the gathering, dipping and shearing of sheep and the management of common grazings, the practices associated with the Tapestry are part and parcel of the everyday process through which community is constructed. 'Processes of becoming part of a community' may, as Tamara Kohn points out, occasionally be 'shouted from the highest rooftops', but they are also 'very quietly and subtly enacted and embodied by people in the everyday'.[55] Identity, she suggests, 'is imbedded in activity; in performance'; it is 'all about choice, action and multiplicity of experience and allegiance. One "becomes" through a life of action.'[56] This does not, of course, mean that identity is not contested or that social interaction around the Tapestry was not on a few occasions fractious.

Creating Eilean na Hearadh/the Isle of Harris

I turn now to the Tapestry as 'site-specific art' to explore its 'democratic possibilities', agreeing with Deutsche that these possibilities concern the questioning rather than concealment of power.[57] My focus is on *how* the (hi)story of Harris is told, visually, paying attention to the relationship between the evidential base of the Tapestry and the illustration of relations of power, specifically as the latter concern people's claim to the land. I suggest that the Tapestry, as site-specific art, opens up claims of belonging through the historical ruptures of its design and trespassings of such boundaries as those between past and present, story and historical event, power and resistance. Its political significance, to adapt Jane Jacobs' argument concerning sacred sites in the Arrernte land struggle in Australia,[58] centres on slippage between authentic local signifiers of the past, specifically as these concern the land, and a contemporary island-centred discourse that resists forces of globalization. This ambiguity, made visible through the motifs/metaphors sewn within the Tapestry's borders, suggests a sense of belonging to place that is always in process of becoming. 'Community' is not shown to be the heritage of one group of people who have existed as an historically inert category through time, but always in process, constructed through everyday social practice. The argument is developed primarily through the tensions and conflicts that have surrounded people's rights to land.

Archeological evidence dating from about 3000 BC, represented by the midden on the shore near Ceapabhal (Northton panel, Figure 2), makes visible the length of time that agriculture has been practised on the island.[59] But details of farming practices which demonstrate the bond between people and place for the most part post-date the establishment of crofts in the period following the Clearances. On the Northton

panel are scenes of women and men creating *feannagan* by building up the soil base and applying seaweed as fertilizer, planting potatoes, sowing corn, making hay and looking after cattle, sheep, horses and hens. The ongoing significance of sheep is made clear in The Golden Road panel (Figure 1) where the Tapestry focuses on the making of the tweed. From the shearing of the sheep to the dyeing of the wool using crotal, a lichen scraped by children from the rocks, to its weaving and waulking,[60] the degree to which the production of tweed, or more generally sheep, was and remains a collective undertaking – for women, men, and children – is apparent.

People's close identification with the land, and through the land with each other, is further demonstrated through the cutting of peats, still used as a source of fuel. People recall this period of hard work and picnics each May as having central social importance in the annual calendar (Bays Area panel, Rodel and Leverburgh panel). Like waulking the tweed, for one resident it was a social occasion which 'demonstrated the way the community worked together'.[61] For her, 'community' was also symbolized by the story of Christina Maclennan, who gave birth to a daughter on 14 January 1934, on the island of Scarp, but who became so unwell the following day that she was taken on a makeshift stretcher (a door) by open boat to the mainland of Harris and thence by bus and car to the hospital in Stornoway, where a second daughter was born (Huisinis Road panel, Figure 4). It took several men to take her on a stretcher to the boat; 'the community was on stand-by all the time.'

And the community was bound through sites of worship, the earliest evidence of this being the prehistoric teampull on Ceapabhal to which came people came from nearby islands (Northton panel, Figure 2).[62] St Clement's at Rodel dates from the twelfth century, this township later achieving central social significance for the Macleods of Harris and Dunvegan. The site itself, as the place where Scarista Church now stands (West Side panel, Figure 3), is widely known to have played a significant spiritual role long before the advent of Christianity to the islands.[63] More recent evidence of Christian worship is found in the portrayal of an outdoor communion at Finsbay in the 1930s (Bays Area panel) and mission halls in Northton and Tarbert.

A landscape of myth and song contributes to the sense of depth of attachment to the land. Stories and songs, Ingold explains, conduct attention '*into* the world, deeper and deeper, as one proceeds from outward appearances to an ever more intense poetic involvement'.[64] The myths of the seahorse in sequinned splendour peering round Ceapabhal, the site of still unfound treasure (Northton panel, Figure 2), or of the 'wee blue men of the Shiants' – responsible, it is claimed, for stirring up the turbulent waters of the Minch with their tridents (Tarbert and Scalpay panel) – are both examples of such stories, depicted in scenes that disturb the boundaries of what counts as evidence in the creation of an island's past and demonstrate something of a heritage richly textured in narratives that bind people to place. Two local bards, Ian Gobha na Hearadh or John Morison, 'the Harris blacksmith', who died in 1852 (Rodel and Leverburgh panel)[65] and Mairi Bhanchaig, or Mary MacRae, the dairy maid at Northtown Farm who died in 1877 (Northton panel, Figure 2), are cited. The latter is symbolized through the tools of her trade and the embroidered words of one of her songs.[66]

Humour is used with similar effect to subvert boundaries between 'fact' and 'fiction', through laughter inviting people to question how the past is defined and, again, drawing attention to the bond between people and place. Examples include the story told by Finlay J. MacDonald in *Crowdie and cream* about how, as a small boy, he was force-fed dandelions by a young girl among the sand dunes of Scarasta in order that he might see 'the wee folk' (West Side panel, Figure 3). Or, on the Tarbert and Scalpay panel, there is the scene of Donald Archie Mackenzie driving with the minister so 'vigorously' that the car ended up in Loch Direcleit, 'JEHU 1' on the licence plate recalling one of the more flamboyant characters of the Old Testament. On the Huisinis Road panel (Figure 4) is the absurd scene of the explosion of the experimental rocket, scattering letters of the Royal Mail in all directions as it attempted to deliver mail from the island of Scarp to the mainland of Harris. On the panel of the West Side (Figure 3), a ram lies beside a great standing stone, lazily contemplating those phallic symbols of the Bronze Age; nearby, the depiction of two sheep whom Mackay herself has been feeding by hand for three years, Daisy, with one horn, and Hope, with a brown face and short legs, subverts any claim to historical pretension.

The Tapestry is not, however, a romantic interpretation of the past, a simplification of people's engagement with the land achieved by 'aesthetic distancing'.[67] It makes clear that the bond between people and land has been constituted through hard-won struggle. The Clearances are a significant leitmotif as is resistance to the attempts to turn people off their land. One poignant scene depicts a family in 1828, first, fleeing with their possessions from a burning house in the fertile west, later arriving in the infertile Bays Area, men carrying the roof beam on their shoulders for the new home. In the distance is a fully rigged boat, the *Hercules*, the *Persian* or the *Royal Albert*, ready to take those who could not find land on the island to Canada or Australia. Partially hidden behind a rocky peninsula is the *William*, chartered by Norman Macleod of Bernaray, the eldest son of Donald Macleod, 'the Old Trojan', in November 1739 to kidnap women and men from North Uist and Harris and sell them as slaves in America. In the event, the ship had to put into its home port of Donaghadee, Ireland, for repairs and the captives escaped, some succeeding in returning to Harris (Bays Area panel).[68] Although this event preceded the eviction of people from their homes in the west of the island, it reveals the harsh reality that it was not only landlords from elsewhere who were instrumental in clearing people from the land. Chiefly families of local provenance were frequently as implicated in the enclosures.

Evidence of resistance to the Clearances is found, for example, in the scene of crofters in Borve refusing to move when faced with a detachment of soldiers and the Sheriff Depute in 1839 (West Side panel, Figure 3). Much later, in 1921 and 1922, cottars are depicted raiding land at Rodel, retreating only when guaranteed work by the factor (Rodel and Leverburgh panel). More successfully, in the 1920s and 1930s, as the notes for the West Side panel recall, sheep farms on this more fertile part of the island were subdivided subsequent to successful land raids. As another instance, the personal drama of Jessie of Balranald in 1850 reveals the extent to which the establishment of sheep farms could cause fractures among the class of factors and how gender could be caught up in constructions of class during the Clearances. Jessie

is shown on the Tapestry escaping down a ladder from an upper room in a house, now an hotel, in Rodel (Rodel and Leverburgh panel). Her fiancé, Donald MacDonald of Monkstadt in Skye, had been dismissed from his position as assistant factor by her father, tacksman and factor of Balranald, North Uist, on account of his leniency towards crofters. Refusing to transfer her affections to the new assistant factor as, it appears, her father expected, she was rescued by her fiancé, only to be later apprehended by an uncle at Tarbert, Harris, where their boat sought refuge from the storms in the Minch. But MacDonald managed to garner local support to rescue Jessie once again, this time from imprisonment in the uncle's house in Rodel, and the two migrated to Australia after his acquittal of any wrongdoing in the Inverness Sheriff Court.[69]

The Tapestry shows that the interest of Harris to the moneyed class did not end with the Clearances – most visibly through such castles as those at Amhuinnsuidhe (Huisinis Road, Figure 4) and Ardvourlie (North Harris panel) and the 'lodges' at Finsbay (Bays Area panel) and Borve (West Side panel, Figure 3) which contrast so starkly with the black houses (Northton panel, Figure 2), a later single-storey thatched house or the 'white house' of more recent times (Golden Road panel, Figure 1). The particularly extravagant lifestyle of the Earl of Dunmore in the early 1860s is portrayed both by the castle at Amhuinnsuidhe and, on the West Side panel (Figure 3), by members of his private army carrying a wedding carriage from Rodel to Luskentyre. Forced to sell the castle in 1868 for financial reasons, the sporting interests of the subsequent owner, Sir Edward Scott, are depicted by motifs of a stag and a salmon, and a retinue of servants (Huisinis Road panel, Figure 4). The juxtaposition of the derelict home of a blind man and Amhuinnsuidhe castle could not more vividly draw attention to social cleavage on the island. The story goes that his small house spoiled the view from the castle and that, in order to establish grounds for his eviction, the factor tricked him into revealing he had poached salmon from the estate.

For one resident on Harris, the Clearances were always 'a very sore part of our heritage'. She saw the Tapestry as bringing out 'the rather dark side of certain landowners, but it has also depicted, quite rightly, where landowners were not a power for good, but have invested in certain areas of the community'.[70] Two men and one woman, remembered for their industry rather than their wealth, capture her meaning: Captain Alexander Macleod, son of Donald Macleod of Berneray, who bought Harris for £15 000 in 1779 from his insolvent relative, Norman Macleod of Dunvegan; Catherine Herbert, Dowager Countess of Dunmore, widow of the 6th Earl of Dunmore, who had inherited the island from his father in 1836; and Lord Leverhulme, who purchased the estate in 1919 for £36 000. Captain Macleod, whose fortune was made through trade in the East Indies, is recalled through the energy spent on establishing a fishing industry, chiefly on the east coast (Bays Area panel). The fishing schemes 'foundered', reads the caption to the panel for the Bays Area, on Macleod's death in 1790.[71] Similarly, it is suggested that the grandiose schemes of Leverhulme, centring on the creation of a major fishing harbour in Obbe (renamed Leverburgh after his purchase of the island), collapsed with his death in 1925 (Rodel and Leverburgh panel). In the wake of his antagonistic relationship with crofters on the Isle of Lewis from whence he had moved to

Harris,[72] it must have been particularly irksome to meet the same resolve on Harris from those who wanted land.

Catherine Herbert, Countess of Dunmore, whose husband, Alexander, the 6th Earl, financed the extension of the castle at Amhuinnsuidhe (allegedly because she considered the castle smaller than her father's stables), is remembered for her energy in promoting the commercial weaving of tweed. Having witnessed the popularity of the locally woven Murray tartan, commissioned for her husband's ghillies in 1844, she was possibly conscious of the growing impoverishment of islanders following the brutal actions of the estate factors.[73] On the Tapestry, she is recalled through the figures of two sisters, Marion and Christina Macleod of Strond, wearing the intricately patterned shawls from Paisley, where she had sent them to learn to weave (Rodel and Leverburgh panel).

The Tapestry also reveals tensions as the island has reworked its relations with the 'outside' world. Evidence of connection abounds, contradicting any suggestion that Harris has existed in isolation from the cross-currents of history or global capital as the protagonists of the Lingerbay quarry proposed. This is both archaeological – Ian Armit's research demonstrating the centrality of the Western Isles to past foci of power[74] – and more recent, in which case motifs recall the growing peripherality of the island as it has been drawn more firmly into the capitalist economies of the mainland and circuits of global capital. Evidence comes, *inter alia*, from the cattle trade of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries between the island and the markets of mainland Scotland (Rodel and Leverburgh panel), the Clearances, the Norwegian whaling station at Bunavoneader established in the early 1900s (Huisinis Road panel, Figure 4) and the war memorial in Tarbert (Tarbert and Scalpay panel). Of contemporary significance are the fish farms, dominated by Norwegian capital (Huisinis Road panel, Figure 4), the Spanish refrigerated lorry ready to take shellfish to the European mainland (Tarbert and Scalpay panel) and, on the panel of the West Side (Figure 3), the island of Taransay, recently the site of a BBC 'reality TV' programme, *Castaway*.[75]

The story of Harris is translated visually, then, through the meanings that the past and present have for the people of the island. Their stories bind people to place and inform a deeply detailed counter-cartography, where conflict has been part and parcel of the struggle to maintain a livelihood. What emerges is a narrative that is neither linear nor singular, an island that is neither romantically isolated from nor marginalized victim of the currents of global capital. Linearity, of 'progress' from one 'state' to another, is subverted through the historically ruptured design of the Tapestry's eight panels. The lack of chronological ordering of the embroidered motifs within each panel contributes to the disordering of a historically bound narrative. Such motifs as those of crofting, weaving and fishing further subvert boundaries. However ambiguous and implicated in change, they remain resilient signifiers of island identity, metaphorically allowing 'visual slippage'[76] between the past and present. The employment of myths – the seahorse of Ceapabhal and the 'wee blue men of the Shiants' – adds to the blurring of time-defined boundaries. And the positioning of the viewer in the centre of the island looking out towards the sea – the Minch to the east, the Sound of Harris to the south and the Atlantic to the west – suggests an invitation to enter the island, not as a spectator of a history that is somehow complete, but to position her- or himself

as part of its (ongoing) construction, faced with the task of trying to sort through it, as though in a puzzle.

Conclusion

The Tapestry, I have suggested in this paper, is iconic of the culture of resistance in which HDL plays a central part. As a place where people's stories of the past and present are translated into the visual field, it is a deeply politicized aesthetics, its meaning 'socially constructed and inseparable from the historical conditions of its existence'.[77] It makes visible social relations that constitute both island and aesthetic spaces. Centrally, this concerns rights to the land, the Tapestry exposing tensions through which historically deep metaphors of belonging have been challenged by class interests and resisted. It also reveals tensions between an island-centred geography whose political spaces echo those created through the practices and principles of HDL and a geography of peripherality, conjured by a multinational and a local supporters' network, the latter caught up in the discursive web of modernity that produces a dichotomy between a traditional and modern society.

The Tapestry is not a romantic rendition of the past. Rather it provides 'clues to complex patterns of ... mobility, interdependence and social cleavage both within and beyond the locality'.[78] This complexity is achieved through the specificity of its art – a discipline of detail – making visible a strong attachment to place and livelihoods firmly rooted in the land in the face of the dis-placing practices of dispossession of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and more recently. In this sense, in Anne Raine's words, it resists 'the dominant narrative of Western history', insisting on making visible not 'timeless aesthetic values' but rather 'particular places and sites of particular historical and political struggles'.[79] As a richly mnemonic device, it counters the distancing processes of modernity, connecting people visually to the specificities of place. Through their narratives, there is what Gregory refers to as a *détournement*, whereby the visual practices of the Tapestry enable people on Harris 'to represent themselves', not as others have construed them, but 'on their own ground as inhabitants of their own land'.[80] The Tapestry becomes a counter-production to a casting of the island as 'empty' and waiting to be filled through the exertions of externally driven 'progress'. As a 'polyscopic narrative'[81] it displaces the scopic regime of modernity.

Place is brought into being through 'the creativity of everyday life'[82] evident in the Tapestry's design and the micropractices associated with its production. With community, place is always 'a doing', brought into being, or mutually performed, through the everyday processes of participation. Neither community nor place exists outwith their co-performance. The democratic possibilities of the Tapestry, specifically the opening up of categories of belonging, are bound up with this. They are linked, as I have shown, to the historically subversive design of the art. The privileging of place, of geography, over time, history, and its signification, to quote Rogoff, 'emerge not as the sites of secure and coherent identities but rather as those of disruptive interventions in the historical narratives of culture.'[83] There are no 'castles of coherence', to

borrow a phrase of Chris Philo.[84] And, with reference to Philo's citation from Foucault's discussion of the work of Raymond Roussel,

> There is no privileged point around which the landscape [is] organised and with distance vanish[es] little by little; rather, there's a whole series of small spatial cells of similar dimensions placed right next to each other without consideration of reciprocal proportion. . .Their position is never defined in relation to the whole but according to a system of directions of proximity passing from one to the other. . .

To replace the imagery of Roussel's *La vue* in the quotation with that of the Tapestry, the embroidered motifs of the wall-hangings are 'uniformly magnified, evenly illuminated, placed one next to the other in the same noonday sun'.[85] There is a 'playful juxtaposing of different categories of thing', of the 'tangible and intangible, of natural and human, of collective and individual, of ongoing and time-bound'.[86]

The land is repossessed, or reterritorialized, not through the drawing of timeless essences but through the visibility of collective, everyday practices. It is the everyday that is privileged though the stories which inform the evidential base of the art – the joy of a picnic at the peats, the sorrow of the eviction from a home, the humour of a minister getting a soaking in Loch Direcleit, the risks of the unpredictable and frequently stormy waters of the Minch stirred up by the tridents of 'wee blue men of the Shiants'. This is an island of immense historical depth, where daily engagement with the land is a reminder of a Norse as well as a Gaelic heritage, of processes of dispossession as well as defiance in the face of them. But it is also an island, as created though the Tapestry, constantly undergoing change, constantly interacting with people who come from beyond its shores. No 'origin' is signalled and no history of a bounded community somehow immune to the crossings of people and place is portrayed in the visual reconstruction of past and present. The Clearances are certainly shown to be a major event – and the Tapestry exposes the devastating effect of the exercise of class privilege – but they neither constitute a beginning of history nor an imperturbable marker of it. As such, it is less easy to consider lineal connection with them as an indelible signifier of identity. Rather, the visual effect of the Tapestry with its depth of detail–bits and pieces of story and myth – organized according to an aesthetic rather than a chronological principle, is to invite the viewer to engage in the recreation of the island, of a place, through the everyday worlds of the past and present. The island is produced as a 'constant presence of a politics of [place] in the making', an ongoing and unending process into which the viewer is drawn, not a 'coherent site of absolute belonging'.[87]

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Notes

[1] E. Dwelly, *Faclair Gaidhlig Gu Beaurla Le Dealbhan/The Illustrated Gaelic–English Dictionary* (Glasgow, Gairm, 1994), p. 779.

[2] Interview, 16 Feb. 2002. Where the source of a quotation is named, permission has been given. Elsewhere, anonymity has been maintained.

[3] Cited in C. Kinghorn, 'After six years of hard work, the unique Harris tapestry is ready...', *Stornoway Gazette* (28 June 2001), p. 4.

[4] Scott-Forrest, interview, 16 Feb. 2002.

[5] M. Mackay, interview, 11 Feb. 2002.

[6] *Ibid*.

[7] Scott-Forrest, interview, 16 Feb. 2002.

[8] R. Deutsche, *Evictions: art and spatial politics* (Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1996), p. 289.

[9] I. Rogoff, *Terra infirma: geography's visual culture* (London, Routledge, 2000), p. 157.

[10] C. Philo, 'Foucault's geography', in M. Crang and N. Thrift, eds, *Thinking space* (London, Routledge, 2000), pp. 211, 214.

[11] See J. Butler, *Gender trouble: feminism and the subversion of identity* (London, Routledge, 1990); J. Butler, 'Contingent foundations: feminism and the question of ''postmodernism'' ', in J. Butler and J. Scott, eds, *Feminists theorise the political* (London, Routledge, 1992), pp. 3–21; J. Butler, 'Gender is burning: questions of appropriation and subversion', in A. McClintock, A. Mufti and E. Shohat, eds, *Dangerous liaisons: gender, nation, and postcolonial perspectives* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1997), pp. 381–95. Also, S. Macdonald, *Reimagining culture, histories, identities and the Gaelic renaissance* (Oxford, Berg, 1997); C. Maclean, 'Migration and social change in remote areas: a Scottish Highland case study' (PhD, University of Edinburgh, 1997).

[12] A.F.D. Mackenzie, 'On the edge: ''Community'' and ''Sustainability'' on the Isle of Harris, Outer Hebrides', *Scottish geographical journal* 117 (2001), pp. 219–40. Also see A.F.D. Mackenzie, ' ''The cheviot, the stag . . . and the white, white rock?'': Community, identity, and environmental threat on the Isle of Harris', *Environment and planning D: society and space* 16 (1998), pp. 509–32.

[13] M. Foucault, *The history of sexuality* I (New York, Vantage, 1978); M. Foucault, *Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison* (New York, Vantage, 1979). For discussion of the concept, see H. L. Dreyfus and P. Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: beyond structuralism and hermeneutics* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1983), p. 196.

[14] D. Gregory, 'Edward Said's imaginative geographies', in Crang and Thrift, *Thinking space*, p. 314; M. Jay, *Downcast eyes* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1994).

[15] Foucault, *Discipline and punish*, p. 140.

[16] Gregory, 'Edward Said's imaginative geographies', p. 316.

[17] E. Said, *Culture and imperialism* (New York, Knopf, 1994), p. 226.

[18] *Ibid.*, p. 228.

[19] *Ibid.*, pp. 229, 311–14.

[20] *Ibid.*, p. 317.

[21] D. Massey, 'Spaces of politics', in D. Massey, J. Allen and P. Sarre, eds, *Human geography today* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1999), pp. 281, 283. Also, G. Pratt, 'Geographies of identity and difference: marking boundaries', in Massey et al., *Human geography today*, pp. 151–67; N.J. Thrift and J.-D. Dewsbury, 'Dead geographies – and how to make them live', *Environment and planning D: society and space* 18 (2000), pp. 411–32; N. Gregson and G. Rose, 'Taking Butler elsewhere: performativities, spatialities and subjectivities', *Environment and planning*

D: society and space 18 (2000), pp. 433–52; C. Nash, 'Performativity in practice: some recent work in cultural geography', *Progress in human geography* 24 (2000), pp. 653–64.

[22] e.g. J. Hunter, *The making of the crofting community* (Edinburgh, John Donald, 1976); C.W.J. Withers, *Gaelic Scotland: the transformation of a culture region* (London, Routledge, 1988); T. Devine, *Clanship to crofters war: the social transformation of the Scottish Highlands* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1994).

[23] Gregory, 'Edward Said's imaginative geographies', p. 322.

[24] With respect to methodology, I use the tools of Foucauldian discourse analysis to read the Tapestry as visual text. The paper draws on ethnographic research conducted on the Isle of Harris over the past six years.

[25] G. Pollock, 'The politics of theory: generations and geographies in feminist theory and histories of art histories', in G. Pollock, ed., *Generations and geographies in the visual arts: feminist readings* (New York, Routledge, 1996), p. 19.

[26] Gregory, 'Edward Said's imaginative geographies', p. 322.

[27] Mackenzie, 'The cheviot'.

[28] *Ibid*. Also Mackenzie, 'On the edge'; H. Barton, 'The Isle of Harris superquarry: concepts of the environment and sustainability', *Environmental values* 5 (1996), pp. 97–122; R. Cowell and S. Owens, 'Suitable locations: equity and sustainability in the minerals planning process', *Regional studies* 32 (1998), pp. 797–811.

[29] Jay, *Downcast eyes*, p. 589.

[30] Mackenzie, 'On the edge'.

[31] Withers, *Gaelic Scotland*. Also Hunter, *The making of the crofting community;* Devine, *Clanship*.

[32] Dwelly, *Faclair*, p. 375.

[33] T. Ingold, *The perception of the environment* (London, Routledge, 2000).

[34] A. Hornborg, 'Environmentalism, ethnicity and sacred places: reflections on modernity, discourse and power', *Canadian review of sociology and anthropology* 31 (1994), p. 258.

[35] Harris Development Limited, *Strategy 2002–05: Ceum air adhairt (A step forward)* (2002), pp. 3–4.

[36] Land Reform (Scotland) Act, 2003.

[37] sing. *feannag*. Dwelly (*Faclair*, p. 422) translates the term as follows: 'Rig, a ridge of ground generally used for growing potatoes, and sometimes also for raising corn, the seed being laid on the surface and covered with earth dug out of the trenches along both sides. The term "lazy-bed" applied to it in English is merely a southern odium on the system of farming in Gaeldom, where soil was scarce, and where bog-land could not be cultivated in any other way.'

[38] See J. Maclennan's *Place-names of Scarp*, ed. C.J. Mackay (Comunn Gaidhlig Inbhirnls and Urras Brosnechaidh na Gaihlig, 2001); D. MacKillop, 'Rocks, skerries, shoals and islands in the Sounds of Harris and Uist and around the Island of Berneray', *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness* 56 (1988–90), pp. 428–502.

[39] Mackenzie, 'On the edge'.

[40] R.A. Rundstrom, 'The role of ethics, mapping, and the meaning of place in relations between Indians and Whites in the United States', *Cartographica* 30 (1993), p. 21.

[41] N.L. Peluso, 'Whose woods are these? Counter-mapping forest territories in Kalimantan, Indonesia', *Antipode* 27 (1995), pp. 386–7.

[42] Rogoff, *Terra infirma*, pp. 8–9, 104.

[43] *Ibid.*, p. 29.

[44] Urras Coimhnearsnachd Na Hearadh/Harris Community Trust, Constitution, p. 1. On the recommendation of Donald John Morrison, the new HDL manager, in 1998, Margaret Mackay approached the Gannochy Trust, Perth, which provided one-third of the £10 000 estimated budget, the remainder being provided from two public sources, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar/Western Isles Council and the Scottish Executive's Rural Challenge Fund, and from a number of corporate sponsors.

[45] Interviews, 11 Feb. and 9 August 2002.

[46] Interview, 11 Feb. 2002.

[47] The concept of 'cultural accounting' is A.P. Cohen's: 'Oil and the cultural account: reflections on a Shetland community', *Scottish journal of sociology* 3 (1978), pp. 129–41. Also see A. Blaikie, 'Photographs in the cultural account: contested narratives and collective memory in the Scottish Islands', *Sociological review* 49 (2001), pp. 345–67.

[48] Interview, 11 Feb. 2002.

[49] Scott-Forrest, interview, 7 Feb. 2002.

[50] The phrase is J.D. McClure's: *Language, poetry and nationhood: Scots as a poetic language from 1878 to the present* (East Linton, Scotland, Tuckwell Press, 2000), p. 151.

[51] Ingold, *The preception of the environment*, p. 42 (emphasis original).

[52] M.D. Dominy, 'Hearing grass, thinking grass: postcolonialism and ecology in Aotearoa-New Zealand', *Cultural Geographies* 9 (2002), p. 22.

[53] Macdonald, *Reimagining culture*, esp. pp. 101–27. Also A.P. Cohen, *Whalsay: symbol, segment and boundary in a Shetland community* (London, Tavistock, 1987).

[54] Dominy, 'Hearing grass', p. 22.

[55] Tamara Kohn, 'Becoming an islander through action in the Scottish Hebrides', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 8 (2002), p. 145.

[56] *Ibid.*, pp. 154, 155.

[57] Deutsche, *Evictions*, p. xxii.

[58] J. Jacobs, 'Earth honoring: Western desires and indigenous knowledges', in A. Blunt and G. Rose, eds, *Writing women and space: colonial and postcolonial geographies* (New York, Guilford Press, 1994), p. 191.

[59] For a summary of this evidence, see B. Lawson, *The Teampull at Northton and the church at Scarista* (Taobh Tuath, Isle of Harris, Bill Lawson, 1993), pp. 3–4.

[60] 'Waulking the tweed' refers to a process whereby the tweed is thickened and felted through soaking (in the past using stale urine) and beating. Women, seated at a long table, would sing waulking songs to accompany the work.

[61] Interview, 7 Feb. 2002.

[62] See Lawson, *The Teampull at Northton*.

[63] *Ibid.*, pp. 21–2; J.A. MacAulay, *Silent tower: a history and description of St Clements Church at Rodil* (Edinburgh, Pentland Press, 1993); B. Lawson, *St Clement's Church at Rodel* (Northton, Isle of Harris, 1991).

[64] Ingold, *The perception of the environment*, p. 56.

[65] His poems are found in the volume edited by G. Henderson, *Dain Iain Ghobha* (Glasgow, 1896).

[66] Mairi Bhanchaig's poems are found in A. Carmichael, *Carmina Gadelica* (Edinburgh, Oliver & Boyd, 1972). There is, unfortunately, no reference to Mairi nighean Alasdair Ruaidh, Mary Macleod, well-known bard to the Macleods of Harris and Dunvegan, born in 1569 on Harris and buried in 1674 in St Clement's, Rodel. For a discussion of her place in Gaelic literature as 'one of the best loved of poets', see *Gaelic Songs of Mary Macleod/Orain agus Luinneagan*

Gaidhlig le Mairi Nighean Alastair Ruaidh, ed. J. Carmichael Watson (Edinburgh, Oliver & Boyd for the Scottish Gaelic Texts Society, 1982).

[67] Blaikie, 'Photographs', p. 359.

[68] See MacAulay, *Silent tower*, pp. 33–5; Lawson, *St Clement's Church at Rodel*, pp. 23–4.

[69] See B. Lawson, *St Clement's Church at Rodel*; interview, Dina Macdonald, 13 Feb. 2002.

[70] Interview, 7 Feb. 2002.

[71] The kelp industry, which had provided immense profits to landlords around this time was also on the decline. See Hunter, *The making of the crofter community* and A. Geddes, *The Isle of Lewis and Harris* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1955).

[72] See J. Buchanan, *The Lewis land struggle: Na Gaisgich* (Stornoway, Acair, 1996), pp. 93–131.

[73] Janet Hunter draws attention to the gaps in historical evidence which make it difficult to assess the contribution of the countess both to the commercialization of tweed and to the alleviation of poverty: *The islanders and the orb: the history of the Harris Tweed industry*, 1835–1995 (Stornoway, Acair, 2001), pp. 20–38. Crofters' and cottars' evidence of the actions of the factors in the nineteenth century is found in the report of the Napier Commission, *Evidence taken by Her Majesty's Commission of Inquiry into the condition of the crofters and cottars in the Highlands and Islands of Scotland*, I (Edinburgh, 1884), pp. 837–64.

[74] Armit's evidence demonstrates the centrality of Harris, and the Western Isles, to past centres of power, 'turning on its head old-style diffusionist archeology, [where] cultural change was seen as the product of invasion, colonisation and migration, [and] the north and west of Scotland was seen as more or less the last place where anything innovative was likely to happen'. *The archeology of Skye and the Western Isles* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1996), p. 5.

[75] See H. Lorimer and F. MacDonald, 'A rescue archaeology, Taransay, Scotland', *Cultural geographies* 9 (2002), pp. 95–102.

[76] A. Raine, 'Embodied geographies: subjectivity and materiality in the work of Ana Mendieta', in S. Hesse-Biber, C. Gilmartin and R. Lydenberg, eds, *Feminist approaches to theory and methodology* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 277.

[77] Deutsche, *Evictions*, p. xvi.

[78] Blaikie, 'Photographs', p. 361.

[79] Raine, 'Embodied geographies', p. 269.

[80] Gregory, 'Edward Said's imaginative geographies', p. 322.

[81] Jay, *Downcast eyes*, p. 592.

[82] Gregson and Rose, 'Taking Butler elsewhere', p. 434.

[83] Rogoff, *Terra infirma*, p. 131.

[84] Philo, 'Foucault's geography', p. 211.

[85] *Ibid.*, p. 215.

[86] *Ibid.*, p. 219.

[87] Rogoff, *Terra infirma*, p. 14.