The Struggle for Waterford Crystal:

A Workers' Story of the Rise and Fall(out) of Ireland's Celtic Tiger

by Josh Lalor

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ABSTRACT

Established in 1947, Waterford Crystal was considered an iconic Irish brand, world-renowned as a handcrafted product made on an industrial scale. The company's success shaped the development of Waterford, Ireland and the surrounding region. Its organized workforce secured good wages, good benefits, a high standard of living, and the opportunity to stay in Ireland during times when poverty, unemployment, and emigration were endemic. In 2009, the company went into receivership and the Waterford Crystal brand and intellectual property rights were sold to US venture capitalists. The workers, most of whom had given twenty to forty years of their lives in service to the company, were out of work with no redundancy pay and a pension fund that was nearly insolvent.

During fieldwork in 2011 and 2012, many of the workers were still unemployed, what savings they had were dwindling, and their chances of any relief were hindered by Ireland's economic austerity measures—a consequence of the 2008 financial crisis. The unemployment rate for Waterford was 25.1%, making it the third worst unemployment spot in Ireland (Taft 2012). Given their circumstances, the workers were inclined to contrast and compare the uncertainty of their current situation with the privileged status they had enjoyed for most of their working lives.

The Struggle for Waterford Crystal represents how the workers make sense of their efforts to achieve a certain security, comfort, and pride from their working lives only to have it taken away by political and economic processes beyond their control. The former glass workers offer a unique vantage point upon which to elucidate the ways in which changes in the manifestation of the capitalist system, namely Fordist/Keynesian capitalism and Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, influence people's lives across time and space. My ethnography of the Waterford Crystal workforce provides a situated case study of the rise and fall(out) of the Celtic Tiger through the experiences, memories, narratives, and archives of the Waterford Crystal workers. In doing so, my ethnography is as much about the historical, geographical, sociocultural, political, and economic processes associated with the capitalist system as it is about the former glass workers themselves.

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*All maps that appear in this thesis, except for the tourism map of Waterford's Viking Triangle, were created by the author with the help of Brent Kuefler using QGIS (Hanover Edition) open-source software with ESRI base maps.

*QGIS Development Team, 2022. QGIS Geographic Information System. Open Source Geospatial Foundation. http://qgis.org Accessed December 8, 2022.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ALMPs: Active Labour Market Policies

ATGWU: Amalgamated Trade and General Workers Union

CAP: Common Agricultural Policy

CE: Community Employment CEO: Chief Executive Officer CFO: Chief Financial Officer

CIU: Congress of Irish Unions

CIVC: Comité Interprofessionnel du vin de Champagne

CSO (Ireland): Central Statistics Office

CTR: Community Trademark Regulation

DSP: Department of Social Protection

EC: European Commission

ECB: European Central Bank

EEC: European Economic Community

EES: European Employment Strategy

EGF: European Global Adjustment Fund

EMU: Economic and Monetary Union

ERT: European Round Table of Industrialists

EU: European Union

FÁS: Foras Áiseanna Saothair

GATT: General Agreement on Trades and Tariffs

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

IBRD: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development

IDA: International Development Association

IDA (Ireland): Industrial Development Authority

ICTU: Irish Congress of Trade Unions

IFSC: International Financial Services Centre

IGB: Irish Glass Bottle Company

ITGWU: Irish Transport and General Workers Union

ITUC: Irish Trade Union Congress

IMF: International Monetary Fund

JNC: Joint Negotiating Committee

LRC: Labour Relations Commission

NAMA: National Assets Management Agency

NICs: Newly Industrializing Countries

NLP: National Labour Party

NWA: National Wage Agreement

OECD: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

OEEC: Organization for European Economic Coordination

OHIM: Office of the Harmonization in the Internal Market

OMC: Open-Method Coordination

PAYE: Pay-As-You-Earn

PCF: Parti Communiste Français

PIPS: Pension Insolvency Payment Scheme

PRSI: Pay Related Social Insurance

PNR: Programme for National Recovery

PS: Parti Socialiste

SAP: Structural Adjustment Programme

TAP: Technical Assistance Programme

TD: Teachta Dála

TNC: Transnational Corporation

TRIPS: Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights

Troika: European Commission, European Central Bank, and International Monetary Fund

VEC: Vocational Education Committee

WTO: World Trade Organization

WIT: Waterford Institute of Technology

WWRD: Waterford Wedgwood Royal Doulton Ltd.

NOTE ON THE ETHICS OF ANONYMITY AND WRITING

In the twentieth anniversary edition of *Saints, Scholars, and Schizophrenics*, Nancy Scheper-Hughes (2001, 12-13) writes:

Were I to be writing this book for the first time and with hindsight, there are things that, of course, I would do differently. I would be inclined to avoid the cute and conventional use of pseudonyms. I would not attempt to scramble certain identifying features of the individuals portrayed on the naive assumption that such disguises could not be easily decoded by villagers themselves. I have come to see that the time-honoured practice of bestowing anonymity on our communities and informants fools few and protects none—save, perhaps, the anthropologist...

Anonymity makes us forget that we owe our anthropological subjects the same degree of courtesy, empathy, and friendship in writing that we generally extend to them face to face in the field, where they are not our subjects but our companions and without whom we quite literally could not survive. Sacrificing anonymity means we may have to write less poignant, more circumspect ethnographies, a high price for any writer to pay. But our version of the Hippocratic oath—to do no harm, insofar as possible, to our informants—would seem to demand this.

When conducting fieldwork, and when writing about my fieldwork, I have always kept Scheper-Hughes' experiences of revisiting her field site, *An Clochán*, at the front of my mind. I asked my-self repeatedly: Am I acting ethically? Am I writing ethically? Can I ensure no harm will come to my research participants from my actions?

As detailed in this ethnography, Waterford, Ireland is a relatively small city and between 1947 and 2009 Waterford Crystal employed thousands of people from Waterford City and the Southeast of Ireland. A common refrain in Waterford is that: "Everyone knows someone who worked in The Glass." During my time in the field, I conducted interviews with different networks of friends through snowball sampling (see Chapter One) and sometimes those networks crossed paths. Prior to each interview, my research participants signed detailed waivers outlining why I was conducting interviews, how the information I gathered might be used, and what potential consequences might arise from participating in my research. While many of my research participants gave me permission to identify them in my ethnography, others did not.

While I agree with much of what Scheper-Hughes writes about when reflecting on her fieldwork experiences in *An Clochán*, I still feel that offering a degree of anonymity can be beneficial or even necessary in certain contexts. For example, in Allen Feldman's (1991, 11) *Formations of Violence*, he states that his "concern with anonymity reflects the intense levels of

surveillance in Northern Ireland and the fact that many of the people [he] talked with had been or were currently engaged in some form of clandestine political practice." My participants were not engaged in the same type of activities as Feldman's research participants nor were they located in a small, relatively isolated village on the West coast of Ireland, like Scheper-Hughes' research participants. However, as noted above, the snowball sampling method I employed in the field and the close-knit ties in my field site means that some of my more private research participants are vulnerable to being identified and having their personal lives exposed to a larger audience. Given some of the sensitive material discussed by my research participants—namely, concerning issues of mental health, personal finances, and labour politics—I have chosen to protect the identities of all my research participants except for a few (I outline why those few research participants are identified in the text of this ethnography). At the same time, I want readers to be able to engage easily with my ethnography and that is where decisions around readability become important.

So, with respect to this ethnography, I have decided that not identifying most of my research participants by name is a level of protection I owe them. However, I have given my research participants pseudonyms and a short description of their personalities to humanize them and allow the reader to connect with certain research participants that appear throughout the thesis. I have also revealed general identifying attributes such as, age, gender, job section, and years of service, to contextualize their connection with Waterford Crystal. I feel that this approach adds to the readability of my ethnography without compromising the anonymity of my more private and vulnerable research participants.

My approach may seem to disregard Scheper-Hughes' advice. However, I think my position is a product of her discussion on the importance of always considering how we research and write ethically to the best of our ability. The point is that we need to think through the ethical demands of our specific research situation and do our best to meet them. The context of our field sites and the ways in which we conduct fieldwork must inform the ethics of our research and writing, including decisions around anonymity and readability.

CHAPTER ONE

NAVIGATING THE FIELD

1.1 Introduction

Jack is a big man. With a warm and welcoming face, he is well over six feet tall with a stout build that is reflective of a bigger man in his fifties. He worked as a glass cutter for thirty-six years at Waterford Crystal and served as a shop steward for part of that time before he was made redundant in 2009. Jack is also what many of the former glass workers referred to as a real gentleman, which implies that he is thoughtful, fair, kind, and honest. He was the second former glass worker I interviewed after arriving in Waterford. His gentlemanly nature was on full display with his patience for me as I was still finding my rhythm for conducting interviews. In the passage below, Jack described for me what it meant to work at Waterford Crystal and how it felt when the factory suddenly closed. His description points to some of the important themes that underlie this ethnography.

Josh: What did it mean to work at Waterford Crystal?

Jack: I use the phrase that it was a: cradle to the grave job. They looked after you: you had free doctors [and] free drug schemes for when you did get sick. Later on, when we got wives, spouses, partners, children, you know, the same free medical schemes—it was unheard of at the time. But there was a certain pride of being part of that story from, I suppose, '69 up to the late '80s. It was a period of twenty years that each year was better than the previous year in terms of results. And there was obviously a trickle-down, an improvement in conditions and wages and all that went with it because everyone was doing well out of it—the tide was lifting all boats. So, there was a pride, especially I think in the quality of the product. And it was held in such high esteem in particular by Americans...For a small place like Waterford to produce such a product that was held in huge esteem throughout the biggest market in the world—there was a sense of pride in that.

We were a small industrial town and the industrial base was shrinking from the middle seventies. And the eighties were a terrible time in Ireland for emigration, unemployment, high interest rates, the whole lot and they were probably the most successful

years in Waterford Crystal's history—certainly in terms of pay and conditions...Lads invested and bought beautiful homes, bigger houses, bigger cars, better holidays...There was a huge sense of pride—that was the overwhelming sense of working in Waterford Crystal. As hard as the work was, as demanding as it was, you were well rewarded and you knew the value that other people put on it.

Josh: What was it like when the factory finally closed?

Jack: I think there was any number of issues that occupied us for the first six months, twelve months in terms of redundancy pay, severance pay, tax issues, pension issues and, obviously, everyone had their own domestic issues. People with children going to university—cause I mentioned the "cradle to the grave" there...you always knew that you had money for university, you had money for private health care, you had the money. And, even if you hadn't it in your pocket, you had access to it...your children could aspire to something that a lesser paid parent mightn't allow their child to aspire to or wouldn't have the financial wherewithal to pay for those aspirations. And, I think, my lad was almost finished college, and I hadn't those particular worries. But they were worries we never had. As I said, we could get mortgages and have nice houses, nice holidays—just a lovely standard of living. And I think when it closed...all the certainty that you had about all this stuff and even going forward to your retirement—I'm going to try and get out by the time I'm fifty-five or sixty or sixty-five, you know, we're going to do stuff that couples wanted to do but couldn't because of all the other restrictions. All that hope and expectation was all washed away in a matter of months, that was gone. - Jack, Male, 50s, Craftworker, 36 Years of Service

Through Jack's employment at Waterford Crystal, he maintained a degree of comfort and security for himself and his family for most of his working life. Furthermore, being a glass cutter at Waterford Crystal was a job Jack took pride in, both in terms of the material benefits the job bestowed and by virtue of knowing he produced something highly valued around the world. He was a craftsman, a master glass cutter.

Jack described his job at Waterford Crystal as a "cradle to the grave job," which implies permanency. Established in 1947, Waterford Crystal was considered an iconic Irish brand, world-renowned as a handcrafted product made on an industrial scale (see Chapter Four). The company's success shaped the development of Waterford, Ireland and the surrounding region (see Chapter Five). Its organized workforce secured good wages, good benefits, a high standard of living, and the opportunity to stay and thrive in Ireland during times when poverty,

unemployment, and emigration were endemic (see Chapters Three and Five). From birth to death, Jack perceived his job at Waterford Crystal as a constant source of financial support for his working life and future retirement. However, there was nothing permanent about the job Jack held for most of his life. Security turned to uncertainty when Waterford Crystal went into receivership and Jack was made redundant following the 2008 financial crisis, which also signaled the collapse of Ireland's much heralded neoliberal model of economic development of the nineties and noughties known as the Celtic Tiger. With the company's pension fund nearly insolvent, Jack's life's work and hopes for the future were gone. He was preoccupied with the thought of having to struggle to make ends meet through his retirement. Jack was representative of many of the former glass workers I interviewed for this ethnography in 2011 and 2012 (see Section 1.3).

In Walley's (2013, 7) ethnography on the deindustrialization of Southeast Chicago's steel industry, she argues that an examination of deindustrialization "means paying attention to the *kinds* of jobs that have been lost: not whether such jobs were located in factories, but whether they were stable, decent-paying jobs around which strong working families and communities could be built." It is what Jack described above as: "just a lovely standard of living." Examining these kinds of jobs "does not mean indulging in an act of nostalgia, but rather the need to take part in a hard-nosed critical exploration of where we have come from...and where we are heading" (Walley 2013, 7). Similarly, Kasmir and Carbonella (2014, 4) argue that we need to examine the making, unmaking, and remaking of labour forces and working classes—culturally, politically, and structurally—over longer time frames in order to make sense of the "changing experiences of labour and all they mean for social and daily life." Through the former glass workers' experiences, memories, and narratives, I examine the workers' lives at Waterford Crystal across different manifestations of capitalism, namely Fordist/Keynesian capitalism and Flexible

Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism (D. Harvey 1990; also see Chapter Three). *The Struggle for Waterford Crystal* represents how the workers make sense of their efforts to attain and maintain a certain degree of security, comfort, and pride—that lovely standard of living—from their working lives only to have it all taken away by political and economic processes beyond their control.

According to Durrenberger (2009, 9), exploring "relationships among states, class structures, global processes, and locales requires attention to the details of local ethnography as well as the larger-scale causal forces." Likewise, Walley (2013, x) contends that while "Southeast Chicago may seem like an obscure place to some, it is the vantage point offered by such marginalized places that may offer the most revealing angle from which to view and understand what has been happening at the American Centre." Waterford, Waterford Crystal, and the former glass workers offer a unique vantage point from which to elucidate the ways in which changes in the manifestation of the capitalist system influences people's lives across time and space. My ethnography of the Waterford Crystal workforce provides a situated case study of the rise and fall(out) of the Celtic Tiger through the experiences, memories, and narratives of the Waterford Crystal workers. In doing so, my ethnography is as much about the historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes associated with the capitalist system as it is about the former glass workers themselves (see Section 1.3).

1.2 A Brief Account of the Downfall of the Waterford Crystal Workers

In 2008, the Waterford Wedgwood Group, a conglomerate of luxury tableware products established by the original Waterford Crystal company, was hit hard by the global financial crisis. Amid a global "credit crunch," banks were reluctant to make loans and eager to consolidate their assets. Consequently, the Group was unable to secure any loans to restructure their

operations or the massive debt they had accumulated from making too many high-priced acquisitions in the nineties and early noughties—all in an effort to corner the luxury tableware market (see Chapter Two). It is also important to note that in April 2008 the Irish government denied the Waterford Wedgwood Group a €39 million loan-guarantee for the completion of a restructuring programme intended to ensure Waterford Crystal's long-term viability in Ireland, a decision that many of the workers considered to be an affront by the Irish government (see Chapter Seven).

On January 5th, 2009, Waterford Wedgwood was placed under receivership after the Group's creditors, led by the Bank of America, refused to suspend a covenant that required the Group to have a certain amount of cash on hand as part of its loan agreement (Werdigier 2009). Subsequently, David Carson of Deloitte Ireland was appointed receiver by the Irish courts. Initially, Carson kept Waterford Crystal operational as a going concern. But three-and-a-half weeks later, on January 30th, the Waterford Crystal workers were locked out of the factory, despite earlier assurances from Carson that no such measures would be taken without consulting the trade union (Unite the Union) and the workforce. That morning hundreds of workers gathered outside the plant, at which point they took over and occupied the factory's Showroom and Visitor Centre in an effort to save their jobs and the production of Waterford Crystal in Ireland.

Initially, the Occupation received enthusiastic support, locally, nationally, and internationally (see Chapter Two). However, as workers' bills began to mount and the possibility of a suitable resolution receded, support for the Occupation began to wane. As an incentive to end the Occupation, the workers were offered €10 million as an *ex gratia* payment by the receiver. Although this payment amounted to very little per worker, many felt that it was better to walk away with something than nothing. In a meeting on March 22nd, 2009, the workers agreed to end their occupation of the Waterford Crystal Showroom and Visitor Centre. Subsequently, the Waterford

Crystal brand and intellectual property rights were sold to a group of US venture capitalists, KPS Capital Partners. In the deal, KPS also acquired some of the Waterford Wedgwood Group's other assets and established a subsidiary company, Waterford Wedgwood Royal Doulton Ltd. (WWRD). The new company outsourced the bulk of Waterford Crystal's production to Central and Eastern Europe. However, through public funding and initiative on behalf of the Waterford City Council, KPS agreed to establish a new showroom and scaled-down factory on The Mall in the centre of Waterford (see Chapter Six). While the new House of Waterford Crystal engages in some production, namely the company's high-end, specialty pieces, it is essentially a site for tourists to observe the traditional production of mouth-blown and hand-cut glass. Historically, the Tourist Trail, as it was known, was always a profitable aspect of the original business (see Chapter Four). Also, the House of Waterford Crystal serves to maintain a link between the brand and its place of origin, which is important to the integrity of the brand.

As for the Waterford Crystal workforce, many of whom gave twenty to forty years of their lives in service to the company, they were out of work with no redundancy pay and a pension fund that was nearly insolvent. The shock from the loss of their pensions was made worse by the Irish state's flagrant disregard for the European Insolvency Directive, which is intended to protect the private pensions of European Union citizens from insolvency (see Chapter Seven). Their situation was exacerbated further by the bursting of Ireland's property bubble and subsequent collapse of the Irish banking system. In an effort to restore confidence in the Irish banking sector and overcome the global "credit crunch," the Irish government sought advice from Merrill Lynch, a recently defunct investment bank which had been subsumed by the Bank of America because of its own dishonest dealings in the sub-prime mortgage crisis, and decided to guarantee the €440 billion debt of Irish banks in September of 2008 (Allen and O'Boyle 2013). The

guarantee was intended to get Ireland "ahead of other states and ensure that credit kept flowing into Irish banks" (Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 6). According to Allen and O'Boyle (2013, 6), this tactic raised two probing questions about the state of Ireland's economy: 1) if the banks are sound, then why do they need a guarantee?; and, 2) how can the Irish government guarantee a debt of €440 billion? Ireland's gross domestic product was €110.8 billion in 2007, approximately a quarter of the total debt guarantee (Central Statistics Office 2011, 127). When this tactic did not lead to an increased flow of credit into Irish banks, the Irish government attempted to recapitalize the banks by injecting €64 billion of public funds into these private institutions, but even this cash injection was not enough to prevent their shares from dropping (Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 7).

The Irish government eventually had to nationalize five of the six major Irish banks (Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 7). However, the Irish government did not take the banks' assets under state control, only their debt (Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 7). The glass workers were incensed by the Irish government's handling of the banking system. When Waterford Wedgwood asked for a €39 million loan-guarantee to restructure Waterford Crystal and when the workers and their trade union called upon the Irish government to nationalize Waterford Crystal after it went into receivership, the government stated that they did not want to be seen intervening in the free market (see Chapter Two). Yet, the government were willing to make Irish people responsible for paying the debt of banks that had posted huge profits, upon which relatively little tax was collected, prior to 2008 (Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 7). This is what led to Ireland's so-called sovereign debt crisis, not years of profligate state spending. Subsequently, the Irish government negotiated a financial bailout with the European Commission (EC), the European Central Bank (ECB), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)—the Troika—which resulted in a period of economic austerity and

retrenchment of Ireland's welfare programmes (see Chapter Eight). Former glassworkers who had paid into the state welfare system for most of their lives found that, just when they needed the state's help, there was very little to be had, making it increasingly difficult to get by on a day-to-day basis.

1.3 RESEARCH METHODS

My research was conducted over two fieldwork periods in 2011 (seven months) and 2012 (four months), two to three years after the closure of the Waterford Crystal factory. It was an uncertain time for many people in Ireland. In December 2010, the Irish government brokered its financial bailout with the Troika and my fieldwork coincided with the first and second year of the bailout agreement, a period of extreme economic austerity. Between 2008 and 2013, the Irish government implemented €28 billion in cuts, which represented "one of the biggest fiscal adjustments of any advanced country in modern times" (Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 25). The unemployment rate for Waterford City and Waterford County was 25.1% and 21.6% respectively, making them the third and the tenth worst unemployment spots in the country (Taft 2012). In Waterford City, there were five neighbourhoods with unemployment rates over forty percent and two neighbourhoods over thirty-five percent (Taft 2012). During my fieldwork, many of the former glass workers were still unemployed, what savings they had were dwindling, and their unemployment benefits were being retrenched (see Chapter Eight). Furthermore, the legal battle to recover the workers' pensions was still unresolved as the Irish High Court had referred the matter to the European Court of Justice, which would not rule on the case until 2013 (see Chapter Seven).

Interviews, as opposed to participant observation, were central to my research because of the circumstances in which I conducted it. Waterford Crystal, as the former glass workers knew it, and lived it, no longer existed. There was no factory or central location for me to go and interact with the workers. The former glass workers were dispersed throughout Waterford and the surrounding region and in the case of those who left the region or emigrated for work, they were even farther afield. Interviews also suited my research participants because many of them were still unemployed and had the time to sit down for in-depth reflections and general conversations. Many of my research participants seemed to welcome the chance to talk with me, sometimes sitting with me for hours. On the one hand, I think the former glass workers wanted to tell their stories to provide greater scope and depth to their lives at Waterford Crystal beyond its tragic end. On the other hand, I think sitting with me broke up their days. It was something different from the monotony of being unemployed. My presence, as a researcher interested in their experiences, also validated the significance they attached to their own working lives at Waterford Crystal.

As for my use of participant observation as a research method, it was also influenced by the context of my research. The opportunity to participate in the 2009 Occupation of the factory or the day-to-day working lives of the former glass workers had passed. For that reason, I employed participant observation in the broad sense of the concept. Glesne (2011, 64) argues that long-term fieldwork in a particular place, which includes daily "observations, conversations, interviews, [and] data collection," constitutes an aspect of participant observation that provides valuable insight into the lives of the people and places we seek to understand (see Chapters Five and Six). While interviews are at the heart of my research, my use of participant observation in this broad sense provided much needed context for my interviews, my field site, and my ethnography as a whole.

While in the field, I conducted fifty-one semi-structured interviews and two group interviews—one of seven and one of three—with former Waterford Crystal workers. I also conducted

semi-structured interviews with local politicians (five), businesspeople (five), and bureaucrats (three) to provide background on what had happened to the Waterford Crystal workers before and after the workers' occupation of the factory. Beyond these interviews, I met with local academics and students from the Waterford Institute of Technology, as well as political organizers and residents of Waterford to further contextualize my research. All of my research participants identified ethnically as Irish, which is significant because Waterford Crystal was established by a Czech immigrant, Karel (Charles) Bačik, and Bernard Fitzpatrick, a Dublin jeweler, along with an initial workforce composed mostly of master glassmakers recruited from war-torn Europe between 1947 and 1956 (Hearne 2019, 304). This is detailed in Chapters Three and Four.

I was introduced to my first research participant through a friend. Subsequently, I attained interviews through cold-calling (and emailing) and by developing my own social and professional networks in Waterford that were initially outside the scope of my research. I was also the subject of an interview in the local newspaper, the Waterford News & Star (O'Mara 2012), which led to two people contacting me but no interviews.

In Waterford, it was often said, "Everyone knows someone who worked in The Glass." Waterford is a relatively small city with a population of 46,747 in 2011 (Central Statistics Office 2011, 9). Waterford Crystal employed thousands of people between 1947 and 2009. For instance, in the 1970s, Waterford Crystal had over 3,000 employees across three different factories in Waterford City and County (Havel 2005, 185; Hunt and Whitty 2010, 228). As I developed my own social and professional networks in Waterford, I was gradually introduced to former glass workers. After connecting with a former glass worker, I would then employ the snowball sampling method to secure more interviews with other former glass workers. I applied the same recruitment approach with respect to the semi-structured interviews I conducted with local politicians,

businesspeople, and bureaucrats. While the snowball method put me in contact with many willing research participants, this approach might have also delimited my overall group of research participants to particular social networks, circles, and/or backgrounds. For example, I did not interview any former workers that did not identify ethnically as Irish. In saying this, I did not uncover any data or information on the number or significance of immigrant labour, outside of the craftworkers of the postwar period, at Waterford Crystal. However, given the ways in which Waterford Crystal's Irishness was promoted by the state, the company, and its workforce (as discussed in Chapters Three and Four), it is possible that immigrant labour was limited at Waterford Crystal, or the experiences of immigrant labour have been silenced by the dominant narrative that casts Waterford Crystal as an Irish company/brand. I also did not have the opportunity to interview any descendants of the initial immigrant workforce recruited from Europe. It is worth mentioning that Charles Bačik's granddaughter, Ivana Bačik TD¹, is a prominent Irish political activist, politician (leader of the Irish Labour Party since 2022), and longstanding advocate of the pro-choice movement in Ireland.

As for the profile of my research participants, my interviews are comprised of mostly older men, supporters of the trade union (all Waterford Crystal employees, except for upper management, were required to join the trade union at Waterford Crystal), and craftworkers. Interviews with managers, office workers, maintenance workers, and general section workers (i.e., quality inspection, packaging, distribution, and general labourers) are less pronounced in my research. There are several reasons for why this is the case. The craftworkers were essential to the identity of the brand and held in high regard both within and outside of the company (see Chapter Four). Their elevated position in the company also meant they dominated the politics of the

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¹ TD is an acronym for *Teachta Dála*, which is a member of Irish Parliament.

workplace and the trade union (see Chapter Two). As a result, the craftworkers were more readily available for interviews because, from the workers' perspective, they had a long history of speaking for the workforce. Twenty-three of my research participants had served as shop stewards during their time at Waterford Crystal and sixteen of those shop stewards were craftworkers. The three senior trade union officials I interviewed were all from the cutting section at Waterford Crystal. As for the rest of the former glass workers I interviewed, all of them were members of their trade union. Many of them were staunch supporters of their trade union but had varying degrees of involvement ranging from irregularly attending meetings to participating in various trade union activities, such as committees. Even former glass workers who were critical of, or stated that they had fallen out with, their trade union, still believed in the benefits of trade unionism in general.

The ready-availability of craftworkers for interviews contributed to the male-centric character of my research participants overall. Table 1 outlines the Job Section and Gender Profiles of my research participants. The craft sections were made up of an entirely male workforce. No one

I spoke with knew of any female blowers, cutters, or engravers. Most of the craftworkers were hired between 1950 and 1980. There was a conventional view that glassmaking was a male-specific

Job Section	Male	Female	Total
Craftworkers	40	0	40
General Section	5	6	11
Managers/Office Workers	6	2	8
Maintenance	2	0	2
Total	53	8	61

Table 1. Research Participants' Job Section and Gender Profile.

occupation because of the physical demands and dangerous nature of the glassmaking process.

While there would have been some recruitment to the craft section in the 1980s, by this time the

craft section was firmly established as a male domain. Furthermore, the craft section jobs were highly coveted because they were well paying and Waterford Crystal, and Ireland in general, was conservative with respect to married women in the workplace. The government-imposed marriage bar, which stipulated that female employees leave their jobs after getting married, was officially lifted for the civil service in Ireland in 1973 (Foley 2022, 63). However, Waterford Crystal continued to impose this sanction on married women until 1977 (E. O'Connor 1989, 335). The status of the craftworker positions would have reinforced a male bias in this context because men were perceived both conventionally, by most of the male and some of the female workers I interviewed, and by law, under the terms of the marriage bar, as being providers and breadwinners for their families. Prior to the 1990s, Ireland had one of the lowest female labour force participation rates in Europe (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton 2002, S150).

Despite a concerted effort to recruit more female research participants, women make up about thirteen percent of my total interviews (see Table 1). While employing the snowball sampling method, I asked specifically to be put in touch with former female glass workers, but I was often given the response that they were not interested in talking with me. This occurred both directly with a couple of potential research participant and indirectly through my contacts. When I asked, "Why?" I was told bluntly that they just were not interested in speaking with me or they deferred to the expertise of the research participant that I was attempting to use as a trustworthy connection. In my interview with the *Waterford News & Star* (O'Mara 2012), I expressed my interest in recruiting female research participants because of a dearth in my own research. However, this did not lead to any additional female research participants. While Waterford Crystal was a male-dominated workforce, my research participants are probably not representative of the

gender ratio at Waterford Crystal. Unfortunately, I was unable to attain any information on the gender ratio of Waterford Crystal's workforce.

With respect to the age of the workforce when Waterford Crystal closed in 2009, my research participants reflect the age profile of the company's workforce well. Table 2 compares the

Age Profiles of my research participants and Waterford Crystal's workforce at the time of the company's closure in 2009. The majority of Waterford Crystal's workforce were in the "forty to fifty" and "fifty to sixty" age groups, which represent thirty-three and forty-six percent of the workforce respectively. With respect to my

Age Range	Age Profile of Research Participants, 2011-2012	Age Profile of Company, 2009
> 20	0	1
20 - 30	0	19
30 - 40	2	102
40 - 50	23	225
50 - 60	26	320
60 - 70	8	20
< 70	3*	4
Total	61	689

Table 2. Age Profile Comparison between Research Participants and Waterford Crystal's Workforce, 2009 (Unite Waterford Crystal Archives 2011).

research participants, the "forty to fifty" age group represents thirty-eight percent of my interviews, and the "fifty to sixty" age group represents forty-three percent. However, the "sixty to seventy" age group is overrepresented at thirteen percent of my research participants compared to three percent of the company's workforce. In contrast, the "thirty to forty" age group is underrepresented, three percent of my research participants compared to fifteen percent of the company's workforce. The under thirty age groups, which made up three percent of the company's workforce, are not represented at all in my research participants. It should also be noted that my

three research participants over seventy years old retired from the company prior to its closure in 2009.

As with female research participants, I made a similar effort to recruit younger workers. However, I found it difficult to secure interviews with these age groups. Given the older age profile of the workforce, the older workers were often deferred to as the experts on the company, especially when I tried to arrange interviews with the children of older workers who were employed alongside their parents. There was also few to no craftworkers in these age groups. Finally, the younger workers were more mobile. The opportunity for them to emigrate or move away to pursue work elsewhere was greater because they were less tied down by children, mortgages, social networks, and other commitments.

As I began to meet with workers, my interviews took the form of working life histories. While I was interested in the historical significance of the company and its workforce to the development of the city and the region, collecting working life histories was not my initial intention. However, the workers were inclined to contrast and compare the precariousness of their current situation with the privileged status they had enjoyed as Waterford Crystal workers. Portelli (1991, 54) suggests that the researcher needs to "accept" their research participants "and give priority to what [each one] wishes to tell, rather than what the researcher wants to hear, saving any unanswered questions for later or for another interview." This is especially significant because oral histories "tells us less about events than about their meaning" (Portelli 1991, 50). Now, "this does not imply that oral history has no factual validity. Interviews often reveal unknown aspects of known events; they always cast new light on unexplored areas of the daily life of the nonhegemonic classes" (Portelli 1991, 50). However, it is important to recognize that "memory is not a passive depository of facts, but an active process of creation of meanings"

(Portelli 1991, 52). Similarly, Scott (1991, 797; also see Scott 1992) argues that our experiences "serve as a way of talking about what happened, of establishing difference and similarity, of claiming knowledge that is 'unassailable.'" Our experiences are both an "interpretation and something that needs to be interpreted" (Scott 1991, 797). Thus, the meaning the former glass workers give to their experiences and memories concerning their working lives must be contextualized by exploring the historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes that have influenced their experiences and memories across time and space.

While the focus of this ethnography is on the Waterford Crystal workers and their lives in a particular place and time, their story is inseparable from major political and economic upheavals occurring across the local, national, and global scale. As Durrenberger (2009, 11), paraphrasing Leach, realized with respect to his own research: "I couldn't comprehend the economy of any village without appreciating its position within the whole region." Many former glass workers refer to the 2008 financial crisis, economic austerity, the failure of the national government to intervene in their situation, as well as broader historical, geographical, political, and economic processes, such as the rise and fall of Ireland's Celtic Tiger, to make sense of what has happened to them. As Kwon and Lane (2016, 10) argue, the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism has resulted in the "production of...precarity, or increased experience of inequality and insecurity that has accompanied the destabilization of the institutions, expectations, and life trajectories around which people once built their lives." The notion of precarity is discussed in further detail later in this chapter but for now it is important to note the overwhelming sense of insecurity and uncertainty felt by the former Waterford Crystal workers following their redundancy.

Burawoy (2000, 4-5) argues that the ethnographer is in a privileged position to offer "insight into the lived experiences of globalization." For Burawoy (2000, 27), the link between local

and global is a "structured' one in which the part [being studied] is shaped by its relation to the whole, the whole being represented by 'external forces." Similarly, Marcus (1998, 83) argues that in ethnographic research, "there is no global in the local-global contrast now so frequently invoked. The global is an emergent dimension of arguing about the connection among sites in a multi-sited ethnography." While my research may constitute a single-sited ethnography, in that it focuses primarily on Waterford City and some parts of Waterford County, the findings of my research are not limited to Waterford City and County.

This ethnography is about elucidating the relationship that connects the Waterford Crystal workforce and the different manifestations of capitalist production that have shaped their lives. My research constitutes what Marcus (1998, 95) calls a "strategically situated ethnography," which "attempts to understand something broadly about the system in ethnographic terms as much as it does its local subjects: It is only local circumstantially, thus situating itself in a context or field differently than does other single-site ethnography." The value of Marcus' notion of "strategically situated ethnography" is that it provides a framework upon which to conceptualize my research in general. However, in taking this approach, it is important not to "objectify" these external forces because doing so "gives them a false sense of durability" and as such they "will appear inevitable and natural" (Burawoy 2000, 27, 29). In order to counter the "objectification" of the global, we need to focus on the ways in which "global domination is resisted, avoided, and negotiated" at the local-level because it is at the local-level where the manifestation of the relationship between the local and the global takes place (Burawoy 2000, 29).

An in-depth understanding of the relationship between the local and the global means "strategically situated ethnography" must also be historical ethnography. In addition to working life histories, this ethnography draws heavily upon local newspaper and radio accounts, publicly

available reports and documents from Waterford City and County Council and Waterford Crystal, as well as documents related to the workers' trade union activities. Many of these documents were available through Waterford City and County Central Library (The Waterford Room), the Waterford City Archives, Unite the Union archives (Waterford Branch)², and people's personal collection of documents. Through the collection and examination of oral histories, local archival data, and community memories, a "strategically situated ethnography" grounded in ethnohistory provides a robust understanding of the interactions between the local and the global across time and space (Burawoy 2000, 5; Marcus 1998, 95). This is reminiscent of an approach employed by Winson and Leach (2002) in Contingent work, Disrupted Lives, who suggest we need to focus on: "the layering of processes at local, national, and global levels, and the interface between these dimensions and across historical periods, as we attempt to understand what happens to ordinary people caught up in complex political and economic processes." Following my research participants' lead, this "strategically situated ethnography" stems from the workers' attempts to make sense of the rupture between their once privileged status as glassworkers for most of their working lives with the position they found themselves in the years following the closure of Waterford Crystal in 2009.

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² I use the term archives here loosely. The archived material on Waterford Crystal was essentially banker boxes full of paper related to the trade union's work at Waterford Crystal. The boxes were in a closet at the Keyser St. Trade Union Hall in Waterford. Thankfully, Unite the Union was kind enough to give me permission to sift through the boxes for any potentially relevant material. Anything that I thought might be useful then had to be approved for use by Unite's Regional Co-ordinating Officer.

1.4 METHOD AND THEORY FOR STRATEGICALLY SITUATED ETHNOGRAPHY

1.4.1 Methodology - Social Actors, Interfaces, and Brokers

Long's notion of "social actors" helped me conceptualize my field site. For Long (2001, 16), social actors can be individuals, groups, organizations (small, medium and/or large), or any social entity that can exercise agency. According to Long, "agency attributes to the individual actor the capacity to process social experiences and to devise ways of coping with life" (Long 2001, 16). Even though there is a tendency to conceptualize agency as embodied within individuals, they "are not the only entities that reach decisions, act accordingly and monitor outcomes" (Long 2001, 16). Small, medium, large groups and/or organizations are also able to "devise ways of solving, or if possible avoiding, 'problematic situations,' and...actively engage in constructing their own social worlds" (Long 2001, 24). Likewise, what are often referred to as "macro actors" (e.g., national governments, central banks, and international organizations) are sometimes portrayed, and continually reified, as monolithic entities (Long 2001, 241). This is problematic because "macro actors" are complex organizations made up of many people and factions with both similar and competing interests. By using Long's notion of social actors, the focus of our analysis is no longer on the "macro actor" as an entity, but on the social interaction a "macro actor" may have with individuals, groups, communities, organizations and/or other "macro actors." Long (2001, 3) focuses on the "processes by which specific actors and networks of actors engage with and thus co-produce their own (inter)personal and collective social worlds." Thus, the emphasis is on the relationships and/or interactions among different social actors, whether individuals, groups, organizations, and/or "macro actors." It is the relationships and/or interactions that are critical for understanding the ways in which we construct and perceive our social reality.

It is important to note that social categories, such as, class, gender, age, nationality, ethnicity, or race do not constitute social actors. Social categories cannot exercise agency because they "have no way of carrying out decisions" as a collective unit (Long 2001, 16). However, social actors may appeal to notions of class, gender, age, nationality, ethnicity, or race as a basis for interaction, making decisions, and forming groups. Similarly, many of my research participants spoke of the importance of Waterford Crystal to the "community." However, the term "community" is not a self-evident category of analysis. It is often imbued with different meanings depending on the people, groups, and/or organizations that invoke "community" (Brubaker 2004, Cohen 1985, Cooper 2005). "Community" can be employed by people, groups, and/or organizations to represent, assert authority over, and speak for others who might not necessarily agree with their particular interpretation (Brubaker 2004, Cooper 2005). Thus, it is important to explore the ways in which the term "community" is employed by different social actors, especially with respect to the story of the Waterford Crystal workforce.

In addition to perceiving people, groups, and organizations in terms of social actors and focusing on their relationships and interactions, Long suggests that we need to identify and examine "interfaces." These are critical points where a "multiplicity of actors and perspectives...merge and combine through processes of accommodation and conflict to generate newly emergent forms of organization and understanding" (Long 2001, 177). Interfaces allow us to explore the interactions among social actors and the ways in which those interactions shape their social worlds. Related to interfaces are what Long (2001, 151) calls "brokers" or people who work across interfaces and "are important in the flow of information since they command access to socially distant relationships and resources." By examining how the broker acts as a go-between, it is possible to explore any structural discontinuities that may exist between the group

and the organization. We can also examine how the decision-making processes of the group and the organization may lead to situations of conflict or accommodation.

When identifying research participants, I was thinking in terms of Long's notion of brokers and interfaces, which is why I sought interviews with former shop stewards, the trade union leadership, local politicians, local bureaucrats, and local businesspeople. As brokers, the shop stewards connected the rank-and-file membership with the trade union leadership. The trade union leadership represented the rank-and-file in talks with the receiver, the Irish government (local and national), and the legal battle for the workers' pensions. The local politicians, who represented the people of Waterford both locally and nationally, related the needs of the workers to the government as a whole. The local bureaucrats I interviewed were largely responsible for connecting the former glass workers with various public and private resources to help them deal with their redundancy. As for the local businesspeople, they spoke mainly of their own independent relationship with the Waterford Crystal workforce. However, they also spoke in relationship to the Waterford Chamber of Commerce or the business community in general.

Some of my research participants do not constitute brokers working across interfaces and this is important as well. My interviews with former glass workers (thirty-eight) who did not serve as shop stewards with the trade union raised issues that were not discussed or not discussed as extensively by the former shop stewards or the trade union leadership. The shop stewards' silence around these various issues are significant for two reasons. Firstly, some of the rank-and-file felt that their views were being dismissed, overlooked, or not taken fully into consideration. Secondly, many of the shop stewards I interviewed talked about the difficulty of the position. Shop stewards are often caught between the demands of the rank-and-file and the threats of upper management. In seeking compromises or resolutions in the workplace, there was always a

level of dissatisfaction with the shop stewards from the rank-and-file. Silencing certain perspectives or narratives could be the result of: 1) there are just too many differing views to include everyone's opinion on a particular issue; 2) by shaping the narrative of a particular issue, shop stewards can make it seem like the only compromise or resolution possible was the one achieved by the trade union, which may be the case; and, 3) a shop steward's role is political and the views of some rank-and-file members maybe dismissed because of interpersonal and/or collective differences. Ultimately, seeking a range of interviews provided a greater breadth of information upon which to contextualize and ground my analysis.

As a methodological approach, focusing on social actors, interfaces, and brokers is congruent with "strategically situated ethnography" as a conceptual framework because both are grounded in relational thinking. In attempting to "understand something broadly about the system in ethnographic terms," "strategically situated ethnography" centres on the relationship connecting local subjects and the wider system (Marcus 1998, 95). Similarly, Long's (2001) social actor approach, with an emphasis on interfaces and brokers, rests on examining the relationships and interactions between individuals, groups, organizations, and/or "macro actors" to understand the ways in which our social reality is constructed.

1.4.2 Elucidating the Struggle for Waterford Crystal Across Time and Space

As already mentioned, Marcus' (1998) notion of "strategically situated ethnography" provides a framework through which to conceptualize the connection between the workers and the wider political and economic processes influencing their lives. However, to elucidate that relationship a comprehensive theoretical approach is needed. "Strategically situated ethnography" is intrinsically spatial and, therefore, temporal. Space is the result of a productive process which is

known in and through time (D. Harvey 2006, 123-4; Lefebvre 1991, 31, 219). Likewise, time is actualized through people's lived experience (i.e., physical and mental sensations) of material space (D. Harvey 2006, 123-4; Lefebvre 1991, 31, 219). Therefore, when discussing space, time is always present in the background and vice versa. So, how do we conceptualize the connection between the working life histories of the Waterford Crystal workers and the wider political and economic processes influencing their lives across time and space?

Braudel (1960) differentiates between two types of "time" upon which historical research is constituted: the *histoire événementielle* (history of events or the short duration) and the *longue durée* (long duration). According to Braudel (1960, 4), "all historical work views the past in its component parts, choosing its chronological realities according to more-or-less conscious preferences. Traditional history is interested in brief time-spans, in the individual, in the event"—the *histoire événementielle*. While "the concept of 'event' seems to indicate a 'point' in time, events stretch in all directions" (Portelli 1991, 73). Portelli (1991, 73) suggests that "both the concept of 'event' and 'duration' appear to be more a matter of how we look at (and narrate) history, than something inscribed into 'objective' reality. Similarly, Feldman (1991, 14) argues that: "*The event is not what happens. The event is that which can be narrated.*"

According to Portelli (1991, 61): "a life history is a living thing. It is always a work in progress, in which narrators revise the image of their own past as they go along." Moreover, "memory is not an instantaneous act of recall...but rather a process and a generator of meaning" (Portelli 1991, 254). In some instances, where stories are told repeatedly by a narrator or within a community, the story can become formalized over time and result in a particular version of "events" becoming preserved in a narrative (Portelli 1991, 52). So, how do we reconcile the

meaning generated from experience, memory, and narration through life histories and stories with our understanding of the *histoire événementielle?*

Portelli (1991, 69) thinks of "events" as occurring on a horizontal and vertical axis. The horizontal axis "is the procedure with which we are most familiar: it divides time horizontally into periods and epochs, which are 'hung' on key events operating as partitions and interpretations of each sequential unit" (Portelli 1991, 69). On the vertical axis, many "events" are occurring at the same time and that for any "conventional time unit, a second or a year, there is always more than one event happening in it" (Portelli 1991, 69). However, concurrent "events" take on different degrees of importance and meaning with respect to what the narrator is trying to convey (Portelli 1991, 69). In doing so, the narrator will group "events" together based on "areas of meaning," which does not necessarily correspond to a chronological order (Portelli 1991, 69). In a life history, a narrator will emphasize certain "areas of meaning," or combine "events" and experiences to present a narrative that is congruent with the way they perceive their place in the world (Portelli 1991, 69-70). In addition, "most narrators seek to confer a coherence to their stories by adhering to a relatively consistent principle or mode" (Portelli 1991, 21). Portelli (1991, 70) sketches three modes, along with their spatial referents, upon which most narratives are organized:

Institutional: the sphere of politics, government, parties, unions, and elections; the national and international historical context; and ideology. Space referent: the nation and the world.

Collective: the life of the community, the neighbourhood, and the workplace; strikes, natural catastrophes, and rituals; and collective participation in "institutional" episodes. Space referent: the town, the neighbourhood, and the workplace.

Personal: private and family life; the life cycle of births, marriage, jobs, children, and deaths; and personal involvement in the two other levels. Space referent: the home.

It is important to note that any "given event can be placed in more than one mode" and that the "identification of an event and of its meaning is usually based on the network of sequential and simultaneous events to which it is linked by means of the narrative and the memory mode" (Portelli 1991, 21). In other words, the meaning associated with a particular "event" is engendered through its narrated relationship with other "events."

Take for example the passage below from Cormac, who worked as a glass cutter for forty-two years at Waterford Crystal. Cormac's presence is undeniable. He embodies the *joie de vivre* of a preschooler with the keen insight of a lifelong socialist and trade unionist. His enthusiasm for life and social justice is infectious. In the following passage, Cormac combines the workforce's decision to end the 2009 Occupation, the history of public disagreement within the trade union's Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC), and his own home life to reveal something about the dynamics of trade union politics (see Chapter Two).

Cormac: People weren't taking up the arguments the way they normally would...But it was posed as either accept that [the €10 million] or they're walking away from it. KPS are walking away from it. All the shop stewards were on board for that because I don't recall any of them disagreeing with it...Of which there was a great tradition in the glass factory of a minority, on the Joint Negotiating Committee, disagreeing with them and having their own say.

Josh: Really? I always got the impression they presented a united front.

Cormac: No, no, not always. One of the most important decisions ever made was the return to work.

Josh: After the 1990 Strike?

Cormac: That wasn't unanimous. On the Joint Negotiating Committee, about five people disagreed with a return to work. I spoke against it, and I got fucking hammered as a result of it—about having lodgers in my house and my wife working and it was easy for you and this kind of stuff. But about five people voted against that, so there was a tradition on down through the years where people wouldn't agree with it, and they could say it. Now, I don't think there was ever a Joint Negotiating Committee recommendation that was overturned. But there were disagreements.

- Cormac, Male, 60s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

This passage is presented primarily in the institutional mode (i.e., trade union politics) and the collective mode (i.e., a general meeting of the workforce voting on a JNC recommendation). However, the personal mode (i.e., becoming a target for abuse in the midst of a labour dispute on the basis of "having lodgers" and a "wife working") is employed to provide context for both this worker's place in the story and the fact that trade union politics have the potential to enter the realm of the personal, especially when tensions are high and livelihoods are at stake. Furthermore, the public disagreement over the return to work in 1990 is used to provide insight into the unanimous decision by the JNC to accept the €10 million offer from the receiver and KPS. The JNC's unanimous decision implied that the closure of Waterford Crystal was inevitable and that walking away with €10 million was better than walking away with nothing. In the end, two seemingly separate historical events and three different narrative modes are combined to convey an understanding of the intricacies of trade union politics, decision making, and the position of the Waterford Crystal workforce in those historical moments. This passage also raises another issue with respect to interpreting "events," memory, and narrative in life histories—namely, the role of the interviewer.

The content derived from interviews are influenced by "what the interviewer puts into it in terms of questions, dialogue, and personal relationships" (Portelli 1991, 54). During an interview, "the roles of 'observed' and 'observer' are more fluid than it might appear at first glance" (Portelli 1991, 30). A research participant's responses are shaped by their interpretation of the interviewer (Portelli 1991, 30). In cases where a good rapport or understanding is established between the interviewer and the research participant, then the research participant's responses will reflect an interpretation of the interviewer as an individual with a particular worldview (Portelli 1991, 30). However, in cases where a good rapport has not been established then the research

participant's responses may reflect their interpretation of the interviewer as "a stereotype of [their] class, manner, and speech" (Portelli 1991, 31). While in both instances subjective responses are elicited, it is important to be aware of what factors might be influencing a research participant's responses. Furthermore, an interviewer's questions add "specific distortions" to the research participant's responses in a way that influence their overall narrative (Portelli 1991, 54). Would my research participant have discussed the abuse he received during the 1990 Strike if I had not inquired further about public disagreements on the JNC? It is impossible to know for certain. Either way, my interjection shaped the worker's narrative. The dynamics of interviewing, namely the relationship between the interviewer and the research participant as well as knowing when to listen and when to interject, add another layer of analysis to Scott's (1991, 797; also see Scott 1992) assertion that our experiences are both an "interpretation and something that needs to be interpreted." In other words, the medium in which a research participant's experiences are conveyed also need to be part of our interpretation.

A final consideration in examining "events" is that, in generating meaning from memory, narrative can have a mimetic effect on the shaping of "events." The stories people tell themselves to make sense of their place in the world may influence their thoughts and actions (R. Rosaldo 1989, 129). This is seen in R. Rosaldo's (1989) work with Ilongot hunters in the Philippines. The Ilongot value highly a hunter's ability "to respond to the unexpected" (R. Rosaldo 1989, 129). As a result, a hunter's responsiveness is a prominent feature in Ilongot hunting stories. The importance of responsiveness in these narratives encourages hunters to "seek out experiences that can be told as stories. In other words, stories often shape, rather than reflect, human conduct" (R. Rosaldo 1989, 129). A similar example can be seen in the desire of some workers to take a more militant approach during the Occupation (this is detailed in Chapter Two). While some workers

perceived the Occupation itself as militant, for other workers the Occupation did not go far enough. Militancy was an important quality of how these individuals identified as workers and as a workforce. For these more militant workers, their desire to escalate the tactics employed during the Occupation was congruent with how they perceived their history before and during the 1990 Strike. In a sense, they were aware of and motivated by the opportunity to "make history." This is like R. Rosaldo's Ilongot hunters in the sense that these workers were looking for opportunities to display their militancy. After the Occupation, when their desire for militancy was not satisfied, they incorporated that desire into their interpretation of the Occupation's failure. While their desire for a more militant approach did not influence the course of the Occupation, it did become part of their story of the Occupation and their personal story in the sense that: "This is what I wanted to do..."; or, "This is what should have been done..." In other words, things that did not happen become important to understanding the "event" itself.

To sum up, the meaning that is "actively and creatively generated by memory" and narrative "to make sense of crucial events and of history in general" is not detrimental to ethnographic and ethnohistorical research because this type of meaning generation can tell us much more about the significance of the *histoire événementielle* (Portelli 1991, 26). The question now is: how do we reconcile this understanding of the *histoire événementielle* with what Braudel describes as the *longue durée*?

According to Braudel (1960, 4), an "event" may be "part of a unit of time much longer than its own duration...[it] may be part of an indefinite chain of events and underlying realities, which seemingly cannot be separated from one another." Braudel's notion of the *longue durée* focuses on what he calls "structures," which are intended to address the issue of the "indefinite chain of events and underlying realities" of history. For Braudel, "a structure is not only a

framework but is a reality that persists through time. Certain long-lived structures are stable elements for many generations; they encumber history, and by disturbing it they determine its course" (Braudel 1960, 6). In theorizing this distinction, Braudel prioritizes the *longue durée* as the appropriate aim of historical research (Braudel 1960, 4). However, Braudel's approach can leave little room for agency and even for individuals "making history." Portelli (1991, 73) argues that:

the act of remembering is, itself, a historical fact operating in the *longue durée* dimension. It is the task of those who deal with history...to study, not only the mechanics of the material event, but the events of the remembering and the telling—the patterns of the remembering and the forms of the telling—through which we are able to perceive the 'event' in the first place.

In attending to the patterns of remembering and forms of telling in oral history, people and groups are positioned, as agents of history, in the *longue durée*. Employing this approach is also the task of anthropologists. Through ethnography, anthropologists are well positioned to carry out this kind of research. Moore's (1987) concept of "diagnostic events" is intended to be used in the field as a means for anthropologists to think of ethnography as current history (see Chapter Two). Moore (1987, 727) suggests that the "field-worker must also ask, "What is the present producing? What part of the activity will be durable, and what will disappear?" By identifying "diagnostic events" in the field, an anthropologist's ethnographic research not only provides insight in the moment but for future historical works as well (Moore 1987, 727). Through participant-observation, interviews, oral histories and other ethnohistorical research (see Section 1.3), anthropologists can provide the necessary context to interpret, as best we can, the meaning generated through experience, memory, and narrative. With respect to "strategically situated ethnography" and elucidating the relationship between the workers and the wider political and economic processes influencing their lives, how do we connect the meaning generated from experience,

memory, and narrative in the *histoire événementielle* with the structures that influence the *longue* durée of history?

As already mentioned, Kasmir and Carbonella (2014, 4) suggest that we need to examine the making, unmaking, and remaking of labour forces and working classes—culturally, politically, and structurally—over longer time frames. This ethnography does so by examining the workers' lives at Waterford Crystal across different manifestations of global capitalism, namely Fordist/Keynesian capitalism and Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. These two regimes of capitalism are detailed in Chapter Three. For now, it is important to note that these two regimes are not intended to define two sharply divided epochs of capitalism with beginning and end dates. They overlap, intersect, and vary depending on particular historical and geographical contexts. However, as typologies, these regimes are useful for capturing the zeitgeist upon which the former glass workers contextualize and make sense of their lives, as well as the institutions that worked to organize their lives. After all, these regimes are not simply economic, they are political, ideological, geographical, and socio-cultural. Furthermore, the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism constitutes a shift within the structure of the *longue durée* of capitalism. It is important to note that my use of Braudel (1960) is employed to think about moments within an enduring system and not an extensive consideration of his larger historiographical project. This ethnography is based on fieldwork in Waterford, Ireland recounting workers' struggles as they organize and reorganize their lives for and against two contrasting regimes of accumulation within the wider longue durée of a capitalist economy.

In conceptualizing this structural shift, Roseberry (1994) and Gavin Smith's (2004) understanding of Gramsci's notion of hegemony is useful. Roseberry (1994, 360-1) suggests that Gramsci intended the concept of hegemony to be used:

to understand struggle, the ways in which the words, images, symbols, forms, organizations, institutions, and movements used by subordinate populations to talk about, understand, confront, accommodate themselves to, or resist their domination are shaped by the process of domination itself. What hegemony constructs, then, is not a shared ideology but a common material and meaningful framework for living through, talking about, and acting upon social orders characterized by domination.

The key point to take away from Roseberry is the notion of hegemonic struggle being characterized by the process of domination itself. This is significant for conceptualizing capitalism as a "long-lived" structure that operates in the *longue durée*. By encumbering history, capitalism, as an organizing principle of economic, political, and social life, can influence its course. Central to an understanding of "hegemony as struggle shaped by domination" is the ways in which hegemonic fields are secured and/or destabilized over the *longue durée*. Gavin Smith (2004, 217) argues that hegemony is:

about the mastery of history. Insofar as societies are reproducing historical formations, so hegemonic fields need to be secured for the future, yet carry with them the residue of past hegemonic work. Cementing hegemony requires stable institutions, cultural reproductive habits, and the securing of real or imagined territorial mastery. The term is thus intended to capture the unevenness and incompleteness of this work at any given moment in history: the securing of a hegemonic field; and conversely, the destabilizing of that field requires ceaseless work on the part of the forces at play.

Gavin Smith's focus on the "unevenness and incompleteness" of securing and/or destabilizing hegemonic fields is important, especially as it pertains to the re/producing of historical and cultural formations upon which our lives are organized. An important aspect to consider as we try to understand the securing and destabilizing of hegemonic fields is the "conditions under which—and the practices through which—an articulate, critical politics emerges and becomes historically effective, and the conditions under which such a politics is blocked, or interrupted" (Li 2019,

30). Li (Li 2019, 34) employs the term "interruption" to highlight "non-linear trajectories and the spatial, temporal, or topical breaks that prevent critical insight from becoming historically effective, or cause it to mutate and realign; it does not assert a definitive closure." This raises the questions: how does interruption apply to the workers' struggle for Waterford Crystal?; and, how can interruption contribute to our understanding of the *longue durée* of capitalism? Roseberry, Gavin Smith, and Li provide conceptual tools that offer insight into the ways in which capitalism, as a structure operating in the *longue durée*, has conditioned the workers' lives across time and space.

With respect to space, Gavin Smith (2004, 217) recognizes that "cementing hegemony" requires the "securing of real or imagined territorial mastery." This is an important aspect of hegemonic fields, but it understates the role played by the production of space, material and imagined, in securing and/or destabilizing hegemonic fields. Lefebvre (1991, 55) argues that the role of class struggle in the production of space is:

a cardinal one in that this production is performed solely by classes, fractions of classes and groups representative of classes...the class struggle is inscribed in space. Indeed, it is that struggle alone which prevents abstract space from taking over the whole planet and papering over all differences. Only the class struggle has the capacity to differentiate, to generate differences which are not intrinsic to economic growth *qua* strategy, "logic" or "system"—that is to say, differences which are neither induced by nor acceptable to growth.

By abstract space, Lefebvre is referring to the space produced by abstract social labour, which is derived from Marx's conception of commodities.

For Marx, commodities are "the material embodiment of *use value, exchange value, and value,*" which all exist in dialectical relationship to one another (D. Harvey 2006, 1). Under the capitalist mode of production, the value of a commodity is realized through its exchange value, but for something to have exchange value it must also have use value; it must fulfill a need or

serve some useful function (D. Harvey 2010, 2006, 2006). Marx depicts value in terms of the social relationships that commodities embody from the labour process (D. Harvey 2010, 2006, 2006). Every commodity embodies the labour that produced it, however the process of "market exchange tends to obliterate individual differences both in the conditions or production and on the part of those doing the labouring" (D. Harvey 2006, 14). Thus, "the commensurability of commodities achieved through exchange renders the labour embodied in them equally commensurable" (D. Harvey 2006, 16). In our capitalist system, value is measured by money, which is a commodity in itself; money's worth is socially constructed and established through the social relationship of exchange. Money as the measure of value further obscures, through exchange, the social relations of labour embodied by commodities. It is the obfuscation of these social relations that provide the basis for Marx's notion of abstract labour, or what becomes labour in general. Abstract space reflects this process in that the production of abstract space is shaped by labouring processes designed to maximize surplus value. Furthermore, abstract labour also produces "spatial fixes" (D. Harvey 2006), both material and imagined, upon which the social relations of capitalism are reproduced, expanded, and secured for the future.

Now, "spatial fixes" are created in capitalism's own image and thus also reproduce the inherent contradictions upon which the capitalist mode of production is based. According to Neil Smith (2008, 6):

Capital is continually invested in the built environment in order to produce surplus value and expand the basis of capital itself. But equally, capital is continually withdrawn from the built environment so that it can move elsewhere and take advantage of higher profit rates. The spatial immobilization of productive capital in its material form is no more or less a necessity than the circulation of capital as value. Thus it is possible to see the uneven development of capitalism as the geographical expression of the more fundamental contradiction between use-value and exchange-value...The pattern which results in the landscape is well known: development at one pole and underdevelopment at the other. This takes place at a number of spatial scales.

For example, the continued investment in the Waterford Crystal factories in Ireland was sound business when the exchange value of the glass made through this production method produced an acceptable surplus value. This constituted a "spatial fix" in the sense that investment in immobile capital, i.e., the factory, its furnaces, etc., had use-value with respect to the profit rates of Waterford Crystal in that particular economic climate (see Chapter Five). However, as the workers organized and made greater demands on the company, their wages and benefits improved. This affected the company's profits, as did outside factors, such as the economic recession of the late eighties and early nineties which played a role in the 1990 Strike at Waterford Crystal (see Chapter Two). At the same time, technological advancements in glass production and the turn toward neoliberal economic policies, namely tax breaks and free trade agreements, made it possible for Waterford Crystal to produce glass overseas for a greater profit. The company responded by investing in factories and areas overseas, which led to the deindustrialization of Waterford Crystal in Ireland. However, the factories used to produce Waterford Crystal overseas were not built by the company but contracted by the company. This allowed them greater flexibility with respect to investing in immobile capital. As a result, the glass factories securing contracts from Waterford Crystal were responsible for the immobile capital and the employees.

Harvey's (2001, 2006) notion of the "spatial fix" has multiple meanings: it can mean to secure in place; it can mean to repair something that is broken; or, it can mean to temporarily satisfy—like an addiction. These different understandings of "spatial fixes" are all at play here. The development of free trade zones constitutes a "spatial fix," both material and imagined, in the sense that they facilitate greater capital mobility to produce more surplus value by undermining and disempowering organized labour. It fixed the problem of well-organized workforces demanding a greater share of the profits through wages and benefits. As production processes

become increasingly global and flexible, large companies, like Waterford Wedgwood, invest less in immobile capital by contracting production with factories that can meet their needs. As a result, they are no longer directly responsible for those workforces. This increases the insecurity and precariousness of workers in those factories because their employment depends on the factory being able to secure contracts from other companies (see discussion on precarity below). To do so, they need to be able to offer competitive bids, which usually comes at the expense of the workforce. Factories in underdeveloped countries with lax labour regulations can more easily exploit workers through lower wages and fewer benefits. By moving production to underdeveloped areas, manufacturing in general is "fixed" to these regions. At the same time, increased capital mobility allows companies to easily move production to different places to get their "fix" of higher profits, as well as divest themselves of responsibilities to specific tax regimes and thus contributing to social welfare programmes, unemployment insurance, and pension systems. The result is that these "spatial fixes" reproduce, expand, and secure the social relations of capitalism, and surplus value, for the future.

A fundamental aspect to these "spatial fixes" is the expansion of what is often referred to as "precarity." According to Munck, Pradella, and Wilson (2020, 361), "the term 'precarity' has a long lineage in terms of labour studies, even if it has been called 'unstable,' 'casual,' 'contingent,' or 'non-standard' work." However, more recently, precarity has taken on a wider meaning with respect to its "political usage in Western Europe as part of the counter-globalization mobilizations," as well as "a more existential meaning, referring to the various ways our lives (not just working lives) are increasingly out of control" (Munck, Pradella and Wilson 2020, 361). Casas-Cortés (2014, 206) suggests that "precarity has produced new understandings of labor and new

experimental forms of organizing in Europe," namely "local, place-based organizing while actively engaging in transnational communication and pan-European actions."

Standing (2011, 7) describes the rise of people in precarious work/life situations as the "precariat," which is a "neologism that combines an adjective 'precarious' and a related noun 'proletariat.'" According to Standing (2014, 971-2), the precariat is composed of a range of disparate groups, namely, immigrants, minorities, victims of deindustrialization, and highly educated, underemployed young people. Their commonality lies in "having insecure employment, of being in jobs of limited duration and with minimal labour protection" (Standing 2011, 24). Furthermore, they have "a status that offers no sense of career, no sense of secure occupational identity and few, if any, entitlements to the state and enterprise benefits" (Standing 2011, 25). Standing (2011, 25) perceives the precariat as a new, dangerous class-in-the-making because its inherent disparateness is "setting people against each other, preventing them from recognizing that the social and economic structure is producing their common set of vulnerabilities." Standing (2011, 7) premises this argument on the notion that "the globalization era has resulted in a fragmentation of national class structures" and that as "the world moved towards a flexible open labour market, class did not disappear," but instead "a more fragmented global class structure emerged." He sees overcoming the disenfranchisement of the precariat in terms of building occupational citizenship, which entails "linking rights and entitlements to what we do [work in its various forms] rather than who we do it for [wage labour]" (Standing 2014, 975). This involves building new forms of collective movements that he feels lie outside the more traditional trade union and workers' movement that have been undermined by the rise of flexible work practices under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism (Standing 2014, 975).

While Standing highlights some important issues, he has been criticized for overlooking some important historical processes in the manifestation of the precariat. Munck, Pradella, and Wilson (2020, 362) argue that the precariat is an ethnocentric term "based on the rather exceptional North Atlantic postwar 'Golden Era'" and applies mostly to workers who benefitted from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism, whereas its long been understood in the Global South that "nonstandard employment patterns" are "the norm, not a deviation from some abstract standard." Moreover, the compromise between labour and capital that formed the basis for Fordist/Keynesian capitalism was predicated on "vast amounts of unpaid domestic labour by women and hyperexploited labour in the colonies" (Mitropoulos 2005, quoted in Casca-Cortes 2014, 219). Following this line of thought, Tamar Diana Wilson (2020, 474) contends that what is currently labelled as precarity or precarization used to be called the informal economy or informalization. Paraphrasing Portes and Sassen-Koob (1987), Tamar Diana Wilson (2020, 474) notes that developed and developing economies have always had an informal sector, however, it has been growing in the latter since the recessions of the 1970s (also see Chapter Three). The economic turmoil of the 1970s led to "increased competition both from other developed countries and Third World countries struggling to reduce trade deficits" (T. D. Wilson 2020, 474). In a global economic context, "informalization in the Third World is part of 'an attempt to break out of economic stagnation through an export-oriented strategy' but tends to promote a similar informalization in the developed world where competition causes the affected industries to 'struggle for survival,'" namely deindustrialization (T. D. Wilson 2020, 474).

Marx's concept of the "reserve army of labour" is important for understanding precarization/informalization across spatial scales (Munck, Pradella and Wilson 2020, T. D. Wilson 2020). According to Marx (1990, 781-94) unemployment and part-time employment are

structural features of capitalism that serve to drive down labour costs and increase profits, as well as weaken the ability of the fully-employed to make claims on and/or resist demands made on them by capital and/or the state (see Chapter Eight). The rise of Fordist/Keynesian capitalism and the welfare state led to a process of de-commodifying labour in the sense that provisions such as "unemployment insurance, pensions, and other social programs...strengthened the bargaining power of workers and relieved them from the discipline of the market" (T. D. Wilson 2020, 477). The erosion of welfare provisions under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism has allowed for the re-commodification of labour. In other words, by weakening the social safety net, workers, including the temporarily or permanently unemployed, the disabled, and the elderly, are forced to participate in the labour market under more precarious conditions, which increases competition and lowers wages, thus increasing profits for capital (T. D. Wilson 2020, 477). Marx did not "conceptualize the reserve army of labour in national terms" (Munck, Pradella and Wilson 2020, 365). Capitalist expansion relies on "processes of colonization, forced market expansion, and dispossession," which "swells the ranks of the global reserve army of labour" (Munck, Pradella and Wilson 2020, 365). Thus, as Tamar Diana Wilson (2020, 475) concludes, "precarization and informalization are both aspects of the drive for capitalist accumulation based on the super-exploitation of labor." Essentially, precarity, the precariat, precarization, informalization, and the informal economy are all concepts intended to capture the precariousness and insecurity at the heart of expanding capitalist social relations.

It is also important to note that placing the precariat as somehow outside traditional working-class movements and trade unionism is unhelpful in building global solidarity because "in many Third World countries...trade unions have organized among the informal sector as a major priority, and new hybrid models of organizing and mobilizing are now emergent" (Munck,

Pradella and Wilson 2020, 363). The value of precarity as a concept may be in "its potential to regenerate imaginations and lifestyles in the midst of an ongoing decline in traditional union organizing and a perceived fragmentation of the collective into singular identities" (Casas-Cortés 2014, 222).

Returning to Lefebvre (1991) and the class struggle for space, the inherent contradictions of the capitalist mode of production and class struggle ensures that the spatial power of abstract space is never absolute. There is always space, both figuratively and literally, to exercise counter-hegemonic power. Now, Herod (1997, 9) argues that Lefebvre failed "to locate struggle at the center of his analysis" and "in fact conceives of workers' struggles as being somewhat secondary to the actual process of producing space under capitalism...Class struggle on the part of labour merely serves to modify these spaces, to prevent abstract space from taking over the whole planet." As a result, Herod (1997, 3) suggests that "workers, too, seek to make space in particular ways...even if this is self-reproduction and survival as workers in a capitalist society. The economic geography of capitalism does not simply evolve around workers who themselves are disconnected from the process. They are active participants in its very creation." Having said that, Lefebvre (1991, 47-8) does address this issue through his notion of spatial codes. Lefebvre argues that each space has a spatial code, which "is not simply a means of reading or interpreting space: rather it is a means of living in that space, of understanding it, and of producing it" (Lefebvre 1991, 47-8). For example, the realities of outsourcing, capital flight, and deindustrialization in the 1980s and 1990s undermined and disempowered the Waterford Crystal workforce to the extent that they were prepared to make concessions that they would not have considered thinkable as little as half-a-decade earlier (see Chapters Two and Three). This is because they realized the geographical, economic, and political processes concerning manufacturing under

Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism had changed. Furthermore, to protect their livelihoods as best they could, they adapted to ensure their survival in Waterford under a different spatial configuration of capitalism.

Finally, Lefebvre (1991) argues that the rise of counter-hegemonic movements begins with disrupting the spatial code upon which the social relations of capitalist production are embodied. Revolutions produce revolutionary spaces or new spaces upon which to re-imagine and re-organize our social reality. However, disrupting the spatial code does not always lead to revolutionary spaces. For example, the workers' occupation of the Showroom and Visitor Centre, which was the public face of the company for tourists and consumers of Waterford Crystal, redefined that space and drew attention to the activities of the company, the receiver, KPS, and the Irish government, but it did not change the overall outcome for the workers. The disruption of spatial codes that do not lead to revolutionary spaces is reminiscent of Li's (2019, 30) notion of "interruption"—namely, understanding the "conditions under which...critical politics emerge and becomes historically effective, and the conditions under which such a politics is blocked, or interrupted." Thus, the production of space, as lived and experienced through the disruption of spatial codes, is also shaped by the process of domination itself.

By capturing moments of incompleteness, interruption, and disruption through the meaning generated by the workers' experiences, memories, and narratives, the struggle for Waterford Crystal demystifies the ways in which power, namely that associated with and/or attributed to capitalism over the *longue durée*, pervades our social reality across time and space. Employing this theoretical approach substantiates the relationship that "strategically situated ethnography" attempts to understand between local subjects and the wider system that influences their lives.

1.5 LOCATING THE STRUGGLE FOR WATERFORD CRYSTAL IN THE ANTHROPOLOGY OF IRELAND

Kelleher (2003, 88) argues that anthropologists need to be cognizant of the ethnography that contextualizes their particular region of study. In the case of the anthropology of Ireland, ethnographic research has been characterized by notions of the "dying peasant community" in the Republic of Ireland and "tribal conflict" in Northern Ireland (Wilson and Donnan 2006; also see Curtin, Donnan, and Wilson 1993; Curtin and Wilson 1989; Egan and Murphy 2015). This is redolent of Appadurai's (1988, 45) appeal for the need to examine how certain anthropological ideas, images, and conceptual paradigms "become hegemonic in, and confined to, certain places," which, as Appadurai suggests, is a process that is "inescapably both historical and comparative."

The conceptual paradigms that characterize the anthropology of Ireland stem from Arensberg and Kimball's classic ethnography, *Family and Community in Ireland*, which "focused on social and cultural stability in the lives of poor farmers and their neighbouring townspeople" in a small, rural community in the west of the Republic of Ireland in the 1930s (Wilson and Donnan 2006, 17). Arensberg and Kimball's study was "one of the first European locations...of what we would recognize as a modern anthropological study" and was intended to break the disciplinary confines placed on anthropology as the study of non-Western individuals and groups (Wilson and Donnan 2006, xiii). According to Arensberg and Kimball (2001[1940], xiii):

if we are to develop a full-grown comparative social science of man [sic], the communities of modern life must be included among those studies by anthropologists. If this means that the subject matter of ethnology is the same as that of sociology, so much the better. Anthropologists may then make effective use of sociological methods, sociologists of anthropological ones.

There was a genuine intention on behalf of Arensberg and Kimball to blur the lines dividing various academic disciplines and schools of thought concerning culture and society.

Family and Community in Ireland also attempted to merge the traditions of American cultural anthropology and British social anthropology. According to Wilson and Donnan (2006, 31), early "British social anthropology emphasized cross-cutting ties of kinship and social organization, political networks, and disputes in communities, while the American perspectives of cultural anthropology were more interested than the British in historical and cultural change, culture contact and acculturation, and culture and personality." While the focus of Family and Community in Ireland was on kinship and social structure "as a means of testing the theoretical model of structural-functionalism" (Wilson and Donnan 2006, 17), chiefly associated with British social anthropology, Arensberg and Kimball's interest in Ireland was fueled by the perception of Ireland as a place in the midst of cultural, political, and economic change as it transitioned from a "traditional" to a "modern" society (Byrne, Edmondson, and Varley 2001, iii; Wilson and Donnan 2006, 17-19; also see Barrett 1996). Arensberg and Kimball's theoretical and methodological reorientation was considered to be "at the forefront of anthropological thought" (Egan and Murphy 2015, 137) As a result, Arensberg and Kimball's work proved to be very influential in shaping future anthropological research in Ireland.

Most of the anthropological research that followed *Family and Community in Ireland* sought to prove and/or disprove the relative stability or decline of rural Irish communities (Wilson and Donnan 2006, 27). In doing so, Irish ethnography developed a "romantic bias" centred on "the search for an authentic Irish locale and authentic Irish voices, [which was] always to be found in such outposts on the fringe of the Atlantic" (Scheper-Hughes 2001, 26). This contributed to what Silverman and Gulliver (1992, 8-9) describe as three biases upon which the early

anthropology of the Republic of Ireland was structured: 1) A bias towards ethnographic studies from the west of Ireland, which "led to a general view of rural Ireland as poor, 'peasant' and demoralized"; 2) A community bias that "viewed rural Ireland as comprised of distinct 'communities'...[which act] as a basic and natural unit" of analysis for ascertaining whether or not "tradition' was persisting, wearing away or being reinforced"; and, 3) A modernization theory bias which "informed, both implicitly and explicitly, the vast majority of economic, social and historical analyses of Irish society." According to Curtin, Donnan, and Wilson (1993, 10; also see Egan and Murphy 2015 and Peace 1989), in searching for the "ethnic Irish," anthropologists, "many of whom [were] visitors to the island, ethnocentrically re-invent[ed] the Irish as a type of non-Western 'other.'" Therefore, instead of incorporating so-called "modern life" into the study of anthropology, the study of non-Western people and groups was transposed onto the people of rural Ireland.

In the case of Northern Ireland, the community-based model utilized by Arensberg and Kimball took on a different character. The community studies conducted in Northern Ireland were also concerned primarily with kinship and social structure. However, these studies were complicated by notions of class, nationalism, and sectarianism following the "the resurgence of 'the Troubles' in 1969" (Wilson and Donnan 2006, 27). These studies either focused on: 1) Kinship and social structure within either a Catholic/Nationalist or Protestant/Unionist community;³ or, 2) Kinship and social structure as the basis for a "common culture" to explain why sectarian violence in Northern Ireland did not result in all out civil war and how a "common culture" could function as a possible means to find a solution to end the Troubles (Harris 1972; Leyton 1974,

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³ The dichotomy of Catholic/Nationalist or Protestant/Unionist is not meant to be understood as absolute categories. However, these terms are generally used to describe the sectarianism that characterizes the region.

1975). Over time, the "dying peasant community" and "tribal conflict" paradigms began to function as "gate-keeping" concepts restricting the theorization of Ireland to these particular themes (Wulff 2015 paraphrasing Appadurai 1988) and resulting in what Egan and Murphy (Egan and Murphy 2015, 134) characterize as an "anthropology of Ireland long encumbered by a history of exoticization and misrepresentation."

By the 1980s, there was a concerted effort to challenge these conceptual paradigms (Egan and Murphy 2015). The publication of Curtin and Wilson's (1989), *Ireland From Below*, was significant in this endeavour. According to Curtin and Wilson (1989, x):

unlike many previous [ethnographic] studies, which viewed social change as variations and devolutions from cultural forms recorded by Arensberg and Kimball, [this collection of essays] conceptualizes change as a continuous process on which the occupants of communities are not just passive victims but are actively engaged through a variety of social, political, cultural and economic strategies in determining their own futures.

In a similar attempt to move beyond the "dying peasant community" and "tribal conflict" paradigms, Curtin, Donnan, and Wilson's (1993, 1), *Irish Urban Cultures*, asked why "Ireland has not figured more prominently in broadly comparative anthropological overviews of urban life." The authors argued that Irish anthropology in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland has been overwhelmingly centred on the countryside (Curtin, Donnan and Wilson 1993, 1). The essays in *Irish Urban Cultures* were intended to address this problem as well as complement the wealth of Irish rural ethnography that already existed (Curtin, Donnan and Wilson 1993, 1). The overarching goal of the book was to provide a broader understanding of rural and urban life, as well as the social processes connecting these two domains, in Ireland (Curtin, Donnan and Wilson 1993, 1).

My research adds to the relatively scant anthropological literature on the Southeast of Ireland (Silverman and Gulliver 1992; Wilson and Donnan 2006). This region does not fit the conceptual paradigm of "poor, rural, dying peasant community" because the socioeconomic history

of the Southeast of Ireland is distinctive from the rest of the island. Ports in the Southeast, namely Waterford and Wexford, were centres for cheap supplies and labour for English merchants involved in the transatlantic fishery beginning in the sixteenth century (Mannion 2008). The profits generated from the transatlantic fishery through trade and wages were largely invested back into the area, resulting in the Southeast being more developed and prosperous compared to the rest of the island (with the exceptions of Dublin and Belfast). For this reason, the region was largely overlooked by anthropologists working in the tradition launched by Arensberg and Kimball. Furthermore, most anthropological studies of labour outside Dublin and Belfast are assumed to be "solely agricultural and usually ephemeral" (Silverman 2006[2001], 16). Of course, there are some exceptions, such as Finlay (1989) on shirt workers in Derry and Kelleher (2003) on glassworkers in Ballybogoin (pseudonym).

Curtin and Wilson's (1989) appeal for different kinds of ethnography to be conducted in Ireland coincided with significant political, economic, and socio-cultural changes in Ireland, as well as a theoretical reorientation in the discipline of anthropology and social sciences in general. In the 1980s, the Irish government initiated a neoliberal economic development model that focused on inward investment in information technologies, financial services, and pharmaceutical research, development, and manufacturing. The unprecedented economic growth and near full employment that this model of economic development led to in the nineties and early noughties became known as Ireland's Celtic Tiger (see Chapter Three). This economic upswing also resulted in an influx of immigrants, mainly Irish emigrants returning home and citizens from poorer EU countries filling labour shortages in Ireland's burgeoning service and construction sectors. The rise in immigration resulted in broader societal questions concerning race, othering, and what it means to be Irish in Ireland (Wilson and Donnan 2006, 143).

At the same time, the economic impact of the Celtic Tiger contributed to considerable "cultural production" centred on what it means to be and act Irish on a global scale (Wilson and Donnan 2006, 69). Irishness became "a much sought after cultural identity by those with the slightest claim to it, and even by those with no obvious national or cultural link" to Ireland (Wilson and Donnan 2006, 69). Wulff (2007) documented this phenomenon through the global success of Riverdance, which developed into a full-length show after appearing as a seven-minute clip on a Eurovision Song Contest in 1994. Wulff (2007, 69) suggests that: "Riverdance was part of a new phase in Ireland's history and economic climate [and] attracted new attention to Ireland, its history, culture and place in the modern world." Following Appadurai, Wulff (2007, 110) perceives Riverdance as an instance where mass mediation and mass migration "offer new resources...for the construction of imagined selves and imagined worlds." The themes of displacement and longing, upon which the Riverdance narrative was based, resonated intensely with the Irish diaspora as an imagined community (Wulff 2007, 110). Moreover, the themes of displacement and longing also "struck a general human note touching masses of people who have no Irish descent" and, subsequently, Riverdance invited the world "to an imagined Ireland, a homeland of the past, and also to a contemporary generic Celtic cosmopolitanism" (Wulff 2007, 122).

With respect to changes in the discipline of anthropology, the 1980s and 1990s marked a turn towards poststructuralist and postmodernist approaches in social science research. There was now a greater emphasis being placed on understanding social processes and agency, while claims to objective or authoritative knowledge were being questioned (Erickson and Murphy 2003, 206). This was in stark contrast to the structural-functionalist approaches conducted in the "dying peasant community" and "tribal conflict" paradigms. In the context of the political and

economic changes in Ireland and epistemological changes in anthropology, there was a "methodical switch to treating an anthropology of Ireland as an anthropology of globalization" (Egan and Murphy 2015, 135). According to Wilson and Donnan (2006, 138), amid this shift from parochial to global:

The Republic, long seen as the less developed part of Ireland, dependent on agriculture, with a rural-oriented society dominated by the church and inefficient politics, has become the darling of modern and developed Europe. [While] Northern Ireland...has gone from industrial zone of the first-world UK to provincial backwater, known globally over the last generation as the pre-modern site of tribal urban guerrilla warfare.

Wilson and Donnan offered this characterization before the 2008 financial crisis and the economic austerity that followed. The aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis exposes pertinent questions about what it means to write the anthropology of Ireland as an anthropology of globalization. Mathur (2015, 145, paraphrasing Anderson 2009) suggests that a "far more important matter is the question of situating cultural processes in Ireland within the ebbs and flows of present-day capitalism," namely an understanding of "Ireland that has lived through the Celtic Tiger and its abrupt and catastrophic end, along the margins and at the behest of a renewed European hegemony." Mathur continues by arguing that "ethnographic evocation is badly needed to enrich and complicate the analyses that have been rushed out in the heat of this moment" (Mathur 2015, 145). My ethnography addresses Mathur's concerns directly by providing a situated case study of the rise and fall(out) of the Celtic Tiger through the experiences, memories, and narratives of the Waterford Crystal workers.

1.6 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Chapter Two, *Scales of Struggle I: Local/Ethnographic*, retraces my introduction to the story of the Waterford Crystal workforce. This chapter is largely ethnographic and presented in

the words of my research participants. Using Moore's (1987) idea of "diagnostic events," it explores Waterford Crystal's two most significant industrial disputes to provide a local/ethnographic account of the demise of Waterford Crystal from the workers' perspective.

Chapter Three, *Scales of Struggle II: National/International*, examines the broader geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes that influenced the relationship between the glass workers and the wider system across time and space. This chapter is an extension of Chapter Two in terms of scope and scale as the analysis shifts from local to global to make sense of the ways in which these broader processes converge and/or diverge across the national and international scale. In doing so, this chapter provides a general account of the changing relationships between labour, capital, and the state during the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

Chapter Four, *The Struggle for Authenticity*, focuses on the former glass workers' experience of working at Waterford Crystal and the ways in which they understand, claim, and use authenticity in the context of Waterford Crystal's history, demise, and reopening under new ownership. By delving into the history of the product, the company, and the workers' experiences with the company as it grew into what many consider to be an iconic Irish brand, this chapter suggests that the workers' concept of authenticity is not an inherent quality that some things possess, and others do not. It is a relational and processual concept that is derived from people's perceived relationships with other people, places, things, and/or ideas. In the case of the glass workers, authenticity is a reflection of a particular history and image of Waterford Crystal that was adopted and promoted by the company and the Irish government during the early stages of Waterford Crystal's development. Now, the workers use this notion of authenticity as a political tool to shame the company and the Irish government and as a more general critique of capital mobility,

deindustrialization, the widespread acceptance of transnational or globalized systems of production, and the role of the state under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

Chapter Five, *Struggle for Space I: Deciphering the Spatial Code*, is divided into two parts. The first part contextualizes Waterford Crystal's built environment through photography, as well as the stories, thoughts, and feelings of the workers associated with these physical spaces. In doing so, Waterford Crystal's built environment becomes a reflection of the workers' struggle for Waterford Crystal in spatial terms. The second part moves from a "discourse on space" to understanding the production of space. Using Lefebvre's (1991, 47-8) notion of the "spatial code"—the "means of living in [a particular] space, of understanding it, and of producing it"—this chapter situates changes in Waterford Crystal's built environment and the workers' struggle for Waterford Crystal in the more general, global transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

Chapter Six, Struggle for Space II: Producing Spaces for Consumption, examines the House of Waterford Crystal and the development of Waterford's nascent tourism industry as a tourist/leisure space designed for consumption. This is in contrast with Waterford's history as being more of an industrial city, with Waterford Crystal being the most significant manufacturing operation in the city and county. However, as the tourism industry continues to expand under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, places are beginning to compete as enterprises, or operate as place-based enterprises, in order to maintain competitiveness and remain viable as attractive tourism destinations (Keul 2014, 238). As a result, place-based enterprises are actively producing spaces for consumption as a means of expanded economic growth. The House of Waterford Crystal is Waterford's biggest tourism draw and is integral to the development of Waterford's tourism industry. This chapter argues that tourist/leisure spaces are insidious spaces that

obfuscate the social relationships of capitalist production for both tourists and those who secure and maintain their livelihoods from the tourism industry.

Chapter Seven, *The Struggle Against Social Injustice*,⁴ documents the former glass workers' anger towards the state over not intervening in the demise of Waterford Crystal, as well as their legal battle with the state to reclaim their pensions—which should have been protected under European Union law. The workers frame their experience with the government in terms of social injustice and call into question the role of the state and the responsibility of its elected representatives to its citizens, particularly as workers. This chapter suggests that the social injustice experienced by the former glass workers constitutes a form of structural violence that stems from an inherent disjunction in exercising democratic citizenship rights, within and across the state and supra-state level, and the changing relationships between labour, capital and the state under the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

Chapter Eight, *The Struggle Within*, explores the workers' experiences with active labour market policies (ALMPs), namely retraining, re-education, and entrepreneurship, under economic austerity. In doing so, this chapter suggests that ALMPs and economic austerity are political programmes or projects that are intended to engender flexible workers and/or labour markets to secure Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism's hegemony. At the same time, these programmes produce their own inconsistencies that open a space for criticism and/or resistance. This chapter examines how social subjects are shaped by the manner in which power is

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⁴ A slightly different version of this chapter was published as "City: redundant workers, forgotten citizens? The case of Waterford Crystal" in The Sociology of Unemployment, Tom Boland and Ray Griffin, eds, Manchester: Manchester University Press (2015). Parts of this chapter haves been reproduced with the permission of the editors and the publisher.

exercised, and by how it is resisted, through overlapping state and supra-state authorities under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

CHAPTER TWO

SCALES OF STRUGGLE I: LOCAL/ETHNOGRAPHIC

2.1 Introduction

On the morning of March 10th, 2009, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's radio show *The Current* did a short piece on the Waterford Crystal workers' occupation of their company's Showroom and Visitor Centre. That morning Carol Off interviewed two workers, Gary Cunningham and Angela Flynn (Off 2009). Here are two excerpts from that interview:

I've been doing this for forty-five years. I've done everything that you can imagine. I've swept the floors; I gave out water to the boys in the old furnaces—it was very hot. I was a water boy, a sweeper up, mould holding, a ball blower...Then I became a master blower, advisor, instructor, and I'm a master blower now again. I've always been in the union and this is a result of being in the union. We are all together in this...Business is still going on. Waterford Wedgwood hasn't actually shut down. They're still selling Waterford Crystal.

- Gary Cunningham

We're just very annoyed the way things were done over here. People that have worked here for forty years and more—just got sacked...While we were in work, private people came around with letters and put them in the letter box saying that we were sacked. Our pension fund has just vanished...and that's money people had been paying into all their lives, out of their wages. We're just very annoyed and very hurt.

- Angela Flynn

Prior to hearing this interview, I was aware of the significance of Waterford Crystal as an Irish product and brand. However, it was this segment on a Canadian radio show, half a world away, that served as my introduction to the Waterford Crystal workforce.

For Moore (1987, 735), "certain kinds of events are particularly important forms of diagnostic data." She suggests that while in the field we need to identify "diagnostic events" because they reveal "ongoing contests and conflicts and competitions," as well as "efforts to prevent, suppress, or repress" people, groups, and communities (Moore 1987, 730). More specifically, "the

juxtaposition in events of competing and contrary ideas, and of actions having contradictory consequences, is the circumstance that requires inspection and analysis" (Moore 1987, 735). It is through what Moore describes as the "contiguity of contraries" within these kinds of events that the "ongoing struggles to control persons, things, and meanings often can be detected" (Moore 1987, 735). While I was not in the field during the 2009 Occupation, it serves a similar function as a "diagnostic event" in the sense that I came to know the Waterford Crystal workers through their narration of the 2009 Occupation. Furthermore, it was also how I came to learn about the 1990 Strike at Waterford Crystal. The workers talked of the 1990 Strike and the 2009 Occupation in connection with each other.

As stated in Chapter One, "a life history is a living thing. It is always a work in progress, in which narrators revise the image of their own past as they go along" (Portelli 1991, 61). Moreover, "memory is not an instantaneous act of recall...but rather a process and a generator of meaning" (Portelli 1991, 254). In relation to my fieldwork, the 1990 Strike and the 2009 Occupation were historical events, however the workers' accounts of these events reflected how they saw themselves at the time of my fieldwork. The meaning they attached to these events was generated in relationship to their circumstances at the time and the ways in which they interpreted and analyzed what has happened to them since the 1990 Strike and the 2009 Occupation. I may not use Moore's (1987) concept of "diagnostic events" quite as she intended, namely as a form of "current history" capturing important data in the ethnographic present. However, I do think the notion of "diagnostic events" can be extended to capture the meaning created from the memory and narration of important events, which, to an extent, also reflects the ethnographic present and can be equally useful for diagnoses.

This chapter introduces the Waterford Crystal workers and their story as I came to learn it and provides a local/ethnographic account of the demise of Waterford Crystal from the workers' perspective. It is important to note that some of the wider political and economic processes touched upon in this chapter are addressed in more detail in Chapter Three. My reason for taking this approach is to use ethnographic insights as the basis for expanding the scope and scale of my analysis with respect to the underlying historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes influencing these events and the Waterford Crystal workers' story across time and space. For now, it is only necessary to be aware that the connections between the 1990 Strike and the 2009 Occupation are symptomatic of underlying problems that coincide with two significant moments in Ireland's experience of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, namely the rise and fall of the Celtic Tiger.

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section outlines the decade-long decline of the Waterford Wedgwood Group, which resulted in Waterford Crystal going into receivership. The second section recounts the 2009 Occupation and how the receivership shaped the potential outcomes of the event. The third section looks at Waterford Crystal's 1990 Strike and the ways in which the workers' experiences of that strike, as well as its aftermath, influenced both the demise of Waterford Crystal and the workers' experience and understanding of the 2009 Occupation.

2.2 FROM RECORD SALES TO RECEIVERSHIP - THE FINAL DECADE OF THE WATERFORD WEDGWOOD GROUP

In 1999 and 2000, the Waterford Wedgwood Group posted record sales of €1.08 billion and €1.01 billion, respectively (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2000, Waterford Wedgwood PLC

2001). Much of the company's success was attributed to the build-up to the millennium, namely Waterford Crystal's Millennium Collection. According to Waterford Crystal's Director of Design, Jim O'Leary, in an interview with *The Chicago Tribune*:

The collection was started in 1995. Each year a set of two flutes dedicated to one of the universal toasts was made available. The first flute was Happiness, engraved with a bow, the next Love, with a heart, then Health with a sunburst, Prosperity with a wheat sheaf and Peace with a dove. You bought a pair at a time at \$99 a pair (Daniels 2001).

The Millennium Collection also marked the first time Waterford Crystal had ever discontinued one of its patterns by destroying the moulds (Daniels 2001). This act would prove symbolic of Waterford Crystal's final years. Many of the former glass workers argued that the company had no plan in place after the success of the Millennium Collection. According to Rory and John:

I do think that when the millennium hit, we had so many products geared for the millennium that when we were finished, we had nothing to follow it up.

- Rory, 40s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

From '95 up to 2000-2001, they had the biggest profits of their life, mainly through the millennium flutes...Well, they expected it again in 2002 and 2003—on what?

All the millennium flutes were gone, they were selling them off at half-price at this stage because they are old stock. Where was the back-up plan if they need that kind of profit? You can't blame a shop floor worker for that. And, they kept promising, "We'll do it. We have it all sorted out. We know what we're doing." No! They hadn't had it sorted out.

- John, 50s, Craftworker, 40 Years of Service

Many of the workers perceived Waterford Crystal's lack of a plan and desire for unrealistic sales targets as prime examples of the company's mismanagement in the post-millennium era. This lack of foresight or mismanagement was exposed by a faltering global economy, which affected the US and the European Union in particular. Moreover, the political instability following the September 11th attacks on the World Trade Centre in 2001 further hurt the struggling US economy.

This was bad news for Waterford Crystal because the company was hugely dependent on the US market. According to Richard A. Barnes, Waterford Wedgwood's Chief Financial Officer: "Following eight consecutive years of growth, the Company's progress slowed in 2001, reflecting the economic conditions in the United States, exacerbated by the impact of 11 September and the absence of 'Millennium Buzz'" (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2001, 4). In the years following 2001, Waterford Wedgwood was also affected negatively by the exchange rate between the euro and the US dollar. According to Waterford Wedgwood's Chief Executive Officer, Redmond O'Donoghue (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2004, 2):

The continuing weakness of the US dollar has been unhelpful to us. About half of our business is denominated in dollars. Consider the rates at which we did business over the past two years. In the three months to March 2002, the exchange rate was $\{0\}$ = \$0.88. In the financial year to March 2003, we translated at $\{0\}$ = \$1. In the year to March 2004, the rate was $\{0\}$ = \$1.18. This deterioration in the dollar makes our costs, whether in Ireland or the UK, higher in dollar terms. It makes the revenues from the US lower when translated into euro.

However, in a volatile economy, luxury products are always going to be affected disproportionately. As Waterford Wedgwood was aware:

Purchases of our luxury lifestyle products are often discretionary for consumers and are particularly affected by trends in the general economy. In times of economic growth, net sales of our products tend to increase, while in times of economic downturn or uncertainty, our net sales are affected by the rationing of consumers' discretionary spending (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2005).

Given the Group's understanding of market trends for luxury products, it is not unreasonable to expect a business that deals exclusively in luxury products to be prepared to weather downturns in the economy. While the September 11th attacks constituted an exceptional event, Waterford Wedgwood's mismanagement was ultimately exposed by wider political and economic processes.

Underlying Waterford Wedgwood's problems was the huge debt that the Group had accumulated through acquisitions, which included notable companies such as: Rosenthal; Hutschenreuther; Royal Doulton; Stuart Crystal; Edinburgh Crystal; All-Clad; Spring; W-C Designs; Ashling; and Cashs Mail Order. All these acquisitions were part of an effort to corner the luxury tableware market. In the passage below, Niall describes this desire as it was expressed by Waterford Crystal's former Chairman and majority shareholder, Tony O'Reilly. Niall is tall, lean, and looks significantly younger than a man in his early sixties. He is considered by many of his colleagues to be an incredibly skilled glass cutter. Niall is assertive and confident in his speech and mannerisms.

I remember being in Frankfurt at a party that the Chairman [Tony O'Reilly] threw for the whole industry, it cost €600,000. Helmut Schroeder was there; Donatella Versace was there. I remember his speech; he was a great speaker...he got you going. He said, "The way forward," and he did make sense. He said, "The way forward in this industry is through consolidation." Those were his exact words. In other words, own everything, own it completely and throw away the bad bits and keep all the good bits. And that was his dream. That's what he tried to do, but it never got to that point, it never worked. It was too cumbersome, too big...They made terrible mistakes. They bought into awful situations. Things they didn't understand.

- Niall, 60s, Craftworker, 51 Years of Service

The problem with many of Waterford Crystal's acquisitions is that they were purchased during a period of exceptional growth. The loans secured to facilitate these acquisitions were based on turnover that was driven by the "Millennium Buzz," which in the long-term was unsustainable. When the "Millennium Buzz" was over and the global economy began to falter, there was no longer the turnover or profit to service the loans and interest payments. The Group were now struggling to manage their debt payments.

There was one company, All-Clad, the Group acquired that continued to be relatively successful despite the economic climate. Many workers referenced Waterford Wedgwood's decision in 2004 to sell All-Clad as a significant moment in the demise of Waterford Crystal. A year

prior to its sale, All-Clad was heralded for offsetting losses in other sections of the Group: "other products' decline [was] more than offset by Crystal improvements and a doubling of operating profit at All-Clad" (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2003). However, according to Redmond O'Donoghue, CEO, by 2004, the sale of All-Clad was a necessary step to managing the Group's debt:

The proposed sale of All-Clad is the essential first step in this plan [Plan for Growth]. Subject to necessary approval, the proceeds (about €205 million, before expenses of approximately €8 million) are scheduled to be received at the end of July. These proceeds will be used to reduce our debt which, at €382.0 million on March 31, was too high. Most of this debt was incurred in making substantial capital investment in our key plants, closing non-core plants and on acquisitions. There will be significant reduction in the cost of servicing our debt going forward (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2004).

All-Clad was a profitable part of the Group. The sale actually came about from "several unsolicited approaches" and in the end sold for "\$50 million above market expectations" (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2004). For the workers, the sale of All-Clad did not make sense, but it was a significant indicator of the dire position of the Group's finances.

From 2003 to 2008, the Group took several steps to restructure its operations. Prior to the sale of All-Clad, the Group closed the Stuart Crystal factory in Stouridge, England and transferred the production of Johnson Brothers branded products to China (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2003). In 2006, Waterford Wedgwood closed Waterford Crystal's Dungarvan plant in County Waterford and the Wedgwood "Tuscan" china factory near Stoke-on-Trent, England (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2007). The Group also integrated the manufacturing, warehousing, retail, and administrative operations of Wedgwood and Royal Doulton (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2007). In total, this resulted in the reduction of 2,200 employees across the Group (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2007). However, at the same time, Waterford Wedgwood had a huge board of directors claiming fees for their services. For example, in 2005, when Waterford Wedgwood announced their major restructuring plan that led to the closures of the Dungarvan

and Stoke-on-Trent factories, the Group had a board of directors made up of nine executive directors and twelve non-executive directors (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2005). That same year the executive directors were remunerated a total of €10.228 million in salary, benefits, and bonuses, which included a €2.584 million "success bonus" for one director's involvement in the "unsolicited" sale of All-Clad the previous year (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2005). The non-executive directors, three of whom waived their fees given the state of the Group's finances, were remunerated a total of €653,000 (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2005). Furthermore, between September 2004 and March 2005, the workers were "subjected to seven weeks short-time work," or "unpaid leave" and "the company pleaded an inability to pay a small wage increase under the terms of the National Wage Agreement" (Hearne 2019, 264). The Group was slowly failing. While, in a familiar story, those in charge were being rewarded handsomely.

Meanwhile, to maintain their necessary levels of production amidst these redundancies, and continued executive and non-executive bonuses, the Group further outsourced their operations: "We have also had considerable success with our new global production facilities. The transition to these factories has been seamless. We have been able to maintain our high-quality products, whilst manufacturing them at lower costs. This can only be further good news for the business" (Tony O'Reilly, Chairman, Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2006). In addition to restructuring the Group's operations, Waterford Wedgwood placed a greater emphasis on marketing and developing new product lines. According to Tony O'Reilly, Chairman:

The Board recognizes that the path to recovery requires more than cost reductions alone - sales growth is key in returning this business to the first rank of global luxury goods companies...we have invested significant effort into contemporising [sic] our brands and making them more relevant to today's market...[Our] expanded portfolio now includes ranges from contemporary and renowned designers...the Group plans to launch new products including wine, furniture and fragrances which will provide the company with additional sales opportunities (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2008).

By 2008, Waterford Wedgwood was producing twenty designer lines (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2008).⁵ While Waterford Wedgwood made cutbacks and restructured production at the expense of the workers, the Group promoted and sold the idea of opulence. After all, as a luxury-product business, luxuriousness was the guiding principle driving the Waterford Wedgwood Group. Despite their efforts, or because of them, as the first signs of the financial crisis began to loom in 2008, there was little that Waterford Wedgwood could do to save itself (see Chapter One).

Since the beginning of the Group's decline in 2001, various reports suggest that Waterford Wedgwood's majority shareholders, Tony O'Reilly and Peter Goulandris, invested anywhere between €250 and €400 million of their own money to keep the Group afloat (Beesley and Hennessy 2008; Curran and Clerkin 2008; Irish Examiner May 5, 2008). Despite their efforts, by 2008 Waterford Wedgwood had a net debt of €488.3 million (Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2008). In April 2008, Waterford Wedgwood sought a €39 million loan-guarantee from the Irish government to carry out the final stages of a restructuring programme that was intended to ensure Waterford Crystal's long-term viability in Ireland. Even though the majority of Waterford Wedgwood's operations lay outside of Ireland, including approximately forty percent of Waterford Crystal's glass output, it was maintained widely that Waterford Crystal was the most viable enterprise within the Group's operations. Given the company's status as an "iconic Irish brand," state support was seriously considered by the *Fianna Fáil*-led government (Curran and Clerkin 2008; McManus 2008; Waterford News and Star May 6, 2009; The Sunday Business Post May

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⁵ Those designer lines include: Versace Rosenthal; Jasper Conran Waterford Crystal; John Rocha Waterford Crystal; Rosenthal Studio-line (Andy Warhol); Royal Albert (Zandra Rhodes); Emeril; Spring - Andrew Weil; Jasper Conran Wedgwood; Vera Wang Wedgwood; Barbara Barry Wedgwood; Kelly Hoppen Wedgwood; Robert Mondavi By Waterford; Marc Jacobs Waterford; Robert Dawson; Gordon Ramsey Royal Doulton; Julien MacDonald By Royal Doulton; Terence Conran By Royal Doulton; Monique Lhuillier for Royal Doulton; Martha Stewart Collection Wedgwood; Michael Aram for Waterford (Waterford Wedgwood Annual Reports and Accounts 2008).

18th, 2008). However, the Irish government ultimately refused to grant the loan-guarantee for fear it would set a precedent for other struggling companies seeking financial support from the state (Irish Examiner May 23, 2008). Without State support, Waterford Wedgwood was out of options. On January 5th, 2009, the Group went into receivership.

2.3 TAKING OVER: OCCUPYING THE SHOWROOM AND VISITOR CENTRE

As mentioned in Chapter One, the receiver, David Carson of Deloitte Ireland, agreed to keep Waterford Crystal operational as a going concern until the business could be sold. However, three-and-a-half weeks later, without consulting the trade union and the workforce, the Waterford Crystal workers were being locked out of the factory. Roy, a member of the trade union leadership, details how the beginning of the Occupation unfolded on Friday, January 30th, 2009.

We got a tipoff that he [the receiver] was sending out termination letters by [private] couriers around the town. So, we were actually after being at a meeting ourselves in the Social and Sports Centre with all the union reps...

A couple of the shop stewards arrived down at the Visitor Centre and there was security men on the door, so we just went in and everybody was working as normal. The manager of the Visitor Centre came to us and said, "What's going on?"

I said, "You are just after being sacked. We're taking over this place now."

The word just spread around the place, there was mayhem in the place. "What's happening? What's happening?" The security men start closing and locking the doors, so we just said to them, "That's not an advisable thing to do. This is our factory, not yours, and we are not going to just walk away from this."

When word came around, more and more workers started to come along. At this stage there was about twenty of us inside, mostly the union reps, and the receiver's security men, who weren't very nice people. They started to let people out, but they weren't letting people in. So, we said to him, "Look, the best thing to do now is to open the door and let those people in because they are coming in one way or another." So, they were making phone calls.

Anyway, the door opened to let people out and then there was a rush at the door to come in. There was a bit of an altercation, I think it is on the archives of the RTÉ news, the glass in the bottom of the door was broken. There was a row. So, everyone started to get really kind of excited about it, we just said, "Let them inside!" Then everyone came in and everything calmed down. From then on, we just took over the

place...When we took over and it hit the local news, we then issued a statement that we were occupying the place and that we weren't leaving—this is our company.

- Roy, 50s, Craftworker, 20 Years of Service

Following the commotion of taking over the Visitor Centre and Showroom, the workers, namely the shop stewards and the trade union leadership, needed to figure out what they were going to do next.

Aidan's recollection of the moments after the takeover is recounted below. According to him, the Occupation almost did not happen. He speaks about the closure of Waterford Crystal with a simmering resentment, the pain of losing his job was still raw. When discussing other matters, he still exudes intensity when he speaks but can also be quite jovial. He is a man of strong opinions and convictions.

There was a display table, a huge display table of Waterford Crystal, set out for like maybe twenty people, twenty places, a big mahogany table, the best of crystal and Wedgwood china laid out on it. So, we sat around that as our meeting table, that's a fact. Some *craic*!⁶

So, the meeting started where they outlined what was going on and we said we obviously can't accept that. It was then suggested that, "Well, you know, what we could do now is—we can't control all of these people, we should probably send everyone home. The receiver is refusing or will refuse to meet us if we are sort of occupying the place. He said he wants to have an orderly run down and that will only happen if we sort of cooperate."

And some were saying, "Well, we could go home and you know make a proper formal meeting time tomorrow say and take it from there."

And, with that, three or four more speakers put up their hand and joined in and said, "Yeah, I think that's a good idea now, we'll go out with our heads held high and we'll have a disciplined position." All of this kind of thing.

So, it was looking like we were actually going to ask everyone to leave the place and end the Occupation. This is even before we got going. But others argued they oppose this view, "Now is the time to hit back! We now have six or seven hundred people occupying the place, we've taken over the doors. If we go out now, all will happen is that they'll get an extra fifty or sixty security guys in to reseal all the doors. We'll never get back in.

We then decided that we'd go out into the general area of the gallery and call the meeting. We got up on a loud-hailer and just said, "Look, lads this is what's happening, we're going to stay here, we're not going to give up our jobs that easy," and the usual stuff that comes with that. Eventually then, we started saying to people, "Look, if there

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⁶ Craic is the Irish word for fun.

is anybody that has things to do or families to take care of—you've all come in here very quickly. Go home. You're alright. Anyone who can stay or wants to stay, please do." And there were still like four or five hundred that decided they were going to stay anyway. So, they were never going to come in and throw us out in that sense. And so, that's how the Occupation started.

- Aidan, 50s, Manager, 36 Years of Service

As Aidan suggests, the 2009 Occupation was by no means a foregone conclusion. While the workers presented a united front, there was some debate over whether occupying the Showroom and Visitor Centre was the right course of action. The trade union was in a difficult position because they were not dealing with management or an owner. They were negotiating with a court appointed receiver, whose primary responsibility was to recoup losses for Waterford Wedgwood's creditors. The dynamics of dealing with a receiver would influence significantly the workers and the trade union's strategy for the rest of the 2009 Occupation.

The primary concerns for the trade union were keeping the tank furnace operational and lobbying for suitable buyers for the company, namely buyers interested in keeping as much production as possible in Waterford. This meant that some workers were still employed by the receiver during the 2009 Occupation. Roy outlines why this was the case below. Roy has a commanding presence. As a member of the trade union leadership, he is passionate about workers' rights, trade unionism, and the labour movement in general. But he is also measured with respect to understanding the complexity of the situation the former glass workers found themselves in 2009. It is this type of balanced outlook he applies to most things—an approach reflective of a life spent in the middle of labour disputes.

At that stage our priority—the tank furnace was still burning, we wanted to keep the tank furnace going until we found an alternative buyer for the company, who would keep the jobs in place. That was our objective from day one of the Occupation. We weren't going to do anything that was going to damage the company, at all. In fairness to all the workers out there, they treated that place with huge respect and the people that worked in it.

The receiver then issued more termination notices, but there was a group of workers, particularly the office staff, who hadn't received notice cause he needed them to continue on working there, to bring it to a stage to sell the business. So, we had no problem with that, some of our members were unhappy that, "Why are they still working in here?"

"We're not here to damage the business, we're here to protect it."

- Roy, 50s, Craftworker, 20 Years of Service

The tank furnace was a priority because it runs twenty-four hours and needs to be maintained by workers while in operation. Allowing the tank furnace to burn out or shutting it down and restarting it were both expensive propositions that were deemed to be detrimental to attracting new buyers that would maintain production in Waterford.

As Roy mentions, the maintenance workers servicing the tank furnace were not the only workers still employed by the receiver. Office staff were required to help close the company and workers in the distribution section were needed for shipping out remaining stock, so they were also working during the 2009 Occupation. This was a very contentious issue for the workers. Charlie and Cathal remember this aspect of the Occupation well because they were both shop stewards and working during the Occupation.

So, I was still on a shift roster during the Occupation...but I managed to juggle work, union, and sit-in. I'd try to go over and do a stint whenever I was off work, but a lot of our members were very uneasy with the fact they were in work. And, even when they went over to participate in the sit-in—they felt resentment.

Now, it may not have been known at the time by people at the time, but we collected €50 a man every week and contributed it to the fund. As I said, we were a necessary evil to everybody then because we had to be in there. Some guys didn't want to be in there, they just didn't want it, but you had the main body of the union saying, "Well, you got to go in there because you got to keep it going."

But, as time went on, I don't think everyone saw it like that. There was definitely resentment. But there was going to be people in there maintaining right up to the closure and there was other people beside maintenance. I presume they were in the same boat. They felt very uneasy. I know some people in the end wouldn't go over to the sit-in, they just felt that, "No, I don't need that. I'm being looked at every time I go in and I just don't need it." They gave up.

- Charlie, 40s, Maintenance, 24 Years of Service

You had staff people, who still had their jobs, who were working Monday to Friday in their job coming in at six o'clock on a Saturday and Sunday morning and spending six or eight hours or longer in there...And, they were castigated.

The distribution centre was working when the place closed—the lads in the distribution centre. In fairness, they used to get awful abuse. And then you had them lads coming over in the evening after they finished work and then you'd have little arguments, "Well, you're alright, you have a job. I don't have a job."

You were getting on guys [i.e. giving them a hard time] who were coming over doing a stint.

- Cathal, 40s, General Section, 25 Years of Service

Many of the redundant Waterford Crystal workers could not understand why some workers were allowed to work during the 2009 Occupation. Connor (40s, General Section, 25 Years of Service) summed it up as: "I'm a union member, you're a union member, I'm over occupying not getting paid, you're over there putting the glass in and getting paid. There's no sense or meaning to it to me. Like it was either an occupation or it wasn't." The situation in which the workers found themselves stemmed from the fact that the trade union was dealing with a receiver. The trade union felt it was in the best interests of the workers to protect the tank furnace and the company's infrastructure to attract prospective buyers that were interested in keeping production in Waterford. While the trade union was seemingly left with no other choice, this approach divided the workers and contributed to undermining the strength and unity of the 2009 Occupation as a whole.

The workers' attitudes ranged from the stalwarts who wanted to keep going no matter what, the disillusioned who just stopped showing up, and the very angry who had wanted nothing to do with it from the beginning. Cathal, Henry, and Senan are representative of these opinions:

We came out of the gallery at a time when the tourist season was literally starting. We could have done the most damage to them then. One of the biggest problems you had is that you had the sit-in there, but you had a core group of people that were running the sit-in. You had fellas that wouldn't be bothered coming down there. You had food and drink on tap, you had a bit of comfort, you had the papers, you had the tele—fellas could

have come down for a couple of hours. From the word go, we tried to get the union to put in a roster, literally to force people to come in—you'd think you wouldn't have to force people to come in and do their turn. They were vehemently against putting in a roster, they just didn't want it.

The people who were actually involved in the sit-in, and some people put in fantastic hours, and they never got credit for it. Some were working and others weren't, but they never got credit for it. Even retired people would come down in the evening and sit-in there six or seven hours.

It was embarrassing when people couldn't get off their arse and come in...my own view is that the people who were doing it, who were involved in the sit-in, we were starting to get tired. Why should I do it when no one else is doing it?

- Cathal, 40s, General Section, 25 Years of Service

At the beginning, people were up for this, but as it went on—myself, I got very disheart-ened with it, to be honest...I ended up start doing less and less because I couldn't see any good coming out of it. I never really spoke to many of the lads over there about it, but...one of the lads said it after the first three weeks of the sit-in—he just couldn't go over there anymore. It was the first time I heard someone express the same opinion that I had...You'd get the stalwart kind of people, who were saying we're not going to give up on this, we're not going to give up on that. But the company [KPS] had what they wanted. They bought Waterford Crystal and all they really wanted was the brand name, they could manufacture it anywhere in the world. And, if we were still sitting over there—to this day, it wouldn't have changed a thing.

- Henry, 40s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

I wanted to stay away from it [the 2009 Occupation] because I knew it was just finished. I felt it in my heart. These people, the likes of Tony O'Reilly, they don't give a damn about you, me, or anybody else. It's only himself and his family...I had no part of the Occupation, I went out twice, I think...I was afraid I might do something pretty stupid, like start breaking stuff or whatever. Or, if I heard somebody running us down, I could lose it.

When I went to collect my gear, I had a row with one of the bosses out there because the security man went in with me and the security man came out with me, but I told him [the boss] on no uncertain terms I'd break every last thing in the place if I got a chance. And I would have. That was just the anger in me and it's still there.

- Senan, 50s, Craftworker, 40 Years of Service

For many of the workers, their motivation for continuing the 2009 Occupation diminished quickly once the possibility of a successful resolution seemed unlikely. Moreover, the Occupation left them wondering who are we fighting against? The Waterford Wedgwood Group no longer existed, the receiver and KPS had no legal obligation to them, and the government was disinterested.

In an effort to re-energize the 2009 Occupation, some workers stated that they wanted to take a more militant approach in order to hold the media's attention, place greater pressure on the government to intervene with the receivership, and reinvigorate the workforce. For instance, Cian felt the workers should have focused their protests on Dublin to force Irish politicians to act. Cian has a very pleasant demeanor and despite all that has happened to him since the closure of Waterford Crystal, he remains optimistic. That's just his nature.

I thought the sit-in was a great, a great idea up to a point, but a total waste of time once the media moved away. Once they moved away, your news to the outside world was gone, your link to the outside world was gone. The only place that the politicians in Ireland listen is in Dublin. When farmers protest, they bring their tractors to Dublin, when the lorry drivers protest, they bring their lorries to Dublin, when the fire brigade protest, they bring their fire brigades to Dublin.

My idea was—there's one main artery in Dublin and that's called the Mad Cow roundabout, that's not its real name, it's the Red Cow roundabout. But now it's a different link, it's a spaghetti junction type now, it's not a roundabout anymore. My interpretation of what I would have done, I would have got eight cars, or maybe even six cars, [and] every morning I would have put one of those cars in every exit or entrance in that interlinking area of the Red Cow. I would have stopped my car, put the flashers on, got out, released the spark plug, and just leave the car with the bonnet up and say my car has broken down. And, have a sign in the back saying, we support Waterford Crystal workers on strike in Waterford Crystal—just a small little banner in the back...And, that would grind at every part of Dublin city, the airport, the business centre, everything. On two days a week, Monday and Friday, and do that continuously...And, that way, the politicians would then have to listen to the people in Dublin, not to the people in Waterford. That's what I thought should have been done.

- Cian, 50s, Craftworker, 41 Years of Service

Conal also felt more should have been done to put pressure on the receiver. He felt they should have targeted different aspects of the business that were still in operation during the Occupation. Conal is very assertive when it comes to expressing his ideas and opinions. He believed firmly that the workers needed to be more militant during the Occupation.

While we were in the dispute, the computer systems that allowed all the salespeople to operate was housed within the upper floors of the office block, which was also part of the Visitor Centre. It was proposed that we shut down the entire IT systems and that was opposed by most of the people on the committee...So, shutting down the IT and communication systems didn't happen, shutting down distribution from shipping out all of

our finished product and selling it as if business was normal didn't happen, blocking the moulds being transferred out to foreign countries—to start making the blank glass while we were in dispute—that didn't happen. I think they were all critical mistakes in the dispute, critical mistakes. And I think those kind of actions were part of the reason why the appetite of the workforce dissipated. They saw these things—we reported these things back to them and guys were saying, "Well, Jesus, what are we left to fight with?"

What you have left essentially is a piece of land inside a fence of twenty-six acres. But sure, if they got all the IT systems, they got all the patents, they got all the designs, they got the moulds that make the stuff, they got all the finished product they wanted out the gate—what's left? So, that kind of reality didn't seem to have any impact on the broader shop stewards committee. It did on a few of us. And there was definitely disparate views within the committee as to how this dispute should go. I think the dispute could have gone an entirely different route. Whether we would have won anymore or not, I'm not sure, but I think we would have.

- Conal, 50s, Craftworker, 36 Years of Service

Whether or not these tactics would have changed anything with respect to the way the 2009 Occupation played out or the final outcome for the workers, it is difficult to say. In the end, there just was not the appetite or the leadership, according to Conal, to take a more militant approach.

The apathy that came to characterize the 2009 Occupation spoke to a larger issue. Many of the workers perceived a lack of organization, communication, and information from the trade union as part of the problem with respect to maintaining momentum during the 2009 Occupation. Finn and John can attest to this issue. Finn is tall, broad, and soft spoken.

Things weren't structured right. There wasn't enough communication with the workers...Communication, communication, communication, that's my problem with the union. No communication with the workers. They were coming out of meetings and it was all whispers and cloak and dagger stuff.

- Finn, 50s, Craftworker, 40 Years of Service

John has a hoarse voice, but a playful way of talking that leaves me hanging on every word. He also speaks with a glint in his eye.

This is where it gets a bit difficult...The repetitiveness of the union constantly telling us that we were going to fight until the end. Now, I never knew and I was always trying to figure out what the end was. What is the end? What would please us? I kept saying to myself, "Is this fella going to open up the place again?" "No, he's not." This is a shut down. It'll never be open again. What kind of an offer is he going to make us? Is he going to hand us out a redundancy package? Couldn't see it, I'd say to myself, this

fella—the way these receivers come in, they have court powers. He's going to try and get out of here on the minimum. He'd want us out, there's no doubt about it. How long are we prepared to stay? What are we prepared to take? More importantly, what are we prepared to refuse?

Now, I could go into all the details of the days and nights that were spent down there—mostly, boredom, lack of information. And I'm not blaming anyone for the lack of information, maybe there was no information because in fairness to the union at that stage, there is no point calling a union meeting if you have nothing to talk about, if you have nothing to actually bring back to it.

- John, 50s, Craftworker, 40 Years of Service

These problems raised by the workers were ultimately shaped by the nature of the receivership. The receiver had no obligation to the workers. The trade union's strategy of trying to protect the business for prospective buyers limited what they could do or were willing to do with respect to the 2009 Occupation. As for the lack of information and communication, the trade union had very little input in the negotiations. They could put forward recommendations, but the receiver was under no obligation to act on those recommendations. Furthermore, the controversial manner in which KPS was able to purchase the Waterford Crystal brand and intellectual property rights also affected the trade union's position in the negotiations and the information available to report back to the workers.

Prior to going into receivership, KPS was in negotiations with Waterford Wedgwood about investing in the Group to keep it viable. This has led to speculation by many of the workers about the role of Waterford Wedgwood's Chief Financial Officer (CFO), Anthony Jones, in the lead up to the receivership and subsequent sale to KPS. Below is Roy's assessment of what many of the workers believe happened.

There is kind of a view out there that the appointment of the receiver was actually a setup because prior to Christmas, KPS was involved as part of the negotiations for the debt restructuring of the company with the Bank of America and a number of other financial institutions. And, Anthony Jones, who is now the CFO of WWRD was at the negotiations from Lazard Investment, who had invested €50 million in the company...So, the speculation that is going around, is that the receiver was already in the room in the guise of KPS and Anthony Jones, saying, "Why are we investing money in this company now when, if it goes into receivership, we can buy the name and everything else for a fraction and we don't have any of the debt?"

What transpired after is what leads people to the view that this had happened. KPS was in there from the start, they had completed their due diligence well before the receivership as part of whether or not they wanted to invest more money in the company through the Bank of America. So, they were ahead of the posse, you know what I mean, in terms of what they had to do.

[T]here was a local consortium here, headed up by, Peter Cameron and John Foley, now they were behind the eight ball in the sense because they were going in to do their due diligence when KPS had already had a head start on them. So, we had a couple of meetings with Clarion [the group headed by John Foley and Peter Cameron]...and [they] were saying that they were prepared to run with [another] plan of keeping the 300 jobs. So, we kind of put our support behind that rather than support behind KPS.

- Roy, 50s, Craftworker, 20 Years of Service

Cathal has a similar assessment of the situation. Cathal was a well-respected shop steward. Before I met him several of my research participants suggested I should talk to him. Strangely, he was hard to track down, we did not meet until near the end of my research period, but thankfully we did finally connect with each other. Cathal is very forthcoming. He is honest and open in his assessment of the way he perceived things at Waterford Crystal.

[W]hat we learned after the place closed, is that probably from the summer of 2008 Anthony Jones was in communication with KPS, which were the people that bought the Waterford Crystal brand name. So, he was keeping them abreast of what was going on there. A lot of us do believe that him and KPS orchestrated the closure.

Obviously, you had nearly 800 people working there in the end, you had an awful lot of people with forty years service, there was a massive hole in the pension fund at that stage. So, these fellas weren't going to—why would they pay fellas' redundancies, you know?...It was going to cost them a fortune. When they could just close the place...

So, they ended up buying the company very, very cheaply. Now, they always maintained, KPS, closing it like they did wasn't the way to do it, that they had done an awful lot of damage to the brand. But in 2008, Anthony Jones did unveil a plan which is remarkably similar to what's in place now [at the House of Waterford Crystal]. We knew it as the Jones Plan, where there was seventy people in manufacturing, and you had the gallery and however many people were going to work in the gallery. It's nearly identical to what actually happened. Anthony Jones is the man in WWRD.

- Cathal, 40s, General Section, 25 Years of Service

The speculation concerning the connection between Anthony Jones and Lazard Alternative Investments stems from the fact that Lazard insisted on Jones as CFO before investing in the

company (Hearne 2019, 277; Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2008). Jones became CFO in November 2007 and the €50 million investment from Lazard was announced shortly after his appointment in late December 2007 (Hearne 2019, 277; Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2008). Two people from Lazard were also nominated to the Board of Directors, they were Ali Wambold and Jonathon Kagan (Hearne 2019, 277; Waterford Wedgwood PLC 2008). The notion that Jones manufactured the receivership and the purchase of the Waterford Crystal brand and intellectual property rights by KPS is speculative. However, the optics of Jones being in talks with KPS prior to the receivership, holding the position of CFO at Waterford Wedgwood and then at WWRD, and then the House of Waterford Crystal resembling the Jones Plan fuels speculation about what may or may not have occurred behind closed doors.

Either way, the workers felt completely disconnected from the negotiation process that would ultimately dictate critical aspects of their future, regardless of occupying the Showroom and Visitor Centre. This perception was not intentional on part of the trade union, but a product of the receivership process itself. The receiver was in control. KPS had the benefit of having done their due diligence well in advance because of being in talks with Waterford Wedgwood prior to the receivership. This certainly put other prospective buyers, such as Clarion, at a disadvantage. KPS was ready to buy, and the receiver wanted to recoup assets as quickly as possible. Plus, as a result of the Occupation, the receiver was in the middle of a high-profile labour dispute. The receiver had no legal obligation to the Waterford Crystal workers; by selling the brand and intellectual property rights, the receiver was able to further undermine the workers' position. With the brand and intellectual property rights sold, the company, in essence, was gone. The workers were effectively occupying a building that only had an historical association with Waterford Crystal.

Given the situation with the receiver, the workers and the trade union felt their only option was to appeal to the national government to intervene and save the company. Now that Waterford Wedgwood was in receivership, Waterford Crystal could have been divided from the parent company and run as a profitable, stand-alone enterprise, which was suggested by the trade union as a possible stipulation during Waterford Wedgwood's pursuit of the government's loanguarantee in April 2008 (Curran and Clerkin 2008; The Sunday Business Post May 18th, 2008). The workers and their trade union believed they could have maintained a viable manufacturing operation in Waterford. Here is Conal's recollection of the role, or lack thereof, played by the Irish state after Waterford Wedgwood went into receivership:

We reckon that we could have retained between 400 and 450 well-paid jobs, even though substantial wage cuts would have applied.

At a meeting we had in city hall, that I attended with most of the shop stewards; several of the city councillors; and, the Minister, Martin Cullen, and TD Brendan Kenneally, both of whom represented this area at the time, Martin Cullen said, "It is against European rules." That was his answer. He said, "I see all the figures lads. Your numbers all add up. It makes perfect sense, but it is against European rules to interfere in the free market."

So we pointed out to him, "How come that didn't apply to Fiat in Italy or to Renault in France." Both had been helped out by their governments. And he had no answer to that.

His answer was, "Well, those countries will have to answer for themselves, but the Irish government is going by the rules."

So, we're absolutely sold out by our government. And, when you look at it and you think about how you might carry on with the dispute and fight on or—you know, you really had nobody backing you up after that—other than ordinary people and the goodwill of the people. But our government really was against us. The receiver was against us. The various laws were against us. The pressure of debt building up in people's homes was against us. Everything was against us.

- Conal, 50s, Craftworker, 36 Years of Service

Conal's references to "Fiat in Italy," "Renault in France," and Europe in general is important because there was a common perception among the workers that, had Waterford Crystal been an iconic brand of another country, then state intervention would not have been so easily dismissed. At the time of the 2009 Occupation, the Italian government was considering a bailout for Fiat

and the French government was in the process of bailing out Renault and Peugeot (Gow and Traynor 2009; The Guardian January 28th, 2009). In the discussion surrounding a potential Waterford Crystal bailout, there were suggestions that any scheme to rescue the company would require approval from the European Commission Directorate-General for Competition and that such approval would be unlikely (Beesley and Hennessey 2008). In the case of Renault and Peugeot, the Directorate-General for Competition immediately claimed that the aid offered by the French government was illegal (Gow and Traynor 2009). However, the "European Commission president José Manuel Barroso...said he had seen no evidence of a breach of EU internal market rules" (Gow and Traynor 2009). The aid was only approved by the Directorate-General for Competition after assurances were made that the bailout of Renault and Peugeot would not adversely affect their manufacturing operations in other EU member states (Gow and Traynor 2009). As the worker above suggests, as the 2009 Occupation went on, it appeared as if everything was stacked against the Waterford Crystal workforce. The EU's influence on Irish political economy is discussed in Chapter Three.

The 2009 Occupation was quickly losing momentum and the possibility of a more favourable resolution for the workers seemed unlikely. As a result, the offer of a \in 10 million *ex gratia* payment from the receiver and KPS for the workers to end the Occupation seemed like the only viable option for the trade union to resolve the dispute. In an open branch meeting on March 22nd, 2009, the trade union recommended the workers accept the \in 10 million offer to end the Occupation. Even though the rank-and-file had always accepted the trade union's recommendations in the past, going into this meeting, Charlie felt this was going to be the first exception. Charlie was a shop steward during the Occupation. He is affable and candid.

People were in a bad place. Now, okay, you could say we wouldn't take it [€10 million] and we would fight on, but at that stage—the factory was virtually empty. Where were

we going to fight? What were we going to do? We didn't have a lot of trump cards. As you can see that building is still out there. A lot of people have a lot of opinions about what should have happened. Now, as I say, I was at long meetings where all this was rehashed and went through. But, as I said, when the public meetings came again, a couple of people would have dissenting voices, but when it came to a vote the union were never beaten on a recommendation. They were always unanimously passed...I said, to-day is the day they are going to turn. It never came. It never came.

- Charlie, 40s, Maintenance Worker, 24 Years of Service

The decision to accept the trade union's recommendations might have come as a surprise, but some of the former glass worker argued there was no alternative or "Plan B" to accepting the recommendation. This is Cathal's interpretation of the situation.

At the final meeting, they were saying you are not getting out of here until you make a decision...there is no plan B. Take your $\in 10$ million and leave. There was no plan B. The point has been made that at the time when we were really going to hit them [i.e., tourism season], the people weren't going to be reinstated, but the $\in 10$ million might have been $\in 15$ million or $\in 20$ million or $\in 30$ million. People could have got what they were entitled to because KPS had plenty of money. I don't think the union leadership were completely behind it.

- Cathal, 40s, General Section, 25 Years of Service

Cathal and some others felt that if they continued to put pressure on the receiver and KPS into the tourism season, then they might have been able to increase the *ex gratia* payment. While there was a lot of anger over accepting the \in 10 million, by that stage in the Occupation it was little more than a formality.

The government was not about to change its position, the trade union had no leverage, and many workers had drifted away from the Occupation itself. Whether things could have been done differently, it is difficult to say. In some respects, it is a remarkable feat that the Waterford Crystal workers were able to get anything from the receiver and KPS. It is unclear as to where exactly the money came from, but neither the receiver nor KPS had any legal obligation to pay out any money to the workers. While little consolation to the workers, the €10 million is a

testament to the strength and determination that the Waterford Crystal workers have demonstrated over their history.

The next section examines the ways in which Waterford Crystal's contentious 1990 Strike influenced the 2009 Occupation. The workers' memories of the 1990 Strike, and its outcomes, shaped their perceptions and expectations of the 2009 Occupation.

2.4 THE 1990 STRIKE - BREAKING THE TRADE UNION

In 1984, Waterford Crystal was purchased by the British firm, Globe Investment Trust (Conlon 1994). This resulted in a significant change in the character of the company as it marked the end of family ownership and a paternalistic managerial approach that was concerned with developing Irish industries and investing in Irish workers (Conlon 1994; Hearne 2019; also see Chapter Three for a discussion on the connection between Waterford Crystal and nationalist sentiment). Under Globe Investment Trust's management, Waterford Crystal became an asset of a much larger corporate entity controlled from the United Kingdom. As the workers' perceived the takeover, Globe Investment Trust's primary concern was generating returns for its shareholders as opposed to the wellbeing of Irish industry and Irish workers. However, Globe Investment Trust's tenure of Waterford Crystal resulted in negative changes in the company's financial situation. Similar to the post-2001 era at Waterford Wedgwood, Globe Investment Trust's mismanagement was exposed by the global economic downturn of the late 1980s and early 1990s.

According to Waterford Crystal's 1985 Annual Reports and Accounts (Waterford Glass Group PLC 1985, 9), "crystal demand outstripped production, testifying to the strong, widespread demand for the product. To meet this increasing demand, particularly in the American, Irish and UK markets, output was stepped up and inventory management significantly

improved." Just prior to the takeover by Globe Investment Trust, Waterford Crystal agreed to a lucrative new contract with its employees and began a recruiting campaign, which included a search for new workers in the craft section (Waterford Glass Group PLC 1985, 9; Hearne 2019, 185). However, "during the period of the agreement total labour costs increased by sixty-two percent against an inflation rate of twenty-one percent" (Hearne 2019, 189). Moreover, the US dollar began to depreciate, thus "making the export of crystal to America much more difficult" (Hearne 2019, 189). The company's precarious financial situation was exacerbated in 1986, when Waterford Crystal purchased Wedgwood China for £252.6 million. According to Conlon (1994, 77-8), "this was three times the book value of the company and represented a GBP£100m premium over the next highest bidder...Waterford had to raise \$40m in equity in the US and borrow heavily to pay." In 1987, Waterford Crystal (with Wedgwood) experienced its first loss (IR£10.3 million) since 1955 (Conlon 1994; Hearne 1992; Waterford Glass Group PLC 1987). Waterford Crystal attributed this first loss in over three decades to a combination of external and internal factors:

During 1987, worldwide crystal sales were adversely affected by three factors. In the first half of the year, there was softening of demand in the US market. Throughout the tourist season, the weak US dollar affected crystal sales in Britain and Ireland. In the second half of the year, US demand recovered strongly, but sales were adversely affected by supply difficulties caused by the restructuring programme (Waterford Glass Group PLC 1987, 6).

The restructuring programme mentioned above was a response to Waterford Crystal's high cost of production, which was considered a liability relative to the wider industry and the declining economy. According to Waterford Crystal (Waterford Glass Group PLC 1987, 6), "production costs had moved seriously out of line compared with those of competitors and the long-term decline in the value of the dollar meant that action to cut costs had to be taken urgently." The

company's concern over "production costs" ultimately translated into a problem with the wage bill at Waterford Crystal.

The company's initial restructuring plan called for a reduction of 750 workers. However, in the rush to reduce the workforce, the company offered very generous redundancy packages, which led to an oversubscription by the workers (Conlon 1994, 78). This resulted in a shortage of highly skilled blowers who were the only workers capable of producing some of the more complicated pieces. According to Cormac:

The thing [the restructuring plan] was done in such a messy, sloppy, fucking way that in the blowing room, lots of the best craft people were let go and the other people behind them didn't have the skills. It was like letting the mechanic go and now saying to the young fella that was mending the punctures, saying, "You can work on the engines." Within a few months of letting them all go, they had to bring them back...

In the cutting room, if you are able to cut glass then you can cut it, in the blowing room there was a much more strict division of labour.

- Cormac, 60s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

Below, Declan recounts this situation from his personal experience. Declan is opinionated and not shy with respect to sharing what he thinks about various subjects.

They were in a mad haste to get rid of numbers and I remember distinctly saying to —, "You are throwing the child out with the bath water."

"What would you know about it," [he said].

"Okay, I know nothing about it, but I'm after telling you."

We were out...[Then] I walked in that door and the personnel manager was there sitting having a cup of tea with [my wife]. I said, "————, what the fuck are you doing here? I didn't want to see your arse again."

He said, "I need to talk to you. We have a problem."

I said, "Don't we all."

He said, "We're after selling IR£2 million worth of glass and we have no one to make it."

And, I said, "Am I surprised, ———? No, I'm not ———. Go back to your boss and tell him to fuck off!"

I said, "But, sure, you knew that when you were throwing us out because all of the experience came out of the blowing room."

"Will you put it to some of the lads," he said, "if any of them would come back for a short-term."

At this stage, there was no money discussed...So, I spoke with the lads and thirty-two lads said, "Look, we'll give it a go." So, I went down and met ———. There was no money discussed, so I said, "Look, there is thirty-two of us that will give it a go on the condition that if we can't get back to it in a week we'll just leave and that will be it."

He said, "No problem, we just want you to try it." So, then he said, "Look, we'll pay you full money, you hold on to your pensions, but you'll be working in Dungarvan. So, we'll give you a 100 quid a man traveling expenses every week."

Now, that was money in your pocket because I was already thinking—pool the cars.

"And, if you so wish, you can work Saturday and Sunday, you get double time for Saturday and triple time for Sunday."

So, we said, right, we'll give it a go. So, thirty-two of us went up to Dungarvan and within an hour we were blowing glass...

- Declan, 60s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

In the end, the restructuring programme reduced the workforce by a third, from 3,010 to 2,005, and according to the company this was supposed to lead to a "reduction in wage costs of IR£18m per annum, which [was] expected to lead to a twenty percent decrease in unit production costs" (Waterford Glass Group PLC 1987, 6). However, the restructuring programme ended up costing the company IR£31 million in redundancies and IR£14.8 million in disruption to production at a time when the company was vulnerable given the debt from the purchase of Wedgwood and the contraction of the US market (Conlon 1994, 78). While the Group turned a small profit of IR£2.7 million in 1988, Waterford Crystal was in trouble, posting a loss of IR£20.52 million in the same year (Waterford Glass Group PLC 1988). Between 1986 and 1989, the overall turnover of the Group increased, but so did their debt and their interest payments (Conlon 1994). The Group was in trouble and the production costs, most notably the wage bill, at Waterford Crystal were again determined to be the main problem by management.

In January 1990, the company proposed a IR£10 million cost-savings plan, known as Plan 90, in an effort to return the company to profitability (Conlon 1994). Some of the proposals of Plan 90 included: "the introduction of a thirty-nine hour work week [up from thirty-seven-and-a-half]; the abolition of attendance, summer, and Christmas bonuses; an increase in the

pension age of craftworkers and the pension contributions of the non-craftworkers...the introduction of performance systems in non-craft areas...abolition of short-fortnight payment; redeployment of wedge cutters...a longer day for blowers; [and] shorter breaks for female workers" (Conlon 1994, 238). However, the workers were reluctant to agree to any more cuts, especially when previous measures taken by the company to streamline production costs had not seemed to work. Beyond the reduction of a third of the workforce, the workers also agreed to the installation of a tank furnace at the Dungarvan factory, the introduction of new diamond cutting wheels, a two-year wage freeze, and a reduction in company pension contributions (Harper 1990). Furthermore, three top executives, including the CEO Paddy Hayes, resigned in 1989 after admitting responsibility for accounting errors that inflated projected profits by IR£15 million, which subsequently overvalued the company's share prices (Conlon 1994, Harper 1990). When Waterford Crystal ended up losing IR£20.5 million in 1988, the company and the board's reputation were severely damaged (Conlon 1994, Waterford Glass Group PLC 1988).

Around the same time, in early 1990, Tony O'Reilly, a former Irish international rugby player and prominent businessman, saw an opportunity with respect to Waterford Wedgwood's business failings. O'Reilly had a long-standing interest in Waterford Crystal. In 1983, O'Reilly failed to put a group of investors together to buy the company (Hearne 2019, 196). In 1988, he had an offer to purchase the Group rejected (Hearne 2019, 196). With Waterford Wedgwood now in serious financial trouble, the time was right. He led a group of investors, which included Morgan Stanley and O'Reilly's own investment company, Fitzwilton, to purchase a third of the Group (Conlon 1994, 81-2). Their investment of £79.5 million alleviated the Group's debt burden, but also placed greater pressure on Waterford Crystal's management team to get the cost saving measures they felt necessary to make the company profitable again (Conlon 1994, 81-2).

In March 1990, Waterford Crystal decided to force the workers' hand by refusing to pay the glass cutters' short-fortnight bonus, which was also known as the "bonanza fortnight" or "bonanza payment" (Conlon 1994, 81-2). Cormac describes what happened:

The company came to a point where they said—we used to have what we called bonanza fortnights. What they were really was that on a bank holiday instead of your target being five days, it was now four days. So, if you could get more production in on those weeks, you'd be delighted. So, what happened then was that people used to—for a month or two before the thing, you'd get a unit, you'd have units of glass, and you'd be working on them, do bits on them and what have you. So, by the time it came up to the short-fortnight you'd have that finished and you'd be able to put it all in and you'd nearly get double your wages. Two weeks wages for that, you know? In the good times, the company had no problem with it, they just wanted the glass...But, now they had a problem with it. So, we were coming up to the bank holiday and they decided they weren't paying the short-fortnight, it was Easter I think, 1990...⁷

So, anyway, the week came and they didn't pay it and they weren't going to pay it. So, we all headed off to the Tower Hotel—there were meetings every day—and we all went down to the Tower Hotel and the thing was outlined as to where we were at. The company wasn't going to pay it, so there was only one course left open and that was to serve notice on it. So, it was agreed anyway. As I remember, there was very, very few people that objected to serving strike orders on them. And it had been pointed out at the meeting that this strike wasn't going to be over next week or the week after, we were going to get locked into a serious battle and that we could be looking at two or three months of a dispute. That was said, I said it myself—a big, huge majority in favour.

So, the two weeks expired trying to do all the things to try and get something going. Basically, we went on strike on the fourth of April 1990 and it lasted fourteen weeks. It was a turning experience for lots of people in terms of hardship came to visit them, what people realized very quickly is that you're only a wage packet or two away from having very, very little.

- Cormac, 60s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

By not paying the short-fortnight bonus, the company unilaterally broke their agreement with the workers (Conlon 1994). Furthermore, targeting the short-fortnight bonus was also seen as a strategic move on behalf of the company. The short-fortnight bonus targeted one section of the workforce, namely the cutters.

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⁷ Conlon (1994) says it was the St. Patrick's Day short-fortnight bonus that the company refused to pay, which makes more sense because Easter fell on April 15th in 1990 and the strike began on April 4th.

Waterford Crystal is known for its cut glass and the cutters have always held a privileged position within the company. Moreover, the cutters, as a section, were also some of the best paid workers within the company. By singling out the cutters, this tactic was intended to create divisions within the workforce, thus attempting to mitigate any sort of organized response from the workforce as a whole (Conlon 1994). This strategy had worked a year earlier when the company was looking for reductions in the cutters' wages. According to one of Conlon's (1994, 136) research participants:

After the introduction of the diamond wheel we got an eleven percent increase in piecerates because some of the lads complained they could not make their wages with the
new wheels. After we got the eleven percent, wages took off. So, the company withdrew
the payment. We decided to deal with it as a section. We stopped for two hours every
day, eventually escalating it to four. They really went to town on us then. Letters were
sent out to all the workers and articles appeared in the papers. We kept it going for two
to three weeks but between the letters and articles and all the talk of how much we were
earning, there was not a lot of sympathy around for us. We decided that there was no
point in taking it to its conclusion by putting pickets on the gate. We would have been
voted back to work. In the end it finished in the Labour Court⁸ and we lost nine percent
of the eleven percent.

While the cutters found little support when they were fighting their wage decrease, the company's breaking of the agreement was seen as a provocation. The trade union argued that by allowing the company to break the collective bargaining agreement, there would be consequences for all sections moving forward (Conlon 1994). Based on this argument, the workers and their trade union felt they had no choice but to serve strike notice on Waterford Crystal.

With the financial investment and backing from the new owners, Waterford Crystal was in a good position to weather a lengthy strike. Furthermore, it was estimated that the company

legally binding (The Labour Court 2024). See Chapter Three for details on the establishment of the Labour Court.

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⁸ In Ireland, the Labour Court "operates as an industrial relations tribunal, hearing both sides in a case and then issuing a Recommendation (or Determination/Decision/Order, depending on the type of case) setting out its opinion on the dispute and the terms on which it should be settled" (The Labour Court 2024). The Court's recommendations are not legally binding, however, the parties involved are "expected to give serious consideration to the Court's Recommendation" (The Labour Court 2024). In cases involving Employment Rights enactments, the Court's rulings are

had IR£40 millions worth of stock available to sell during a potential strike (Conlon 1994, 143). Plus, the most important months for crystal sales were September, October, and November, so a strike in the first half of the year would be less damaging to supplying market demands (Conlon 1994, 143). This further reinforced workers' suspicions that the company had deliberately provoked the strike and had little interest in working with the trade union and the workers to solve the company's problems.

Given the high profile of the company and its workforce, the strike received extensive media coverage (Conlon 1994). The company depicted the workers as greedy, constantly referencing the "bonanza payments" and publishing what the cutters earned, which was not representative of the entire workforce (Conlon 1994, 145). The workers focused on the recent mismanagement of the company, namely the price paid for Wedgwood and the fallout from the 1987 rationalization programme (Conlon 1994, 161). There was also the issue of outsourcing and/or relocating production. The company downplayed their threats to relocate production because of its unpopularity with the government and the wider public (Conlon 1994, 217-18). Even the workers and their trade union were convinced that outsourcing and/or relocation would be too damaging to the brand for the company to follow through with their threat. At the same time, structural changes in production were resulting in capital flight and the deindustrialization of towns and regions around the world. So, outsourcing and/or relocating production was not beyond the realm of possibility (Conlon 1994, 217-18). As the strike continued, the company's threats were taken more seriously (Conlon 1994, 217-18).

When it came to this "war of words" in the media, the workers were at a disadvantage with respect to managing the message (Conlon 1994). The workers felt this was largely because of Tony O'Reilly's relationship to the Independent Group of Newspapers, which published "a

daily, an evening daily, and two Sunday papers...[as well as holding] interests in a second daily and a third Sunday" (Conlon 1994, 146). According to Brady (quoted in Conlon 1994, 146), not only is O'Reilly Chairman and Chief Executive of the Independent Group of Newspapers, but "his nominees to the Board and...Fitzwilton...control an estimated seventy percent of the shares of the Group." The company's use of public relations firms also allowed them to have better control of the message, which left the workers and their trade union constantly reacting to statements issued by the company (Conlon 1994, 146). While the workers were at a distinct disadvantage with respect to the national media, they were better able to manage the local media because of the workers' importance to the local economy (Conlon 1994, 146). Plus, the local papers and radio were more accessible and responsive to the workers (Conlon 1994, 146).

Given the importance of media coverage and the company's efforts to communicate directly with workers during the strike, a major concern of the trade union was to maintain regular contact with the rank-and-file and make sure they were well-informed (Conlon 1994, 137-8). According to Conlon (Conlon 1994, 137):

The stewards wanted to ensure that the members knew what was going on and that the decisions were taken in a situation where the workers knew all the facts. It was also seen as important that the stewards were in touch with the members so they could establish what was possible at any given moment. They were concerned not to end up losing contact and trying to take the workers in directions they did not want to go.

This desire for good communication was given added emphasis by the company's efforts to communicate directly with the workers, over the heads of the stewards. During the strike a number of letters were sent directly to the workers' homes. The company tried to portray the shop stewards as being out of touch with the real feelings of the workers. In his letter to the workers of April 24, Galvin [Chief Executive of Waterford Crystal] alleged that facts had been misrepresented and he advised the workers to check the information they were being given (*Irish Times* 25/4/90). Thus the stewards believed it was necessary to report back regularly and get feedback from the workers.

This level of consultation on the part of the trade union was something the workers felt was missing from the 2009 Occupation. Moreover, given the workers' experiences with the trade

union during the 1990 Strike, there was an expectation that the 2009 Occupation would be organized in a similar manner.

There was also a significant difference between the 1990 Strike and the 2009 Occupation with respect to the desire and fortitude for militancy. During the 1990 Strike, the Waterford Crystal workers decided to block the company shipping materials from the Kilbarry factory to keep the relatively new tank furnace in Dungarvan operational. This decision meant that the tank furnace in Dungarvan would burn out and the Dungarvan workers would be out of work well after the strike was over. This action compromised the security of their jobs, a threat that was more pronounced given the fact that they were in the middle of a labour dispute and the company was threatening to outsource and/or relocate production. Cormac and Darragh recall the decision to allow the tank furnace in Dungarvan to burn out:

The tank furnace in Dungarvan needed "hot top," is what they called it, and it was a mixture of lead and cullet, which is broken up glass—just to be shook across the top of it. It's like an element without having a kettle on it, it'll burn out in no time. So, the hot top was in Kilbarry, so they wanted that. So, there was a big debate amongst the Joint Negotiating Committee and the shop stewards as to whether they should get it. Now, people in Dungarvan wanted them to have it, to a man if I recall, and the shop stewards up here were saying, no, they shouldn't get it.

So, it went to an Open Branch⁹ meeting and it was decided at the Open Branch meeting that they weren't getting it and that if anything happened—cause the company was saying, this will burn out and it could take us six months to re-open Dungarvan. So, it was decided at that meeting that if that happened that the lads would be on the labour [i.e., social welfare] and that people in the factory would contribute to making up their wages, so as everyone would have the same. So, the decision was taken, and we had a meeting with the company and we told them it wouldn't be happening. And, we all went home, went off to bed, the next morning we woke up and on the news it was after going to fire.

But one night we went down to Kilbarry, to the factory, there was a rumour that they were going to take it [the hot top] anyway. And when I got down there, there was just about 200 people there with a big spiky chain across the gate. So, nothing happened.

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⁹ An Open Branch meeting is a meeting in which all the members of the various branches of the affected trade union (i.e., the Dungarvan workers and the Kilbarry workers, etc.) can attend and voice their concerns in order to reach a collective decision on a particular issue or issues.

But when we told them they weren't getting it, I think over that weekend, on the Sunday night, it actually went to fire. So, that was that.

- Cormac, 60s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

When issues started to arise about the tank there was no way that they were going to be allowed to truck materials from Waterford to Dungarvan through the picket lines. I recall the argument at the time and while it was not, to my recollection, universally accepted by the Dungarvan workforce, the argument was won by the commitment to support the workers during the fallout from rebuilding the tank...We got instructions to make sure no trucks would get out of Kilbarry and to that end we collected planks with six-inch nails driven through them and we also got the fitters on the docks to assemble long chains with metal spikes through the links—the intention being to use them to stop the trucks. We stored them in a horse box in the car park and never had to use them.

I also recall that later the Dungarvan workers seemed to milk the commitment a bit in assessing what was linked to the furnace issue and what was not, but overall, we lived up to the commitment.

- Darragh, 50s, Craftworker, 38 Years of Service

After the workers decided to block the shipment of "hot top," the company's management decided to switch the tank furnace over to a different operating procedure, which caused a rapid rise in temperature that resulted in the fire (Murphy and Dowling 1990). At the time, the company stated that the workers were indirectly to blame for the fire and that the cost to repair the tank furnace was going to be more than initially expected (Murphy and Dowling 1990; Munster Express May 18th, 1990). The company claimed that the entire refractory lining would have to be replaced because of the damage caused by the fire (Munster Express May 18th, 1990). However, the workers' trade union argued that the company was intending to shut down the tank furnace before the strike because it was only yielding twenty-three percent good glass (Munster Express May 18th, 1990). Either way, the tank furnace fire featured prominently in what the workers described as the "war of words" between the company's management and the trade union during the strike. After the fire, the company did commence a full shutdown of the tank furnace (Irish Press April 28th, 1990). Following the end of the strike on July 10th, the tank furnace

underwent repairs and was not operational again until December of that year. Approximately 130 workers were affected during that period (Munster Express November 9th, 1991).

Another issue from the 1990 Strike that resurfaced during the 2009 Occupation was the matter of crossing the picket line. The 1990 Strike was a divisive event that reverberated throughout the Southeast of Ireland because Waterford Crystal was a major employer for the region. As a result, the 1990 Strike had long-lasting effects on the workers and the wider community, especially for those non-unionized workers who decided to cross the picket line. Edward moved from the cutting section to management around the time of the 1990 Strike. His decision to cross the picket line as a recently promoted member of management was difficult for him and his family. Edward is an intelligent, thoughtful man and very easy to be around. He is very careful in describing his decision because of the effect it had on his life.

For me, it was a difficult time because I was moving from one job into another. I was moving from a unionized cutters job into a design job. The design area was non-union and it was explained to me that it was non-union. So, when I applied for a job in the design department, one of the fears I would have had behind it was that I was now leaving the safety of the union to a non-union position. However, I decided that I needed to do it for various reasons. I wanted the challenge, I really wanted to do it because I love the idea of changing from the craft into a design area. I had a few medical problems with my elbows and stuff like that, so I was also alleviating that problem in a way. But there was definitely a fear element in leaving the security of the union. However, I decided after doing the interviews and after doing a probationary period in design that I really wanted to go ahead and do it. I was also dropping about twenty-five percent of my salary at the time. But when I went to the interviews, I was promised that there would be status things, a bonus system introduced that would recognize the importance of the design or whatever and that in a few years my salary would be built back up. But I had two young children at the time and a house and a mortgage and all the rest of it, so there was a financial decision to be taken.

However, I made the decision to leave the union and I'll describe the situation. I remember coming out of the final meeting where I had accepted a position and accepted the salary for the job and the promises that went with it. And I met the union man whom I knew and lived on the same road as I lived on before I entered into the factory. I went over to him and explained the situation to him and I said I believed in the union. And he shook hands with me and said, fine, that's great and wished me luck in my job. That was in January of 1990. In April of 1990, The Strike, it's known as The Strike, occurred within Waterford Crystal. People that I fished alongside of, people I worked alongside

of, people I knew all my life, spat on the ground and shunned me. We met as a design group and said what are we going to do, I was actually kind of threatened almost by one of our union leaders of the day—he said, "If you don't come out and leave and walk out with the workers, I won't be responsible for what happens to you or your family."

I told him where to go in no uncertain terms because I didn't like being threatened by anybody. But there were people—we were vilified, now there was other staunch friends that I had, who just said that they didn't agree with my stance, they thought I should be out. I explained that I was now a member of staff and that I was expected to go in. So, we did.

For the period of fourteen weeks, we went in and we did security duty, we had people beating poles and throwing stuff at the window of the security office while we were there. But we did it, we did it because we felt we had to do it. We were afraid of doing it, I don't believe any one man who went in there as a member of staff did it for wages or salary, we did it because we felt we were obliged to do it. That was the role we had within the company at that time. When the strike ended, after a while, there was a very slow and painful return to any kind of normality. To this day, I attended a meeting about pensions about twelve, eighteen months ago and I had a fella call me a scab from behind me when I went to the meeting. Even though I'm now a member of the union because years after The Strike there was a campaign to join the union again, a staff union set-up and I joined...I was a member of the union, and I was literally being vilified by my own members of the trade union because of something that took place in 1990.

So, that still goes on...I don't blame them in a way in the sense that it was a very emotional time. I know people whose families—I was afraid to go into town at the time with my family for fear of I'd be approached or vilified or physically abused in town. It was a particularly difficult time...

- Edward, 50s, Management, 44 Years of Service

Edward does not regret his decision. While he was not comfortable with crossing the picket line, he felt duty-bound as a member of management to report for work. That was his rationale for crossing the picket line.

Gearóid felt differently. He was a member of management who decided not to cross the picket line. When he returned to work, he received abuse from his colleagues in management but was remembered with admiration by the striking workers. Gearóid has a big personality. He is affable and his enthusiasm is infectious.

When The Strike broke out there, which I deemed to be caused by the management deliberately breaking an agreement with the union—I would have and still have very strong socialist views and opinions. Even though I was a member of management, I just couldn't pass the picket...I went back to work after The Strike and just got on with it and I eventually got promoted anyway...

[But] the Strike caused huge divisions. There was a seamless structure between the factory floor even up to the senior levels of management. You had brothers that passed the picket and brothers that didn't that haven't spoken since. You had friendships that were never mended. I was constantly getting hit with it on both sides. On the management side, when I was in there it was often thrown at me and fucking said to me. And then, my stock answer was I owed an historic debt to the union and I was paying it back. I did what I did and now let's get on with it...

Sometimes it would be embarrassing when I was in company with people and I might be out in a pub and you'd have some fella who was on the strike and he would say, "Fair play to you, you stood by us, those fuckers over there didn't!"

I couldn't pass the fucking picket, it's as simple as that. I nearly got divorced over it.

- Gearóid, 50s, Manager, 40 Years of Service

As Gearóid's final comment alludes to, the pressures of homelife (i.e., the financial stress of paying the bills, the mortgage, putting food on the table, and how financial insecurity effects the maintenance of healthy relationships in the home) can profoundly affect the experience of a labour dispute and how its remembered. As the financial security of the family is put under threat, the pressures of home can erode labour militancy. In Chapter One, Cormac was criticized for wanting to continue the 1990 Strike because his wife was working, and he had lodgers. His experience was not representative of the suffering experienced by many of the workers during the 1990 Strike. Furthermore, the hardships of home life play a significant part in feeding the anger directed towards those who crossed the picket line, even decades later.

The divisiveness of the 1990 Strike ran so deep that it sparked a debate about whether the workers who crossed the picket line in 1990 should be allowed to participate in the 2009 Occupation, as detailed by Cormac below. Furthermore, the treatment of the workers who crossed the picket line in 1990 was a major concern for the workers employed by the receiver during the 2009 Occupation. Cormac was recruited to reassure those workers still employed by the receiver that they were not doing anything wrong.

So, initially there was a debate around the people who had passed the pickets [in 1990] and what have you. Now, I think coming up to that point, there was an understanding

that they were getting their heads chopped off the same as us and to abandon them wasn't going to gain us anything. Now, there was still an undercurrent of resentment against them, but overall the majority said they were part of the thing and what have you...

There was a sensitive enough situation with people who had passed previous pickets and those that were going into work feeling lousy and all the rest of it. So, it was agreed that people would go into work. The next day, I was asked to come down with a number of shop stewards...to reassure the people who were in there that they weren't doing anything wrong because certain people had misgivings that they shouldn't be in there. So, I went into the factory with the lads and we went around to people and said, "Look, you're only doing what the majority of members want you to do." In one sense, I was collaborating in the thing, but look, the decision having been made as it was and what have you—you know?

- Cormac, 60s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

The workers' memories of the 1990 Strike shaped their understanding of industrial disputes, especially with respect to organization, communication, and militancy. As already mentioned, the nature of the receivership undermined the workers and their trade union's ability to establish themselves in the fight for the workers' livelihoods during the 2009 Occupation. As a result, the strategies, or lack thereof, employed during the 2009 Occupation conflicted with the workers' identity, memories, and history of being a well-organized and militant workforce. However, beyond the nature of the receivership itself, the 2009 Occupation was also affected by the legacy of the 1990 Strike and its outcomes, which severely weakened the organizational strength of the workers and their trade union in general.

During week six of the 1990 Strike, the two sides accepted an invitation from the Minister of Labour, Bertie Ahern, to get talks started, but it took almost nine weeks before any serious talks began (Conlon 1994, 243). Bertie Ahern "explicitly endorsed the company's position on a number of key issues...[and] was seen to seriously undermine the strikers' position" (Conlon 1994, 150). According to Conlon (1994, 148), "the Waterford strike took place against a background of industrial peace and a major debate on industrial relations reform." Ireland had suffered from a crippling recession for most of the 1980s. In 1987, the Irish government proposed

the Programme for National Recovery (PNR) to address the recession (also see Chapter Three).

This strategy significantly affected the prospects for effective labour action.

The defining aspect of the PNR was social partnership, which brought the government, trade unions, farmers' associations, and employer organizations together to agree on issues of mutual economic interest, namely national wage agreements, tax reform, and social welfare benefits (Allen 1997 and 2000; Conlon 1994; E. O'Connor 2011; W. K. Roche 2009). The PNR led to the passing of the Industrial Relations Act in July of 1990, which "imposed new regulations for the calling of strike action and picketing" (Conlon 1994, 148). Instead, industrial disputes were ideally to be settled through official channels established through social partnership (Allen 2000). As a result, the Industrial Relations Act played a significant part in undermining the trade union movement as a whole by repressing trade union militancy and portraying it as being at odds with the national interest (Allen 2000). In this context, the Waterford Crystal Strike was perceived by PNR advocates as a blight on Ireland's newly established approach to industrial relations and potentially having an adverse effect on attracting foreign investment in Ireland (Conlon 1994, 249-50).

Over the final five weeks of the 1990 Strike, there were agreements reached on several key issues, such as: a new productivity related bonus scheme, new procedures for reviewing piece-rates, and a wage increase for non-craftworkers until performance systems were introduced (Conlon 1994, 247-8). However, six remaining issues were eventually referred to the Labour Relations Commission (LRC) for binding arbitration (Conlon 1994, 251). Those issues were: a thirty-nine-week duration before reviewing and changing the workers' hourly rate; a two percent attendance bonus; pensions age date of review; compensation for short-fortnight payments; compensation for reduction in total earnings resulting from the loss of regular overtime; and, the

length of personal needs breaks in the female section (Conlon 1994, 251). The LRC ruled in favour of the company on five of the six issues, the trade union won the dispute over personal needs breaks for the female section (Conlon 1994, 251). The LRC's rulings could have been challenged in the Labour Court. However, according to Conlon (1994, 210), the shop stewards "were of the view that the Labour Court would rule in favour of the company" because "given the [poor financial] state of the company and the criteria by which the Labour Court operates they felt they would lose." The LRC and the Labour Court are unlikely to make rulings that would jeopardize a company's survival and at that time Waterford Crystal was losing money. The workers and their trade union realized that the company had to return to profitability, so by the end of the 1990 Strike they were more concerned about containing the number of changes that the company wanted to implement with respect to the workers' wages, conditions, and benefits (Conlon 1994, 211). In the end, the company was seeking IR£10 million in cost savings and ended up getting IR£7 million in cost savings plus increased productivity (Conlon 1994, 211).

While The Strike ended on July 12th, 1990, the effect it had on the workers and their trade union was long lasting. It took longer than expected to return the company to profitability and this was a devastating time for the workers. According to Roy:

Between 1990 and 1994, the industrial relations environment out there was dreadful, it was really terrible...But, we kept our organization together, we kept the membership together, and that stood to us coming out of that bad period.

1993 was really the worst agreement because everybody was put on short time from 1991 and 1992, the cutters were on short-time for nearly two years because the market had dropped but they had excess capacity in terms of production in the cutting shops, which they had introduced to increase productivity with less people, but they didn't have the money to make more people redundant, so they had to put them all on short-time. The plan was that if you can keep workers on short-time, when the market takes off you can bring them all back and put them all on full-time when we have products to do.

So, 1993, that was really the impact of the worse pay cuts, there was twenty-five percent pay cuts in the craft areas and about between eleven and fifteen percent pay cuts in the rest of the company. They also introduced new ways of pricing the glass for the piecerates, which meant you could still make money, but you were producing more glass for the

same amount of money. Your basic pay was reduced and your ability to earn bonus was significantly affected by the fact that you had to produce more glass to produce the same amount of bonus as you would have under the previous system. But we battled through all that, we continued to negotiate hard to try and minimize the impact of what the company was trying to do.

- Roy, 50s, Craftworker, 20 Years of Service

In the years that followed the 1990 Strike, the company was largely able to implement changes it wanted by following through with their threats of relocating production. In 1991, the company announced the production of a new range of crystal, Marquis by Waterford, that would be produced in Germany, Yugoslavia, and Portugal (Shanahan 1991). This was done without consultation with the trade union and the workforce (Shanahan 1991). In 1992, the company announced that two traditional lines of Waterford Crystal would be outsourced as well (Irish Times July16, 1992). Shortly after this announcement, the company entered negotiations with the trade union to get further concessions from the workforce that would result in more redundancies in order to reduce the workforce to 1,400 and an average annual cost saving of IR£7 million in wage cuts, wage freezes, and changes to the production process (Murdoch 1993). The company also wanted a five-year "no strike" deal (Irish Times August 22, 1992). The redundancy packages offered to these workers were not as lucrative as the 1987 agreements because the company did not have the money to pay out extensive packages (Murdoch 1992). However, after the 1990 Strike and two years of working short-time, there was a number of workers willing to take reduced packages in order to decrease the personal debts they had incurred since 1990. These workers were further hampered by the fact that the trade union "refused to negotiate on behalf of employees who decided to accept the redundancy terms that were on offer" because the trade union took the stance that it "was in the position of protecting employment rather than negotiating on terminations of employment" (Hearne 2019, 209). As fully paid-up members, these workers felt betrayed by their own trade union (Hearne 2019, 209).

When these latest rounds of talks did not lead to an agreement the company referred their plan to the LRC, which reduced the cuts sought by the company by IR£0.8 million for the first year of the plan and placed a twelve month moratorium on any further outsourcing in order to give the Waterford and Dungarvan plants a chance to increase productivity and become more competitive (Murdoch 1993). The trade union and the workers rejected the LRC's recommendations and even threatened strike action, but after the 1990 Strike and short-time work there was little motivation for another industrial dispute (Irish Times August 22, 1992). The company refused to budge on its position as well. As the stalemate continued, the company suggested they may not be able to open in the new year if the trade union and the workers did not agree to the LRC's recommendations (Irish Times December 14, 1992). In January 1993, the trade union and the workers agreed to accept the LRC's recommendations (Munster Express January 29, 1993).

Many of the workers felt the 1990 Strike and its aftermath broke the trade union's power because even though they kept the workforce together they were largely forced to concede to many of the company's demands. As Cathal and Henry recall:

I suppose the union had a terrible name. They were very militant, very, very socialist—the socialist workers' movement, they were very, very left-wing. I think that continued up until The Strike in 1990. That broke the union, it completely broke the union. They still had a name of being very militant, but they weren't. You were trying to negotiate with both hands tied behind your back...[The] agreement that was reached following The Strike. This gave the company complete and utter power.

- Cathal, 40s, General Section, 25 Years of Service

We had a strike back in 1990...and we got nothing and from that day on the trade union movement in Waterford Crystal was gone.

Six weeks after that [The Strike] I was told my job was gone, I was redeployed and the union could do nothing about it. And here's x-amount for your compensation and that was it. There was no fight. There was no fight from the union for anything at that stage because they knew the company would say, "That's it. What are you going to do about it?" The union knew they weren't going to call another strike. So that was it, from that day onwards I think the union movement out there suffered big time after that strike.

- Henry, 40s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

While the Waterford Crystal workers still had a reputation for being well organized and militant, they never quite regained the same degree of influence over the company as they had had in the past. In Conlon's (Conlon 1994, 49) study of the 1990 Strike, he concludes that, "despite a strong organizational capacity, changes in the structural context of the industry limited the achievements of the strikers."

It was not just in the glass industry that changes in the structural context were undermining workers' ability to assert themselves in their places of work, however. The 1970s and 1980s marked a major shift in the configuration of the capitalist mode of production. This ethnography outlines this shift in Chapter Three as the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism (D. Harvey 1990), which took on a distinctive form in Ireland under the PNR. The Waterford Crystal workers were one trade union in a long list of strong, well-organized, and militant trade unions that were weakened under this reconfiguration of capitalist production. The slow demise of the Waterford Crystal workforce after 1990 was regarded by the workers as part of a more general process intended to weaken the Irish trade union movement and worker solidarity, as well as discipline labour to accept new understandings and conditions of work. As a result, the breaking of the trade union's power during the 1990 Strike had consequences for what was perceived as possible during the 2009 Occupation. The 1990 Strike was a very difficult time in the history of the Waterford Crystal workforce. While the workers fought the good fight, the successes of the 1990 Strike were ultimately rearguard in nature, such as keeping the trade union together, limiting changes to wages, conditions and benefits, as well as retaining as much production as possible in Waterford. By the time of the 2009 Occupation, what constituted, and how to reach, a successful conclusion was difficult to

envisage, especially with the receiver in control. As the 2009 Occupation continued, the hangover from the 1990 Strike worsened.

2.5 CONCLUSION: DIAGNOSING THE 1990 STRIKE AND THE 2009 OCCUPATION

As already mentioned, I was introduced to the Waterford Crystal workers' story through their narration of the 2009 Occupation, which included connections they drew to the effects of the 1990 Strike on the workforce and their trade union in general. Labour disputes, like the 1990 Strike and 2009 Occupation, constitute important "diagnostic events" by virtue of being oppositional in nature and because the stakes are so high. Furthermore, these are moments of ethnographic insight. People's livelihoods, and sometimes the social and economic fabric of entire communities, are at risk of being lost or severely damaged. This results in a myriad of opinions being expressed, competing interests being pursued, and drastic actions being taken to influence particular outcomes. As Moore (1987) suggests, it is anthropology as current history.

With respect to "diagnostic events" in general, Moore (1987, 735) recognizes that "local affairs cannot be addressed without serious attention to the larger processual implications of the local moment." The 1990 Strike and the 2009 Occupation were heavily influenced by the wider political and economic contexts in which they were taking place. With respect to the 1990 Strike, this wider context included: the global economic downturn of the late-1980s and early-1990s; Ireland's implementation of the Programme for National Recovery and the Industrial Relations Act; and the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism with its relocation of production. As for the 2009 Occupation, it took place in: the wake of the 2008 financial crisis; a global credit crunch; the collapse of the Irish banking system; the onset of severe economic austerity in Ireland; and, after two decades of social partnership with its subsequent effects on the Irish

labour movement. This raises an important question: what are the underlying historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes connecting and influencing these events across time and space? Addressing this question begins with diagnosing the 1990 Strike and the 2009 Occupation.

As stated earlier, Moore (1987, 735) suggests that it is through the "contiguity of contraries that ongoing struggles to control persons, things, and meanings often can be detected." In terms of diagnosing the workers' accounts of the 1990 Strike and the 2009 Occupation: where are the "contiguity of contraries" most perceptible? The workers' narration of the 1990 Strike and 2009 Occupation revolves around the interplay between: the workers' ability to save their livelihoods and the production of Waterford Crystal in Ireland; the company's/owners' ability to realize and/or maximize profits; and, the desire, or lack thereof, of the state to intervene in the company's and/or workers' fate. My interpretation of where to identify the "contiguity of contraries" within 1990 Strike and the 2009 Occupation focuses on the interactions within and between three groups of social actors: 1) the workers and their trade union (i.e., labour); 2) Waterford Crystal/the receiver/KPS (i.e., capital); and, 3) the respective Irish governments, local and national, in power during the 1990 Strike and 2009 Occupation, as well as the LRC and the Labour Court (i.e., the state). It is important to note that I perceive the demarcations between labour, capital, and the state in terms of Long's (2001, 177) notion of interfaces—namely, critical points where a "multiplicity of actors and perspectives...merge and combine through processes of accommodation and conflict to generate newly emergent forms of organization and understanding." Focusing on the interfaces between labour, capital, and the state provides a framework for shifting the scope and scale of analyzing the relationships that connect people, groups, and

communities with the wider system that influence their lives across time and space (i.e., Marcus'[1998] notion of strategically situated ethnography).

The next chapter explores the underlying historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes connecting and influencing these events across time and space by examining the changing relationships between labour, capital, and the state (as constituted by various social actors) during the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism across the national and international scale.

CHAPTER THREE

SCALES OF STRUGGLE II: NATIONAL/INTERNATIONAL

3.1 Introduction

Fordist/Keynesian capitalism and Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism constitute parts of the *longue durée* of capitalism (see Chapter One). To grasp fully the glass workers' struggle for Waterford Crystal at the local level, it is necessary to understand the broader historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes that influenced their working lives across time and space. This chapter provides a general account of the changing relationships between labour, capital, and the state under these regimes of capitalism to make sense of the ways in which these various processes converge and/or diverge across the national and international scales. Moreover, exploring the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism is essential for understanding the ways in which the former glass workers contextualize and make sense of their own lives.

Underlying the transition between Fordist/Keynesian capitalism and Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism outlined in this chapter is what Kasmir and Carbonella (2014, 15-17) describe as the "politics of dispossession" or "the multiple ways in which capital and the state episodically undermine the power of working classes." Central to the "politics of dispossession" is the "dialectic of organization and disorganization that plays a critical role in defining the politics of labour" (Kasmir and Carbonella 2014, 17-18). Essentially, during periods of economic crisis, labour has the capacity to become organized and disorganized as "emergent forms of solidarity often give way to class fragmentation and exclusion...leav[ing] many [people] isolated, passive, or in despair" (Kasmir and Carbonella 2014, 17-18). The fragmentary nature of this

process stems largely from the ways in which labour is simultaneously in conflict with capital while its economic interests are linked to capital's interests (Leach 2002, 196). Consequently, labour participates in its own dispossession.

Further related to the "politics of dispossession" is Masco's (2017) understanding of crises and how the politics of crises has come to operate as a framework that shapes the way we understand, think about, and imagine collective problems and possible collective futures. According to Masco (2017, S73), "crisis talk today seeks to stabilize an institution, practice or reality rather than interrogate the historical conditions of possibility for that endangerment to occur." As a result, crises, in this case economic crises, have "become a counterrevolutionary force...a call to confront collective endangerment that instead increasingly articulates the very limits of the political" (Masco 2017, S67). In relation to the politics of crises, labour, capital, and the state also produce protective counter movements to temper the destructive tendencies of unfettered capitalism. This is at the crux of Polanyi's (2001) notion of the "double movement" and the self-regulated market society. Polanyi (2001, 3) argues that the idea of the self-regulating market economy is utopian and that "such an institution could not exist for any length of time without annihilating the human and natural substance of society." This is why society in the form of the nationstate has historically "taken measures to protect itself" (Polanyi 2001, 4). Polanyi's "double movement" is comprised of: 1) the "laissez-faire movement to expand the scope of the market;" and, 2) the "protective counter movement that emerges to resist the disembedding of the economy" from the social relations that constitute society (Block 2001, xxviii). The result is that crises of capitalism have not led to system change, but have engendered new geographical, sociocultural, political, and economic arrangements between labour, capital, and the state to ensure the survival of the capitalist system.

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section outlines the international development of Fordist/Keynesian capitalism and the postwar boom. The second section presents Ireland's experience of the postwar economy. The next section details the demise of Fordist/Keynesian capitalism and the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. The final section examines Ireland's embrace of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, which, along with European integration and US economic expansion, set the foundation for Ireland's so-called economic miracle known as the Celtic Tiger.

3.2 FORDIST/KEYNESIAN CAPITALISM AND THE POSTWAR ECONOMIC BOOM

The origins of what is considered Fordist production can be traced to 1914, when Henry Ford implemented the "five-dollar, eight-hour day" in an effort "to secure worker compliance with the discipline required to work the highly productive assembly-line system" (D. Harvey 1990, 126). Prior to this change, there were regular work stoppages protesting the intensity and tedious nature of the work, which resulted in high employee turnover and the constant training of new workers (D. Harvey 1990, 126). The extra income and leisure time afforded by the "five-dollar, eight-hour day" not only helped retain workers, but also allowed workers to consume the vast amount of goods that were now available from mass production (D. Harvey 1990, 126). This was the central tenet of Fordism—mass production needed mass consumption (D. Harvey 1990, 126). However, Ford felt that this aspect of the workers' lives also needed to be regulated to make sure the workers were spending their leisure time "appropriately." So, he introduced a "Sociology Department," which "watched over and sanctioned their [his employees'] financial and sexual prudence, their hygiene and habits, and, of course their interests in [trade] unions" (Mollona, De Neve and Parry 2009, 192). While the "Sociology Department" did not last long,

"its very existence was a prescient signal of the deep social, psychological, and political problems that Fordism was to pose" (D. Harvey 1990, 126). During the interwar years, this regime of production envisioned by Ford was ultimately thwarted for three reasons (D. Harvey 1990, 127-8). Firstly, the leftist and radical political movements of this period, including labour organizations and craft traditions, were too strong to accept a regime of production so heavily based on the socialization of the worker (D. Harvey 1990, 127-8). Secondly, immigration at the time was too weak to employ racist and xenophobic rhetoric to exploit divisions within the labour force (D. Harvey 1990, 127-8). Finally, the hardships of the Great Depression that began in 1929 and the near collapse of capitalism led to Roosevelt's New Deal policies and the formation of a new relationship between labour, capital, and the state (D. Harvey 1990, 127-8; Panitch and Gindin 2013, 62).

The New Deal policies introduced a Keynesian approach to US governance (D. Harvey 1990, 127-8; Panitch and Gindin 2013, 62). Instead of the laissez-faire, free market capitalism of the 1920s and protectionism of the early 1930s, the US government began to actively intervene in the economy to secure economic growth, along with guarantees on full employment, health care, public education, and other social programmes and policies that would benefit the overall welfare of US citizens (D. Harvey 1990, 132-33; D. Harvey 2005, 10-11). While Roosevelt's New Deal policies alleviated the suffering of many people in the US, it was the country's entry into WWII that ultimately led to a period of full employment and the recovery of the US's economy. According to Jensen (1989, 582), through the removal of millions of men in their prime from the labour market, the restructuring of work processes to maximize productivity for the war effort, and the subsidizing of wages and funding of retraining programmes by the state, the war provided capital with the incentives to begin hiring. This included people from groups that had

historically been marginalized and/or pigeonholed within the economy, namely single and married White women, visible minority men and women, and non-Anglo-Saxon immigrant groups. It is important to note that female employment grew throughout the 1920s and remained relatively stable during the 1930s, despite protests about the employment of married women during an economic depression (Montgomery 1987, 20). Similarly, many Blacks, and to a lesser extent some Hispanics, moved from employment in the agricultural sector to manufacturing jobs in the northern US in the 1920s (Montgomery 1987, 10). However, during the 1930s these were the first groups of workers to be made redundant (Montgomery 1987, 10). Furthermore, in the war economy, these groups still faced segregation and discrimination in the workforce and military regardless of their contributions to the war effort (Zinn 2003, 415). Ultimately, the New Deal policies of the 1930s and the war effort saved American capitalism. Following WWII, the US emerged as the economic leaders of the non-communist world. As a result, the US applied a similar brand of American-style capitalism to the international economy through the Bretton Woods Agreement and the Marshall Plan.

The Bretton Woods Agreement established a framework for international trade and economic development (Panitch and Gindin 2013, 74). We to the Bretton Woods Agreement was that exchange rates were tied to the US dollar, which was fixed to a set value of gold (Panitch and Gindin 2013, 74). As a result, the US dollar became "the world's reserve currency and tied the world's economic development firmly into US fiscal and monetary policy" (D. Harvey 1990, 137). The Bretton Woods Agreement also established several organizations to regulate this new regime of international capitalism. Those organizations were: the International Monetary Fund,

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¹⁰ According to Panitch and Gindin (2013, 74), this framework was established by: "first, securing both currency convertibility and exchange rate stability as a condition of reviving international trade; second, allowing some degree of flexibility for governments in the face of the deflationary implications of balance of payments deficits; and third, providing the huge amounts of capital that the European countries would need for reconstruction."

which "lends money, usually to developing countries and new market economies, to help when they have difficulties with their balance of payments or with paying interests on their debts" (Nye 2000, 187); the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (in conjunction with the International Development Association, established in 1960, the IBRD and IDA are more commonly known as the World Bank), which was initially established to fund reconstruction projects in postwar Europe but then shifted its focus to lending "money to poorer countries and new market economies for development projects" (Nye 2000, 187); the General Agreement on Trades and Tariffs (GATT became the World Trade Organization in 1995), which "established rules for liberal trade and has served as the locus for a series of rounds of multilateral negotiations that have lowered trade barriers" (Nye 2000, 187); and, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which "serves as a forum for two dozen of the most developed countries to coordinate their economic policies" (Nye 2000, 187). Essentially, the Bretton Woods Agreement established an organizational structure for the expansion of capitalist development on an international scale.

However, in the immediate aftermath of WWII, these organizations did not yet have the resources or capacity to be of much use in the reconstruction of Europe (Panitch and Gindin 2013, 95). The significance of the Marshall Plan was that it provided immediate aid in the form of grants and loans for rebuilding Europe. However, as Panitch and Gindin (2013, 96) note:

The bilateral pacts which each government had to sign with the US to obtain Marshall Plan funds required them "to agree to balance government budgets...restore internal financial stability...and stabilize exchange rates at realistic levels." The recipient states were allowed to be "committed to the mixed economy. But the US insisted that market forces be represented more liberally in the mix." Crucial here as well was that "for every dollar of Marshall Plan aid received the recipient country was required to place a matching amount of domestic currency in a counterpart fund to be used only for purposes approved by the US government (DeLong and Eichengreen 1991, 46-8, 51-3)."

Furthermore, the Marshall Plan's "explicit promotion of a 'social contract' for labour peace and improved productivity" secured the cooperation of organized labour in the capitalist development of European states after WWII (Panitch and Gindin 2013, 97). Bolstered by US military dominance and alliances, Fordism and Keynesianism produced a postwar boom that "favoured unionized labour, and to some degree spread the 'benefits' of mass production and mass consumption further afield. Material living standards rose for the mass of the population in the advanced capitalist countries, and a relatively stable environment for corporate profits prevailed" (D. Harvey 1990, 140).

The development of the interventionist, welfare state constitutes a protective measure of Polanyi's "double movement" in the sense that the rise of the welfare state was a political and economic response to the laissez-faire capitalism of the 1920s, the subsequent hardships of the 1930s, and the devastation of WWII. Furthermore, it ensured a new era of capitalist development. Panitch and Gindin (2013, 9) argue that what the rise of the interventionist, welfare state:

obscures is that the social welfare reforms were structured so as to be embedded in capitalist social relations. They facilitated not the "decommodification" of society, but rather its increasing commodification through full employment in the labour market and through the consumer demand that the welfare state made possible. The social reforms of the welfare state were extremely important in terms of employment and income security, education and social mobility, and they strengthened classes in many respects; but at the same time these reforms were limited by the way they were linked to the spreading and deepening of markets amid the relaunching of global capitalism.

So, on the one hand, the Fordist/Keynesian regime of capitalism facilitated the expansion and deepening of the capitalist mode of production across the non-communist world during the postwar boom. However, on the other hand, this regime of capitalism "spread unevenly as each state [over time] sought its own mode of management of labour relations, monetary and fiscal policy, welfare and public investment strategies, limited internally only by the state of class relations

and externally only by its hierarchical position in the world economy and by the fixed exchange rate against the dollar" (D. Harvey 1990, 137). Ireland is a good example.

3.3 IRELAND AND THE POSTWAR ECONOMY

The Irish political and economic landscape has been influenced heavily by its largest political party, Fianna Fáil (Allen 1997). Formed in 1927, Fianna Fáil was a splinter party that separated from Ireland's party of independence, Sinn Féin, following internal disagreements over working within the confines of the Anglo-Irish Treaty after the Irish Civil War (Allen 1997; R. Foster 1988). After serving in opposition for two elections, Fianna Fáil formed its first government in 1932. Between 1932 and 1973, Fianna Fáil formed Ireland's government all but twice (Allen 1997, 1). Prior to 1959, Fianna Fáil embraced nationalist, protectionist, and isolationist policies. The party's preference for autarky was intended to protect and foster a nascent Irish capitalism (Allen 1997, 5). In doing so, Fianna Fáil placed a great emphasis on trying to control Ireland's trade union movement (Allen 1997; E. O'Connor 2011). For the purposes of this chapter, the trade union movement is discussed in terms of the rank-and-file members and the trade union leadership, which are the various organizations that have been established to represent the collective interests of Ireland-based trade unions, as well as Irish workers in general. These organizations include: 1) the Irish Trade Union Congress (ITUC), which was established in 1894; 2) the Congress of Irish Unions (CIU), which separated from the ITUC in 1945; and, 3) the Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU), which was formed in 1959 when the ITUC and the CIU reunited (Allen 1997; E. O'Connor 2011). It is important to note that prior to the Irish Civil War, the Labour party was gaining traction amongst Irish voters (R. Foster 1988, 514). However, during and after the Irish Civil War, the labour movement and class politics were "defused not only

by the effects of recession and emigration but also by the polarization of nationalist politics" (R. Foster 1988, 515).

During WWII, Ireland's *Fianna Fáil*-led government decided to remain neutral to reinforce the country's sovereignty (R. Foster 1988, 559-60). The Emergency, as the WWII period is known in Ireland, and its aftermath, played a significant role in *Fianna Fáil*'s attempt to control the trade union movement. During the Emergency, *Fianna Fáil* "assumed sweeping powers of economic organization" to address issues related to fuel shortages and food and energy rationing (R. Foster 1988, 562). These sweeping powers resulted in draconian labour laws that were deemed necessary for the so-called good of the nation (R. Foster 1988, 562). For example, the Wages Standstill Order (1941) "removed legal protection for strikes in pursuance of higher wages" and the Trade Union Act (1941) "restricted rights of collective bargaining and even affiliation to particular [trade] unions" (R. Foster 1988, 562). While the Wages Standstill Order was repealed after the Emergency, and the Trade Union Act was ruled unconstitutional because it violated an Irish citizen's right to free association, the Irish policy of neutrality did have its effect on the character of the trade union movement (Allen 1997; E. O'Connor 2011, 176).

In 1944, when ITUC decided controversially to send delegates to the World Trade Union Conference, hosted by the British Trade Union Congress in London, on the war economy and reconstruction, some "Irish [trade] unions objected to representation at an assembly identified with Allied powers" (E. O'Connor 2011, 167). This led to the formation of the CIU by a splinter group of Irish trade unions, which felt the Irish trade union movement should be represented by trade unions operating solely in Ireland (E. O'Connor 2011, 167). At the time, ITUC was dominated by members of British-based trade unions operating in Ireland (E. O'Connor 2011, 167). The CIU's embrace of a nationalist ethos put them in favour with *Fianna Fáil* (Allen 1997). As a

result, the CIU was given "equal status to the ITUC," only CIU delegates were appointed to the International Labour Organization, and government policy was developed to "build up the CIU and treat it as the most representative organ of Irish [trade] union opinion" (Allen 1997, 82). By exploiting nationalist sentiment, *Fianna Fáil* was able to develop an alliance with an increasingly influential segment of Irish labour (Allen 1997, 82).

In the immediate aftermath of the Emergency, the increasing control and regulation of the trade union movement continued (Allen 1997; E. O'Connor 2011, 176). Fianna Fáil's next step toward the statutory control of industrial relations entailed establishing the Labour Court system for the voluntary mediation and binding arbitration of workplace disputes (Allen 1997, 87). Under this system, the Labour Court established Joint Labour Committees for setting minimum pay rates and regulating working conditions (Allen 1997, 87). Once the pay rates and the conditions were determined and confirmed by the Labour Court, they became legally binding (Allen 1997, 87). Trade unions and employers were also encouraged to voluntarily register their agreements with the Labour Court, which would also make them legally binding (Allen 1997, 87). However, while the rallying of nationalist sentiments during the Emergency proved effective, after the Emergency, the increased regulation of the trade union movement and the poor state of the Irish economy was met with a groundswell of resistance by the rank-and-file members of various trade unions (Allen 1997; E. O'Connor 2011). This included strikes from: female workers in the laundries; farm labourers; teachers; workers in the flour mills; and, bus and rail workers (Allen 1997; E. O'Connor 2011). Many of these disputes focused on higher wages, shorter hours, and extra holidays (Allen 1997, 88). This unrest led to Fianna Fáil's first electoral defeat since taking power and the election of the Inter-Party government in 1948, which was made up of six political parties including the Labour Party and the National Labour Party (NLP). The NLP formed

as a result of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union (ITGWU) disaffiliation from the Labour Party over communist leanings of prominent members within the Labour Party (Allen 1997, 79-80). This was in contrast to the Catholic social ethos preferred by the NLP (Allen 1997, 79-80).

During the post-Emergency period, the politics of partition and the Catholic Church featured prominently in influencing the trade union movement (Allen 1997; E. O'Connor 2011). Shortly after coming to power, the Inter-Party government passed the Republic of Ireland Act, which repealed the External Relations Act (1936) and essentially clarified Ireland's status as a republic by severing any residual constitutional associations with the United Kingdom (R. Foster 1988, 566). In response, the British government passed the Ireland Act in 1949, which "maintained special citizenship and trade preference arrangements with Britain," similar to those afforded to citizens of Commonwealth nations. But the Act also included stipulations guaranteeing the constitutional status of Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom (R. Foster 1988, 566; E. O'Connor 2011, 181). The fact that the Ireland Act (1949) was passed by the British Labour Party inflamed the already existing distrust of British-based trade unions operating in Ireland (Allen 1997, 98). The CIU was quick to point "out that many of these [British-based trade] unions paid a political levy" to the British Labour Party "and argued that British-based unions had been revealed as 'enemies of democracy and of a free united Ireland'" (Allen 1997, 98). This appeal to nationalist sentiment had a devastating effect on ITUC and British-based trade union in the Republic of Ireland as their membership dropped from 22.9 percent in 1945 to 13.6 percent by 1955 (Allen 1997, 99). As for the Waterford Crystal workers, they went against this trend. In 1948, the glass workers switched from the ITGWU, an Irish-based trade union, to the Amalgamated Trade and General Workers Union (ATGWU), a British-based trade union, after the

intervention of Charlie O'Rourke, a trade union official, in settling a lightning strike at the factory (E. O'Connor 1989, 272). Historically, the ATGWU had a strong foothold in Waterford because of a labour dispute on the docks in 1915, which resulted in the dockers leaving the ITGWU and outright refusing to rejoin the trade union during its later expansionary phase (E. O'Connor 1989, 372). However, in general, the fostering of a nationalist ethos within the Irish trade union movement benefitted *Fianna Fáil* because they were regarded as the political party of national development (Allen 1997).

As for the Catholic Church, it was opposed to many of the welfare policies that were being proposed during the post-Emergency period because they encroached on areas typically administered by the Catholic Church in Ireland (Allen 1997, 96). The full influence of the Catholic Church was demonstrated when it played a key role in the nixing of the proposed Mother and Child Scheme in 1951 (Allen 1997, 96). As part of the 1947 Health Act, the Inter-Party government proposed to provide free health care for mothers and children up to the age of sixteen under the Mother and Child Scheme (Allen 1997, 96). Initially, the ITUC and elements of the CIU supported the Scheme because it appealed widely to working class people who could "not afford to pay for doctors or had to endure the degrading means-test" to access health care services (Allen 1997, 96). However, the Catholic Church perceived the Mother and Child Scheme as the first step in the development of a "British-style National Health Service," which did not adhere to the moral and social teachings of Catholicism (Allen 1997, 96). As the Catholic Church continued to condemn the Scheme, the Irish trade union movement as a whole eventually withdrew its support for the programme (Allen 1997, 96). The Mother and Child Scheme was eventually abandoned

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¹¹ In 2007, the ATGWU became Unite the Union (commonly known as Unite) after merging with Amicus, another British-based trade union (Unite Website 2020).

following the resignation of the Minister of Health, Dr. Noel Browne, the Schemes biggest proponent (Allen 1997, 96).

During the Emergency and the post-Emergency period, the Irish trade union movement was imbued with the sense of Catholic nationalism that had taken hold of much of post-independence Irish politics (Allen 1997; E. O'Connor 2011). For a time, this proved to be an effective way of controlling the Irish trade union movement. However, as Allen (1997, 100) argues, "people may share a nationalist sentiment for a long period of time, but they only tend to sustain active mobilizations for a nationalist cause when it is associated with material improvements." The late-1940s and 1950s was a difficult time for the Irish economy overall. This period was characterized by poverty, unemployment, and emigration, in stark contrast to the postwar economic boom being experienced by most other European countries (Allen 1997; E. O'Connor 2011). Between 1949 and 1956, Ireland's gross national product "grew by only eight percent compared with an average of forty-two percent for the countries in the Organization for European Economic Coordination" (Allen 1997, 101). Furthermore, between 1951 and 1956, approximately 200,000 people emigrated, resulting in a population drop of 66,000 people (E. O'Connor 2011, 184). The ineffectiveness of the Inter-Party government to produce real change in the lives of the working class led to the re-election of Fianna Fáil in 1951 (Allen 1997). However, Fianna Fáil's inability to deal with the Irish economy resulted in their second electoral defeat in 1954. The new coalition government continued to be plagued by the struggling Irish economy, which led to another Fianna Fáil election victory in 1957. This time Fianna Fáil promoted a different approach to managing the economy, one that was more in step with trends driving international capitalist development and that was influenced by the Marshall Plan.

Despite Ireland's policy of neutrality during WWII, it was given access to Marshall Plan funding for two reasons. Firstly, the US government was concerned about the spread of communism in Western Europe (Whelan 1992 and 2008). Secondly, Ireland was earmarked as an important area for agricultural development to provide much needed food supplies to war ravaged Great Britain and Europe (Whelan 1992 and 2008). However, the US government was still angry over Irish neutrality during the war and therefore provided most of its aid in the form of loans as opposed to grants (Whelan 1992 and 2008). This approach was against the wishes of the Irish government (Whelan 1992 and 2008). However, given the state of the Irish economy, which resembled many war-ravaged European economies in terms of resource rationing, rising inflation, high unemployment, falling standards of living, emigration, and worsening balance-of-payments, they had little choice but to accept the US government's terms (Whelan 1992 and 2008). Plus, the Irish government was eager to repair the country's international reputation, which had been eroded by neutrality (Whelan 1992 and 2008).

In total, Ireland received US\$147.4 million in Marshall Plan funding, US\$128.2 million in loans and US\$19.2 million in grants (Whelan 2008, 31). As a result of receiving most of this aid in loans, the Irish government had greater control over its allocation of counterpart funds than if it had received the money as grants (Whelan 1992, 63). The Irish government invested a significant amount of the money into state infrastructure projects, such as, rural electrification, reforestation, land reclamation, housing, and hospitals (Whelan 1992 and 2008). Marshall Plan funding accounted for 49.5% of Ireland's capital expenditure programme between 1949 and 1952 (Whelan 2008, 32). However, Ireland's participation in the Marshall Plan involved more than just receiving funding, it was also about spreading American methods and practices with respect to economic growth (Whelan 1992 and 2008). According to Whelan (2008, 32), "the push

for production and productivity through the Technical Assistance Programme (TAP) brought workers, owners, managers, and trade unionists into contact with" the overall aims and goals of the Marshall Plan. At the time, many of the Marshall Plan's recommendations, such as "export promotion, market diversification, tourism development, and the attraction of foreign direct investment" still sat uneasily with Irish politicians' predisposition for autarky (Whelan 2008, 32).

However, by 1958, *Fianna Fáil* was ready for a shift in economic policy. Conventionally known as the "1958 Turn," *Fianna Fáil* took on many of the Marshall Plan's recommendations for economic development (Allen 1997, 106; Whelan 1992 and 2008). According to Allen (1997, 107), the 1958 Turn was the result of a series of policy changes that "helped to open the way to greater foreign investment and a shift to an export-oriented industrialization programme." This shift marked a major change in Ireland's economic policy from autarky to a market economy. Despite previous thinking, this change in course was not detrimental to indigenous industries and the development of Irish capitalism. Allen (1997, 108) argues that:

In reality, the 1958 turn should not be seen as an abandonment by *Fianna Fáil* of its original ideal, but rather as a continuation of its central project of promoting native capitalism. The party sought to revive the Irish business class by connecting it to an expanding world economy and by using the multinationals to inject a new dynamism into the Irish economy. Protectionism was simply one strategy that became outmoded, and the evidence suggests that *Fianna Fáil* were correct in their assessment that the new economic turn would benefit native capitalism...[E]ven if foreign multinationals are left aside, the rest of industry in Ireland grew at the rate of 3.6 per cent per year throughout the 1960s.

The success of the 1958 Turn solidified *Fianna Fáil's* hold on government for the next sixteen years (E. O'Connor 2011, 218).

During this period, Ireland signed the Anglo-Irish Free Trade Area Agreement and established diplomatic relations with the European Economic Community (EEC) (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008; E. O'Connor 2011). By opening up their economy, "industrial output rose by over

250 percent" between 1958 and 1973 (E. O'Connor 2011, 218). Exports in the manufacturing sector "increased from one quarter of, to near parity, with agricultural exports" and "thirty percent of the labour force were engaged in industrial employment, compared to twenty-five percent in agriculture" (E. O'Connor 2011, 218). Furthermore, the Irish economy became "highly export oriented, with thirty percent of total manufacturing being exported, compared with five percent in 1962" (E. O'Connor 2011, 218). Ireland was finally reaping some of the benefits of the postwar economic boom. As detailed in later chapters, Waterford Crystal and its workforce also benefitted from this change in approach to organizing the economy.

Despite some reservations, the trade union movement was largely on board with the opening up of the Irish economy if it benefitted Irish workers (Allen 1997, 109). As a result, the 1958 Turn ushered in an era of economic nationalism with government, trade unions, and capital rallying around the goals of developing Ireland and improving wages and conditions for Irish workers (Allen 1997, 110). One consequence was the re-uniting of ITUC and the CIU under the new banner—the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. At the same time, Fianna Fáil made new attempts to regulate the trade union movement and industrial relations in Ireland, through moving towards a system of centralized collective bargaining (Allan 1997, 117-8; E. O'Connor 2011, 221). Fianna Fáil "stimulated and supported moves from sections of business and the public service to centralize collective bargaining and to create institutions that would co-ordinate pay bargaining with economic policy" (W. K. Roche 2009, 186). In this process, trade union leaders were invited "to join such newly created corporatist institutions as the National Industrial and Economic Council and the Committee on Industrial Organization" (W. K. Roche 2009, 187). The reorganization of the economy required greater productivity and flexibility from the Irish labour force, the incorporation of trade unions in economic planning was to "ensure that they

established discipline over their own members" in exchange for greater input into the organization of the Irish economy (Allen 1997, 121). In 1961, *Fianna Fáil* established the National Employer-Labour Conference, which was initially intended to use "expert advice on the movement of pay and prices so that it could issue general guidelines for wage negotiations" (Allen 1997, 116). Allen (1997, 116) argues that ideologically-speaking "the Employer-Labour Conference was an attempt to remove the issue of pay bargaining from the realm of distribution of resources to one which centred on 'the national interest."

However, transforming Ireland's industrial relations system proved to be more difficult than Fianna Fáil initially thought (Allen 1997, 116). As the economy grew and more people entered the workforce and joined trade unions, it became harder for the trade union leadership to control the militancy of its growing rank-and-file membership (Allen 1997, 125-6). The trade union movement was reshaped by the militancy and radicalism of its members (Allen 1997, 128). In 1963, when Fianna Fáil tried to make the Employer-Labour Conference guidelines binding, the trade unions withdrew from the Employer-Labour Conference and threatened to do the same from the Committee on Industrial Organization (Allen 1997, 117). When Fianna Fáil realized the trade unions could not control their membership, the party's response was two-fold. Firstly, Fianna Fáil threatened to enact anti-union legislation that would render unofficial strikes illegal and allow the Ministry of Labour to decertify trade unions (Allen 1997, 131-3). In the face of resistance from the rank-and-file of the trade union movement, Fianna Fáil backed down from this position (Allen 1997, 131-3). Secondly, Fianna Fáil shifted its policies to the left by implementing several measures "that laid the basis for a rudimentary welfare state" (Allen 1997, 125). Those measures included free secondary education, grants for third-level education, an "occupational injury scheme, provision for redundancy payments, a choice-of-doctor scheme, and payrelated benefits as a cushion against the immediate hardship of unemployment" (Allen 1997, 125). It is important to note that the militancy and radicalism of the late-1960s in Ireland was part of the global rise in radical politics that stemmed largely from the anti-war and civil rights movements. The change in Ireland's economic fortune and the growth in trade union membership signaled a period of strength for Irish labour in general. The Waterford Crystal workforce came of age in this era. As we will see in this ethnography, this era of trade unionism was influential in shaping their understanding of labour politics.

Historically, *Fianna Fáil* has employed nationalist sentiment to influence the trade union movement as a whole. But when the material conditions of Irish workers failed to improve, the rank-and-file of the trade union movement tended to revolt and hold its leadership accountable. However, the hardships of the economic crisis of the late 1940s and 1950s ultimately overcame any resistance mounted by the rank-and-file of the Irish trade union movement. This resulted in a reconfiguration of the relationships between labour, capital, and the state with respect to capitalist development in Ireland. While the 1958 Turn enabled Ireland to take greater advantage of the postwar economic boom and for Irish labour to seek social protections already being afforded to other national workforces, it also made the Irish economy more susceptible to fluctuations in the international economy. The next section examines the collapse of the postwar economy and the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

3.4 THE COLLAPSE OF THE POSTWAR ECONOMY AND THE RISE OF FLEXIBLE ACCUMULA-TION/NEOLIBERAL CAPITALISM

The postwar boom produced by Fordist/Keynesian capitalism began to lose momentum in the late 1960s. By this time, the economies of Western Europe and Japan were catching up to

the US and developing "export markets for their surplus output" (D. Harvey 1990, 141). The US market began to import more goods than it was exporting, which, along with increased US foreign direct investment, created a deficit in the US's balance-of-payments (Panitch and Gindin 2013, 12). This led to a crisis of corporate profitability in the US, which subsequently created a fiscal crisis for the state as tax revenue decreased from poor profits and higher unemployment, which was compounded by more people becoming dependent on social welfare programmes (D. Harvey 1990, 141). As inflation and unemployment rose, there was an increase in labour militancy, which had become emboldened under the policies of the Fordist/Keynesian capitalism of the postwar era (D. Harvey 1990; Panitch and Gindin 2013). There was also a rise in issue-based social movements, such as, the anti-war, civil rights, and environmental movements (D. Harvey 1990; Panitch and Gindin 2013). As a result of this widespread unrest, greater political and economic demands were being placed on capital and the welfare state (D. Harvey 1990; Panitch and Gindin 2013). This political and economic instability in the US spread to the international economy as other advanced industrialized countries began to lose confidence in the US dollar. Reserves of US dollars were building up in other advanced industrialized countries because it became "increasingly more difficult to sterilize them, which fostered domestic monetary expansion and inflation" (Bordo 1992, 53). At this point, it became apparent that the US had a gold convertibility problem because it did not have enough gold to support the international monetary system if there was a sudden run on gold (Bordo 1992). Thus, the US dollar was overvalued. Other advanced industrialized countries were reluctant to devalue their currencies to restore confidence in the US dollar as the world's reserve currency (Bordo 1992). As a result, in 1971, the US unilaterally suspended the US dollar's link to gold, which terminated the Bretton Woods Agreement and ultimately established a floating exchange rate system.

According to Harvey (1990, 141-2), "the period from 1965 to 1973 was one in which the inability of Fordism and Keynesianism to contain the inherent contradictions of capitalism became more and more apparent." Harvey describes these contradictions in terms of rigidities in: 1) the system of mass-production and the "long-term and long-scale fixed capital investments in mass-production systems that precluded much flexibility of design and presumed stable growth"; 2) "labour markets, labour allocation, and labour contracts," of which attempted changes were resisted in the waves of strikes and labour disruption between 1968-72; and, 3) state social programmes, which were "under pressure to keep legitimacy at a time when rigidities in production restricted any expansion in the fiscal basis of state expenditures" (D. Harvey 1990, 142). Monetary policy and the "capacity to print money at whatever rate...to keep the economy stable" was the only flexible response governments had to address these rigidities (D. Harvey 1990, 142). However, the increased money supply resulted in rising inflation. This situation was exacerbated by the 1973 Oil Shock when: 1) OPEC, the Organization for Petroleum Exporting Countries, decided to raise oil prices; and, 2) the Arab nations of OPEC decided to impose an embargo on oil exports to countries that supported Israel in the Yom Kippur War, namely the US and its Western Allies (D. Harvey 1990, 145). This led to a period of stagflation—high unemployment and high inflation (D. Harvey 1990, 145). Amidst this political and economic chaos, the welfare state was in trouble because the redistributive programmes of Fordist/Keynesian capitalism were intended to be funded through economic growth, but Keynesian welfare "policies appeared inflationary as entitlements grew and fiscal capacities stagnated" (D. Harvey 1990, 167).

In 1979, this situation was worsened by the Iranian Revolution, which sparked fears over a drop in the global production of oil and the various consequences this might have on oil dependent markets (Nye 2000, 183). Even though the global production of oil fell by only about

five percent, the panic induced by the Iranian Revolution provided the opportunity for OPEC to increase the price of oil (Nye 2000, 183). Thus, producing a second Oil Shock, or inflationary event, which had a knock-on effect on market prices on an international scale. Overall, the political and economic turmoil of the 1970s initiated the gradual retrenchment of the welfare state and the dispossession of social protections afforded by the welfare state.

It is important to note that the significance of this period is that it "did not produce anything approaching the kind of inter-imperial rivalry to which earlier capitalist crises have given rise" (Panitch and Gindin 2013, 14). Instead, it led to a coordinated international response to save capitalism, namely the birth of what became the G7 (or the Group of Seven - the seven leading non-communist industrialized nations) (Panitch and Gindin 2013, 14). The expansion and deepening of the capitalist mode of production in the Bretton Woods era meant that the class interests of capital across national boundaries were too valuable and interconnected to support another outbreak of war between the traditional imperial powers (Panitch and Gindin 2013, 14). While the economic and political turmoil of the late 1960s and early 1970s is often depicted as the collapse of the Bretton Woods system, it is important to understand this period as advancing the development of the capitalist mode of production as a whole (Panitch and Gindin 2013, 14). The legacy of Bretton Woods is that it did just what it was intended to do—expand and deepen the social relations of the capitalist mode of production on an international scale (Panitch and Gindin 2013, 14).

As a result, the 1970s and the 1980s were a transitionary period for the capitalist mode of production and subsequently the relationships between labour, capital, and the state. According to Harvey (1990, 145):

in the social space created by all this flux and uncertainty, a series of novel experiments in the realms of industrial organization as well as in political and social life [began] to

take shape. These experiments may represent the early stirrings of the passage to an entirely new regime of accumulation, coupled with a quite different system of political and social regulation.

These experiments resulted in a system that Harvey (1990, 147-56) describes as flexible accumulation, which essentially entails increasing the flexibility of production, labour processes, and patterns of consumption to expand and respond efficiently to the demands of the marketplace. In practical terms, flexible accumulation employs techniques such as: just-in-time production and small batch manufacturing to reduce or eliminate stocks; has a greater "reliance on part-time, temporary, and sub-contracted work arrangements" to increase the flexibility of the labour market as well as drive down labour costs; and, pays much more "attention to quick-changing fashions and the mobilization of all the artifices of need inducement and cultural transformations that this implies" (D. Harvey 1990, 147-56). Underlying these changes were major technological and organizational advancements in computers, information technologies (IT), and transportation, which led to another instance of what Harvey (1990, 147) calls "time-space compression' in the capitalist world—the time horizons of both private and public decision-making have shrunk, while satellite communication and declining transport costs have made it increasingly possible to spread those decisions immediately over an ever wider and variegated space."

For flexible accumulation to operate as a regime of accumulation, it required a new approach to governance that would facilitate a reconfiguration of the relationship between labour, capital, and the state. This new approach entailed minimal state intervention in the economy, a belief in the efficacy of self-regulating markets, and a greater emphasis on individual freedom and responsibility. In other words, state intervention in the economy should be limited to developing a better business environment for capital to operate. Underlying this assertion is a belief that free and open markets, when left to function without government interference, tend to self-

correct any imbalances in the system and that common interests are best served by people who are allowed to "freely" pursue their own self-interests in a "competitive," "innovative," and "entrepreneurial" environment. Thus, success or failure in the marketplace comes down to an individual's ability or inability to actualize their dreams. This new approach to governance has come to be known as neoliberalism or neoliberal capitalism "because of the emphasis on liberalization [in the marketplace], and because like nineteenth century liberalism, they emphasized the importance of a minimal role for the state" (Stiglitz 2008, 41). This drive to expand the scope of the market economy and belief in individualism represents the market fundamentalist aspect of Polanyi's (2001) "double movement" as well as Kasmir and Carbonella's (2014) "politics of dispossession" in the sense that the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism represents a coordinated effort between capital and the state to undermine labour and the social protections achieved by labour during the postwar era (This is expanded upon below.). Furthermore, the cult of the individual also validates anti-union sentiment, reflected, for example, in the rise of socalled "right to work" legislation, which makes it more difficult for workers to form trade unions and bargain as collective units (Kingsolver 2016).

The key economic principles upon which neoliberal capitalism is based have been grouped together under what is now known as the Washington Consensus. John Williamson coined the term with respect to what he believed to be ten economic policies that the US government, the Federal Reserve, the US Treasury, US economic aid agencies, and international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, could agree upon with respect to bailing out debt-ridden countries (Williamson 2008). His ten-point programme entailed: 1) Fiscal Discipline; 2) Re-ordering Public Expenditure Priorities; 3) Tax Reform; 4) Liberalizing Interest Rates; 5) Competitive Exchange Rate; 6) Trade Liberalization; 7)

Liberalization of Inward Foreign Direct Investment; 8) Privatization; 9) Deregulation; and 10) Property Rights (Williamson 2008, 16-17).¹² It is also important to note that these economic principles form the basis for the structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) implemented by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund when negotiating loans with countries in the midst of debt-crises in Latin America, Africa, and South East Asia in the 1980s and in the former Soviet Union and the Balkans in the 1990s (Chossudovsky 1997; Greer 2014; Harvey 2005; Klein 2007; Panitch and Gindin 2013). This is significant for two reasons. Firstly, there is the similarity between the roles played by SAPs and the Marshall Plan (Panitch and Gindin 2013, 96). In both instances, economic relief is available on the condition that the debtor country adheres to certain economic principles that are congruent with the prevailing regime of international capitalism contributing to the expansion and deepening of the social relations of the capitalist mode of production (Panitch and Gindin 2013, 96). Secondly, as we will see in later chapters, the bailout agreement the Irish government reached with the Troika following the 2008 financial crisis essentially doubled down on these types of neoliberal political and economic policies. As a result, the Irish public was exposed to similar, but less severe, hardships faced by much of the developing world after having been subjected to a SAP administered by the World Bank and IMF. While the current understanding of the Washington Consensus overlooks some of the subtlety of Williamson's work (Stiglitz 2008), his ten-point programme acts as a good summation for understanding the type of policies implemented by countries from the 1970s into the 1990s that helped establish the regime of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

¹² There is some controversy surrounding the concept of the Washington Consensus because the term came to define a period of economic and political reform that preceded its initial usage (Stiglitz 2008). While Williamson did not intend for this ten-point programme, nor the term Washington Consensus itself, to represent an authoritative set of neoliberal economic policies upon which to establish an international regime of capital accumulation, the term and the principles it espouses, have become synonymous with the development and expansion of neoliberal capitalism (Stiglitz 2008, Williamson 2008).

As alluded to earlier, the most significant effect of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism is that it undermined the gains made by labour in the advanced industrialized countries under the Bretton Woods era (D. Harvey 1990; Panitch and Gindin 2013). The strong and well-organized workforces of advanced industrialized countries came under threat because: 1) advancements in information technologies and transportation allowed for the coordination of production and the movement of goods on a global scale much easier; and, 2) there was strong political will to facilitate greater capital mobility by reducing barriers to international trade. In developing free and open markets, national labour markets were simultaneously opened up to competition on an international scale as it became easier and more profitable for companies to outsource or relocate production overseas (also see Chapter One and Eight's discussion on the global reserve army of labour). Harvey (2003, 63) argues that this undermining of labour led to a:

wave of labour militancy [that] swept the advanced capitalist world during the late 1970s and the 1980s...as working-class movements everywhere sought to preserve the gains they had won during the 1960s and early 1970s. In retrospect, we can see this as a rearguard action to preserve conditions and privileges gained within and around expanded reproduction and the welfare state, rather than a progressive movement seeking transformative changes. For the most part this rearguard action failed. The subsequent devaluation of labour power and the steady relative degradation in the condition of the working class in the advanced capitalist countries was then paralleled by the formation of a huge, amorphous, and unorganized proletariat throughout much of the developing world. This put downward pressure upon wage rates and labour conditions everywhere.

In creating good business environments, the shift to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism also put the trade union movement in direct confrontation with the state. The most high-profile examples from this period are Ronald Reagan's standoff with the air traffic controllers and Margaret Thatcher's dispute with the British miners (D. Harvey 2003, 63). These two instances are also important to the Waterford Crystal workers because they understand their struggle during the 1990 Strike as being similar to these disputes.

When the air traffic controllers' union, PATCO, told its 13,000 members to walk off the job in 1981, Reagan gave them forty-eight hours to return to work or they would forfeit their jobs because as federal employees it was illegal for them to participate in a strike (McCartin 2011). When Reagan's ultimatum was ignored, he fired the 11,345 air traffic controllers that refused to return to work (Early 2006). Even though "it took several years and billions of dollars (much more than PATCO had demanded) to return the system to pre-strike levels," Reagan's actions broke their trade union and "undermined the bargaining power of American workers and their labour unions" (McCartin 2011). There had been "thirty-nine illegal work stoppages against the federal government between 1962 and 1981, [since 1981] no significant federal job actions [have] followed Reagan's firing of the PATCO strikers" (McCartin 2011). It is important to note that "PATCO was more than an ordinary union: it was a white-collar union which had the character of a skilled professional association...an icon of middle-class rather than working-class [trade] unionism" (D. Harvey 2005, 25). The dispute with PATCO signaled open season on organized labour in all its forms, not just those traditional bastions of trade unionism in the resource extraction and manufacturing sectors that were falling prey to deindustrialization in advanced capitalist countries. It also marked a move away from the notions of full employment and working with organized labour, two principles that defined the postwar economy. Thatcher's confrontation with the British miners sent a similar message.

In 1974, the British miners (workers in a nationalized industry) went on strike because their wages were not keeping up with inflation (D. Harvey 2005, 57-8). Their plight generated a great deal of public support partly because the British miners had always been at the fore of the British trade union movement (D. Harvey 2005, 57-8). Their dispute forced a national election, which returned the British Labour Party to power, who settled with the British miners (D.

Harvey 2005, 57-8). However, as inflation and unemployment continued to increase during the 1970s, more and more trade unions (e.g., hospital workers, gravediggers, truck drivers, and British Rail workers) began to strike in response to the poor economic conditions, namely wages not keeping pace with inflation (D. Harvey 2005, 58). The mainstream British press branded these trade unions as "greedy and disruptive" (D. Harvey 2005, 58). Gradually, public support for the trade unions began to wane (D. Harvey 2005, 58). As the economy continued to falter, the Tories were returned to power in 1979 with Thatcher at the helm (D. Harvey 2005, 58). She had a majority government and a strong mandate to tackle trade union power (D. Harvey 2005, 58). Her assault on the trade union movement came to a head when "Thatcher provoked a miners' strike in 1984 by announcing a wave of redundancies and pit closures (imported coal was cheaper)" (D. Harvey 2005, 59). According to Harvey (2005, 59):

The strike lasted for almost a year, and, in spite of a great deal of public support and sympathy, the miners lost. The back of a core element of the British labour movement had been broken. Thatcher further reduced union power by opening up the UK to foreign competition and foreign investment. Foreign competition demolished much of traditional British industry in the 1980s—the steel industry (Sheffield) and shipbuilding (Glasgow) more or less totally disappeared within a few years, and with them a good deal of trade union power...The overall effect was to transform the UK into a country of relatively low wages and a largely compliant labour force (relative to the rest of Europe) within ten years. By the time Thatcher left office, strike activity had fallen to one-tenth of its former levels.

In advancing the development of the neoliberal state, the significance of Thatcher and Reagan's assaults on organized labour was that, as leaders of two of the world's largest non-communist economies, their attacks on organized labour would not just reverberate domestically, but internationally as well.

In addition, as global leaders in the development of the neoliberal state, the US and the UK are home to the two most powerful financial centres in the world, New York City and the City of London respectively. This is significant because of the expansion and greater role played

by the financial sector in influencing international monetary and fiscal policy under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. Underlying the connection between flexible accumulation and finance capital is the increased mobility of capital. It is important to note that the growth of the financial sector was also facilitated by advancements in information technologies, which made it possible to process financial transactions on an international scale almost instantaneously (D. Harvey 1990). The deregulation of the financial sector allowed financial institutions to loan, trade, and speculate on domestic and global markets more easily. As a result, "the financial system is better able to spread risks over a broader front and shift funds rapidly from failing to profitable enterprises, regions, and sectors" (D. Harvey 1990, 164). The ability to shift capital flows rapidly is congruent with a system of production (flexible accumulation) that similarly aims to shift production quickly to respond to changes in the market more efficiently in order to maximize profits. However, in freeing the financial sector to respond to flux and turmoil in the marketplace, the state has less control over capital flows and, subsequently, its own monetary and fiscal policies through financial disciplining from the financial sector (D. Harvey 1990, 164-5). For example, in 1981, the French elected a leftist coalition government comprised of the Parti Socialiste (PS) and Parti Communiste Français (PCF). In the face of the nascent neoliberal state, the PS/PCF government began to nationalize major industries, increase financial regulations, and increase public spending (Guizol 2013). This resulted in a run on the franc and considerable capital flight to the US and Switzerland (Guizol 2013). By 1983, the PS/PCF began to preach moderation and reneged on many of its socialist programmes (Guizol 2013). Furthermore, to control the country's rising deficit and debt, the PS/PCF instituted a period of economic austerity (Guizol 2013).

Further contributing to the growth of the financial sector in advanced industrialized countries was the overall move away from industrial production because it was becoming possible and economically advantageous to conduct manufacturing operations overseas. With the deregulation of the financial sector, it was also increasingly possible to make money from money through financial investments and speculation, bypassing the industrial production process altogether—in other words, the financialization of the economy. As state-owned and/or state-controlled aspects of the economy were being privatized in the development of the neoliberal state, there were plenty of new markets for financial institutions to invest in themselves or to facilitate loans for businesses, entrepreneurs, and consumers to participate in these newly created markets. Finally, under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, notions of the entrepreneur and consumer pursuing their dreams are venerated. In cultivating an environment where entrepreneurship can thrive, and consumers have purchasing power, entrepreneurs and consumers need access to credit to start and expand their businesses or increase their purchasing power respectively. Plus, in compensating for cuts in social security services, those services are increasingly assetbacked and/or debt-financed (e.g., pensions and housing respectively). An economy centred on entrepreneurism and consumerism necessitates a robust financial sector to function and for people to survive.

Stemming from the political and economic crises of the 1970s, the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism entailed the coming together of: technological advances in information technologies and transportation; new approaches to the organization of production; and, the political resolve to develop and support free and open markets. The transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism signaled the gradual dispossession of social protections afforded by the welfare state as the interventionist state was

superseded by the so-called non-interventionist state. As a result, the gains made by labour under Fordist/Keynesian capitalism were undermined. Essentially, the relationships between labour, capital, and the state were redefined, allowing for a new period of capitalist expansion. That said, differences in national and regional histories, cultures, political and economic institutions, and internal class dynamics have resulted in different trajectories and manifestations of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism around the world. Ireland is an interesting case in point.

3.5 IRELAND'S EMBRACE OF FLEXIBLE ACCUMULATION/NEOLIBERAL CAPITALISM

After a period of labour militancy and radicalism in the late-1960s, both Fianna Fáil and the trade union leadership wanted to establish some sort of control over the rank-and-file of the trade union movement (Allen 1997, 144). In 1970, the trade union leadership established new rules for picketing for strikes that involved more than one trade union (Allen 1997, 144). Meanwhile, the government introduced the Prices and Incomes Bill to freeze wages at a time of increasing inflation (Allen 1997, 144). Allen (1997, 144) argues that the Bill was a device to pressure trade "union leaders into standing up against their own militants." The result was a renewed focus on centralized collective bargaining (Allen 1997, 144). The trade union leadership, government, and employers came together and agreed on a "new structure for handling wage claims" under the National Wage Agreement (NWA) (Allen 1997, 144). In return, the government withdrew the Prices and Income Bill (Allen 1997, 144). Furthermore, the Labour-Employer Conference was re-established and "met monthly to monitor and control wage demands" (Allen 1997, 144). Subcommittees were set-up "to enforce a new respect for procedure in the conduct of grievances" (Allen 1997, 144). The Fianna Fáil-led government also introduced the Trade Union Bill (1971), which made "it more difficult to establish 'breakaway unions," thus giving greater

authority to already established trade unions that were willing to work with the government (Allen 1997, 144). The NWAs would be a feature of Irish industrial relations during the 1970s, evolving from primarily bipartite (Employers/Trade Unions) to tripartite (Employers/Trade Unions/Government) agreements (Allen 1997, 144). According to Emmet O'Connor (2011, 233):

Seven NWAs were concluded through the [renewed] Employer-Labour Conference between 1970 and 1978. Unlike previous national agreements, which were merely set guidelines for decentralized bargaining, the NWAs marked a real departure. While the first five were bipartite, those concluded in 1977...and 1978 were tripartite. Even before 1977, the distinction between bipartism and tripartism was blurred by...[the government's] willingness to use budgetary inducements to secure agreements.

The NWAs were a significant step forward in regulating Irish industrial relations and exercising some control over the trade union movement as a whole, something that *Fianna Fáil* was unable to accomplish after the Emergency and the 1958 Turn.

In February 1973, Fianna Fáil called a general election. The party was feeling confident because of "a generous budget in 1972, twenty-one percent pay hikes in the last National Wage Agreement, public confidence in [their] approach [to the Troubles in] the North, and lack of progress in [coalition] talks between Labour and Fine Gael," Ireland's third and second largest political parties respectively (E. O'Connor 2011, 231). However, before the election Fine Gael and Labour were able to reach an agreement "on a programme for a 'National Coalition'" government and thus combined forces to defeat Fianna Fáil at the polls (E. O'Connor 2011, 231). Unfortunately for the National Coalition government, the 1973 Oil Shock occurred in October and their government was plagued by poor economic conditions during their term in office. Fianna Fáil was then re-elected in 1977 on a Keynesian-inspired platform intended to re-invigorate the Irish economy (Allen 1997; E. O'Connor 2011). The approach entailed lowering interest rates and cutting taxes on capital to stimulate growth in the private sector and rely on foreign borrowing to cover shortfalls in increased public spending, which was also intended to stimulate the

economy (Allen 1997, 150). It was an approach being taken by many newly industrializing countries (NICs) at the time (Allen 1997, 152). According to Allen (1997, 152):

With increased rates of growth, they could reasonably expect to pay back the debt from an expansion of their exports...[However,] the fact that many NICs were all engaged in borrowing to boost production meant that they could not all expect to experience phenomenal rates of growth in their exports. Moreover, as each of them took out huge loans, this in turn pushed up interest rates. They had to pay back more than expected with less resources than they had hoped for.

It also did not help that the Irish government was embarking on this programme when Keynesian economics were being blamed for the woes of the international economy and as Reagan and Thatcher were beginning to promote and enact neoliberal policies (Allen 1997, 153). However, the first two years of this programme, largely because of the injection of funds into the economy from foreign borrowing, "led to the creation of 60,000 extra jobs in two years and trade union membership rose to sixty percent of the workforce, the third highest in Europe" (Allen 1997, 153). This growth in employment and trade unionism coincided with a period of rising inflation and uncertainty in the market because of the second Oil Shock, which contributed to a period of labour militancy and the beginning of Ireland's tax revolts (Allen 1997; E. O'Connor 2011, M. O'Donoghue 1990). This led to several significant confrontations between workers and the state.

The first incident occurred at the National Board and Paper Mills in Waterford after the announcement of a major redundancy programme (Allen 1997, 153). The workers decided to occupy the plant to have it nationalized (Allen 1997, 153). At one stage, the workers "announced that they would conduct a sit-down on the main bridge entering the city" (Allen 1997, 153). This protest was later changed to a march after the government promised to meet with the workers, but still there were rumours "that the bridge would be seized" (E. O'Connor 1989, 349). As the march made its way toward the bridge, the workers could see fully armed soldiers on the other side of the bridge (Allen 1997, 153; E. O'Connor 1998, 349). A confrontation was averted as the

workers refrained from seizing the bridge and marched past the soldiers. Yet, the presence of the Irish army was a provocation that angered many people in Waterford and subsequently led to a two-hour general strike in the town several weeks later (Allen 1997, 153; E. O'Connor 1998, 349). Approximately 20,000 people took to the streets in support of the mill workers (Allen 1997, 153; E. O'Connor 1998, 349). However, the Irish government still refused to intervene on behalf of the mill workers and their strike gradually lost momentum (E. O'Connor 1989, 351).

The second incident was the post office workers' strike over wage increases (Allen 1997, 153-4). When the workers voted to strike, they were accused by the ICTU of "breaching the agreed procedure" over wage negotiations, which "emboldened *Fianna Fáil* to stiffen their resistance to the strike" (Allen 1997, 153-4). As postal workers attempted to "close down deliveries [they] were met by a sustained *gardai* [police] presence," which resulted in many clashes between the strikers and the police (Allen 1997, 153-4). Eventually, the strikers were forced back to work as the nineteen-week long strike took its toll on the workers (Allen 1997, 153-4). According to Allen (1997, 154), "the defeat of the strike was later to have powerful repercussions in dampening public sector militancy and convinced many to look again at the option of social partnership." The defeat of the postal workers had a similar detrimental effect on public sector trade unionism as the PATCO workers in the US and the miners in the UK.

Possibly the most significant confrontation with the state occurred in 1979, when Irish Pay-As-You-Earn (PAYE)¹³ workers erupted in unofficial strike actions after the Irish government "yielded to pressure from the Irish Farmers' Association to drop a two percent levy on farmers" (E. O'Connor 2011, 235). This is despite paying relatively little tax on farm produce in

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¹³ PAYE is a system of taxation used in Ireland where the employer deducts Income Tax, Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI), and a Universal Social Charge directly from an employee's paycheck and then pays that money to the Office of the Revenue Commissioners, which is the state-body responsible for the assessment and collection of taxes and duties (Government of Ireland 2023).

general and having agriculture incomes rise seventy-two percent during the 1970s (E. O'Connor 2011, 235). The anger of PAYE workers over this decision has its origins in the 1958 Turn. The government subsidies that fueled Ireland's industrialization programme of the 1958 Turn were funded mainly by PAYE workers, i.e., income tax (Allen 1997, 124). Under this programme, the Irish government increased income taxes while it reduced taxes on capital (Allen 1997, 124). During the 1960s, the workforce grew, standards of living improved, and social welfare programmes expanded, so the tax burden on PAYE workers was not felt as deeply (Allen 1997, 124-5). However, "between 1970 and 1981, the contribution of the PAYE and Pay Related Social Insurance (PRSI) schemes to the total tax take rose from thirty to forty-five percent; partly because of an absolute increase in taxation, and partly because taxes on property and capital were reduced" (E. O'Connor 2011, 235). In 1975, PAYE workers "accounted for seventy-one percent of all income tax revenue" and "by 1978 it had risen to eighty-seven percent" (Allen 1997, 154). In light of the success of the Irish agricultural sector, PAYE workers felt they were contributing a disproportionate amount to Ireland's tax revenue. The Waterford Crystal workers were actively involved in the tax revolts because they were well paid workers, paying huge amounts of tax, as we will see Chapter Five. However, complicating matters during this period was the fact that the success of the Irish agricultural sector, and subsequent anger of PAYE workers, was largely the result of a new dimension incorporated into Irish politics and economic development in the 1970s, namely European integration.

While Ireland may have been late to the postwar economic boom, the policies that constituted the 1958 Turn prepared Ireland for accession to the European Economic Community (EEC) as the country's politicians sought further trade liberalization, the free movement of capital, and the attraction of foreign direct investment (Allen 1997; Laffan and O'Mahony 2008; E.

O'Connor 2011). Ireland followed the United Kingdom's decision to join the EEC because of Ireland's economic dependency on the United Kingdom (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, 197). However, EEC membership also constituted another measure to free Ireland from economic dependence on the UK (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, 31). Even though Ireland established diplomatic relations with the EEC in 1959, it took over a decade before Ireland's application for EEC membership was ratified in 1972 (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008). Joining the EEC was heralded as a significant economic opportunity for Ireland but was soon squashed by the global economic downturn caused by the 1973 Oil Shock (E. O'Connor 2011, 231-2). However, despite EEC membership not quite living up to its hype, Ireland was the net beneficiary of EEC funding for the first twenty years of its membership, so much so that Irish politicians were accused of suffering from "sponger syndrome" and possessing a "begging bowl mentality" (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, 31). During the 1970s and 1980s, Irish industry did benefit from foreign direct investment from transnational corporations seeking access to the European Common Market (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, 36). But the clear beneficiaries of EEC membership during this period was the Irish agricultural sector (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, 36). Through the EEC's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the Irish agricultural sector gained access to higher prices for agricultural goods in the European Common Market (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, 36). Between 1970 and 1978, prices rose by thirty-five percent for agricultural products (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, 36). When prices began to drop after 1978, farming incomes were now largely funded by the EEC through the CAP, which "paid for seventy percent of Irish public expenditure on agriculture" (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, 36). This removed a "serious burden from the Irish exchequer and taxpayer" as the Irish economy continued to decline in the 1980s (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008, 36). However, PAYE workers continued to bear a disproportionate tax burden.

In the end, the "renewed confidence and militancy" among the rank-and-file of the trade union movement and PAYE workers in general in the late 1970s and early 1980s was short-lived (Allen 1997, 153; E. O'Connor 2011, 240). Ireland's economic situation worsened as a result of *Fianna Fáil's* economic policies (E. O'Connor 2011, 240). In 1979 and 1980, the NWAs were incorporated into the two National Understandings for Social and Economic Development (E. O'Connor 2011, 234). The National Understandings "were novel in being two-tier agreements, the first relating to pay, and the second relating to specific objectives in policy on taxation, education, health, and housing" (E. O'Connor 2011, 234). However, the National Understandings never lived up to their promises and soon collapsed as "none of the parties to the tripartite accords were convinced that their interests had been well served, and each was more or less critical of what they saw as the bad faith of the other parties" (W. K. Roche 2009, 192).

The economic turmoil and civil unrest in Ireland during this period gave rise to an eighteen-month period of political instability (E. O'Connor 2011, 238). A general election was held in
June of 1981, which returned a *Fine Gael*-Labour coalition minority government (E. O'Connor
2011, 238). After taking power, *Fine Gael* declared that the public finances were in worse condition than *Fianna Fáil* had claimed (E. O'Connor 2011, 238). This led to two harsh budgets, the
second of which was defeated, prompting another election in February of 1982 (E. O'Connor
2011, 238). *Fianna Fáil* returned to power with a minority government after courting left-wing *Teachta Dála* (TDs)¹⁴ with promises of increased social spending (E. O'Connor 2011, 238).
However, when *Fianna Fáil* released their economic plan, it opted for austerity and spending
cuts (E. O'Connor 2011, 239). As a result, yet another government fell and another election was
held in November of 1982 (E. O'Connor 2011, 239). Once again, *Fine Gael* and Labour entered

¹⁴ Members of Irish Parliament.

into a coalition government and while the government pursued austerity and spending cuts, these were tempered by the Labour Party which persuaded *Fine Gael* to stagger the cuts over time (E. O'Connor 2011, 240). As *Fine Gael* pressed for more cuts, the Labour Party was under increasing pressure from trade unions, which were now calling for disaffiliation from the Labour Party over its support of the government (E. O'Connor 2011, 242). Eventually, the Labour Party pulled out of the government rather than approve further cuts to the health care system (E. O'Connor 2011, 243). Subsequently, in 1987, *Fianna Fáil* was re-elected to power with a minority government supported by their main political rivals *Fine Gael* (E. O'Connor 2011, 244; Edwards 2010). *Fine Gael* only agreed to support the government with respect to economic reforms that were deemed to be in the national interest (Edwards 2010).

Between 1981 and 1987, unemployment rose to over nineteen percent, real take home pay declined by seven percent, emigration reached 15,000 per annum, and the national debt rose from IR£12 billion to IR£24 billion—nearly 150% of Ireland's gross national product (Edwards 2010). In response, *Fianna Fáil* proposed the Programme for National Recovery (PNR). The defining element of the PNR was the institution of social partnership, which brought government, trade unions, farmers' associations, and employer organizations together to agree on issues of mutual economic interest (E. O'Connor 2011, 244). It was a return to *Fianna Fáil's* longstanding desire to regulate and control the trade union movement (Allen 1997; W.K. Roche 2009; O'Connor 2011). Social partnership was presented as "a way of preventing Ireland going down the Thatcherite road where [trade] unions had been excluded from power" (Allen 1997, 170). It was a way of supposedly moderating neoliberalism under the pretense of social solidarity (E. O'Connor 2011, 244). According to O'Connor (2011, 247):

The PNR raised Irish corporatism to a new level. Whereas the National Understandings amounted to two-tier trade-offs on pay and specific policies, the PNR integrated a pay

deal into a comprehensive framework. Covering 1987 to 1990, it set out macroeconomic goals dictated by the requirements of European monetary convergence, and social concessions to the ICTU, notably the maintenance of the value of social welfare benefits, and, if feasible, tax reform and job creation. The crucial pay element, the meat in the sandwich, provided for wage increases of 7.5 percent over three years. The PNR also created a Central Review Committee to monitor the programme and act as a forum for the resolution of difficulties of implementation. As such, the Committee gave the ICTU unprecedented institutional access to government ministers and civil servants.

Social partnership "defined itself in opposition to older forms of 'adversarial' trade unionism that recognize, to some degree at least, the reality of class conflict" and established a new understanding of trade unionism described as "new realism," which is "a full acceptance of the need for workers and employers to form a partnership to compete in a market economy" (Allen 1997, 171). Roche and Cradden (quoted in Kirby 2010, 179-80) describe social partnership as a form of "competitive corporatism," which entails "the enhancement of national competitiveness" largely through "the flexibilization of the conditions for labour." This was accomplished by, firstly, the promise of tax relief for wage restraint (Allen 2000, 83). However, tax relief was distributed to everyone and disproportionally (Allen 2000, 83). For example, a single person making IR£7,500 paid 18.8% income tax, while a single person making IR£60,000 paid 36.1% income tax (Allen 2000, 84). The high-income earner paid just under twice the rate of income tax on eight times as much income relative to a low-income earner (Allen 2000, 84). Furthermore, wage restraint ensured that pay raises were not commensurate with corporate profits, which resulted in higher profits for capital and the increased competitiveness of the Irish economy (Allen 2000, 84).

Secondly, to streamline the centralized bargaining process, the Irish government offered financial incentives for trade unions to merge (Allen 2000, 115). This created large trade unions, which ended up holding more influence under social partnership arrangements than smaller unions that resisted mergers (Allen 2000, 115). As trade unions in Ireland became large

bureaucratic structures, the leaders of large trade unions took on a more significant role in representing their members; even as, the bureaucratization of the trade union movement disconnected trade union leadership from their members (Allen 2000, 115). In 1990, the government ratified the Industrial Relations Act, which grew out of the social partnership established under the PNR. The Industrial Relations Act placed constraints on workers' ability to engage in industrial disputes and thus weakened the militancy of shop stewards and rank-and-file members (Allen 2000, 116). Allen (2000, 117) argues that "the overall rationale of the act was to force workers to respect official procedures and look to their officials for guidance in negotiating the law." By agreeing to social partnership, the trade union movement took on the problems of Irish capitalism and in doing so preached moderation and restraint to their members (Allen 2000, 114). Under the guise of consensus building, social partnership undermined the strength of the trade union movement and Irish workers in general (Allen 2000, 114). Furthermore, social partnership institutionalized a neoliberal political agenda within Irish industrial relations through the disempowerment and increased flexibility of labour (Kirby 2010, 179).

It is important to note the significant role played by European integration in the perceived success of the PNR and the rapid growth of the Irish economy in the 1990s—also known as the "Celtic Tiger" (Kirby 2010; Laffan and O'Mahony 2008; E. O'Connor 2011). After ratifying the Single European Act in 1987, Ireland received IR£6 billion in structural and cohesion funds (E. O'Connor 2011, 248). According to Kirby (2010, 47), Ireland secured the "largest per capita allocation of EU Structural Funds which allowed for structural weaknesses in the Irish economy to be remedied...Among these were improvements to the country's physical infrastructure but also investments into raising competitiveness and productivity and to improve the skills base of the workforce." Access to Structural Funds allowed the Irish government to invest in long-term

projects without the pressure of short-term budgetary constraints (Kirby 2010, 47). These projects would not have been possible given the Irish state's finances after the country's recession in the 1980s (Kirby 2010, 47).

Furthermore, the Single European Act turned Ireland into an attractive destination for transnational corporations (TNCs) wanting to establish bases of operations for the European market (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008). Many US transnational corporations were further attracted to Ireland because of its well-educated, English-speaking, and flexible workforce (Laffan and O'Mahony 2008). Attracting foreign direct investment was also facilitated by the creation of Ireland's International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) in 1987 (Allen 2000, 65). The IFSC offered a "ten percent rate of tax for finance houses who used the centre" (Allen 2000, 65). According to Allen (2000, 65):

By 1989, a road show was organized to promote the IFSC in New York because US companies needed to gain access to a head office that was regulated by the Central Bank of one of the twelve EU states if they were to operate in this market...[The IFSC's] particular advantage is that it combines a low tax haven inside the EU with a liberal regime of regulation.

Moreover, the IFSC offered some of the lowest salaries for finance workers in the financial world, even though the financial sector in general has experienced some of the highest wage growth relative to other sectors of the economy in advanced capitalist countries (Allen 2000, 65; Lindley and McIntosh 2017). This was indicative of Ireland's commitment to wage restraint under social partnership. Kingsolver (2016) documents a similar process in South Carolina with respect to the ways in which the US state attracts capital investment by actively commodifying and marketing the precariousness of its rural workforce by touting their eagerness to work for low wages, their low mobility due to indebtedness, and the suppression of trade unions. In both cases, the goal is to project and establish business-friendly environments for outside capital investment.

Fianna Fáil embarked on their programme of neoliberal economic development just prior to a period of unprecedented economic growth and expansion in the US economy, which centred mainly around computers and information technologies (O'Hearn 2003, 34). Through low corporate tax rates, ¹⁵ lax financial regulations, and an English-speaking, flexible workforce, Ireland was able to capitalize on US-based corporations, namely IT and pharmaceutical companies, looking for new markets and tax shelters to maximize their profits (O'Hearn 2003, 37). Ireland fit the bill on both counts (O'Hearn 2003, 37). In Ireland's case, the country became an important location for TNCs to not only access the European market by setting up subsidiaries, but through transfer pricing maximize their profits from their global operations (O'Hearn 2003, 37-8). According to O'Hearn (2003, 40), "the US Department of Commerce's Survey of Current Business" found that "Ireland US-based TNCs maintained profit rates in the 1990s that were five times greater than those achieved elsewhere in the world."

Ireland's rapid economic growth was "widely regarded, [especially within the EU], as a model to be followed by other [small] countries seeking 'economic success'" (O'Hearn 2003, 40). However, the initial gains in economic growth during the Celtic Tiger period occurred without similar gains in employment (O'Hearn 2003, 40). The US-based TNCs "that were responsible for output growth...did not employ very many people, relative to their economic size" (O'Hearn 2003, 40). According to O'Hearn (2003, 41), "gains in employment were mostly within the construction and service sectors, which expanded as some of the effects of manufacturing growth finally filtered to the rest of the economy." When corporations, such as Intel,

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¹⁵ In 1987, the corporate tax rate in Ireland was fifty percent, but declined to thirty-two percent by 1997 (Allen 2000, 83). The corporate tax rate was then reduced by four percent annually to achieve a corporate tax rate of 12.5% by 2002 (Allen 2000, 83). Within the EU, only Bulgaria and Cyprus have lower corporate tax rates (10%) than Ireland and they lowered them in 2007 and 2005 respectively (European Commission 2007, 24, European Commission 2010, 11).

Apple, Dell, Microsoft, Oracle, Siemens-Nixdorff, Hewlett-Packard, and Pfizer, decided to establish their manufacturing operations for Europe in Ireland, this only created a handful of relatively high paying, full-time jobs (O'Hearn 2003, 41). Most of the jobs created during the height of the Celtic Tiger era were part-time, fixed-term, temporary, and self-employed contracting positions supporting Ireland's relatively small and mainly foreign-based, high-tech manufacturing sector (O'Hearn 2003, 42).

As employment opportunities increased and Ireland's population grew during the Celtic Tiger, there was a greater demand for goods and services domestically. This was reflected in a significant shift in the economic growth of the Celtic Tiger from being predominantly export-driven to a reliance on demand from the domestic market (Kirby 2010). Between 1995 and 2000, annual average export growth was 17.6%, while between 2001 and 2006 it dropped to 4.9% (Kirby 2010, 35). Tansey (2007; quoted in Kirby 2010, 35) argues that "the Celtic Tiger economy [actually] met its end in 2001" as exports and industrial employment began to decline. Much of the growth in the latter half of the Celtic Tiger was fueled by unsustainable debt-financed domestic consumption, of which the construction and housing sector played a significant role. (Kirby 2010, 35).

Allen (2000, 72) points out that housing is one of the basic needs and main costs facing workers and that Ireland has one of the highest rates of home ownership in Europe. While demand may have initially exceeded supply, as housing prices began to rise, the housing market soon became vulnerable to property speculation (Allen 2000, 72). Furthermore, *Fianna Fáil* "introduced a host of tax breaks such as reducing capital gains tax on second homes and…tax breaks for the write-off of rental incomes" (Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 73). This resulted in a "shift from individual home ownership to landlordism and the use of houses as investment income"

(Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 73). Meanwhile, there were "cutbacks in social housing and a refusal to introduce any form of rental control" (Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 73). According to Allen and O'Boyle (2013, 73): "In a situation where rents were high and banks were assiduously pushing loans with little scrutiny on people's ability to pay, tens of thousands fell for the line about 'getting their foot on the property ladder.'" Following the 2008 financial crisis and the bursting of Ireland's property bubble, many Irish people were saddled with huge household debts and either lost their homes or experienced some form of mortgage stress. By 2012, "over half of Irish mortgages were in negative equity" (Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 69). It is important to note that after the collapse of the Celtic Tiger, there was 1,655 ghost estates scattered around the country in various degrees of completion (Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 75). Moreover, during the Celtic Tiger, homelessness doubled between 1993 and 2005 with "2,399 households officially categorized as homeless, 1,725 households living in unfit accommodations, 4,112 in overcrowded accommodations and 3,375 involuntarily sharing" (Kirby 2010, 61). This resulted in a situation where people lost their homes and other people needed homes all while houses sat empty across the country.

In the context of social partnership, namely tax cuts, wage restraint, and governmental fiscal discipline, the rapid economic growth of the Celtic Tiger led to severe inequality. By the mid-1990s, Ireland was the "most unequal country in Europe and second only to the United States in the OECD" (O'Hearn 2003, 47). The rise of the Celtic Tiger was the result of *Fianna Fáil's* embrace of neoliberal strategies, European integration, and a period of international economic expansion led by US-based TNCs. Writing during that time, O'Hearn (2003, 40) argues that "Ireland's most important function today is as a site where US companies can shift their products into Europe, while accumulating profits in order to avoid taxation." As a model of economic growth, it would prove to be unsustainable. The precariousness of the Celtic Tiger was

exposed by the 2008 financial crisis. The rise and fall of the Celtic Tiger are discussed more explicitly throughout the rest of this ethnography.

In sum, as this chapter documents, different manifestations of economic nationalism contributed to the overall dispossession and disorganization of labour in Ireland. Centralized collective bargaining under the NWAs, the National Understandings, and the PNR have produced various relationships between labour, capital, and the state, the overall effect of which has been to disempower labour, namely through wage restraint, increased productivity, the increased flexibility in the conditions of work, and the relative capture of trade unions (i.e., restrictions on job actions). When economic nationalism has appeared to benefit the Irish economy and Irish workers, it has largely been a by-product of capitalist expansion at the international scale, i.e., the 1958 Turn and the postwar boom, Irish agriculture and membership in the EEC, and the PNR with European integration and US-based TNCs seeking access to the European market. Periodic economic crises contributed to the dispossession and disorganization of labour in Ireland, most notably after periods of resistance and revolt by the rank-and-file of the trade union movement. The severity of economic crises in Ireland—especially with respect to high unemployment, widespread poverty, and emigration—have resulted invariably in a renewed focus in centralized collective bargaining and new forms of economic nationalism. Following Masco's (2017, S67) argument, economic crises in Ireland have acted as a "counterrevolutionary force...a call to confront collective endangerment that instead increasingly articulates the very limits of the political." As discussed in the rest of this ethnography, the economic austerity instituted after the 2008 financial crisis constitutes another example of the "limits of the political" as Ireland's austerity measures entailed the expansion and deepening of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. With the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism our "collective future has been

assigned to the marketplace, which elevates short-term profitability above all other concerns" (Masco 2017, S75). As we will see, this had a profound effect on the former Waterford Crystal workers.

3.6 CONCLUSION - "DOUBLE MOVEMENT," DISPOSSESSED, AND DISORGANIZED

In terms of Polanyi's (2001) "double movement," the development of Fordist/Keynesian capitalism was a response to the political and economic turmoil of the 1930s and the aftermath of WWII, which was rooted in the laissez-faire, free-market capitalism of the 1920s. The New Deal policies and the interventionist, welfare state were protective measures instituted to mitigate the effects of unfettered capitalism, which were felt all too sharply after the collapse of the New York Stock Exchange in 1929, the onset of the Great Depression, the rise of fascist politics, and the outbreak of WWII. While Fordist/Keynesian capitalism is depicted as a victory of the welfare state over the market economy, mass production and mass consumption led to an increasingly commodified society—expanding and deepening markets as well as the social relations of the capitalist mode of production on an international scale (Panitch and Gindin 2013). As a result, when the postwar economy began to falter and stagflation gripped the international economy in the 1970s, there was an internationally coordinated effort to protect capitalist development.

Bolstered by technological advancements in computers, IT, and transportation, as well as the re-organization of industrial production, the newfound political will and support to retrench the welfare state and cultivate self-regulating markets formed the basis for Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. Since the 1970s, the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism has entailed the continued dismantling of social protections for policy measures designed to promote and nurture a so-called free, open, self-

regulating market economy. The most significant effect of these policies are the increased mobility of capital and the ways in which this has undermined the organizational power of labour. As capital flight became easier, national labour markets were opened up to competition on an international scale and trade unions lost much of their leverage over the control of production in any particular place. The consequence for labour has been the gradual dispossession of the social protections that labour struggled for and has attempted to maintain since the postwar economy. Furthermore, the increased flexibility and precariousness of work under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism has actively disorganized workforces, making it more difficult for labour to achieve collective goals. At the national scale, the processes of "double movement," dispossession, and disorganization converge and/or diverge in ways that are more nuanced.

In Ireland, Polanyi's (2001) "double movement" manifested itself through the politics of nationalism. Irish politics, dictated largely by *Fianna Fáil's* long-term objective of establishing centralized collective bargaining, focused on economic nationalism to persuade and control the Irish trade union movement for the benefit of Irish capitalism in general. However, as Allen (1997) argues, nationalism is only an effective tool for rallying the citizenry if it is eventually accompanied by improvements in the material conditions of people's lives. When appeals to nationalism fail to produce material benefits, then people tend to organize, protest, and demand change (Allen 1997). In the Irish case, the failure of nationalist politics often led to a rise in militancy and radicalism by the rank-and-file of the trade union movement, as well as a change of government, with *Fianna Fáil* being ousted. However, these rebukes of *Fianna Fáil* did not result in any sort of viable political and economic alternative as coalition governments tended to coincide with crippling economic recessions, which invariably returned *Fianna Fáil* to power with an even stronger mandate to tackle Ireland's economic issues. In turn, economic crises

became a means for the state to persuade Irish labour to participate in centralized collective bargaining and ultimately take on the problems of Irish capitalism. This was most notable in the policies that led to the 1958 Turn, the renewal of National Employer-Labour Conference and NWAs in the 1970s, and social partnership and the PNR in 1987.

In general, centralized collective bargaining brought trade union leadership closer to Irish politicians and employers, which alienated many of their rank-and-file members. However, during moments of economic recovery, namely after the 1958 Turn and *Fianna Fáil's* Keynesian-inspired budget in 1977, trade union memberships grew rapidly. When these periods were followed by economic downturns, the trade union leadership found it difficult to manage their rank-and-file members, which resulted in a militancy and radicalism that brought about collective movements that led to the social welfare policies implemented during the 1960s and the PAYE tax revolts in 1979. However, in the grand scheme of Ireland's economic development, these moments of labour organization were always undermined by major economic crises that resulted in high unemployment, poverty, and emigration.

In the 1980s, with the international economy trending towards Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, which was undermining trade union movements in general, social partnership appeared to be a better option for Irish labour than falling victim to a similar kind of assault on trade unions that was occurring in the US and the UK. It is important to note that most trade union leaders do not perceive themselves as intentionally undermining their rank-and-file. They see their role in much more practical terms, namely doing their best for workers with respect to pay, benefits, and conditions under very difficult circumstances. Most trade union leaders are cognizant of the fact that they are participating in a system that contributes to their own

exploitation, dispossession, and disorganization. However, they feel it is better that the trade unions are there doing what they can in their present capacity than to not exist at all.

In conclusion, economic nationalism informed the Irish approach to centralized collective bargaining and as a result labour, capital, and the state found new ways to come together to ensure the continuation of Irish capitalism—a process that was amplified during moments of economic crisis. The following chapters position the Waterford Crystal workers' story in relation to these broader historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes to elucidate the relationship that connects the Waterford Crystal workforce and the different manifestations of capitalist production that have shaped their lives.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE STRUGGLE FOR AUTHENTICITY

4.1 Introduction - "It's not Waterford Crystal."

As Senan, David, and Liam attest to below, the notion of Waterford Crystal being produced anywhere other than Waterford, Ireland was not only preposterous; it was deeply upsetting for many of the former glass workers.

It's not Waterford Crystal. You can call it Slovakian Waterford Crystal or Slovenian or whatever you want, you know. But it is not Waterford Crystal. Waterford Crystal was always hand-cut in Waterford.

- Senan, 50s, Craftworker, 40 Years of Service

It's not Waterford. I just feel that Waterford finished in January 2009. Now, production of Waterford is predominantly in Europe and other parts of the world—everywhere else but Waterford. I can look back—memories, ghosts—I can see the workers and the efforts they put in over the years and the proposition of mouth-blown, hand-cut Irish crystal no longer applying. That's my memory of Waterford Crystal and that's only a memory now as far as I'd be concerned. It's nice to see it displayed in the shop, but then you pick it up and you see that it's made in Slovenia or somewhere else.

- David, 50s, Manager, 40 Years of Service

I have a great amass of Waterford Crystal that you can see there in front of me, but I would not buy a piece of Waterford Crystal made anywhere else in the world. Even if that meant I was getting it at a third of the price, I still wouldn't. It would go against my principles completely. I would not buy Waterford Crystal made in Slovenia. I'd be like a lot of people, I would imagine, that would have the same thing to say. It just goes against my principles completely. In that respect, that's why I'm saying, to you, Waterford Crystal is dead.

- Liam, 50s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

The fact that the company and product use the name of the town gives the product an immediate association with Waterford, Ireland. By maintaining that only mouth-blown and hand-cut crystal produced in Waterford can legitimately be called Waterford Crystal, the workers question the authenticity of products that are produced elsewhere and marked under the company brand.

According to Theodossopoulos (2013, 338), there is a "presupposition that authenticity lies at an inaccessible level below the surface of social life, deep within oneself or among societies 'uncontaminated' by modernity." Similarly, as Bendix (1997, 8) argues, "the quest for authenticity is a peculiar longing, at once modern and antimodern. It is oriented toward the recovery of an essence whose loss has been realized only through modernity, and whose recovery is feasible only through methods and sentiments created in modernity." As we will see, claims to authenticity constitute one dimension of the glass workers wider struggle to keep the production of Waterford Crystal in Ireland and to ultimately save their livelihoods.

This notion of authenticity as being both modern and antimodern has correlations with Neil Smith's understanding of the logic of uneven development. According to Neil Smith (2008, 6), "the logic of uneven development derives specifically from the opposed tendencies, inherent in capital, toward the differentiation but simultaneous equalization of the levels and condition of production." As detailed in Chapter One, "capital is continually invested in the built environment to produce surplus value and expand the basis of capital itself. But equally, capital is continually withdrawn from the built environment so that it can move elsewhere and take advantage of higher profit rates" (N. Smith 2008, 6). Claims to authenticity have symbolic value that works to differentiate products and places as capitalist production and social relations become more and more mobile around the world. Products and places that are perceived to be imbued with authenticity can take advantage of higher price points and, ideally, greater profits. A well-known example that has become prominent in popular culture is Champagne wine. Take for example this exchange in the movie *Wayne's World* (Meyers, Turner and Turner 1992):

Cassandra: I don't believe I've ever had French Champagne before...

Benjamin: Oh, actually all Champagne is French, it's named after the region. Otherwise, it's sparkling white wine. Americans, of course, don't recognize the convention

so it becomes that thing of calling all of their sparkling white Champagne, even though by definition they're not.

Champagne became a generic term for all sparkling white wines because the process for making sparkling white wine is popularly understood to have originated in the French region of Champagne. However, through the support of the French government, the Comité Interprofessionnel du vin de Champagne (CIVC), a trade association of independent Champagne producers, the name Champagne was given the strongest legal distinction and protection under European Union laws (CIVC 2015; Monteverde 2012). Champagne was awarded Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) status, which applies to food, wine, and agricultural products where every part of the production process takes place in a specific region (European Commission 2022) (The other distinctions are outlined later in this chapter). This distinction is also recognized under the World Trade Organization's agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights. For this reason, only sparkling white wines from the region of Champagne can legally be called Champagne. As a result, Champagne is perceived to be more authentic and occupies a special place in the sparkling white wine market in terms of reputation and price. By legally protecting the name, Champagne connotes a history and tradition of wine making that differentiate the product for the purposes of profit-making within the capitalist mode of production. Furthermore, underlying the legitimization of what can be called Champagne is the delegitimization of other producers of sparkling white wine who might attempt to imitate or misuse the Champagne label. ¹⁶ This is true for many products in Europe.

¹⁶ It is important to note that the struggle for Champagne's cultural and geographical distinction predates its PDO status. In the late nineteenth century, "representation of the French nation became intertwined in French discourse about the wine industry...[and] struggles to define what was champagne went hand in hand with the process of defining what it meant to be French" (Lehning 2005 paraphrasing Guy 2003). By 1936, Champagne received Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée (AOC) certification by the French government, which indicates that a product "draws its identity and characteristics from its geographical origin" (Comité Champagne 2024).

On that account, notions of authenticity can be perceived as both a "condition of" and "conditioned by" the logic of uneven development. Authenticity is a "condition of" the logic of uneven development because it acts to differentiate something, such as Champagne from other sparkling white wines. It is "conditioned by" the logic of uneven development in the sense that authenticity, as a quality, is sought out by people who have become disillusioned with the equalization of the levels and conditions of production and respond, for example, by purchasing Champagne with its history and traditions in mind instead of other sparkling white wines that seem more generic. Champagne has become an iconic or touchstone instance of place-based authenticity. The former glass workers, often citing the Champagne example, felt a similar distinction should apply to the production of Waterford Crystal. Using Waterford Crystal as an example, this chapter examines the ways in which disputes over what counts as authenticity can be understood as socio-cultural manifestations of the logic of uneven development.

When analyzing authenticity, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (quoted in Bendix 1997, 21 as personal communication, May 29, 1995) suggest the important questions are not so much "what is authenticity?" as 'who needs authenticity and why?' and 'how has authenticity been used?" The ethnographic focus of this chapter is distilled from the former glass workers' experience of working at Waterford Crystal and the ways in which they understand, claim, and use authenticity in the context of Waterford Crystal's history, demise, and reopening under new ownership. To grasp "why" and "how" the workers use authenticity, it is necessary to understand their conception of authenticity, which requires delving into the history of the product, the company, and the workers' experiences with the company as it grew into what many consider to be an iconic Irish brand. Through exploring the workers' conception of authenticity, this chapter suggests that authenticity is not an inherent quality that some things possess, and others do not. It is a relational

and processual concept in the sense that its meaning is derived from the ways in which people perceive their relationships with other people, places, things, and/or ideas. Furthermore, this chapter suggests that the glass workers' invocation of authenticity draws on a particular history and image of Waterford Crystal that was adopted and promoted by the company and the Irish government during the early stages of Waterford Crystal's development. The workers used this notion of authenticity as a political tool to shame the company and the Irish government for the loss of their livelihoods. In doing so, the workers also put forward a more general critique of capital mobility, deindustrialization, the widespread acceptance of transnational or globalized systems of production, and the role of the state under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. In essence, the former glass workers' claims of authenticity were an attempt to fight wider economic and political power through recourse to meaning as derived from place.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section details the workers' experiences with Waterford Crystal's Tourist Trail and Ambassadors programmes to establish the workers' articulation of authentic Waterford Crystal as being founded on an intrinsic relationship between people and place. The second section explores the ways in which the relationship between people and place became critical to Waterford Crystal's image and brand, which led to both the company and product being established as an iconic Irish brand and a semi-official national symbol. The remainder of this chapter focuses on the three incarnations of Waterford Crystal, which, for the sake of clarity, will be referred to as: 1) the Waterford Glassworks (1793 to 1851); 2) Waterford Crystal (1947 to 2009); and, 3) the House of Waterford Crystal (2010 to Present). The third section chronicles the international origins of both the Waterford Glassworks and Waterford Crystal to complicate the assertions of authenticity as something founded on the intrinsic association of people and place. By focusing on the issue of outsourcing at Waterford

Crystal and the House of Waterford Crystal, the next section examines the workers' critiques of globalized systems of production and the role of the state under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. The final section documents Unite's attempt to have the Waterford Community Trademark legally revoked from the House of Waterford Crystal under European Union law and the ways in which notions of authenticity connect to Neil Smith's understanding of the logic of uneven development.

4.2 EXPERIENCING AUTHENTICITY - CONNECTING PEOPLE AND PLACE THROUGH THE TOURIST TRAIL AND AMBASSADORS PROGRAMMES

In what has become part of Waterford Crystal lore, Con (Cornelius) Dooley, Waterford Crystal's head of sales, returned from a trip to the US in 1961 and told Noel Griffin, the company's managing director, that: "It's no longer a selling problem any longer[sic], it's a production problem from now on" (Reddy and Nolan 2006). Over the next two decades, Waterford Crystal would expand its operations to a much larger manufacturing facility at Kilbarry on the outskirts of Waterford and expand production to include plants in Dungarvan and Butlerstown, County Waterford. At its height, Waterford Crystal had 3,430 employees, making it the largest handcrafted crystal manufacturer in the world (Havel 2005, 185; Hunt and Whitty 2010, 228). Most of the employees who were made redundant in 2009, especially the craftworkers responsible for the blowing and the cutting of the glass, were hired during this period of massive expansion.

Underlying the workers' experiences at Waterford Crystal are two interrelated elements that inform their conception of authenticity—people and place. In terms of people, this category includes the workers, especially the craftworkers responsible for producing the glass through

their artisan skills, and the people who buy Waterford Crystal for its craftsmanship and/or Irishness. It is the symbolism surrounding Waterford Crystal craftsmanship and Irishness that informs the workers' notion of the ways in which people and place interrelate. The success of Waterford Crystal is often attributed to the product's popularity with the Irish diaspora, mainly Irish Americans. The company's success with the Irish diaspora turned Waterford Crystal into a semi-official national symbol, which is discussed later in this chapter. According to Coombe (1998, 27), "we need to consider people's active engagement with commodified cultural forms—consumption—as a type of production," especially with respect to identity construction. Of course, in this case, the production of identity hinges on others' productive wage labour. Plus, consumption is used to fulfill a performative function. By purchasing Waterford Crystal, people of Irish descent are acquiring what they perceive as a connection with Ireland. Given the handcrafted nature of the product, this connection is regarded as more profound because there is the impression of a more direct link between people and place. For those with no ancestral link to Ireland, the craftsmanship itself has symbolic value. People often seek out experiences and objects that are considered authentic, which are then perceived as a manifestation, or evidence, of their own character or "taste" (see Bourdieu 1984). In the case of Waterford Crystal, the authentic self is projected through a concern for and the consumption of authenticity. Even though these people may not have the same emotional attachment to Waterford Crystal's Irishness, the workers and their craftsmanship are intricately tied to place through the product's historical association with the town and the nation, which in itself has a certain cachet. For that reason, the relationship between people and place is critical to the craftsmanship of Waterford Crystal and consumers' perceptions of authenticity.

The workers were aware that both the success of the company and the security of their jobs depended largely on international markets, mainly the Irish diaspora. They were also aware that Waterford Crystal's Irishness and craftsmanship were important to the image and success of the brand. While these connections may have seemed abstract, they became more tangible through Waterford Crystal's Tourist Trail and Ambassadors programmes. These two programmes highlight the ways in which the relationship between people and place informs the workers' understanding of authenticity with respect to Waterford Crystal.

4.2.1 The Waterford Crystal Tourist Trail

In the 1950s, Waterford Crystal opened a visitor centre to accommodate the increasing number of people requesting factory tours. Before the company closed in 2009, Waterford Crystal attracted on average about 300,000 tourists a year, making it one of the largest tourism attractions in Ireland (Fáilte Ireland 2006, 5; Sunday Business Post February 8, 2009). Since opening in 2010, the House of Waterford Crystal continues to be a major tourism attraction with approximately 200,000 tourists visiting annually (Fáilte Ireland 2006, 5; Sunday Business Post February 8, 2009). The Tourist Trail played a significant role in the workers' understanding of what their work meant to consumers because it put them in touch with the very people who purchased and valued Waterford Crystal. Moira, a soft-spoken but enthusiastic research participant, remembers the Tourist Trail fondly. John recalls the emotional reaction some tourists would have on the

From March to October, you were really—the seven days you'd be working. You'd be working Saturday morning; you'd be working Sunday morning and finish maybe at two o'clock Sunday and then you were back in again Monday. That was constant for the Tourist Trail because the tourists would just come in there in the thousands, absolutely.

It would just be lovely to see them all coming in from different countries and, you know, different nationalities. They'd stop and talk to you. I loved all that part of it.

- Moira, 50s, General Section, 36 Years of Service

It's [Waterford Crystal] a national treasure. The whole world just loves it. I used to see people walking past me on the Tourist Trail—there'd be tears in their eyes because they had a couple of pieces at home and [now] they'd actually seen it being made.

- John, 50s, Craftworker, 40 Years of Service

Below, Darragh and Adam reflect on the performative aspect of the Tourist Trail. Darragh is very well-respected former glass worker and shop steward. Other workers always spoke of him highly and would often refer me to him if clarification was needed on a particular issue. His openness and keen insight were invaluable to my research. Adam is energetic and light-hearted; I am sure he was a hit on the Tourist Trail.

There was no obstruction to contact [with the tourists], although there were restrictions that were more to do with safety because it was a working factory. In my own experience, I recall that there were certain craftsmen who reveled in the performance to the extent that it was almost theatrical and when they finished their performance by showing the visitors the minor masterpiece, they had the ability to draw an appreciative round of applause from the tour. There was also a continuous conversation between the tourists and the workers. This, of course, validated the tourists' decision to visit the city. Workers from time to time would allow a tourist to blow a piece which they invariably messed up, much to everyone's enjoyment. The workforce took a dim view of anyone or anything that might infringe or damage that relationship, even to the point of occasionally mentioning at union meetings the importance of tourists to the industry.

- Darragh, 50s, Craftworker, 38 Years of Service

The blowers, in the shop, they'd have a big tank of water in front of them. And, in the summer, we could time the tours coming in—half-nine, half-ten, quarter-to-eleven, something like this. Just to see the tourists, especially the Americans, we all use to go over to the tank and do that [acts out splashing water all over his face] with all the water—the water running down your face. All the Americans would be coming up with their flashes and we'd look like [acts out an exhausted face] and the blower would be looking at them—click, click, click, taking their snaps, you know. We used to do this with everyone, it was brilliant.

- Adam, 40s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

The Tourist Trail was a significant part of working at Waterford Crystal, especially during the high tourism season. The workers were able to interact with the tourists and get a sense of why

people purchased Waterford Crystal and what it meant to them. As the one worker suggests, the Tourist Trail validated the tourist's decision to visit Waterford. This is true in the sense that there was "continuous conversation between the tourists and the workers" and that these interactions connected the consumers with the workers as people with respect to the production of Waterford Crystal.

At the same time, the presence of the tourists also validated the workers' experiences. The very presence of the tourists gave meaning to the workers' efforts. While the theatrical aspects of the tour may have been at the expense of the tourists in some instances, this does not make them disingenuous, an assessment that would require the tourists be unaware of the performance itself. It could also be the case that performing productivity is part of the Waterford Crystal brand. Either way, Waterford Crystal was an industrial workplace, which for many of the workers was a grueling experience day in and day out. During interviews, many of the workers reminisced about the pranks, blackguarding, banter, and craic at work and how it helped them get through the day. ¹⁷ This characterization resonates with Willis' (1977) comments in *Learning* to Labour about how having a laugh was compensation for the tedium of school and factory work as well as part of a class culture. It is worth noting that these compensations, including ideas about masculinity (Willis 1977), contribute to securing workers' positions in a class hierarchy. In saying that, the performance is beneficial for both the tourists and the workers. For the tourists, the performance imbues the crystal with authenticity in the sense that the consumer witnessed the handcrafted production of Waterford Crystal. For the workers, an enjoyable tour means that people will continue to come back or encourage other people to take the tour.

¹⁷ In this context, blackguarding refers to people behaving in mischievous ways for the sake of humour. Someone who is referred to as a blackguard is a bit of rascal, a lovable rogue. *Craic*, as noted in Chapter Two, is the Irish word for fun.

Furthermore, the tour experience and the promotion of that experience propagates the notion of authentic Waterford Crystal being handcrafted in Waterford, Ireland. This was beneficial in terms of the success of the company and the security of the workers' jobs, but also personally satisfying because it reified the meaning of their own work. As the one worker noted, the relationship between the workers and the tourists was very important, even to the point that it was a topic of discussion at trade union meetings. The tourists had both strategic and emotional significance. The Ambassador programme served a similar function.

4.2.2 The Waterford Crystal Ambassadors

The Ambassadors programme also connected the workers with consumers of Waterford Crystal. Here is a description of the Ambassadors programme from the company magazine, *Crystal Clear* (Waterford Crystal 1991, 4):

Each year for the past number of years our craftsmen have travelled to our international markets to assist the local sales and marketing teams in raising the profile of Waterford in retail stores. They have travelled to the US, the Far East, and the UK and worked in major retail stores on what we term "Craftsmen Events." The craftsmen sign individual pieces of crystal in the stores and sell these pieces to consumers.

Over the years our Craftsmen have built up excellent reputations throughout the world and act as ambassadors with the management of our companies in these markets, with the staff on the retail stores and with the consumer. They serve not only to optimize sales of Waterford Crystal during the time that they are there but also ensure, through their work with the trade and consumer, that the craft of Waterford Crystal is recognized and respected, thus ensuring the long-term future of the brand in the marketplace.

Similar to the factory tours, the Ambassadors programme served to create experiences that would make the consumers' connection with the product and the company more personal. The craftworkers would be available to interact with the consumers and sign a piece of crystal with a portable cutting machine. This personalized the crystal, which also acted to authenticate the piece for the consumer. These trips had an equally important effect on the workers in terms of

understanding the significance of their craft and its connection with Waterford, Ireland. John and

Ronan look back on their experiences below:

I was sent as one of those ambassadors one of those times. I got one of the very good trips, I actually wasn't sent to America or Canada, I was sent to the US Virgin Islands, St. Thomas, and I was in a store called Switzerland. I could not believe—I thought it was hysterical over here, but when I was in this shop—I was there and I had a mobile cutting machine and needless to say was to sign the crystal, if they bought some—personalize it. So, this island of St. Thomas lives on cruise ships coming in and I was there at about half-nine one morning and the cruise ships arrive around eight o'clock and disembark. It's about half-nine by the time they get to the shops and I didn't know it, but my photograph and a description of me is all over the boards on the ships. I was a tourist attraction on the island.

This shop was narrow, but about five hundred meters long from the front. And, from about forty yards I can hear this woman and she is screaming, "Mr. Waterford! Mr. Waterford! Are you here? Are you here?"

I said, "Jesus Christ! What is going on?" Then I said, "Jesus, this is a tourist coming in." I got great *craic* out of this. I just jumped up and said, "Yes! I'm here. I'm here," with my arms out. And she ran up and threw her arms around me.

"I thought I'd never meet you," is what she said.

I thought, Jesus, this is fantastic.

She bought about five thousand dollars worth of crystal and she asked me to walk around the display because there was German crystal there and other crystal there and I said to her, and I made no bones about it, I said, "Now, there is crystal here that has Waterford on it, but it is made in Germany."

"You come with me," she said. And she made me pick the stuff that was actually made in Waterford and I just got her all the nice pieces.

- John, 50s, Craftworker, 40 Years of Service

I went originally to the States signing in the stores. I did it for nearly seven years. Some years I went twice. I'd go over for three weeks every time. The same question was always asked, and I was in practically every state in America. And they'd always ask, "Is this made in Waterford? Because if it's not then I don't want it."

They are picking up a piece with a made in Germany on it and you had to try an explain why that stamp says Germany or Czechoslovakia or Slovenia or wherever. The spin at the time was that we have our people out there overseeing it and it's being made exactly the same as it is in Waterford. Most of them would say, "Well, I don't care. I just want it made in Waterford. Otherwise, I'm not interested."

We came back time, after time, after time, after time and we'd have meetings with—maybe there could be six, eight, nine of us away at the same time all in different parts of the States and we'd meet up in New Jersey where our headquarters were, and we'd meet up there for the last weekend—we'd have a weekend off. And, we'd have meetings with the senior people in New Jersey and they'd ask the questions and every single one of us, we wouldn't even have to talk to each other, we'd all just give our

impression of what was asked, and we'd all say that everybody is saying, "If it's not made in Waterford than we don't want it."

They just dismissed it. They never took it on board. They never really worried about it. Even though they were being told the same thing year in, year out.

- Ronan, 50s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

The workers' experiences on the Ambassador trips always seemed to confirm the notion that consumers of Waterford Crystal wanted their crystal produced in Waterford, Ireland and that the company's association with the region and its people is important to the image of the brand. While meeting the craftworker and getting them to sign a piece of crystal was intended to give the consumer a more personal connection to the product and the company, there was no guarantee that the craftworker happened to work on the piece of crystal they signed for the customer. However, the relationship formed between the consumer and the craftworker from this meeting, where the consumer gets to witness an aspect of the craft, is important with respect to the perception of the product's authenticity. It attaches the crystal to a person who is from Waterford. The consumer not only has the crystal, but a story to go along with that piece of crystal. As a result, the notion that authentic Waterford Crystal is handcrafted in Waterford, Ireland becomes something more tangible for the consumer.

These excerpts also touch on the issue of outsourcing, which began in the 1990s. This is a contentious issue for several reasons and will be addressed more thoroughly later in the chapter. For now, it is important to focus on the workers' interactions with consumers and that according to the workers, consumers wanted Waterford Crystal that was made in Waterford, Ireland. This sentiment was expressed by many of the workers because of their experiences on the Tourist Trail and Ambassador programmes. More importantly, as a result of these programmes, this is a sentiment that permeated throughout the workforce with workers who might not have worked on the Tourist Trail or been Waterford Crystal Ambassadors. For the glass workers, their

experiences on the Tourist Trail or Ambassador trips reinforced the importance of place in the production of Waterford Crystal and, subsequently, their position as the craftworkers producing the high quality, cut crystal desired by consumers.

Through both the Tourist Trail and Ambassador programmes the glass workers came to understand the importance of their role in the production of Waterford Crystal, not just on a material level but on a symbolic and emotional level as well. Moreover, the Tourist Trail and the Ambassador programmes demonstrate the ways in which authenticity was secured through establishing relationships between people and place, whether it be going to Waterford to witness the handcraft production of Waterford Crystal or meeting a craftworker when purchasing crystal at a "Craftsmen Event." For the consumer, Waterford Crystal's authenticity is derived from establishing more intimate relationships that connect the product with the people who make it and the place in which it is made. For the workers, these experiences became the basis for their understanding of authenticity and its importance to the consumer, the product, and the company.

The role of tourism in establishing these connections is important because tourism is "an important way of reproducing 'place'...it leads to a change in the meaning and experience of place for those people who are local and those who visit" (paraphrasing Quinn in Cronin and O'Connor 2003, 5). Furthermore, tourism affirms the value of place through the "creation of local awareness of their difference" (Cronin and O'Connor 2003, 6). The popularity of Waterford Crystal as a tourism attraction confirmed the importance of the glass industry to Waterford. As a result, Waterford embraced the identity established by the company and the product. The Ambassadors programme served a similar function in that it emphasized the importance of people and place in the production of Waterford Crystal. Moreover, it is an example of the ways in

which "the site of tourism consumption may not always coincide with the site of tourism production" (Cronin and O'Connor 2003, 10). Similar examples are the Riverdance and prefabricated Irish pub phenomenon, which have propagated a particular version of Irish culture around the world (Cronin and O'Connor 2003, 10). Tourism played an important role in the development of Waterford Crystal and the idea of it, as addressed in the next section. For now, the importance of attracting tourists to Waterford Crystal and/or to seek out Waterford Crystal Ambassadors is that it both established and reinforced the workers' perception that authentic Waterford Crystal is mouth-blown and hand-cut in Waterford, Ireland. The following section explores the development of the relationship between people and place with respect to Waterford Crystal's image as an authentic and iconic Irish brand.

4.3 DEVELOPING AUTHENTICITY - IMAGINING PEOPLE AND PLACE

There are two essential features to Waterford Crystal's image as a brand, namely its association with Ireland and its craftsmanship. The early success of Waterford Crystal as a high quality, cut crystal manufacturer was largely based on the company's ability to access the American market, which is often attributed to the exploits of Con Dooley in the 1950s and 1960s. As head of sales, he was the first representative of Waterford Crystal to go to the US to secure sales contracts with big American retail stores, such as Marshall Fields in Chicago and B. Altman in New York City (Havel 2005, 184). However, maybe more importantly, Dooley was responsible for branding the various Waterford Crystal design patterns or suites. It was Dooley's idea for the suites to evoke a sense of nostalgia for Ireland. For example, here is the original copy for the Lismore and Colleen (which is the anglicized version of *Cailin* or girl) suites:

Lismore, with its ancient turreted Castle, seat of the Dukes of Devonshire, crowning the wooden slopes of the great river Blackwater, is a pretty little village famous since the eighth century for its illustrious school of learning, which produced the book of Lismore. Illustrious, too, is the Waterford Glass Lismore suite with its restrained and elegant pattern—a border of diamonds finished with vertical incisions. The Lead Crystal content gives unequalled lustre and sparkle. The glasses have delicately tapered, faceted stems and sun-burst bases (Havel 2005, 189).

Colleen...Who has not heard of the beauty of the Irish colleen? Here is a Waterford Crystal suite that holds a charm as bewitching and as magical as a fair girl's loveliness—intricate diamond cutting offset by gracefully fluted ovals, with a close diamond pattern on the knobbed stem (Havel 2005, 191).

By steeping Waterford Crystal in Irish history and culture, Dooley intended for Waterford Crystal to resonate with the increasingly wealthy Irish diaspora in the United States and elsewhere (Havel 2005, 185). Waterford Crystal had to focus on international markets because there was no sustainable domestic market for high quality, cut crystal. Ireland was a relatively poor and underdeveloped country, as discussed in Chapter Three.

While the Irish diaspora may have been hugely important to the initial growth of Waterford Crystal, the company's sustained success cannot be attributed entirely to the Irish diaspora. Redmond O'Donoghue, who served as the director of sales and marketing and as the managing director during his time at Waterford Crystal, explained the company's success as follows:

- 1. The product is of extremely high quality.
- 2. Every piece of Waterford Crystal is mouth-blown and hand-cut.
- 3. Waterford Crystal was given a premium position in that it was always highly priced. If a product is going to be a miniature work of art then it has to be expensive.
- 4. Tightly controlled distribution, e.g., Waterford is retailed through such renowned American stores as Bloomingdales, Saks Fifth Avenue, Marshall Fields of Chicago, Neiman Marcus, Robinsons, Lord & Taylor.
- 5. Waterford should always be sold at full prices and should never appear in sales. (Hunt and Whitty 2010, 227)

While still trading on this legacy, the company would begin to compromise on all of these principles beginning in the 1990s. This will be addressed more thoroughly later in the chapter. For our purposes here, it is important to focus on the craftsmanship of Waterford Crystal, both in terms of the quality and the image of the product.

The craftsmanship is central to Waterford Crystal's success with those consumers who were less concerned with its "Irishness." For example, I found an old advertisement for Waterford Crystal in Unite's Waterford Crystal Archives. It was a photocopy of the original advertisement and did not give any indication of the magazine in which it appeared. So, for copyright reasons, I cannot reproduce the image here. It is a simple one-page advertisement that fades from black at the top to white at the bottom. The quality of the photocopy is not great. But there appears to be faint white lines in the darkest part of the fade that run from the centre to the edges of the page, much like a sparkle of light. These lines appear to produce a similar effect to the ways light is refracted from cut glass. While the importance of the image may be lost because of the poor quality of the photocopy, there is certainly significance to the message conveyed in the advertisement's text. In large, bold print, the advertisement begins with the headline, "A machine can make it for half the price." Underneath the headline in two columns, there is text describing the uniqueness of Waterford Crystal. Some of the key passages are listed below:

- They even have computers nowadays that can cut glass so it looks hand-cut. At first glance, that is.
- We make our crystal entirely by hand (and mouth). Our craftsmen take twenty years or more to master their skills.
- And in subtle ways each man leaves something of himself in his work. No two pieces of Waterford Crystal are exactly the same.
- Though there are many qualities they share, of course.
- The purity of the shapes, for instance, many of which are over two hundred years old.
- We invite you to see our craftsmen at work when you're next in Ireland. But if you can't make the trip this year, make it next year or in ten years time. Very little will have changed. (Unite Waterford Crystal Archives 2011)

Underneath this text, there is the Waterford Crystal name and logo. At the very bottom of the advertisement, in fine print, is information on how to order the Waterford Crystal catalogue. The company information in the fine print lists Waterford Wedgwood, which would suggest this advertisement appeared after Waterford Crystal's purchase of Wedgwood China in 1986 (see Chapter Two). This is significant because it was after 1986 that Waterford Crystal began introducing new glassmaking technology (i.e., diamond cutting wheels and a tank furnace at the Dungarvan plant) to their production processes. This advertisement could also coincide with the 1990 Strike and its aftermath, which led to the outsourcing and machine production of some Waterford Crystal products (see Chapter Two). This is plausible because the advertisements juxtaposition between handcrafted and machine produced glass is probably why I was able to find a photocopy of this advertisement in Unite's Waterford Crystal Archives.

Returning to the idea of craftsmanship and authenticity, Waterford Crystal, both the company and the product, is steeped in tradition and history. This is similar to Dooley's original copy. Furthermore, Waterford Crystal is imbued with a kind of timelessness in the sense that "very little will have changed" in the way it was made in the past compared to the way it will be made in the future. The craft and the product appear as timeless. In this sense, there is something about Waterford Crystal that is "uncontaminated' by modernity" thus making it seem more authentic because of the craft's history and tradition (Theodossopoulos 2013, 338). Furthermore, the idea that "each man leaves something of himself in his work" and that "no two pieces...are exactly the same" even though the "purity of the shapes...are over two hundred years old" conveys a sense of uniqueness within Waterford Crystal's history and tradition of glassmaking.

While the craft and the product have deep historical roots, there is still an element of individuality with respect to the skill of the craftsman. The notion that there are slight differences in every

piece of crystal makes each piece unique, which enhances the crystal's authenticity with respect to it being, albeit mass produced, a handcrafted product.

Promoting Waterford Crystal's Irishness and craftsmanship was facilitated by another marketing strategy employed by the company, which entailed creating specialty pieces, either by donation or commission, for high-profile, special events, such as sports tournaments and political functions. The presentation of shamrocks in a crystal bowl to the President of the United States on St. Patrick's Day was particularly significant to Waterford Crystal's profile in the United States. As Cormac recalls:

If you went back to the [50s and] 60s, when Con Dooley was the salesman for Waterford Crystal—he used to go off regularly to the States trying to push this stuff and what have you. And it was through one of the Goldbergs, who was the Lord Mayor of Cork, and who was in America. They were presenting the shamrock to—who was the president before Kennedy—Eisenhower! They were making a presentation to him, and Dooley got them to do it in a glass bowl, you know. Everybody in America wanted a glass bowl of shamrock, particularly the Irish people.

- Cormac, 60s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

The Shamrock Ceremony, which is what the presentation of shamrocks is now called, began in 1952, when the Irish Ambassador to the United States, John J. Hearne, brought a small box of shamrocks to the White House in honour of St. Patrick's Day. However, President Truman was away on holidays and unable to accept the gift (United States Embassy Dublin 2013). On Truman's return, he sent a letter to Hearne encouraging positive diplomatic relations between the United States and Ireland, which opened a line of communication between the White House and the Irish Embassy (United States Embassy Dublin 2013). During the Eisenhower years, the presentation of shamrocks continued but remained a relatively low-key event until 1959 when Seán T. O'Ceallaigh became the first Irish president to visit the United States and presented a Waterford Crystal trophy to President Eisenhower (Hearne 2019, 141). Given Ireland's position of neutrality with respect to WWII and the Cold War, this moment represented an opportunity

for Irish leaders to express their pro-Western stance through a more direct relationship with the United States without compromising the country's policy of neutrality (Wunner 2010). However, it was the election of John F. Kennedy in 1961 that cemented the Shamrock Ceremony as both a politically and symbolically significant event. The reason this presentation of shamrocks was so important is because of what Kennedy represented to Irish Americans and Irish-Catholics in particular. Kennedy epitomized the success of those people who left Ireland. Furthermore, he was held in equally high esteem in Ireland and became an important symbol of the connection between Ireland and its diaspora. At the ceremony, Waterford Crystal was front and centre in the form of a large specially-designed crystal bowl holding the shamrocks. After receiving the bowl of shamrocks, Kennedy was presented with a scroll documenting his family tree, thus reinforcing the connection between Kennedy and his Irish ancestors (United States Embassy Dublin 2013).

When Kennedy visited Ireland in 1963, he was presented with several specially-designed pieces of Waterford Crystal, most notably "an eighteen-inch high footed centre-bowl containing four panels...one depicted the old Kennedy homestead at Dunganstown, the second a sailing ship of the type his great grandfather had sailed in to the United States, the third the White House, the forth the New Ross Coat of Arms [the port from where his great grandfather left Ireland]" (Waterford Crystal 1968). The symbolism of the engravings in this piece is representative of Kennedy's place, or his family's story, in the larger history of emigration that connects Ireland with its diaspora. Following Kennedy's assassination, the Irish state commissioned and presented a magnificent chandelier from the Irish people to the US for the Kennedy Centre in Washington,

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¹⁸ Waterford Crystal has been used consistently since President John F. Kennedy, except for a Kilkenny marble bowl that was gifted, along with a book on Irish Gardens by Edward Hyams, in 1968 for President Lyndon B. Johnson (personal communication with museum specialist at the Lyndon B. Johnson Presidential Library, September 29, 2023).

D.C. (Hearne 2019, 167). Similar to the Shamrock Ceremony, the installation of the Waterford Crystal chandelier at the Kennedy Centre was hugely important to opening up a market for household chandeliers in the United States (Havel 2005, 198). Up until this point, Noel Griffin was reluctant to supply chandeliers to the US because he considered it too costly (Havel 2005, 198).

The Shamrock Ceremony, Kennedy's visit to Ireland, the installation of the chandelier at the Kennedy Centre were all key moments in raising the profile of Waterford Crystal and the connection of the product with Ireland. For the Irish state, the Shamrock Ceremony has promoted closer political and economic ties with the United States, which initially focused largely on Ireland's growing tourism industry. It was unusual for a country as small and, at the time, as economically insignificant to have that kind of access to the leader of the United States. Even now, it is an unusual relationship. However, this relationship developed at a time when St. Patrick's Day celebrations were becoming bigger, more prevalent, and more commercialized events across the United States (Cronin and Adair 2002). Moreover, St. Patrick's Day celebrations were being observed by more and more people with no ancestral connection to Ireland (Cronin and Adair 2002). Given the sheer size and significance of the Irish diaspora in the United States, it was a politically astute move by both Irish and American politicians to take advantage of this particular moment.¹⁹ While different American presidents have embraced the Shamrock Ceremony with various levels of enthusiasm, the presentation of the shamrocks has remained continuous and Waterford Crystal has been an integral part of that tradition (United States Embassy Dublin

¹⁹ In the 1980 US Census, the first US Census to contain a subjective question on ethnic identity, over 40 million Americans identified as Irish (Hout and Goldstein 1994). Based on immigration data, Hout and Goldstein (1994, 65), estimated the Irish immigrant base population to be approximately 4.8 million, which means the 40 million Americans that identified as Irish exceeded the natural increase by nine times. Hout and Goldstein (1994, 79) attributed this disparity to several quantifiable statistical factors (e.g., length of time in the US, religious diversity, education, and dispersal throughout the country) and: "an unexplained subjective 'closeness' to Ireland."

2013). Over the years, Waterford Crystal has been the go-to gift item for important foreign dignitaries. For example, between 2003 and 2013, Waterford Crystal topped the Irish state's gift list with fifty-two pieces of crystal (O'Kane 2013). It is within this context that Waterford Crystal is perceived as a semi-official national symbol. This status had a huge influence on the role tourism played in the development of the company.

Waterford Crystal developed alongside and became an important part of Ireland's burgeoning tourism industry in the post-WWII period. In 1953, Waterford Crystal began advertising in the "internationally distributed tourist[sic] magazine, *Ireland of the Welcomes*" (Hunt and Whitty 2010, 226). As the official publication of the Irish Tourist Board, *Ireland of the Welcomes* (first published in 1952) was intended to be a "regular bi-monthly publication which would showcase Ireland's attractions as a place to visit" (Cronin 2003, 179-80). Through the tourism industry, the company was able to engage with international markets and subsequently become a major tourism attraction in Ireland. According to Hunt and Whitty (2010, 226), "so bound to the image of Ireland did Waterford Glass become that two lengthy articles on the factory and its history appeared in the *Ireland of the Welcomes* issues of January/February 1955 by Dr. George A. Little and January/February 1961 by Margaret Holland."

According to Cronin (2003, 179), "writing has shadowed the emergence of Ireland as a significant tourist[sic] destination" and, while often overlooked, tourism magazines and journals are no less worthy of attention than other forms of travel writing when it comes to shaping the relationship between people and place. In the case of *Ireland of the Welcomes*, Cronin argues that the magazine has served a "dual function" over the years (Cronin 2003, 181). Firstly, "it has a representative function in that it represents Ireland to those who cannot be there." In this sense, "reading the magazine itself becomes a form of tourism" (Cronin 2003, 181). The purchase of

Waterford Crystal can be seen as a form of souvenir shopping from a distance. Someone who is unable to visit Ireland can still own something that is uniquely connected with Ireland. The Ambassador programme functioned in a similar way. Secondly, the publication has a rhetorical function. The purpose of the magazine is to persuade people to visit Ireland, so the "choice of articles, contributors, illustrations is dictated by an imaginary dimension to tourism discourse, by the way in which the potential Irish tourist is envisaged and what is seen to excite his or her interests" (Cronin 2003, 181). Given Waterford Crystal's profile in the United States and its status as a handcrafted, indigenous industry, the company was a fitting attraction in terms of enticing the "imagined" Irish tourist. Thus, Waterford Crystal featured prominently as a major tourism attraction through articles and advertising and became an important place and/or activity for tourists to experience when visiting Ireland. Moreover, Waterford Crystal began to be identified with Ireland as a nation.

Since the inception of *Ireland of the Welcomes*, Ireland has undergone significant social, political, and economic changes. Yet, throughout these changes the Irish tourism industry has trafficked in an image of Ireland as timeless and relatively unchanging. Cronin (2003, 191) argues that *Ireland of the Welcomes* addressed these changes in two ways. On the one hand, these changes are depicted as instrumental in the sense that modernizing trends have led to better services in transportation, accommodations, and tourism activities. They are presented in isolation from what has supposedly remained constant within Ireland itself (Cronin 2003, 191). On the other hand, the image of a timeless Ireland is reified by creating "a history outside of history" (Cronin 2003, 191). In other words, "large-scale historical narratives are shunned in favour of a fetishization of place and the local" (Cronin 2003, 191). This is what Cronin describes as a "spatialization of history [which] leads to the relentless de-historicization of the here and now,

thereby sustaining an illusion of an Ireland which, 'has, in essence, remained the same'" (Cronin 2003, 192). Waterford Crystal has employed similar approaches in constructing its own image. For example, in the March/April 1953 issue, a Waterford Crystal advertisement reads as follows:

An ancient glory lives again — Once more the clear translucent beauty of Waterford Cut Crystal Glass is on show throughout the world, once more the skill that made antique Waterford Glass so justly famous is being devoted to the production of fine lead crystal glassware based on traditional designs and adapted to the tastes of the modern age... (Hunt and Whitty 2010, 226)

This advertisement is similar in theme to the advertisement discussed earlier in the chapter on two accounts. Firstly, while Waterford Crystal may be handcrafted, it is ultimately a modern manufacturing company in the sense that its focus is on the mass production of high-quality crystal. It is not a cottage industry. However, the industrial designs, techniques, and discipline that allow for the mass production of handcrafted crystal is presented as only secondary or "instrumental" to the essential skill of the craftsman that produces the crystal. This is evident in the way Waterford Crystal is shrouded in history and tradition, which is integral to the image of the product and the company, even if it is conceived for the so-called "modern age." Secondly, there is that same sense of timelessness with respect to the product and the craftsmanship, for example: "once more the skill that made antique Waterford Glass so justly famous is being devoted to the production of fine lead crystal glassware." By connecting Waterford Crystal with the original Waterford Glassworks (e.g., "ancient glory lives again" or from the earlier advertisement: "purity of the shapes...are over two hundred years old") historical detail is swept aside and the focus is solely on the workers, their craft, and the product as it has been produced and continues to be produced by the craftworkers in Waterford, Ireland.

Emphasizing the product's Irishness and craftsmanship presents authentic Waterford

Crystal as rooted in people and place. On the one hand, Waterford Crystal is something tangible

that can connect people through a shared imagining of Ireland. On the other hand, the timelessness of the craftsmanship connects people with something that extends beyond the present moment, both into the past and into the future. Each process reinforces the significance of the other. The craftsmanship of Waterford Crystal makes its connection to Ireland more intimate. Likewise, Waterford Crystal's history in Waterford gives further credence to the timelessness of the craftsmanship. It was against this backdrop that the workers understood their own work and what it meant to the people who purchased Waterford Crystal. Moreover, as a form of political memory, the workers carried with them the knowledge of all those moments that made Waterford Crystal an iconic Irish brand and a semi-official national symbol, which further contributed to their understanding of authenticity and the ways in which it relates to the product and the company. The next section examines the beginnings of the Waterford Glassworks and Waterford Crystal in order to complicate the notion of the company and product being intrinsically Irish.

4.4 International Origins: The Waterford Glassworks and Waterford Crystal

The Waterford Glassworks was established in 1783 by George and William Penrose, a wealthy merchant family who were heavily involved in the transatlantic and cross-channel provisions trade (Hearne 2010, 2019). The Penroses had no experience with glass manufacturing prior to opening the glassworks. However, they had several things working in their favour for the new venture. Firstly, Waterford was a significant port city in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, mainly for the transatlantic fishing industry that connected the West Country ports of England with Newfoundland, but Waterford was also a port of call for ships operating on trade routes in the Baltic Sea, the South Atlantic, Asia Minor, and elsewhere in North America

(Hearne 2010, 2019). Secondly, the changing political and economic context brought about by the American War of Independence made glass manufacturing in Ireland both possible and profitable. Prior to the American War of Independence, glass manufacturing in Ireland was subjected to the following law enacted by British Parliament:

Whereas the importation of glass into Ireland from foreign parts, and the exportation of glass from Ireland, may be of great prejudice to the manufacture of glass in Great Britain, it is enacted that from May 1st, 1746, no glass of any kind, except glass of Great Britain, be imported into Ireland...No glass of any kind is to be exported from Ireland under penalty of ten shillings for every pound so exported (Waterford Crystal 1968).

This law made glass manufacturing in Ireland a very expensive proposition. However, this would begin to change after 1770 when the British government imposed trade embargoes on France and thirteen of the "recalcitrant American colonies" (Hearne 2010, 146). In 1775, the American Continental Congress responded with a non-importation embargo on goods, wears, and merchandise from Great Britain and Ireland into British America (Hearne 2010, 146). These embargoes had a significant effect on the British and Irish economies. Furthermore, the rhetoric surrounding American independence was beginning to resonate with the Irish public. Consequently, a "vociferous criticism from Irish merchants ensued and...a bill proposing free trade in provisions was read in [Irish] parliament in 1778" (Hearne 2010, 146). At the same time, the political and economic crisis in the British empire was being exploited by British politicians opposed to both the war and the current leadership of the governing Whig Party (R. Foster 2001). This led to a period of political opening in Ireland beginning with the Free Trade Act of 1780, which included a proposal to rescind the 1746 law on glass manufacturing (R. Foster 2001; Hearne 2010). In 1781, Ireland also became exempt from paying duties on coal imported for glass manufacturing (Hearne 2010). This put Ireland in a very favourable position for glass manufacturing, especially since in 1777 "Britain doubled the excise duty on her[sic] own domestic glass production" in

order to help fund British "involvement in the American War of Independence" (Hearne 2010, 147). Ireland was now in a position of competitive advantage for glass manufacturing and as a result several "glasshouses were established in Ireland during this time" (Hearne 2010, 147). Moreover, many British glass manufacturers were forced to close their factories because of the heavy taxation of the industry (Hearne 2010, 147). This resulted in many glassmakers leaving Britain to practice their craft elsewhere (Hearne 2010, 147).

Given the Penroses' lack of experience in glass manufacturing, they recruited John Hill, a prominent English glassmaker to head up their new business venture. Hill was responsible "for the technical organization of the factory, such as identifying the most suitable furnace, the best-quality raw materials, in particular the clay for the pots, but more importantly for procuring the necessary skilled craftsmen to ensure the factory's success" (Hearne 2010, 149). Many of the craftsmen were recruited from Britain and employed on both short-term and permanent contracts (Hearne 2010, 149). In 1786, Hill left the Waterford Glassworks for reasons that are unclear other than he had a falling out with the Penroses, but he left the recipes for the various glasses being made at the factory with Jonathan Gatchell, a clerk at the glassworks and a friend who was sympathetic to his situation at the factory (Hearne 2010, 2019). This elevated Gatchell's position at the factory to batch compounder (Hearne 2010, 2019). The Waterford Glassworks became a successful enterprise very quickly because the quality of the glass was very high and the Penroses were able to use their trade networks and foreign contacts to access markets abroad (Hearne 2010, 2019).

Following the deaths of George (1796) and William (1799) Penrose, the ownership of the Waterford Glassworks was assumed by a partnership of Jonathan Gatchell, James Ramsey, and

Ambrose Barcroft (Hearne 2010, 2019). Gatchell would become the sole owner in 1811 and pass the enterprise on to his children after his death in 1823 (Hearne 2010, 2019).

The turn of the nineteenth century marked the beginning of a change in fortunes for the Waterford Glassworks and the manufacturing of glass in Ireland in general (Hearne 2010, 2019). In 1801, the British Parliament passed the Act of Union, which abolished the Irish colonial parliament and subsumed Irish political representation into the British Parliament (R. Foster 1988). The Act of Union contained an *ad valorem* tax on goods being imported into Britain, which was applicable to glass exported from Ireland (Hearne 2010). Glass exported from Ireland "was subjected to a countervailing duty" that was not imposed on British glass producers exporting to Ireland (Hearne 2010, 158). Despite this new tax regime, the Waterford Glassworks continued to be a profitable enterprise (Hearne 2010). However, the cost of the Napoleonic Wars and subsequent economic recession exacerbated matters. The British government needed money, so it increased excise duties (Hearne 2010). This further taxation made it very difficult for Irish glass producers to export to Britain because of the countervailing duties (Hearne 2010). Even then, the Waterford Glassworks was still turning a small profit (Hearne 2010). It was the British Parliament's decision to extend these excise duties to Ireland in 1825 that marked the beginning of the end for the Waterford Glassworks (Hearne 2010). Despite the ever-increasing taxation of glass manufacturing in Ireland by British Parliament, the Waterford Glassworks managed to survive until 1851. Before the company's closure, it displayed its glassware at the Great Exhibition in London's Crystal Palace, the first international exhibition of manufactured products. This "proved to be a significant event as it provided Waterford glass with an international audience, thereby establishing a recognizable brand that would be instrumental in resurrecting the Irish glass industry one hundred years later" (Hearne 2010, 163).

Waterford Crystal was formed by Bernard Fitzpatrick, a Dublin jeweler, and Karel (Charles) Bačik, a Czech glass manufacturer. Fitzpatrick, a staunch nationalist and supporter of *Fianna Fáil*, saw the "revival of glassmaking in Waterford as a vital cog in the wheel of *Fianna Fáil's* industrialization programme" as early as 1935 (Hearne 2019, 93). However, his vision was interrupted by the outbreak of WWII. According to Fitzpatrick's son, his father's idea was reinforced in the early 1940s, when his father saw a Waterford Crystal display in a jewelry store in Winnipeg, Canada (Reddy and Nolan 2006). When Fitzpatrick inquired about the pieces, he was told that they were not actually Waterford Crystal, but representative of the old Waterford Crystal (Reddy and Nolan 2006). He then asked the buyer at the store, "If you were able to get the real thing, would you buy it?" (Reddy and Nolan 2006). The buyer replied, "We'd give anything, but it has not been manufactured since the last century" (Reddy and Nolan 2006).

While this chance encounter might have renewed Fitzpatrick's interest in re-establishing a glasswork in Waterford, it was not to be realized until Charles Bačik decided to leave Czechoslovakia for Ireland. Following the Second World War, Czechoslovakia underwent major upheaval as it came under the political and economic influence of Stalin's Soviet Russia. During this period, Bačik's glass factory was nationalized, but he was retained as a manager (Hunt and Whitty 2010). At this stage, Bačik already had a strong business relationship with Fitzpatrick because prior to the war, Fitzpatrick imported and distributed crystal from Bačik's factory (Hunt and Whitty 2010; Reddy and Nolan 2006). Given the political situation in Czechoslovakia, Bačik was looking for an opportunity to leave the country and, based on previous conversations with Fitzpatrick about re-establishing a glass manufacturing facility in Waterford, relocating to Ireland seemed like a viable course of action (Hunt and Whitty 2010; Reddy and Nolan 2006). So, Fitzpatrick secured visas for Bačik and his family to come to Ireland in 1946 (Hunt and Whitty

2010; Reddy and Nolan 2006). In the Spring of the following year, they secured a site and a lease from the Waterford Corporation and began construction on a new glasswork at Ballytruckle, which was then on the outskirts of Waterford. Bačik then recruited Miroslav Havel, a promising young glassmaker from Czechoslovakia. Havel was a student at the Academy of Art and Industrial Design at the Charles University of Prague (Havel 2005). He knew Bačik through an internship he had completed at Bačik's Karlov glass factory (Havel 2005). Havel was integral to the re-establishment of a glassmaking industry in Waterford. In 1948, using Fitzpatrick's connections, Havel spent a considerable amount of time at the National Museum of Ireland studying and drawing examples of the old Waterford Crystal (Havel 2005; Hunt and Whitty 2010; Reddy and Nolan 2006). The glass patterns that he replicated on paper would provide the inspiration for the new Waterford Crystal suites (Havel 2005; Hunt and Whitty 2010; Reddy and Nolan 2006). However, it would be some time before Havel's research at the National Museum of Ireland would be needed.

While Bačik's ambition was always to produce high-quality crystal in the manner of the Waterford Glassworks, he did not have the capital nor the workers with the necessary skills to embark on such an enterprise (Reddy and Nolan 2006). So, he began expanding his business by importing soda glass from Belgium, adding some simple cuts to the glass, and then selling that glass to the domestic bar and hotel trade (Reddy and Nolan 2006). To cut the glass, Bačik recruited a handful of young men (sixteen years old or more) from the area to apprentice under Havel (Havel 2005). To build a local workforce, Havel also began teaching glassmaking at the Waterford Central Technical Institute (Havel 2005). However, for the business to grow and enhance the quality of the product, the company needed skilled craftsmen recruited from abroad. In searching for skilled glassmakers, Bačik concentrated his initial efforts in Germany (Havel

2005). Some of the early recruits were ethnic Germans who fled or were expelled from Czecho-slovakia and other Central and Eastern European countries following the war and were living in displaced persons camps inside the German border (Havel 2005). The opportunity to practice their craft and make money in Ireland was a welcome proposition. According to Miroslav Havel, "displaced craftsmen were only available to us because of the war" (Havel 2005, 136).

In 1950, Waterford Glass was purchased by the Irish Glass Bottle Company (IGB), a private company formed in the 1930s by Joseph McGrath (then Ireland's richest man), Joseph Griffin, and Bernard Fitzpatrick (Havel 2005; Hearne 2019; Hunt and Whitty 2010). IGB held a monopoly on glass manufacturing in Ireland (Hearne 2019, 114). When Bačik began producing glass for the domestic bar and hotel trade, he entered into direct competition with IGB (Hearne 2019, 114). Bačik was aware that he needed an influx of cash to expand and realize his ambition of producing high quality, cut crystal. Even though Bačik was an astute businessman, he was still relatively new to operating in Ireland and required more time to raise the needed funds. As early as 1948, IGB became interested in acquiring Waterford Crystal (Hearne 2019, 114). Initially, McGrath and Griffin offered to work with Bačik and his plans for expanding the company, although the genuineness of this offer was questionable (Havel 2005; Hearne 2019, 120). Bačik refused their help and subsequently McGrath and Griffin became set on owning the business outright (Havel 2005; Hearne 2019, 120). The takeover of Waterford Crystal appears to have been a somewhat sordid affair (Havel 2005).

In the six months before the sale, for example, IGB had purchased thousands of pub glasses on the Continent and sold them at a steep discount throughout Ireland...And there were other rumours of subtle industrial sabotage being practiced against Waterford Glass. One prominent Limerick publican and beer franchisee, for example, had invested some money in the Bačik operation and was reportedly warned by IGB that if he continued doing business with Waterford Glass he would be cut off as an IGB customer. It was certainly suspicious that this publican suddenly told Bačik just before the IGB

takeover that he wanted immediate full repayment of his Waterford Glass investment (Havel 2005, 153).

Furthermore, the Department of Industry and Commerce found that IGB engineers and tradesmen, the only qualified workers in Ireland able to deal with the technical problems that Waterford Crystal was experiencing with their furnace, were prolonging repairs, using sub-standard parts and materials, as well as gaining insight into the potential of the company (Hearne 2019, 119). By 1949, Waterford Crystal was insolvent and ripe for a takeover (Hearne 2019, 114-5). There was also mounting pressure from the government. According to Hearne (2019, 118), "some years later, during an official inquiry...then Managing Director of Waterford Glass Ltd., Noel Griffin, stated that 'it was at the request of the government that Irish Glass Bottle took over the concern." This is very plausible because "both the Inter Party government...and the opposition, Fianna Fáil, were interested in the export potential of the Waterford firm; and the McGraths and Griffins had powerful political connections" (Hearne 2019, 118). McGrath served as Minister for Labour and Minister for Industry and Commerce during the early years of the Irish Free State (Havel 2005). Moreover, Bačik always maintained "the takeover was completed without his knowledge and that he was not involved in the discussions which wrested the company from his control" (Hearne 2019, 118).

Following IGB's takeover of Waterford Glass, Joseph Griffin's son, Noel, was made the managing director of the company (Havel 2005). The first order of business was to construct a new and much larger glass manufacturing plant at Johnstown near the city centre of Waterford (Havel 2005; Hunt and Whitty 2010). During the opening ceremony of the new facility, Joseph McGrath proclaimed his hopes that one day "only Irish workers" would make up the company's workforce (Havel 2005, 167). Havel (2005) argues that McGrath's statements were probably more of a comment on the importance of building Irish industry than of promoting anti-foreigner

sentiments. However, his comments amounted to the same thing. While there sometimes was friction between some of the immigrant and Irish workers within the company, this was not necessarily the result of xenophobia alone. The division between immigrant and Irish workers represented a power structure in terms of master craftsmen (immigrants) and apprentices (Irish), which also had consequences for the workers' rates of pay. The move to the Johnstown plant meant that Waterford Crystal could start producing high quality, cut crystal, which also meant recruiting more glassmakers (i.e., blowers, cutters, engravers, and mould makers) from Europe (Havel 2005; Hunt and Whitty 2010). Waterford Glass continued to recruit international craftsmen up until the mid-1950s (Hunt and Whitty 2010). These craftsmen brought their own influences from various glassmaking traditions, namely Czech, German, and Italian, to Waterford Crystal and passed them on to their Irish apprentices (Hunt and Whitty 2010).

Despite these international influences, during the 1950s and 1960s Waterford Crystal was becoming more closely associated with Ireland and Irishness. The changing political and economic context in Ireland during this period was significant to this process and the success of Waterford Crystal. As outlined in Chapter Three, Ireland was transitioning from an agricultural economy to an export-oriented industrial economy, which culminated in the 1958 Turn. The success of Waterford Crystal was important to this transition (Hearne 2019, 126). In 1952, Séan Lemass, Minister for Industry and Commerce under the *Fianna Fáil* government, "increased duties on imported drinking glasses...explaining that it was to allow Waterford Glass to be competitive and to allow the company 'to move from soda glass to machine-cut crystal'" (Hearne 2019, 126). The following year, Lemass "removed the import duty on sand and potash used for glass production...and later reduced the age at which apprentices could be employed...to facilitate the hiring of adequate numbers of apprentices at Waterford Glass" (Hearne 2019, 126). Furthermore,

Waterford Crystal was being actively promoted by state agencies to export markets (Hearne 2019, 126).

Ultimately, Waterford Crystal was an indigenous industry with deep historical roots in Ireland—at least this was the dominant narrative projected by Waterford Crystal, the Irish tourism industry, and the Irish government. The company was also earmarked by the state as the spearhead of Ireland's export-oriented industrialization programme. As a result, the product and the company were imbued with a sense of national pride, thus transforming Waterford Crystal into an iconic Irish brand. According to Bendix (1997, 7), "the most powerful modern political movement, nationalism, builds on the essentialist notions inherent in authenticity." Despite Waterford Crystal and the Waterford Glassworks being far more international in their origins than the image of the product and the company suggests, Waterford Crystal embodied an understanding of authenticity that, similar to nationalist sentiments, was rooted in people and place. An integral aspect of Ireland's national identity is its relationship with the Irish diaspora and Waterford Crystal as both a commodity and a symbol connect Ireland with its diaspora.

Waterford Crystal's international origins can be better described as a muted history, than a silenced one. The efforts of Bačik and Havel in starting the company are not forgotten by the company (see Chapter Six), and many of the older workers apprenticed under international craftsmen. Essentially, there is a complex nexus of history and meaning surrounding Waterford Crystal and emerging from that nexus is a dominant narrative that selects certain aspects of the history of glass manufacturing in Waterford to promote Waterford Crystal as an iconic Irish brand that is mouth-blown and hand-cut in Waterford, Ireland. This narrative becomes dominant as opposed to other possible narratives that might have been promoted—for example, one that highlights the overall international character of Waterford Crystal and the complex ways in

which various political, economic, historical, and socio-cultural processes gave rise to glass manufacturing in Waterford. While the focus of this chapter is on the ways in which claims to authenticity work to differentiate products and places within the capitalist system of production, it is important to note that in terms of the logic of uneven development, processes of differentiation are myriad and not necessarily fully intentional. This section outlines the ways in which several international, national, and local factors gave Waterford, Ireland a competitive advantage over other places for glass manufacturing. Similarly, it was the interaction of political and economic processes at the international, national, and local level that worked against the profitability of glass manufacturing in Waterford, Ireland and which ultimately led to the closures of the Waterford Glassworks and Waterford Crystal in 1851 and 2009, respectively. The next section examines the issue of outsourcing at Waterford Crystal and the House of Waterford Crystal and the ways in which the former glass workers interpret and make claims to authenticity.

4.5 Interpreting Authenticity

Following the 1990 Strike, as discussed in Chapter Two, Waterford Crystal introduced its first entirely outsourced product line, "Marquis By Waterford." The branding of this new line of crystal, "Marquis By Waterford," is an important distinction because, while the crystal is not technically Waterford Crystal, it still benefits from being associated with the brand. The company intended to sell Marquis crystal at a lower price, but in higher quantities. This turned out to be a very successful sales strategy as the Marquis line is still in production. Regardless of the ambiguous branding of the Marquis line of crystal, the workers were critical of the company's decision to outsource any production because of the brand's image as a handcrafted, Irish product. However, the workers were in a disadvantageous position to mount a fight against the

company's decision. When reflecting on the issue of outsourcing, many of the workers still believe it was a mistake and hold a staunch line that authentic Waterford Crystal must be hand-crafted in Waterford, Ireland. According to Moira:

It's not Waterford Crystal, sure. It's not like the old Waterford Crystal that was made here in Waterford. How can it be Waterford Crystal if it is made some place else? I think that was the start of the ruination of Waterford Crystal when they started doing things like that. You know, if you go to buy something in Waterford, it should be made in Waterford, especially something that is so expensive. What's the point of having something made out in Germany or Poland and calling it Waterford Crystal when it's not? I'd say that was the beginning of the end of Waterford Crystal.

- Moira, 50s, General Section, 36 Years of Service

While many former glass workers held Moira's view on the production of Waterford Crystal, there was also an element of reluctant acceptance with respect to outsourcing. During the 1980s and 1990s, the manufacturing sectors of most Western developed countries were moving production to countries with lower labour costs and fewer regulations. This engendered a feeling of inevitability about outsourcing. This was certainly the case for Cian, who remained optimistic in defeat.

When we were told we'd be outsourced a lot of people were fearful... They said, "Well, that's the end of our jobs." But I suppose we don't realize or know the size of the market that's out there and to sell a product to the worldwide demand—if you can't produce it in your own factory and you don't have the technology you obviously then have to outsource it.

| ...

I think a lot of people were very fearful of their jobs, but it did help us to grow the business, I suppose, the little bit bigger and produce the crystal that little bit faster for the market that demanded it.

- Cian, 50s, Craftworker, 41 Years of Service

The workers were in a difficult position at this point in the company's history. The company was losing money and the global trend in production was outsourcing because the industrial base in most advanced industrialized countries was deemed too costly to be profitable. The workers

could either agree to work with the management's restructuring plans or risk losing their jobs and potentially the production of all Waterford Crystal in Ireland entirely (see Chapter Two).

The near total outsourcing of production by the House of Waterford Crystal in 2010 was the realization of the workers' worst fears from the 1990s. Based on their years of experience with the Tourist Trail and Ambassador programmes, the workers believe that consumers are reacting negatively to the overseas production of Waterford Crystal. Many of the workers have stories about someone they know or met who were disappointed that the piece of crystal they purchased at the House of Waterford Crystal was made somewhere else. Here is Aidan's example:

I personally don't like it [outsourcing]. I think it's wrong. It goes back to the feedback that we always had. That Waterford Crystal made in Ireland, made in Waterford is part of the uniqueness of the brand and that it's not a Levi's or a Tommy Hilfiger in that you can make them in China and anywhere else and they will still sell. And subsequently, we have been proven right. Only last week I had a friend up in the house here. They had American visitors and they bought Waterford Crystal down on The Mall and they didn't realize it until they got home—it had "Made in Poland" on the bottom of it. They were disgusted and they sent their glass back. They complained saying, "They came to Waterford, Ireland to buy Waterford Crystal...not 'Made in Poland."

- Aidan, 50s, Manager, 36 Years of Service

These stories are prevalent among the workers and people in Waterford in general. I had several similar interactions with tourists during my research. However, since opening in 2010, the House of Waterford Crystal is still operating and appears to be a successful enterprise even though the vast majority of its production is being carried out in Eastern and Central Europe. In 2015, KPS sold WWRD Ltd. to Fiskars, a Finnish housewares company, for €406 million (Paul 2015). This is more than four times the estimated €100 million that KPS Capital paid for the brand and intellectual property rights of Waterford Crystal, Wedgwood, and Royal Dalton (Paul 2015).

The continued success of the House of Waterford Crystal has some of the workers questioning the importance of authenticity (i.e., handcrafted crystal produced in Waterford, Ireland) with respect to Waterford Crystal. While all the workers I interviewed agreed that Waterford

Crystal should not be produced overseas, there is a certain degree of ambivalence among the workers over whether authenticity matters in the production of Waterford Crystal. For Niamh, authenticity does not matter and her summation of why it does not matter is reflective of many of the former glass workers. Niamh was one of the few women I interviewed who had also served as a shop steward. She was always sincere and forthright in her assessment of working at Waterford Crystal.

There is nothing you can do about it [outsourcing] now...They are saying that people are not buying—the Americans are not buying it and people are insisting that it is made in Waterford, but if that was the case, they wouldn't be selling it, would they?

- Niamh, 50s, General Section, 37 Years of Service

Gearóid takes a slightly different perspective with respect to the importance of authenticity and Waterford Crystal being made in Waterford. For him, authenticity has never mattered more.

Waterford has left itself in a very strange situation. The American consumer more and more and more is actually looking for authenticity of its origin. When it's Irish crystal, they expect it to be Irish, with Waterford Crystal you expect it to be made in Waterford. What they are going to do now as such, WWRD, with the whole Waterford connection, the city connection, I don't know? I don't know if they know themselves what they want to do with it.

- Gearóid, 50s, Manager, 40 Years of Service

To the extent these differing perspectives are both well-founded, how does that affect our understanding of discourses of authenticity with respect to Waterford Crystal?

According to Bendix (1997, 9), "the notion of authenticity implies the existence of the opposite, the fake, and this dichotomous construct is at the heart of what makes authenticity problematic." The outsourcing of production in the 1990s created a far more subtle distinction between authentic and inauthentic Waterford Crystal than the differences between the Waterford Glassworks and Waterford Crystal. While the Waterford Glassworks may have been the inspiration for the designs and patterns of Waterford Crystal, the two companies were separate enterprises that shared a partial name and location for production. Moreover, Waterford Crystal was a

significantly more advanced industrial operation than the Waterford Glassworks. It was focused on mass production, which meant the cuts and designs were based on what could be produced efficiently in an industrial environment. According to Havel (2005, 169-70):

[Miroslav Havel] was forced initially to simplify his designs in order to match the learning curves of the apprentices. The Masters, almost all of them foreigners[sic], were still too few to carry the anticipated production on their own.

This process of simplification was precisely how Miroslav managed to re-invent the old Waterford designs for a new age. Just as important as these design decisions were Miroslav's many decisions on the technical and production side...[H]is years of exposure to modern glassmaking technology and the costs of modern production, he came to appreciate that most of the designs he had discovered in the Museum were "useless," as he says, for commercial manufacture. Eventually 85 percent of Waterford's catalogue during Miroslav's career would comprise his new designs, while the rest would be replicas (with technical adjustments) of old Waterford patterns.

Despite the handcrafted nature of the product, the production process at Waterford Crystal was quite modern. The branding and marketing of Waterford Crystal suggested a more substantial link between the Waterford Glassworks and Waterford Crystal than indicated by the history. However, the debate over authentic Waterford Crystal rarely focuses on whether a piece produced by the Waterford Glassworks is more or less authentic than a piece produced by Waterford Crystal. This is partially because there is very little Waterford Glassworks' crystal left in existence and given its rarity and age, it would be considered more valuable. Still, authenticity does not seem to preoccupy the discussion when comparing the products from the two companies. This relates to what Cronin (2003) describes as the "spatialization of history" outlined above. The differences between the Waterford Glassworks and Waterford Crystal are swept aside by a historical narrative that promotes the connection of the product through a shared understanding of people and place. In contrast, the decision to outsource production in the 1990s ran counter to the dominant narrative that constitutes authentic Waterford Crystal as handcrafted in Waterford, Ireland. More importantly, it is within that dominant narrative that the workers understood their

own role in the production of Waterford Crystal. The outsourcing of production in the 1990s occurred within the life of the company and the workforce was aware of what might be considered authentic or inauthentic Waterford Crystal. By comparison, Waterford Glassworks and Waterford Crystal had over 200 years of history between the two companies to blur and/or reconstitute the meaning of what is regarded as authentic Waterford Crystal.

While the authentic is inevitably constructed against a notion of the inauthentic, the qualities used to secure authenticity are not fixed. For example, during the 1990s, Waterford Crystal also introduced mechanized cutting machines, which allowed for an increase in productivity and a reduction of the workforce. Jack remembers the impact of these cutting machines on the production process.

The '90s—what was brought in was a machine that you put the glass into these heads, like a conical head with a vacuum that sucked it in and held it steady—close the doors and the wheels came down and cut the design on the glass. So, you were probably getting eight glasses done in a five-minute cycle and one of those guys could operate two of those machines. We were really on the back foot.

We had an agreement actually, that was a significant agreement at the time, that if ever it came to the stage where the men who are hand cutting ran out of work, the machines would be stopped—that work would be sent to traditional craft areas, you know. And that was fine, but it became unsustainable in that we had some lads that were approaching, maybe, their mid-50s—maybe they were looking at early retirement and the company—there was just too many of us and we were having to take weeks off to share the work, so were on social welfare and all that. And this would have been in the early '90s after the strike, so eventually, and it could have been some years after that again—they wanted that agreement to be taken out in return for ten or twelve early retirements. So, it was a case that if the machines weren't going twenty-four hours a day in Waterford, they'll be going twenty-four hours a day in Slovenia. So, at least you are getting twelve guys out on a pension and that alleviates the problem as well about having too many workers.

- Jack, 50s, Craftworker, 36 Years of Service

The introduction of new, mechanized glassmaking technology to the Waterford factory at Kilbarry raises an interesting question: is machine-made crystal produced at the Waterford factory more authentic than the machine-made crystal produced at the outsourced factories? This

largely depends on what is more important to authentic Waterford Crystal—is it the crystal's Irishness or its handcraftsmanship? The markers used to distinguish between authentic and inauthentic in any case may not be fixed and depend more on various interrelated factors across different historical contexts. For the Waterford Glassworks, what made crystal authentic was mainly the quality of the craftsmanship. Its Irishness was less important. At Waterford Crystal, claims to authenticity were tied to the craftsmanship, but also to a sentimental connection to production in Ireland. Regarding the House of Waterford Crystal, having some sort of connection with Waterford may be enough to authenticate the product and the company in the context of globalized systems of production where there is a cynicism and/or expectation that most products are no longer made in the places they originated. While authenticity is often perceived or discussed in terms of being an intrinsic aspect that something does or does not possess, in actuality, discerning the criteria for determining authenticity, and the reasons why those criteria matter, is a complex process that shifts across time and space. The notion that there are degrees of authenticity is indicative of the ways in which the concept is processual, relational, and political as opposed to an objective/fixed quality or feature that something possesses. Moreover, it shows the active process by which things are rendered authentic.

In the case of Waterford Crystal, the dichotomous structure of authenticity is important to the ways in which the workers use claims to authenticity as a more general critique of global economic and political processes. When discussing the issue of authenticity, the fact that products are no longer made in the places where they were originally produced is a recurring point raised by many of the workers. Their concerns on this subject reflect directly the logic of uneven development. Aoife and John address these systemic issues more explicitly below. Aoife was the

only other female shop steward I interviewed. She is open, outspoken, and when she speaks about subjects, she feels passionate about, she can be quite inspiring.

It's [outsourcing] a farce. I think it's a farce. I know they say it's cheaper. How can it be cheaper to pay someone in whatever country—all the countries that were in the Eastern Bloc that were cheap, they're all coming into it now, they all want the wages, they don't want to work for nothing. So, they have to pay them and then it [Waterford Crystal] is being shipped here to get a stamp on it and then shipped out again. I know they will probably refine it and all that, but it can't be Waterford Crystal. How can it be Waterford Crystal if it is not blown here or cut here, you know. It isn't and I don't care what name they put on it or what touch up they do to it to pretend that it's all been done here. And I don't think the Yanks will swallow it for much longer.

- Aoife, 50s, General Section, 35 Years of Service

John's critique calls into question the role of the government in allowing the outsourcing of production.

What I do see is that there is practically nothing in there (the House of Waterford Crystal Showroom) that is made in Waterford, it's all imported back in, and I would know just by looking at the crystal. It could have the same designs on it, same patterns, the same shapes, but by looking I just know straight away that that's not Waterford. From the blowing process to the cutting process to the acid process, it has a different texture and different feel to it, but I can understand where the average eye wouldn't spot it at all because the only thing they look for is the stamp.

Ah, sure. It's not only Waterford Crystal, you are looking at Talk Talk²⁰ walking out of the country only last week, two weeks ago. You are looking at Dell, three, four years ago—gone. They are just gone to cheaper countries. Just for more profit. They drop their standards, but to get it produced cheaper that is the ultimate game. What I do wonder about is how the government can allow it to happen, actually allow it, stand back, and watch it happen.

- John, 50s, Craftworker, 40 Years of Service

The workers' invocation of authenticity is more than just a narrow concern over the production of Waterford Crystal. It is a commentary on the political and economic system that is to blame for their now precarious situations. By positioning their claims to authenticity in the context of deindustrialization and capital mobility, the workers' use of authenticity is a way of criticizing the company, the government, and wider political and economic processes for what has

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²⁰ Talk Talk was a call centre that moved its Waterford operations overseas while I was conducting my fieldwork.

happened to them. As a result, KPS's takeover of Waterford Crystal becomes emblematic of the problems with political and economic processes under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

As venture capitalists, KPS strips failing business of their most valuable assets and turn them around to sell for a profit, which is done for the benefit of their shareholders. When Waterford Crystal went into receivership, everything was up for sale. KPS could have purchased the factory with the intention to manufacture crystal in Waterford, which would have meant fewer redundancies and the continuance of a local industry. This also could have had ramifications for the workers' pensions. If an adequate workforce had remained then they could have continued to invest in, and replenish, the workers' pension fund. But KPS was only concerned with the company's most valuable asset—its brand and intellectual property rights. This focus gave KPS the greatest amount of flexibility in terms of what they wanted to do with the company, especially with respect to manufacturing. Maybe most importantly, it allowed them to circumvent the interests of the workforce and their trade union, who were the biggest proponents of maintaining production in Waterford. The redundant workers do not have any sort of legal recourse to the House of Waterford Crystal. Even if the workers had attempted to bring legal action against the company after it went into receivership, they would only have joined the long line of creditors trying to recover something from the defunct company. This disempowerment of the workers is important because it underlies why they are engaging with and making claims to authenticity. They gave most of their lives to the company and they embodied the image and history of the company. In many ways, the workers perceived authenticity as the key ingredient they put into the crystal through their skilled labour. It was their most valuable and distinctive asset.

But branding does not work that way. The workers found it difficult to understand how a group of investors could purchase the brand and intellectual property rights of Waterford Crystal with little obligation to maintaining a more real link between the company and the product with Waterford, Ireland. Moreover, they cannot believe that the government could allow it to happen. Despite appeals from the workers and their trade union, the Irish government made little effort to maintain Waterford Crystal's connection with Ireland. The government's decision to not intervene is a reflection of the role of the state under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, namely, to manage the conditions necessary for a competitive, open-market economy. The state is not to be seen interfering with the market itself. This is in stark contrast to the earlier role the state played in helping establish Waterford Crystal as an iconic Irish brand. However, many of the workers' felt Waterford Crystal was a special case and that state intervention was merited given its history and association with Irish nation-building. As a result, the Irish government's inaction is perhaps more pronounced in the case of Waterford Crystal because of the company's position as an iconic Irish brand and a semi-official national symbol. Over the company's history, the workers embodied the notions of authenticity used both explicitly and implicitly by the company, the tourism industry, and the government to promote Waterford Crystal. Now, as their only form of recourse, the workers use authenticity as a political tool to question the principles of the company, the motives of the government, and the political and economic system that has engendered the situation in which they find themselves. The next section examines Unite's attempt to reclaim the production of Waterford Crystal in Waterford, Ireland on legal grounds.

4.6 LEGITIMATING AUTHENTICITY

Several former glass workers mentioned that the Waterford name, as it applies to glass-making, should have been protected in a way that is similar to the European Union's geographical indication system for food, wine, spirits, and other agricultural products. Under this system, certain products are designated as: 1) PDO (protected designation of origin), which, as outlined earlier, applies to food, wine, and agricultural products where every part of the production process takes place in a specific region; 2) PGI (protected geographical indication), which applies to food, wine, and agricultural products where at least one stage of production takes place in a particular region; and, 3) GI (geographical indication), which applies to spirits and requires at least one stage of the distillation process to take place in a particular region (European Commission 2022). Darragh was one of the workers that felt the Waterford name should have been protected to prevent the outsourcing of production.

I think it's (outsourcing) just a crime. The thing that I used to bring up with the lads is—you have this thing in Europe where you have the designated place names of a product, right. For example, if you have Cheshire cheese, it can only be made in Cheshire in England, Champagne can only be called Champagne if it comes from the Champagne region and there's loads of stuff like that—like the Parma ham—all that type of stuff.

But in Venice, say the home of glassmaking, right. The island of Murano is where they make the glass—got together and went to Europe to say that the only glass that can be called Murano can only be made on the island of Murano in Italy. So, there is no other glass in Europe that is entitled to call itself Murano—maybe you get people counterfeiting stuff, but that's then a crime.

Now, I raised it with the lads about doing this and again we never—they would say the company wouldn't be interested in doing that. They were after getting the—they actually own the name Waterford, right. For anything, it's not just for glass, but the brand name Waterford belongs to them. But the fellas down in the city hall couldn't see the long-term development of Waterford was tied to this and if we had fought a case in Europe, I'm sure we would have won it on the same basis of the other people that won it. That the only glass that can call itself Waterford Crystal has to be made in Waterford, you know, and that would have made some difference.

- Darragh, 50s, Craftworker, 38 Years of Service

In the case of Murano Glass, its proof of origin is protected under the *Vetro Artistico*® Murano trademark, which was recognized by the Veneto Region under Law 70 on December 23, 1994 (Murano Glass 2022). The trademark and what constitutes authentic Murano Glass is managed by a consortium of glassmakers on the island of Murano (Murano Glass 2022). So, the protection of Murano Glass was done under Italian law as opposed to EU law.

In 2013, Unite, representing the former Waterford Crystal workers, filed an application with the Office of the Harmonization in the Internal Market (OHIM) requesting the revocation of the Community Trademark of Waterford Crystal. The Waterford Crystal trademark is a silhouette of a seahorse with Waterford Crystal written in a circle around the top-half of the seahorse. The tail of the seahorse is curled in such a way to form the outline of a four-leaf clover, which is a symbol often associated with Ireland. However, it is the three-leaf shamrock that is an official symbol of Ireland. The OHIM is the body responsible for the registration and protection of trademarks within the European Union. By having the Community Trademark revoked, KPS would be forced to have any crystal sold under the Waterford trademark manufactured in Waterford, Ireland. Unite challenged KPS under Article 51(1)(c) Community Trademark Regulation (CTMR), which states that "a registered CTM may be declared revoked if, in consequence of the use made of the sign by its proprietor or with their consent, the trademark is liable to mislead the public, particularly as to the nature, quality or geographical origin of the goods/services concerned" (Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market 2014, 14; emphasis added). Much of the language for Article 51(1)(c) is borrowed from the World Trade Organization's agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). While authenticity is not mentioned explicitly during the legal proceedings, it is at the heart of the case. Unite's argument rested largely on the fact that the majority of Waterford Crystal is produced in Eastern and

Central Europe and that the Waterford trademark, which contains the Waterford name, is misleading with respect to the geographical origin of the product.

In order to substantiate their case, Unite needed to prove there is a tradition of glassmaking in the region and that the average consumer is aware of this tradition, yet unaware that the bulk of Waterford Crystal's production is no longer being carried out in Waterford, Ireland. Here are some relevant excerpts from the OHIM's summation of Unite's argument:

The majority of the glass made by the proprietor is no longer made in the town or county of Waterford in Ireland but is made in Eastern Europe, while the consumer believes that it is made in the geographic location of Waterford. The name of the city and county of Waterford have been associated with fine glass since 1783 when William and George Penrose opened an extensive flint glass manufacture in the Irish port of Waterford...In 1947 Charles Bačik founded Waterford Glass Ltd not far from the original site with the cooperation of Miroslav Havel and Bernard Fitzpatrick and then purchased the site of the original crystal factory and Waterford Crystal was reborn. The object was to revive an industry for which Waterford already had a reputation and to give Waterford an industry it could be proud of. Waterford Glass Ltd became one of the most renowned luxury brand companies in the world. A new factory was opened in Kilbarry, an inner suburb of Waterford city in 1970, becoming the largest manufacturing unit of its type in the world.

In November 2000, Waterford crystal was named the top world-class brand in the United States by a survey conducted among 30,000 people by the New Jersey based independent market research company Total Research Corporation.

The name Waterford is synonymous with the production of fine crystal around the world and many believe that it is made in the Irish city and county of Waterford. As a result of the influx of purchasers of Waterford Crystal requesting factory tours, a visitors centre was opened on the premises in the 1950's and rapidly became the fourth most popular visitor attraction in Ireland. It claims that this fact proves the link in the customers mind between the geographical place Waterford and the fine crystal bearing the Waterford trademark (Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (Cancellation Division) 2014).

The history presented by Unite is significant because it served as the foundation of their case. Unite's version of history was focused largely on place. For example: 1) "William and George Penrose opened an extensive flint glass manufacture in the Irish port of Waterford;" 2) "Charles Bačik founded Waterford Glass Ltd. not far from the original site;" 3) "A new factory was opened in Kilbarry, an inner suburb of Waterford city;" and, 4) "As a result of the influx of

purchasers of Waterford Crystal requesting factory tours, a visitors centre was opened on the premises in the 1950's and rapidly became the fourth most popular visitor attraction in Ireland." Waterford, Ireland is the link that provides continuity for the tradition and history of glassmaking that was manifested in the form of the Waterford Glassworks and the various Waterford Crystal factories. Unite also relied on witness statements, articles, and surveys to show that consumers are aware of the history and tradition of glassmaking in Waterford, Ireland and that the connection between product and place is integral to the image of the brand. The importance and popularity of the Tourist Trail was vital to this argument in terms of connecting consumers' knowledge of the product with Waterford, Ireland. For these reasons, Unite argued that consumers of Waterford Crystal are being misled or deceived by the Waterford trademark.

KPS's case focused on the Waterford trademark as the sign of a product that is marketed and valued for its uniqueness and quality, not for its geographical origins. The importance or continuity of place was less critical to their argument. It is interesting to see the ways in which KPS used the history of glassmaking in Waterford to support their understanding of the Waterford trademark. Below are the relevant excerpts from OHIM's summation of KPS's arguments:

The applicant has not presented even a *prima facie* case that Article 51(1)(c) CTMR renders the proprietor's mark liable to be revoked. By contrast, the proprietor's evidence clearly establishes through witness testimony, exhibits and judicial precedent, that the Waterford mark is perceived by the relevant public as a trademark and not as a geographical indicator. The burden of proof rests with the applicant and the Cancellation Division can only decide on the application on the facts presented. Mere allegations about consumer behaviour and perceptions do not meet the requirements.

[C]rystal production in Waterford became a fact of history when two Czechs, Bačik and Havel opened the company in 1947 in Waterford and brought a workforce from across Europe to work for them. The fact that Waterford enjoyed low taxation and was a port was helpful to their plans. Moreover, crystal production in Waterford did not rely on locally sourced materials or even the local work force at that time. It is also true that melting, cooling and moulding processes can be carried out to the same standard anywhere in the world without there being any change in the nature or characteristics of the finished pieces. Manufacturing plants across Europe have substantial skill in this area.

The vast majority of crystal producers have had to change the way they conduct their business since the 1980's and starting to outsource the production process was the solution that saved many businesses from closure. The manufacture of some of the Waterford Crystal began in 1991 which enabled the company to stay afloat until it went into receivership in 2009. WWRD continues to manufacture its Waterford products worldwide as has been the case since 1991 and continues to apply the same high standards of quality. It is recognized by famous retail outlets such as Harrods and John Lewis as well as by renowned brand valuators such as Intangible Business as a premium brand with a strong and significant reputation that communicates to customers the commercial origin of the goods and not their place of manufacturing.

The proprietor affixes the place of manufacturing to the packaging and as the relevant public will have a higher degree of attention in relation to luxury goods it is sufficient. The goods are not marketed as to their origin but to their quality and uniqueness...The Cancellation Division have accepted that goods can be named after the area where a manufacturing process was invented through the resultant products even though they are no longer made there and the consumer is aware of such practices (Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (Cancellation Division) 2014).

By stating that glassmaking was established in Waterford by result of Czech immigrants and a workforce that was initially made up of largely international workers, KPS was suggesting that the history and tradition of glassmaking in Waterford had little to do with the place itself. KPS reinforced this point by stating that the materials for production were not locally sourced and that the glassmaking process can be done anywhere. This argument was reinforced further by the fact that Waterford Crystal began outsourcing in the 1990s and that it did not tarnish the brand. Unite challenged this argument by stating that "in 1995 23% of the total production was outsourced, although mainly in relation to a different brand," namely the "Marquis By Waterford" line of crystal (Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market [Cancellation Division] 2014). Moreover, this is significantly different to now, when the majority of crystal production is outsourced (Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market [Cancellation Division] 2014). In contrast, KPS's case separates the product from the place by emphasizing Waterford Crystal's history as the story of a brand and not a place.

The OHIM rejected Unite's application to revoke the Waterford Community Trademark stating that Unite did not "prove actual deceit and/or manifest deception [and] has not submitted sufficient evidence to substantiate its arguments" (Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market [Cancellation Division] 2014). However, according to Coombe (1998), the language of intellectual property laws is often ambiguous and the balance of power is in favour of those who hold the trademark. The most significant piece of evidence the OHIM relied on was the decision of the Irish Supreme Court WATERFORD Trademark (Ireland) [1984], which had allowed the Waterford name to be registered as a trademark in the first place. Using the Irish Supreme Court ruling, the OHIM stated that KPS's "predecessor in title was 'a well-known and highly successful company whose products are acclaimed throughout the world...It is inconceivable that any other manufacturer or trade, in Waterford or elsewhere, could with honest motives, manufacture or offer for sale, as his own, cut glass described as 'Waterford'" (Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (Cancellation Division) 2014). In rebuttal, Unite argued that even though "the mark 'Waterford' has acquired distinctiveness sufficient to allow it to be registered, it does not exclude the possibility that the relevant public, for the purposes of Article 51(1)(c), perceives the term primarily as a geographical term depicting the origin of the crystal or that there is a close link between the trademark and the place" (Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market [Cancellation Division] 2014). Moreover, Unite stated that this finding is outdated because in 1984 Waterford Crystal was still being manufactured entirely in Waterford, so the trademark at that point was not misleading (Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market [Cancellation Division 2014). Again, the ambiguity of the law becomes problematic. As Coombe (1998) argues, trademarks are signs that take on different meaning for different people in different contexts. Proving what a trademark, as a symbol, means to people in general is difficult. Plus,

intellectual property laws give "the owners of intellectual property priority in struggles to fix meaning" (Coombe 1998, 26). As in the case of Waterford Crystal, the company's ability to register Waterford as a trademark in the 1980s allowed KPS to defeat the workers and their trade union in a legal challenge of the meaning of the Waterford Crystal trademark.

Despite the particulars surrounding the Irish Supreme Court's ruling, Unite's protestations were also significantly undermined by Waterford Crystal's history of outsourcing. The OHIM found:

[KPS] has not stopped producing its goods in Ireland but has reduced significantly the amount manufactured in Waterford. However, in line with the Irish Supreme Court decision the sign 'WATERFORD' is not seen as a geographical indication but as a distinctive trademark. As such, this trademark could be produced anywhere in the world without confusion ensuing as it is an indication of the commercial origin of the goods from the proprietor company and not a geographical indication of the goods (Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market (Cancellation Division) 2014).

The OHIM was also unconvinced by Unite's depiction of Waterford as a place with a rich history of glassmaking:

[Unite's] arguments in relation to Waterford becoming one of the most visited areas due to the Visitors Centre again shows the reputation of the proprietor's goods and the wish of its customers to visit the shop. It does not prove that they travel to Waterford to see a famous town for crystal or glassware but to see the proprietor company itself and maybe possibly buy some goods. [Unite's] evidence to prove its assertion that Waterford is famous for glassware has not been proven (Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market [Cancellation Division] 2014).

Based on the OHIM's ruling, the history and tradition of glassmaking in Waterford is the result of a company that became famous for glassmaking, with Waterford as a location being incidental. Ironically, one outcome of the closure of Waterford Crystal is that it has engendered smaller glassmaking operations in Waterford. Some former Waterford Crystal workers, mostly glass cutters or engravers because they only require a cutting wheel to practice their craft, have established small businesses cutting or engraving blank glass sourced from other companies.

Glass blowing is much more difficult to do on a small scale because of the expenses involved in operating and heating the pot that contains the molten glass. Nevertheless, a few former Waterford Crystal workers have set-up glassblowing operations in Waterford. However, none of this glass production can be marketed as "Waterford."

Finally, the OHIM ruling did specifically address one aspect of the history of glassmaking in Waterford:

Indeed, as pointed out by both parties Waterford Crystal was in fact established by two Czechs. They brought their own skilled work force to Ireland and their glassmaking knowledge and some materials. The company, although changing ownership and installations, and with admittedly certain disruptions to production, continues producing crystal up to the present day. The end product is still a highly sought after item with a high reputation. The fact that the goods are not being produced in their entirety in Waterford does not appear to have affected the quality of the goods. Moreover, some of the production (although only a small amount) is in fact still carried out in Waterford (Office for Harmonization in the Internal Market [Cancellation Division] 2014).

By focusing solely on Bačik, Havel, and their international workforce as being responsible for the creation of Waterford Crystal, the company and its products appear as the entrepreneurial vision of two Czech immigrants. This reinforces the notion that the Waterford Community Trademark represents the story of a brand that has little to do with place of origin. An alternative narrative might highlight the role played by Bernard Fitzpatrick in re-establishing glassmaking in Waterford, or the work of John McGrath, John Griffin, and Noel Griffin in expanding the business. Likewise, the focus on Bačik, Havel, and their international workforce also negates the significance of the Penroses and the Waterford Glassworks as the reason for re-establishing glass manufacturing in Waterford, Ireland. Most importantly, it ignores the ways in which Waterford Crystal became an iconic Irish brand and a semi-official national symbol, which arguably does root the company and product to a particular geographical place. In grounding Waterford Crystal's history in the entrepreneurship of Bačik and Havel, they function as a starting point upon

which to trace the proprietary rights of Waterford Crystal now afforded to KPS. This approach is representative of the ways in which the legal system serves the interests of capital and private property. The protection of ownership allows the holder of intellectual property or trademarks to eliminate or silence any counter or unauthorized meanings a trademark may signify that do not meet the holder's approval (Coombe 1998). Interestingly, in the OHIM decision to rule that Waterford Crystal is a brand and not a sign of geographical origin, they still felt it necessary to highlight the fact that some crystal production is being carried out in Waterford. This gives the impression that any discrepancies that might exist over the Waterford Community Trademark are satisfied by this small amount of production. After all, outsourcing production was a practice introduced by Waterford Crystal in the 1990s.

As the OHIM case demonstrates, the attempt to establish authenticity is often an attempt to establish the genesis of the contested practice or thing. According to Yanagisako and Delaney (1995, 1-2), "narratives of origins tell people what kind of world it is, what it consists of, and where they stand in it; they make it seem natural to them." Origin stories validate people's perceptions of authenticity, which is also a validation of themselves in the sense that concerns over, and the consumption of, authenticity is a manifestation of a person's character. The notion that authentic Waterford Crystal is mouth-blown and hand-cut in Waterford, Ireland reflects a narrative that arose from a particular political and economic context. According to the workers, for many consumers, the knowledge that their crystal was handcrafted in Waterford, Ireland meant their piece of crystal was authentic and connected them meaningfully to a place. If authenticity is conceived in terms of origins, then the international character of the Waterford Glassworks and Waterford Crystal's beginnings could arguably undermine the perceived Irishness of the product and the company, as well as the authenticity of the crystal to some consumers. However, for the

history of Waterford Crystal to be defined simply by the way it came into existence is to deny the effort of all those people who transformed Waterford Crystal into an iconic Irish brand and a semi-official national symbol, which was critical to the company's overall success. The measure of authenticity in any given case is not static. Its measure can change or develop over time. In this instance, there is an underlying tension between claims that Irishness means originating in Ireland from Irish workers and that the presence of immigrant workers in the origin story of Waterford Crystal somehow tests its Irishness.

Unite's attempt to reclaim the production of Waterford Crystal speaks to a larger issue concerning Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism and the protection of cultural and intellectual property rights. According to Coombe (2009, 395), "a distinctive area of neoliberal governmentality...[is to] recognize traditions as sources of social capital and otherwise encourage people to adopt a possessive and entrepreneurial attitude toward their culture and the social relations of reproduction that have traditionally sustained them." As a result, cultural goods and practices can become sites for legal contestation, which decides if particular goods or practices can be produced by anyone, anywhere or if their production must be rooted in and unique to local knowledge, traditions, and/or resources. This is significant because the legitimation of authenticity through geographical origins and cultural distinctions acts as a "means of accumulating various forms of capital and preventing the development of others" (Coombe 2005, 47). Therefore, legitimizing culture through claims to authenticity can be seen as a way of manipulating the logic of uneven development. Unite's case against KPS is illustrative of these processes.

By claiming that the Waterford Community Trademark is misleading, Unite was asserting that only crystal produced in Waterford could count as authentic Waterford Crystal. Doing so not only meant returning production to Waterford, but also preventing the production of

Waterford Crystal elsewhere. However, Unite's case was undermined by the fact that many crystal producers, including Waterford Crystal, began to outsource and mechanize production in the 1980s and 1990s to remain viable. This aspect of Waterford Crystal's history is reflective of wider political and economic processes, namely the ways in which the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism is informed by the logic of uneven development—"the opposed tendencies, inherent in capital, toward the differentiation but simultaneous equalization of the levels and conditions of production" (N. Smith 2008, 6). In other words, advancements in technology and the drive to develop open market economies through free trade, deregulation, and fewer capital controls allowed for the reorganization of production on a global scale. This constitutes equalization in the levels and conditions of production in the sense that there was systemization of production practices and a belief in, as well as material efforts to enable, the increased mobility of capital. At the same time, this resulted in a process of differentiation in the levels and conditions of production because it was now possible and profitable for capital to move, more easily, their manufacturing bases from advanced industrialized countries to less developed countries with lower labour costs and fewer regulations. Moreover, the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism undermined the strength of unionized labour in advanced industrialized countries while countries with low labour costs gained a competitive advantage. As a result, this shift increased simultaneously the exploitation of labour overall, thus highlighting the limits of a nationalized labour politics in a globalized labour market.

The history of Waterford Crystal is enmeshed in the logic of uneven development in the sense that outsourcing, a consequence of wider political and economic processes, undermined the image of authentic Waterford Crystal as handcrafted in Waterford, Ireland—or, being rooted in people and place. Moreover, the Waterford Crystal workforce suffered a double blow from the

company's decision to outsource because now that globalized systems of production are ubiquitous, claims to authenticity have taken on greater value in differentiating products. Essentially, the struggle to establish authenticity becomes a struggle to differentiate a product and a community to maintain livelihoods. Consequently, the struggle for authenticity as a socio-cultural manifestation of the logic of uneven development also undermines the cultivation of solidarity between workers in different places.

4.7 CONCLUSION - AUTHENTICITY AND THE LOGIC OF UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT

This chapter puts forth three interrelated arguments. The first is that authenticity is not a substantive quality that something possesses; nor is it innate or intrinsic to something or someone. Authenticity is a relational and processual concept in the sense that claims to authenticity are based on the ways in which people perceive their relationships with other people, places, things, and/or ideas and these relationships can change and develop over time. The notion that authentic Waterford Crystal was mouth-blown and hand-cut in Waterford, Ireland developed in a particular political and economic context, which rooted the product in a particular understanding of people and place. While this understanding of authenticity was significant to the success of Waterford Crystal and became a dominant narrative, it concealed the international character of Waterford Crystal's beginnings. Furthermore, the introduction of outsourcing and mechanized glassmaking technology in the 1990s both reinforced and undermined the notion that authentic Waterford Crystal is mouth-blown and hand-cut in Waterford, Ireland. On the one hand, these changes in the production process contradicted the dominant narrative of what constitutes authentic Waterford Crystal, but at the same time reinforced the notion that the truly authentic Waterford Crystal is handcrafted in Waterford, Ireland. On the other hand, outsourcing and

mechanization also undermined key elements of the dominant narrative, which was integral for KPS in convincing the OHIM that Waterford Crystal's authenticity is rooted in the uniqueness and quality of the brand and has less to do with hand craftsmanship or where it is produced.

The second argument stems from Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's (quoted in Bendix 1997, 21 as personal communication, May 19, 1995) assertion that when analyzing authenticity, the important questions are not necessarily "what is authenticity?" but the more political questions: 'who needs authenticity and why?' and 'how has authenticity been used?" Given the relational and processual nature of authenticity as a concept, "what is authenticity" or "what counts as authenticity in a particular situation" becomes foundational to who, why, and how authenticity is being used, claimed, and/or denied. The workers understand authentic Waterford Crystal as being handcrafted in Waterford, Ireland. Moreover, many of them believe that this is what consumers want. The workers' claims about authenticity became a political tool in their attempts to challenge the company, the government, and the political and economic system that is responsible for the demise of Waterford Crystal and their livelihoods, as well as the precarious situation in which the workers now find themselves.

The final argument is that the logic of uneven development creates conditions where vulnerable workers and/or communities may feel compelled to make claims to authenticity. As Neil Smith (2008, 6) argues, inherent within capital production are two processes that occur simultaneously to both differentiate and equalize the levels and conditions of production. The continuous balancing between these two processes constitutes the logic of uneven development. The legitimation provided by authenticity has become a way to differentiate cultural goods and practices to sustain communities and livelihoods. Likewise, while claims to authenticity may draw on assertions about origins, history, tradition, and timelessness, the legitimation of authenticity acts

as a form of differentiation that exists and operates within the frame of capitalist production (Coombe 2005, 2009). Ironically, the legitimation offered by authenticity places limits on the ways in which particular cultural practices or goods may change over time; the legal rights protecting the authenticity of particular cultural practices and goods encapsulate a certain understanding of authenticity at a given moment or period, which is decidedly inauthentic with respect to the ways in which culture exists as a dynamic force (Coombe 2005, 2009). Furthermore, while some cultural goods and practices may be successful in receiving special distinctions, others are not, such as Waterford Crystal. Given the relational and processual character of authenticity as a concept, determining authenticity is not an exact science but a process contested in terms of historical, geographical, political, economic, and sometimes through legal processes. Unite's attempt to legitimate their case for what constitutes authentic Waterford Crystal, namely crystal produced in Waterford, Ireland, was undermined by political and economic processes working simultaneously to equalize and differentiate the levels and conditions of production, such as the free trade agreements, deregulation, and removal of capital controls that resulted in deindustrialization.

The next chapter explores the workers' struggle for Waterford Crystal in spatial terms by examining changes in Waterford Crystal's built environment with respect to the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

CHAPTER FIVE

STRUGGLE FOR SPACE I - DECIPHERING THE SPATIAL CODE

5.1 Introduction

The images in Figure 1 are of the main Waterford Crystal manufacturing facility, as it stood in 2011 and 2012, at Kilbarry in Waterford, Ireland. The factory occupied an area of land just over 14.5 hectares and at the peak of the company's production powers it employed 3,430 workers, most of whom worked at the Kilbarry factory (Havel 2005, 185; Hunt and Whitty 2010, 228). Michael remembers working at the Kilbarry factory with a certain degree of wonderment. Michael is gregarious and very easy to get along with, our interviews never felt like anything more than pleasant conversations.

I used to love to go up on "the hill," they called it, behind the factory. You're probably aware that the factory was built in four sections K1—Kilbarry 1, Kilbarry 2, Kilbarry 3, and Kilbarry 4. There was a five as well, later. But the tank furnace installation was set up right in the centre of K2, if you looked down on a plan, it was more or less in the middle, and I used to walk up in the night time on this hill behind the factory. On a summer's night, two o'clock in the morning, it's mild and it's dark and all the lights of the city are shinning, twinkling, and glittering. In the middle of all of this, my view, this factory and the hum of this tank furnace just going, "Bmmmmmmm." Inside, it's serious decibels, but when you are outside it's just a vibration. I used to look at it and think to myself, that's amazing—it's an amazing sight...it was kind of like the heartbeat of the sleeping city. Everyone's asleep now, but this thing is, "Bmmmmmmm." And, if you listen very, very carefully, you could hear—Oh, that's that machine. "Psshh-tok-kaclink-psshh!" And all of this noise going on. Maybe that's the musician in me, but I thought—maybe it's kind of a romantic thing, but I just thought, "Wow! Isn't that an amazing sight?" This is the new age of 24/7 production, which had never happened in Waterford.

Now, the plug is gone—it's gone, man! It's gone! There's nothing there. There's not a nut or bolt there. It's completely—I went in and had a look there recently. I was passing there, and the security guy was saying, "Do you want to come in and have a look?" And I couldn't believe it. Fucking hell! In the space of two years—he said it was like that within six months—there was pigeons and rats. It's derelict. How did it happen so fast? It was unrecognizable, really.

- Michael, 40s, Maintenance, 19 Years of Service

The Kilbarry factory sat empty until 2013 when the Kilbarry site was purchased by a property developer, Noel Frisby, who demolished everything except the visitor centre and the office block (these can be seen in the top image of Figure 1), which were intended to be renovated and converted into office spaces (Kane 2013). The rest of the land has been cleared for the development of a modern industrial park intended to attract new businesses, and jobs, to the area (Kane 2013).











Figure 1. The main Waterford Crystal manufacturing facility at Kilbarry in Waterford, Ireland.

According to High and Lewis (2007, 2), the "aesthetics of deindustrialization" engenders "a sense of being swept away by the beauty and terror of economic change." The post-industrial landscapes produced by deindustrialization, such as the Kilbarry factory, are often characterized by a dominant narrative that depicts these places as simply the ruins of economic change. However, deindustrialization "is not just an economic process, but a cultural one as well" and it is important to interrogate "the cultural meaning of industrial ruins themselves" (High and Lewis 2007, 11). After all, "industrial ruins are memory places, for they make us pause, reflect, and remember" and in doing so create meaning with respect to the places themselves and the ways in which people understand their changing circumstances across time and space (High and Lewis 2007, 9; also see Chapter One).

Similar, to High and Lewis' (2007) approach in *Corporate Wasteland*, this chapter contextualizes the built environment connected with Waterford Crystal through photography and the stories, thoughts, and feelings of the workers associated with these spaces. By imbuing the built environment with socio-cultural meaning, this chapter explores the ways in which the built environment connected with Waterford Crystal constitutes a reflection of the workers' struggle for Waterford Crystal in spatial terms. In doing so, this chapter also moves from "discourse on space" to understanding the production of space. Following Lefebvre's (1991, 36-7) argument that:

If space is a product, our knowledge of it must be expected to reproduce and expound the process of production. The "object" of interest must be expected to shift from *things in space* to the actual *production of space*, but this formulation itself calls for much additional explanation. Both partial products located *in space*—that is, things—and discourse *on space* can henceforth do no more than supply clues to and testimony about, this productive process—a process which subsumes signifying processes without being reducible to them. It is no longer a matter of the space of this or the space of that: rather, it is space in its totality or global aspect that needs not only to be subjected to analytical scrutiny (a procedure which is liable to furnish merely an infinite series of fragments

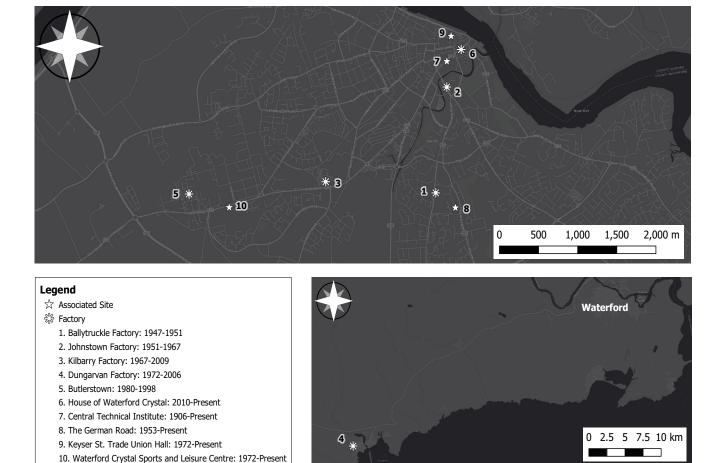
and cross-sections subordinate to the analytic project), but also to be *engendered* by and within theoretical understanding.

Thus, the transition from an understanding of "things in space" to the production of space involves examining space in its totality, namely through the exploration of the various historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes that engender the mental and material spaces that constitute our social reality. In doing so, the ways in which these various processes interconnect must be subjected to analytical scrutiny. In the case of this ethnography, this entails revisiting Lefebvre's (1991, 47-8) notion of the "spatial code"—the "means of living in [a particular] space, of understanding it, and of producing it (also discussed in Chapter One). This chapter situates changes in Waterford Crystal's built environment and the workers' struggle for Waterford Crystal in the more general, global transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism (D. Harvey 1990, 124).

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section is organized around important physical spaces connected with the development and history of Waterford Crystal from 1947 to 2009. Using photographs and oral history each space is contextualized in a way that highlights particular aspects of the workers' experiences at Waterford Crystal. It is important to note that Cormac features prominently in this chapter because he was kind enough to drive me to and expound on several of the places discussed below. The second section examines the ways in which the workers' experiences with the built environment relates to the workers' struggle for Waterford Crystal across the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

5.2 CONTEXTUALIZING WATERFORD CRYSTAL'S BUILT ENVIRONMENT

The physical spaces examined in this section include the main manufacturing facilities, as well as important associated sites that are significant to the ways in which the workers frame their experiences at Waterford Crystal. The main manufacturing facilities are: Ballytruckle, Johnstown, Kilbarry, Dungarvan, and Butlerstown. The important associated sites are: the Central Technical Institute, The German Road, Keyser St. Trade Union Hall, and the Waterford Crystal Sports and Leisure Centre. The actual physical proximity of these places is shown on the maps of Waterford City and County in Map 1.



Map 1. Waterford Crystal Facilities and Associated Sites.

5.2.1 Ballytruckle

The Ballytruckle factory was in operation from 1947 to 1951. Charles Bačik and Bernard Fitzpatrick secured 1.2 hectares of land from the Waterford Corporation to build the new factory (Havel 2005; Hearne 1992). It is estimated that the initial investment in the land and the building of the factory was between £15,000 and £20,000, which was made up of Bačik and Fitzpatrick's own money combined with a loan negotiated by Bačik with insurers Friends Provident and Century Life Insurance Company (Havel 2005; Hearne 1992; Hearne 2019, 111). The initial workforce at Ballytruckle was small—approximately thirty people—and the working conditions were extremely poor (Hearne 1992; Reddy and Nolan 2006). The factory was often depicted by workers as a glorified shed (Reddy and Nolan 2006). Figure 2 shows pictures of the Ballytruckle factory in its present state, the building is now occupied by other businesses, but the original chimney from the old factory is still visible in the middle of the building.



Figure 2. Pictures of the site of the Waterford Crystal Ballytruckle Factory.

This chimney was significant to William Murphy.²¹ William is, as they say in Waterford, a true gentleman. He is gracious and kind. During an interview, William shared a section of his unpublished memoirs that documented his experiences with Waterford Crystal. It was titled: *Waterford Crystal: A Quintet of Memories* by William Murphy. While he started at the Johnstown factory in 1954, the following passage is his reminiscence of the construction of the Ballytruckle factory.

At the time I was a sixteen-year-old student studying for my leaving certificate and cycling the two-and-a-half miles to my home in the country each evening. It was fortuitous for me that my homeward journey took me past the site at Ballytruckle where the new glass factory was being constructed.

It is with great fondness of memory that I recall the pleasure of watching the progress of the new building. I can honestly say that in my mind I chronicled every standing girder, every row of concrete bricks and every roofing sheet over a period of three months. Then with the building itself complete the installation of the furnace and machinery could commence. I was impatient—being an outsider I had no idea as to how long the furnace would take to commission, so my only hope was to keep a watchful eye on the chimney stack.

So intense was my eagerness to see smoke that I would dismount from my bicycle and stare at the stack for a full fifteen minutes hoping against hope that I would be there to witness those first few hesitant puffs! If it was true that "looks" can kill, well than that poor stack hadn't a chance, and to take things a little further, some years later I often wondered in amusement, that had I linked my subsequent troubled eyesight with all that chimney staring and lodged a claim would I have been the first "outside the gate" industrial litigant in the city—if not the country!

Unbeknown to me at the time the entire residential area was also on the lookout and when after a lapse of a few weeks the furnace had its trial firing and smoke appeared from the chimney, the excitement was palpable. Doors and windows were flung open and in less time than it takes to say, "Waterford Glass," the entire city knew that something big was happening in Ballytruckle.

Little did the person, whose finger tripped the switch to fire the furnace, realized that his finger would soon become part of the hand of history. Nice to note also that on that particular evening the setting sun seemed reluctant and as it slowly slipped behind the mountains of west Waterford is left in its wake, a blazing trail of reddened sky, which in itself is a sign of good things to come.

Had we been in another ancient city on another occasion we would be shouting "Papam Habemus" but no needs now—the Pope is safe and all is well in Rome so maybe

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²¹ While I have kept the identity of most of my research participants anonymous throughout my thesis, I decided to identify William Murphy because he gave me permission to use his real name and because I am quoting directly from his unpublished memoirs.

the occasion demands that we change it a little and altogether in one loud voice "Laborem Habemus"—we have work.

[...]

It is hard to comprehend now how a small band of young workers, eagerly learning the new trade of glassmaking in a small building on the edge of the suburbs could have such a stimulating effect on the city at large.

The good news that was "Waterford Glass" got us on our feet and awakening from the slumber of economic destitute, we were at last able to open our eyes and look—not so much backwards to despair and failure, but rather to the future—a future of hope and prosperity—hope in the sense that our children will have a better chance of a job for life—prosperity in the knowledge that if we as a people apply ourselves to the task in hand, then the world is at our feet and eventually that same world will come knocking at our door.

The early years at the factory were quite hard and Bačik had a difficult time turning a profit, which led to the subsequent takeover of the company by the Irish Glass Bottle Company. William Murphy's reminiscence of the Ballytruckle factory is informed by his years of working at Waterford Crystal during some of the company's most profitable years. Waterford Crystal provided him with a good life, as well as the opportunity to stay and work in Ireland. In 1947, there was no way to know that the company would become a globally recognized brand. However, William Murphy's memory of the factory suggests that it was a successful company in the making. Granted, at the time, Waterford had few employment opportunities, so there would have been a palpable excitement over a new industry being established in the area, especially one by a businessperson from outside the country who was bringing in opportunities for employment.

The chimney is another significant aspect of William Murphy's memoir. According to High and Lewis (2007), industrial smokestacks are important cultural symbols because they invoke a sense of place and identity with respect to the ways in which workers perceive their role in the community. With deindustrialization, the demolition of smokestacks are often contentious moments (High and Lewis 2007). On the one hand, the demolition of smokestacks symbolized progress and economic change. On the other hand, it represented the end of an industry, which

also had an adverse effect on the status and identity of the workers that associated themselves with that industry. For William Murphy, the chimney at Ballytruckle was symbolic, and/or became symbolic through his reminiscence of the factory, of economic security—"Laborem Habemus." However, many people in Waterford would now pass that smokestack and be completely unaware of its significance.

5.2.2 Johnstown



Figure 3. Pictures of the site of the Waterford Crystal Johnstown Factory.

The takeover of Waterford Crystal by the Irish Glass Bottle Company in 1950 resulted in a massive financial investment into the struggling company. Shortly after the takeover, the new owners secured 1.6 hectares of land at Johnstown near the city centre (Hearne 2010; Irish Examiner January 20, 1950). The benefit of this new location was that it was next to the city's gasworks, which was pivotal for fueling the new furnaces at the Johnstown factory (Hearne 2010). By 1951, the new factory was in operation and in 1955 the company turned its first annual profit of £7,655 (Hearne 1992). Figure 3 shows picture of the Johnstown factory, which is now the Johnstown Business Park.

The construction of the Johnstown factory was a major investment in the city of Waterford itself. There was still relatively little work in Waterford at that time and the jobs provided by
Waterford Crystal were extremely important. The Johnstown factory's initial workforce was
about fifty people (Hearne 1992). By the end of the decade the workforce increased steadily to
around 500 employees (E. O'Connor 1989). By 1967, there were approximately 1,000 employees at the factory (Irish Independent January 5th, 1967). The success, profitability, and expansion
of Waterford Crystal from the 1950s into the 1980s is very well-known in the area because it was
important to the development of the city and the region. The Johnstown factory represents the
beginning of that expansionary period. Many of the former glass workers have stories of people
being hired in unexpected and humorous ways. Declan remembers how he got his job with
amusement.

I walked in with my lunch under my arm and told the personnel manager, "You were looking for me?" This is truth.

He said, "Who..."

"Declan, you were looking for me."

"Go over there and up the stairs to — and tell him I sent you up." He didn't know me from Adam. I heard there were jobs going down there, so I went and got one. I needed a job. I was the eldest of eleven children. I had been in college, but because there was no such thing as a proper social welfare system or anything at the

time—my Father was taken ill at sea, that was the last time he ever worked. I was the eldest of eleven, so somebody had to go out and earn the crust and it fell to me. I wasn't forced out, but it was hardship on the family. So, I devised my own CV. The lunch under the arm was very important because it made it look very authentic.

- Declan, 60s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

The ease in which some of the workers became employed at the Johnstown factory was discussed in stark contrast to the challenges that many of the workers faced in trying to attain reemployment in the aftermath of the company's closure (see Chapter Eight). The labour market completely changed since they were hired at Waterford Crystal (Chapter Eight discusses the changing labour market). Many of the workers juxtaposed the expansionary period of Waterford Crystal with the high unemployment, lack of opportunity, and emigration of the post-financial crisis economy in Ireland.

While the opportunity to stay and work in Waterford was a welcomed prospect, it did not mean that it was easy to become accustomed to the job, especially for the many teenagers who were being taken on as apprentices in the blowing and cutting sections in the early days of the company. Cormac remembers how difficult it was to adjust to working at Waterford Crystal.

Initially, when I went in there it was like being incarcerated. That's what it felt like, just being incarcerated from eight o'clock in the morning until six in the evening. The days were so long and because you were a first-year apprentice the money was tiny. I think it was five shillings at the time, which would be about thirty-five pence now. Of course, it had a better value than thirty-five pence has now. I used to give my mother four and six, so I had a six pence for myself, which you'd spend in a sweet shop. I couldn't go to the pictures or the cinemas or take a drink in or anything like that because I didn't have the money. That six pence was gone on Saturday morning. I found it desperate, terrible those first three or four years, every day was the same and the work was so monotonous and repetitive—I found it hard to stay there. I was thinking about going to England, try to get into nursing or something, but I kept saying to myself—I knew the fellas that were out of their time had loads of money, so I said if I get out of my time here, I'll have a better wage. And, of course, that's what happened. The time went by and as I got into my fourth and fifth year the money improved. At least that part of it meant on the weekends you had money to spend and whatever. It was still—I felt the days long and I just felt like I was incarcerated.

Obviously, when you go into a place like that on your first day, there's the smells that are associated with the place and they are alien and you feel a lump of glass in your

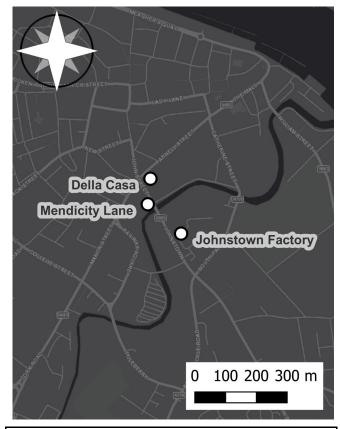
hand—the first day I was in there I was holding this rose bowl, it's like a globe, and the inside of it had to be bevelled and there was a thing shaped like a cone screwed on to a spindle and it is coated with sand paper. And you put that thing into [the bowl] and you move it around. But you are dead awkward, so if you put it up too far on the cone and it sticks into it, it'll whip it around in your hand, inevitably that will happen, and it will nearly break your wrist. It just felt strange—there was water everywhere because there is water coming off of this thing [the cutting wheels]. You didn't have a proper apron. I had an apron, but there was a hole in it. Then some guy took pity on me and got another one, which was all in tatters as well, but at least it went over the hole. Those kind of experiences—but then even in those long, long days and what have you, obviously you make friends with people—you get to know people. Some people you already knew because it is a small town and other people you got to know. You always wondered, were they feeling the same as you. And, basically, they were, basically they were. It was long, hard monotonous days. As time went on, I eventually got a bench, there was three of us working together. Initially when I went in there, I was on a twelve-man shop. There was one guy there, the Master, this was all strange an alien—the Master, the first helper, the second helper, qualified guy, and apprentices at various stages of their apprenticeship and when I went in, I was the lowest form of life because I was the last in.

- Cormac, 60s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

For teenagers going into a factory environment, the transition was very hard. The sensory experience in terms of smells, sounds, and touch was new and foreign. The young workers also had to adapt to new hierarchical structures of power and forms of discipline that became associated with the place itself. While over time Waterford Crystal developed a reputation for paying good wages and providing good benefits, the early years at Waterford Crystal were not nearly as lucrative. Furthermore, it took a lot of time and hard work before the benefits of working at Waterford Crystal were realized. There was also a high turnover of employees at the company because the work was so demanding, both physically and psychologically.

The next account details Shay's first week at the Johnstown factory. Shay is a great story-teller, which is a good thing because he loves to tell stories. He is also able to find the humour in almost anything. Map 2 indicates the key sites that feature in Shay's story. For purposes of understanding his story, it is important to note where Mendicity Lane is relative to the Johnstown

factory and to Della Casa, a takeaway that served fish and chips. Mendicity Lane is no longer there, but it would have been an immediate left turn after crossing over the John's River Bridge if someone was walking from the Johnstown Factory to Della Casa. It is also important to know that at one time there was an institution for the poor on Mendicity Lane. After all, mendicity is defined as depending on alms for a living or practicing begging (Houghton Mifflin 1982). Here is Shay's account of his first week at the Johnstown factory:



Map 2. Map for the "Don't go over Mendicity Lane" story.

When I went in as a raw, young fella—you have to understand this—I was new and I was working with four fellas and they said to me, "Now, seeing that you are the new young fella, it is your turn to go into Della Casa and get a fish and chips." I've never had a fish and chips in my life, I'm fifteen years old and never had a fish and chips in my life. You just didn't have the money to buy it. Think about what I'm saying. You might have got a chips or shared a chips with somebody, but you never had the money to buy a fish and chips. If you had money, it went to others, not chips.

"What?"

"Yeah! It is your turn; you have to go and do it. Go to Benny and ask Benny for four fish and chips and we'll pay him at the end of the week. We'll give you the money at the end of the week."

So, I went into Benny's Della Casa—they're Italians, smashing fella—they were down there where the Woodman Pub is, you have to be right on this? You know where it is?

Josh: Yep.

Well, next to that was Della Casa—The Venetian Cafe. From Venice to Waterford, naturally. I went into Benny and explained to him my situation. I was a raw young

fella. Benny said, "I'll give them to you. Now, come Friday, come in here and pay me. Remember now, come and pay me. Don't go over Mendicity Lane when you get paid." Now, you know the bridge on Johnstown?

Josh: Yep.

You know where Dignity Pub is?

Josh: Yep.

Well, going across that lane way there was houses all along there and you went into the Tramore Train Station that way. There was a little laneway with houses—Mendicity Lane. That was the lane way, there coming out on to the road. There was houses and shops all along there, that's all gone and the train station as well.

"Don't go over Mendicity Lane," he said.

"Jesus! I won't," I said. Of course, you'd never dream of doing something like that. I thought I was in heaven, a fish and chips—going home I might have a bit of bread and butter and a cup of tea. Poor is not the word.

When we got paid on that Friday—these are my first week wages and I'm delighted to be going home to my mother. I said to the lads, "Don't forget the fish and chips from off of Benny's Della Casa."

"What?" they said. "Shag off! You're not getting any money; we were only conning you. Shag off!"

"But hang on, I have to pay him," I said.

"You can do what you like, but we're not giving you any money."

I was after being conned. So, I was walking down, and I am just about to go across Mendicity Lane and Benny is out there, "I'm warning you," he said, "Don't go over Mendicity Lane. Come in and pay." So, I had to go in and give him my first week's wages. [Laughter] But, if it didn't happen, I couldn't talk about it.

- Shay, 60s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

Similar to Cormac, the focus of Shay's initial experience at the Johnstown factory was based on his status as a young boy working with men. His naïveté was exposed by his coworkers' initiation ritual. Now, in the moment, he was furious, and so was his mother, about being duped out of his first week's wages. His wages were needed to help support the household. However, now he can look back on that first week as a humourous anecdote. This experience is informed by the time between the event and the telling of the story. However, many of the workers often talked about the *craic*, blackguarding (a term used regularly by the workers), banter, and/or joking around, while working at Waterford Crystal. For many of the workers, it was the best part of the

job, it is what made the job bearable, because it was such a demanding job. While the work was tough, it was the beginning of what many of the workers perceived as a better life. Initially, their wages were needed to support the household, but as the company grew it got to the point where the workers could begin to afford the comforts and luxuries of a better standard of living.

5.2.3 The Central Technical Institute



Figure 4. Pictures of the Central Technical Institute.

The Central Technical Institute was built in 1906 and extended in 1955 (National Inventory of Architectural Heritage 2016). The building is significant because it was the first technical institute established in the area (National Inventory of Architectural Heritage 2016). The building is now occupied by the Waterford College of Further Education (see Figure 4). According to Hearne (Hearne 2010, 217), in the early days at the Ballytruckle and Johnstown factories, it was not the responsibility of the craftworkers recruited from Europe to undertake all aspects of the apprentices' training. To nurture a local workforce in Waterford, Miroslav Havel and Charles Bačik organized a course on glass technology at the Central Technical Institute in 1948 (Havel 2005; Hearne 2010). According to Noel (quoted in Hearne 2010, 218):

We were told one day that there was a man coming in from the glass factory, it might have been Havel. He gave us an idea of the work we would be doing in the factory and told us we would be coming to the "Tech" two days a week to train for the work. That was about 1951 or 52, and I went into the factory in 1953.

The "Tech," as the Central Technical Institute is known colloquially, was an important site for training and recruiting the workforce for the glass factory (as well as other industries in Waterford). Conal and Edward had similar experiences.

I was down at what we used to call the "Tech," the Central Technical Institute, it's now called Waterford College of Further Education, on Parnell Street. But we all sort of went down there to go into the trades. Those who weren't academically the brightest would go to that school where you would learn metalwork and woodwork and craft. You'd still do science subjects and English and Irish and all of that, but—I was down there anyway, and it turns out that employers would come visit the school looking for workers—looking for new apprentices—people who'd be willing to come out and work with them once you had what they called your Group Certificate. That was the education level to become an apprentice, you had to have your Group Cert. So, I had that and so my parents pushed me into it to be honest. I didn't want to leave school at all. I wanted to stay on and get as high as I could, but there was no money in the house, practically nobody working at the time.

- Conal, 50s, Craftworker, 36 Years of Service

As soon as somebody became eligible to go to work, they went to work. And they worked and they handed up the money to their household and that is how people survived. So, my brother did it at fourteen years of age and I was fifteen when I went into the glass factory. I had sat what was known as the Group Cert in the local Technical Institute, which is the place where children went to learn a trade as opposed to going into the more academic fields. So, anyway, that's what I did and at fifteen years of age I was recruited from the "Tech" to go into Waterford Crystal, which was then situated in Johnstown in Waterford.

- Edward, 50s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

For some workers, they wanted to attend the "Tech" because they enjoyed working with their hands and wanted to learn a trade. Waterford Crystal gave them that opportunity. For other workers, attending the "Tech" and getting a trade was perceived as the best way to attain employment, which was needed to support their household.

The development of the glassmaking programme at the "Tech" represented an investment in the community with respect to creating a local workforce to help the industry grow. Bačik and

Havel identified the "Tech" as a way to develop that workforce and it was seen as a great opportunity. Upon the opening of the Johnstown factory, the *Irish Independent* wrote: "Already a number of local youths who will be given positions in the new factory have completed a special course in glass cutting at Waterford Technical School. Other pupils have enrolled for the reopening of the course, with the almost definite assurance of being placed in employment next year" (Irish Independent September 19th, 1951). At the time, Waterford suffered from high unemployment and high rates of emigration and the prospect of a job at Waterford Crystal presented an opportunity for people to live and work in Waterford. By the 1970s, Waterford Crystal had established its own training programme (Hearne 2019, 124). However, the workers' attendance at the "Tech" became a common experience which a large portion of the workforce, namely the craftworkers, identify with and draw from in conveying how they became employed by the company. In many cases, the workers' time at the "Tech" was seen as an extension of, or as a rite of passage for, their experiences with the company.

5.2.4 The German Road

In 1952-3, twenty semi-detached homes were built for some of the immigrant craftsmen that were recruited to work at Waterford Crystal from Germany, Italy, Czechoslovakia, and elsewhere (D. Dowling 1998, 173). Through popular usage, the street that these houses lined became known as the German Road (D. Dowling 1998, 173; see Figure 5). While not all the residents were German, the notion of the German Road came to symbolize the influx of immigrants

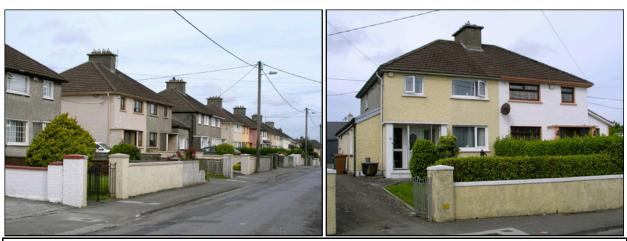


Figure 5. Pictures of housing on the German Road of St. John's Park.

settling in Waterford because of the glass factory, which would have been unusual for the time.

David remembers the diversity of his neighbourhood growing up.

I lived in St. John's Park, which is right up from the original factory in Ballytruckle. I didn't have Smiths or Murphys as my neighbours, I had Madrigalis and Morellis because most of the Germans and Italians that had come to Ireland lived in that area. So, it wasn't unusual for me to have these people around. On the way to school then, you'd pass the Johnstown factory eventually, you know. It [Waterford Crystal] was foremost in your mind.

- David, 50s, Manager, 40 Years of Service

In 1953, this same area was marked for the development of one of the largest private housing schemes in Waterford—St. John's Park (D. Dowling 1998, 173). The Waterford Crystal workforce is closely associated with this development because "the first lot of thirty houses to be completed were let to key workers in the new Waterford Glass Factory" (D. Dowling 1998, 173). Furthermore, as the Waterford Crystal workforce expanded and wages increased, a number of the workers purchased homes in St. John's Park.

The achievement of home ownership was significant for many of the workers who remembered or experienced the impoverishment of Waterford before the glass factory. Niall remembers the poverty of Waterford in the 1950s.

I grew up here in the fifties, well I grew up in the forties as well, but I remember 1950. This town, I was six years old, poverty stricken. We had tenements still. People don't realize we had three and four families living in one house. Not a lot, but there was a section right in the centre of the city. There was two, three streets we had tenement living, people sharing houses. Horrendous! Poor. Miserable. God forsaken places. So, they were proud that Waterford was beginning to move, come out of that awful poverty. It [Waterford Crystal] was huge, it brought in—I mean, the salaries being paid out...even labourers made good money. I don't know what the wage bill would've been, but it would have been huge by comparison to anything else going on in the country or the city.

- Niall, 60s, Craftworker, 51 Years of Service

While Waterford Crystal was not the only industry in town, it was a very significant industry given its rapid growth and expansion, as well as the recognition the brand bestowed upon Waterford itself. In many ways, the German Road represents an important aspect of Waterford Crystal's unique history within Waterford, namely the immigration of craftsmen from other European countries to a city in a country known more for its association with emigration. Between 1947 to 1956, forty-five immigrant glass workers from Germany (18), Italy (9), Czechoslovakia (3), Scotland (3), Austria (2), Poland (2), Belgium (1), England (1), Estonia (1), Hungary (1), Lithuania (1), Portugal (1), Romania (1), and Wales (1) were recruited to work at Waterford Crystal (Hearne 2019, 304). This is against a backdrop of negative net migration (-579,000) from 1951 to 1971 in Ireland (Central Statistics Office 2017). The jobs, wages, and benefits associated with Waterford Crystal represented a better life for both immigrant and domestic workers. This was mostly realized through home ownership, which was a luxury not afforded to everyone in Waterford during this period, even though mortgages and related debts might ultimately curtail future labour militancy.

The construction of the Kilbarry factory (see Figure 1) commenced in 1967 (Sunday Independent November 22nd, 1970). The production of glass was gradually transferred from Johnstown to the new plant as it came online. Kilbarry was finally completed in 1972 (Hearne 2019, 53). The Kilbarry factory was a bustling hive of activity that many of the workers described as a community unto itself. For Cormac, just seeing the building is an emotional experience.

When the place closed down and we all went our merry way, passing that factory was a difficulty in the sense that when you passed it all the memories came back to you—the people that worked in there. Put it this way, having effectively been incarcerated in it for over forty years, do you know what I mean? You are bound to have an emotional attachment to the building itself, to the people, obviously, that you worked with down through the years—a lot of lads have died. Young men who would have died, who were friends, and people who were active in the union and things that you had done together. They've died for one reason or another. All them kind of memories are in there.

As I said, it was a good place to work. We got the best of what was in it, out of it. If we hadn't got it, the shareholders would have got it. It was an emotional kind of thing when you pass it.

When I pass it now, it's more of a shell, you know. I just look at it. It's more of a shell, but still when I drive down Matties Hill, which is always the way I came to work, all the cars would be parked on the right-hand side and the left-hand side—there would be people always, no matter what time of the day, there'd be people coming and going out of that entrance into the factory. And that's not the tourist entrance, this was the factory side. There'd be vans going in, there'd be fellas driving in and out and people walking in. It was always a busy place. Then it was all gone and all the people that had been left in the place were obviously all scattering to try and decide what they can do with their lives. That great sort of centre of collective identity, that that group had, was atomized...But, it's all gone now. It's all a memory.

- Cormac, 60s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

The Kilbarry factory was home to thousands of well-paying jobs with good benefits, which helped drive the local economy as the majority of the workers' wages were spent in the area. Prior to the 1990 Strike, sixty percent of "Waterford Crystal's annual wage bill of IR£54.3 million was spent locally" (Hearne 2019, 208). Furthermore, the number of tourists that visited the factory was around 300,000 a year. The Waterford Crystal Tourist Trail, Showroom, and Visitor

Centre were hugely important to the local tourism industry (although, this is a somewhat contentious point that is discussed in Chapter Six). The company, the product, and the Kilbarry factory, as the site of the Tourist Trail, became closely associated with the identity of the town itself. The Kilbarry factory was the physical manifestation of Waterford Crystal's success, as well as what the company meant to Waterford and Ireland.

However, the Waterford Crystal workforce could be a polarizing subject amongst people not associated with the company. While Waterford Crystal was hugely important to the development of Waterford and the southeast of Ireland, it was a contested symbol in that its effects on the region were both revered and reviled by the wider community. After the company closed and the workers lost their jobs, many people expressed their pity for the workers and argued that the company was good for the town. Other people felt that the workers got what they deserved after "having it too good for too long." The workers were aware of the contentious position they occupied within the wider community. Aoife and Declan describe this below.

At the start it was just a job, it was a good paying job at the time. Even though we were lower paid than the general male worker out there, it was still a good paying job.²² You could go on your holidays, you could go to Spain, which lots of people weren't doing at the time. You had to have money to really do it. You could buy your house, you could get a mortgage, you could get a car, you could always get the loans.

It was a great place to work. It had a bit of a thing about it and a lot of the people that worked in there thought it had a bit of thing about it.

"Sure, that's the glass factory again."

"Sure, it's you that have the prices in the town so high."

"All your money is making it impossible for other people to go on holidays because you are going down and booking them, so they know they can charge whatever they like."

Lots of things like that, but you had the other side where people were very generous to charities, very generous. And anyone who ever came looking for anything was always given, especially local charities. They always gave. Everybody knew you worked in Waterford Crystal; everybody knew you worked in Waterford Crystal.

- Aoife, 50s, General Section, 35 Years of Service

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²² Pay inequality is discussed later in the chapter.

It went to the stage where we had a deduction, weekly, from our wages called raffles and collections and that money was divided up between local charities. And that was up to the day the factory closed. The goodness of people out there, I couldn't overstate. And yet, the same people who were forced out on to the road were vilified. They were absolutely vilified. I heard a fella say one day, "Good enough for them. They had it too good for too long."

I said to myself, "How do you address that? You don't."

Now, having said that, a lot of workers brought that on themselves by the simple fact that they lost the run of themselves. Why do I say that? They had so much money and so much little sense, or so little sense, that you had fellas who bought a house say up in Lisduggan and that became too common for them, so they moved to another upmarket estate and when that became too common—so, you had that kind of thing going on.

- Declan, 60s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

On the one hand, Waterford Crystal was a symbol of growth and prosperity. Its workers could afford to buy their own homes, cars, and go on foreign holidays. It meant having opportunities and experiences that were unimaginable for the previous generation. As Niamh (50s, General Section, 37 Years of Service) recalls with respect to the foreign holidays: "Now, we went on holidays, all the women—Spain and Portugal, which was unheard of that our Mothers would be able to do these things. I'm talking about single women that went off—no problem, just go down to the credit union or the bank and get the money and off you go." Working at Waterford Crystal was a means to a better life for themselves and their families. The workforce also did a lot for the town in terms of providing a consumer base for the local economy, as well as supporting local causes and charities both practically and financially. According to Hearne (2019, 208), "it was estimated that the workers contributed IR£21,000 per year to the St. Vincent De Paul and over the years had contributed in excess of IR£5 million to other charitable organizations." Furthermore, the company, and the workforce through the Tourist Trail, gave the city and its people a global identity.

On the other hand, there was a certain amount of resentment in the city towards the workers because they were perceived as "having it so good" within the factory. The workers were accused regularly of driving up consumer prices and housing costs in the city because of their high wages. According to Shay:

One of our mates went away to Sligo, this is going back years now, and he went into a shop—like, Dunnes. He paid £20 for a pair of jeans here and he saw the same pair of jeans for a tenner in Sligo. And, he said to the girl behind the counter, "If I bought them in Waterford, it would be £20, why is it only a tenner here?"

She said, "You shouldn't be asking me. There is the salesman over there. He is only after coming in."

He called him over, "Come here," he said, "I buy those jeans for a tenner here, but I'd pay twenty for them back in Waterford."

"Ah, yeah," he said, "That's because of Waterford Crystal, all the prices are doubled."

- Shay, 60s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

Whether this is true or not, it certainly became an accepted truth within Waterford. At the same time, the issue over prices also functioned as a commentary on the privileged status the workers held within the city. Working at Waterford Crystal came with a certain prestige because of the company's high profile and the fact that the good wages and conditions afforded to the workers were well known. Even the ability to make charitable donations is a performance of relative privilege.

There was also a similar resentment or envy replicated within the company, as Niamh remembers with respect to divisions between the craftworkers and the non-craftworkers.

We were bad within the non-craft, but the craft were worse because you had to have a bigger house than me, you had to have a bigger car than me—because you were the craftsman, I was the general worker, how could you be living alongside of me, the same estate, you know? This viciousness, snobbery—you know what I mean? A cutter and a blower could live wherever they like on that estate, but how could a general worker live on the same estate. How could they afford the same houses? I must be able to afford a better house than them, if they can afford—that was the side of Waterford Crystal that I didn't like. It created that situation where people were living just way beyond their means.

- Niamh, 50s, General Section, 37 Years of Service

Other significant tensions within the company, included divisions between management and the craftworkers. Some managers resented the fact that craftworkers with low levels of formal

education were earning comparable salaries. There was even division between blowers and cutters. Waterford Crystal was known for the quality of its cut glass, so there was a sentiment within the factory that the cutters were held in higher esteem.

As the company began to expand, one of the most significant divisions was between men and women and the right to equal pay. As Aoife mentioned earlier: "Even though we were lower paid than the general male worker out there, it was still a good paying job." Eventually, the pay gap between male and female workers resulted in the female workers leading a trade union supported fight for equal pay. Niamh was involved in that fight.

But we eventually got it. But people don't realize, it was a major milestone for women within Ireland, not just Waterford. We were quoted and used because we did it under the job for equal value—the value of your job was equal to the man's job. It wasn't like for like...you could claim equal pay, you could say my job is the same as yours and it would've been real messy. We had to get people to do a work study—do a valuation on all the jobs, both male and female.

- Niamh, 50s, General Section, 37 Years of Service

The impetus for equal pay legislation came from Ireland's membership to the European Economic Community (EEC) (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton 2002, S150). To comply with EEC directives, the Irish government introduced the Anti-Discrimination (Pay) Act in 1974 and the Employment Equality Act in 1977 (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton 2002, S150). Even then, the Federated Union of Employers (FUE) lobbied for later effective dates suggesting the immediate

implementation of this legislation would result in redundancies and plant closures (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton 2002, S151). The Irish government itself even asked for an exemption from the EEC for industries where equal pay might jeopardize employment (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton 2002, S151). This request was denied, and the Acts were enacted on schedule (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton 2002, S151).

However, the "employers are not required to determine the worth of jobs and resulting pay levels" (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton 2002, S152). As a result, the onus is on the female employee to make a claim for equal pay (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton 2002, S152). The female workers at Waterford Crystal fought for equal pay under the "equal pay for equal value" part of the legislation, which is defined as: "the work performed by one is equal in value to that performed by the other in terms of the demands it makes in relation to such matters as skill, physical or mental effort, responsibility and working conditions" (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton 2002, S151). Equal pay for equal value is an important aspect of the legislation but is also difficult to assess. As Niamh mentions, they had to have a third-party come into the company and do job evaluations, which "assigns points to the various components of the jobs (e.g., skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions)" (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton 2002, S153). The aggregate point scores are then used to compare the value of male-dominated and female-dominated jobs (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton 2002, S153). At that time, the female employees were largely limited to female-dominated areas of the company, namely the marking (i.e., drawing lines on the glass for cutting), quality control/inspection, and packaging departments. The value of these sections to the overall production of Waterford Crystal as a whole, except for the craftworkers who were on a piece-rate system, needed to be assessed in order to determine equal pay for equal value. Even after this work study, Waterford Crystal was still resistant. According to Niamh:

"They fought it hard, like, they made us go through the rigors. They didn't just say, "Ah yeah. You're right. In the end, we eventually got it."

The fight for equal pay at Waterford Crystal was a significant victory on several levels. Ireland was a very conservative country with respect to gender equality. As stated in Chapter One, the marriage bar was in effect for the civil service until 1973. A ban on night and Sunday work for women was lifted only in 1986 (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton 2002, S150). Divorce was illegal until 1995 (Cassidy, Strobl and Thornton 2002, S150). Abortions up to twelve weeks only just became legal in 2018 (Ely 2022). Furthermore, Article 41:2 of the Irish constitution says the State: 1) "recognizes that by her life in the home, woman gives to the State a support without which the common good cannot be achieved; and 2) "shall, therefore, endeavour that mothers shall not be obliged by economic necessity to engage in labour to the neglect of their duties in the home" (The Journal.ie January 21st, 2022). The language around the role of women in the Irish constitution is archaic. It is a holdover from the Catholic Church's influence on the Irish state (The Journal.ie January 21st, 2022). But it is also representative of a prevailing thought on the role of women in society that characterized a significant part of Ireland's history. The female workers at Waterford Crystal were up against this history. Plus, Waterford Crystal was a conservative company. It kept the marriage bar in effect until 1977 (see Chapter One). The original ownership of Waterford Crystal had close political ties to Fianna Fáil, Ireland's dominant political party (see Chapters Three and Four). Given the company's profile, status as an iconic Irish brand, and political connections, the fight for equal pay was a meaningful victory on a wider scale.

Many of the workers remember the great friendships and camaraderie they had at work.

Any elements of animosity amongst the workers were expected given the sheer size of the

workforce. Having said that, the social activities associated with Waterford Crystal, which is described in the section on the Waterford Crystal Sports and Leisure Centre, also brought people from what might be perceived as disparate groups together. It is important to recognize the complexity of the division and unity within the company, as well as the ways in which these dynamics were perceived and experienced by the wider community.

Overall, the relationship between Waterford Crystal and the city has been largely positive, but it has also changed over time. After the 1990 Strike, the company began to introduce new technology, reduce the size of the workforce, and outsource some of its production. This period also coincided with the rise of the Celtic Tiger and the influx of new companies, namely pharmaceutical and IT companies, establishing branches in Waterford to benefit from Ireland's flexible labour market, low corporate tax rate, and access to the European market. These industries tended to attract younger workers with higher levels of formal education. While the influence of Waterford Crystal and its workforce in the city dwindled significantly after the millennium, the company and the brand were still important symbolically to the town's identity. The closure of the company in 2009 was felt throughout the town, but not as intensely as if it had happened in the 1970s or 1980s when Waterford Crystal was much more of a driving force in the local economy. However, returning to High and Lewis (2007, 25; also see Walley 2013): "deindustrialization is, clearly, much more than an economic process involving job loss. It involves the displacement of industry and industrial workers to the cultural periphery." The demise of Waterford Crystal also undermined the importance of the workforce, who historically had been seen as very privileged workers that had a huge influence on the development of the city and the southeast of Ireland. The opening of the House of Waterford Crystal in 2010, while contentious, is largely seen as good for the city because it keeps a connection between the product and

Waterford. Furthermore, the House of Waterford Crystal is important to the development of Waterford's tourism industry, which has taken on greater importance since the 2008 financial crisis. The spatial importance and influence of the House of Waterford Crystal is discussed in the Chapter Six.

The workers' struggle for higher wages, benefits, and job security, was both positive and detrimental to the wider community. On the one hand, the industry and the workers' well-paying jobs generated other economic activities upon which other people were able to benefit. On the other hand, those people who were not part of this economic growth felt they were left to struggle as Waterford became an increasingly more expensive place to live in. Moreover, their inability to acquire the material markers of homes, cars, and foreign holidays that the glass workers enjoyed was also demoralizing.

5.2.6 Dungarvan

Dungarvan is approximately fifty kilometres southwest of Waterford City in County Waterford. The Dungarvan factory (see Figure 6) was also built during Waterford Crystal's major expansion period. After having recently moved from Johnstown to Kilbarry, with the company continuing to expand the Kilbarry operation, the Dungarvan factory was officially opened in 1972 (Irish Examiner June 1st, 1972; Munster Express August 4th, 1972). It cost approximately IR£1million to build and occupied an area of approximately six hectares (Irish Examiner June

1st, 1972; Munster Express August 4th, 1972). The establishment of a Waterford Crystal factory in Dungarvan was significant to rural Waterford and represented the company's continued commitment to invest in the Waterford region, as well as Irish industry and workers in general. According to Hearne (2019, 152):



Figure 6. Pictures of Waterford Crystal's Dungarvan Factory.

Both Noel Griffin and Paddy McGrath, in lengthy interviews, explained that the location had been influenced by its proximity to *An Rinn* Gaeltacht area. Both felt "that in promoting such development the problem of emigration and rural development will to some measure have been overcome." It was also hoped that the community as a whole would benefit and that it would help in the preservation of the Irish language.

The Dungarvan factory employed approximately 500 workers at its height, which was a huge boost to the economy in that part of the county.

The formation of the Dungarvan factory resulted in issues about how to best organize these largely separate workforces to avoid the process of "whipsawing," which "exploits the system of decentralized labour relations by putting one location in competition with another for jobs, raises, and security" (Carbonella 2014, 103; also see Kasmir 2014, 212-13). Below Cormac describes how they dealt with this issue:

Initially, they started paying them [the Dungarvan workers] a country rate, which was below the rate down here [at Kilbarry], so we went up there and we got that sorted out. And the first day we were up there, the guy who was the managing director up there brought the Committee down to the pub—sandwiches and beer, right? We went back up then—and we use to go up once a month. Then we insisted that this [the wages] had to be sorted...there was no more trips to the pub after that. [Laughter]

Now, there was also a big argument around '77, around that period, to give Dungarvan their own branch. They wanted their own branch and we argued that they should have their own branch—that they should be able to determine—and the company would treat them better, if they knew they had their own branch and that they could make their own decisions.

They then had their own branch and done their own business up there. And everything that was going to affect anybody working at Waterford Crystal [as a whole] was decided by the Joint Negotiating Committee and they [the Dungarvan Branch] was fully involved in that.

- Cormac, 60s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

Each Waterford Crystal plant had its own Branch Committee to deal with issues specific to the situations at their individual plants. Each Branch Committee had their own Section Committees of the workforce, i.e., cutters, blowers, staff, and general workers. The shop stewards representing their Sections raised specific issues effecting their Section. Some of these shop stewards also made up the Branch Committees and/or served on the Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC). The

JNC was made up of members from across the different Waterford Crystal Branches and oversaw decisions that affected the workforce as a whole. In doing so, the JNC was there to address instances of "whipsawing."

However, there were also issue-specific Committees, such as negotiating piece-rates for the blowers and the cutters, which also allowed for and addressing "whipsawing." In response to a question about whether Waterford Crystal actively pitted the various workforces at the different factories against each other, Darragh said:

I don't think the company sought to pitch the workforces against each other to any great extent as a policy. However, I think that at times the company were quite happy to have all sections, not just Dungarvan and Kilbarry, pulling against each other on occasions over various issues and indeed sometimes within sections in an attempt to win their point of view. That said, [the Managing Director at Dungarvan] ruled Dungarvan rather than manage it and he fomented distrust between the workforces of the plants by constantly reinforcing the insecurities of the Dungarvan members, fears for their jobs, et cetera. Some of the stewards readily ran with this and sought to claim that Dungarvan was the most competitive plant. In my view really, it was just buying into that plant v plant nonsense. You could say the JNC kept it at bay, but it was really resisted by those stewards who had become clued into the tactics of employers generally and then this fed into the Branches, if that makes sense to you. Those that were most clued in were also those who were more politically active.

There is also the fact that historically there was a distance between some of the committees. I do know there was always a tension between the blowers committees in Kilbarry and Dungarvan up to the time I went onto the committee. Apparently, and this is according to —————, the Kilbarry committees always withheld information from the Dungarvan committees on piece rates, et cetera, and generally tried to keep their information and knowledge to themselves at the expense of the Dungarvan workers. My argument within the committee was that we could only lose long term by not getting the blowers from Dungarvan onto the same page as ourselves. My policy then was to show them how we operated piece rate systems and it helped to raise the wages of the Dungarvan blowers and bring us closer as a group as we faced the issues of short time and sharing work.

- Darragh, 50s, Craftworker, 38 Years of Service

While it was not entirely clear if the company actively sought to instill animosity among the various branches of the workforce, it certainly benefitted from any discord and tension between the workforces and their organizing committees. As in any political organization, there is going to be

internal disputes and disagreements. However, according to Darragh, the Waterford Crystal workforce managed to stay strongly organized through the political acumen of some of its workers and shop stewards, which benefitted them as a workforce in terms of wages, conditions, and benefits. This is discussed further in the next section on the Keyser St. Trade Union Hall as what some workers referred to as a "trade union education."

In 2006, Waterford Crystal decided to close the Dungarvan factory as part of a larger restructuring programme to prevent the Waterford-Wedgwood Group sinking further into debt (also see Chapter Two). Dungarvan's production was moved to the Kilbarry factory, while some of Kilbarry's production was moved overseas (C. Murphy 2005). As part of the restructuring programme, 485 redundancy packages were on offer to Waterford Crystal employees in Dungarvan and Kilbarry, with 390 coming from Dungarvan (Riegel 2005, 2005). Not all the Dungarvan workers were made redundant, as some were redeployed to the Kilbarry factory. Regardless, the closure of the Dungarvan factory and the redundancy of nearly 400 hundred workers, some of whom were couples working in the factory, had a devastating effect on the town's economy (Riegel 2005, 2005). It is important to note that, as Winson and Leach (2002, 126) have documented, mass redundancy "is particularly bad for couples...who [find themselves] suddenly at home together, unemployed." In these cases, the financial stress of redundancy have a significant effect on the health of the relationship, the family, and the household in various ways, such as: fighting over money/bills/food; no or limited social activities outside the house; having less time and/or space to oneself; less patience and understanding for young children; an inability to support adult children facing their own difficulties in the labour market; and, finally, separation and/or divorce (Winson and Leach 2002; also see Chapter Seven).

As of 2016, the Dungarvan factory is still vacant (Property.ie 2016). The photographs in Figure 6 were taken in 2012. Cormac found the Dungarvan factory the most haunting, because unlike the main Waterford Crystal plant in Kilbarry (see Figure 1), all the old Waterford Crystal signage was still present and visible. Following the closure of Waterford Crystal in 2009, all the Waterford Crystal signs at the Kilbarry factory were removed. It was unclear as to whether this was done to conceal the company's closure, to soften the blow to the workers and the city, or to prevent confusion between the Kilbarry factory and the new House of Waterford Crystal. Even though Cormac had memories of working at both factories, it was as if the spectre of Waterford Crystal lingered longer at the Dungarvan factory as opposed to the Kilbarry factory. The very presence of the Waterford Crystal signage deepened the emotional response evoked by the abandoned buildings.

5.2.7 Keyser St. Trade Union Hall

There is some discrepancy as to when the Keyser St. Hall opened (see Figure 7). According to Emmet O'Connor (1989, 310), the union "vacated its old hall in Henrietta St. for a new premises in Keyser St." in 1962. However, Merrigan (1989) states that the Keyser St. Hall was opened in 1972. According to Darragh, 1962 seemed too early for the Keyser St. Hall: "It[1962] seemed to me to be too early for Keyser Street and I asked around over the past week or so and one of the older blowers...who had started in 1965 told me that he attended meetings in Henrietta Street after that date and for much of his early years that's where the office was sited...The Union moved from 117 The Quay to Henrietta Street in 1965 and from there to Keyser Street in 1972." The glass workers formed their own branch, the 11/64, of the Amalgamated Transport and General Workers Union in 1966 (E. O'Connor 1989, 310). It seems likely that a new branch

of the trade union would form and then seek out new premises rather than vice versa. Either way, these dates all coincide with Waterford Crystal's major expansionary period and the trade union played a significant role in the development of the company's workforce.

The trade union and the labour politics at Waterford Crystal factored significantly into the experiences of the workers hired during this expansionary period. Darragh refers to those experiences as a trade union education.

We all had our own teams and when we socialized all the masters would sit together and all the apprentices would sit away at their own table. Now, they wouldn't allow you to sit down with them, but they'd buy you a drink, they were decent men that way in making sure their lads were looked after. But they never allowed you to sit down with them and that type of thing. But it was good, you know. And the other side of it was that there was a trade union education attached to it...the older guys who started to develop the union—and it was insisted on that you go to your union meeting, which was most of the time down in this hall. If we had bigger meetings, we might have to go somewhere else. Invariably, we were down here, and you had your committee and you had your stewards,



Figure 7. Pictures of the Keyser St. Trade Union Hall.

well organized, and if you weren't at the meeting they'd say to you why weren't you—you should be going to your meetings.

Now, at that time we were what they called, "Boys." And, on the ground, we'd be holding moulds and stuff like that. And the progression into apprenticeship phase wasn't as fast as we would like because it meant jumping from that tenner, I was telling you about, to an apprentice wage which was a percentage of the master's wage. And they worked piece-rate, so if you were in a good shop and you were a fella earning good money, right, you'd be working hard, but you'd be getting good money in return. Now, I should say that when these fellas went in on Monday morning, they didn't have a penny, they started earning from eight o'clock Monday morning, so they'd rule you. They were tough, tough task masters. But I was lucky. I was never with anyone that treated me in the sense—bad, bullied. So, I always got on with the people...

So, they insisted that young fellas attend and then, of course after that, the point I was making was that the boys on the floor were on a rate and they were trying to get into be apprentices and on to the platform and get their progression moving a lot quicker. So, we set up an Apprentices Committee and to agitate for that to happen. We probably came into conflict with the Committee [JNC] in the sense—because the company, naturally, didn't want us moving up onto more money. And it was pressure for them [the Committee] and the lads were coming back and saying that it was going to happen just not as fast, but we were more eager. A member on one occasion down there—one of the lads that was involved with us decided he wasn't recognizing the Committee, so he turned his back on the Committee and all the apprentices turned their back to the Committee. It was something. It's funny now, but it probably had its effect at that time.

So, we kind of learned—active learning from that on how to be a trade unionist and you had to stand up and talk for yourself. There is no point in keeping your mouth shut. And the fellas that are the most vociferous obviously ended up becoming shop stewards later on, myself included. They were all good lads and there was always a genuine effort to better things for themselves and the group of workers that they represented. And there was no personal gain in it other than you're off the platform for a while doing something, you know, you're away from the daily grind. But they weren't doing it for that because it was hard work and you'd have to sit up there and take it from the membership if you weren't performing. And for that reason, it was a great education in trade unionism...Our union was shop steward and rank and file led, you know, and very insistent we had monthly meetings. And we were organized on a sectional basis and on a branch basis, you know. So, it was kind of horizontal and vertical in terms of organization—the union. It made for great democracy...that type of democracy where people come together and through a show of hands come to an agreement...That's the kind of trade union education that I had in there.

- Darragh, 50s, Craftworker, 38 Years of Service

Aoife recalls a similar empowering experience from having the opportunity to voice her opinions at trade union meetings.

Kids will never know what it's like to stand up at a union meeting with, it might be only fifty people there, but it could be 500, and say what you want to say and get people there

going, "Yeah! You're right," and feel that behind you. Jesus! My voice might have been shaking and I might have stuttered, but I said it. I mightn't be the best speaker in the world, but I still said what I had to say that's the way I felt. I mightn't have been agreeing with what was being said or whatever, but I said it.

I saw people standing up at union meetings and they are getting cheered to high heaven. It's great. It's great. I saw people standing up and get booed, but they said what they wanted to say and that was their place to say it. That was their forum. They were entitled to stand up. I mightn't have agreed with them, but they were entitled to it. Kids will never have that. This is my place to say it and I want you to go in and do that for me. They mightn't be able to do it, but at least you said it and at least you tried.

- Aoife, 50s, General Section, 35 Years of Service

Aoife's lament for the next generation points to the general decline in Ireland's trade union density, the proportion of the national workforce that are in a trade union. According to Geary and Belizon (2022, 5), Ireland's trade union density has declined from approximately sixty percent in the early 1980s to around twenty-five percent by 2021, with the highest concentration of trade union membership remaining in the public sector. The only increase in trade union density during this forty-year period occurred in 2008 following the financial crisis, but that was marked by a sharp decline shortly thereafter (Geary and Belizon 2022, 5).

While the Waterford Crystal workforce had a low formal education-attainment profile, many of the workers talked about education based in the real-world experiences of work. Moreover, those workers that were actively involved in the trade union, often referred to their education through the trade union as well. The trade union played an important role in the lives of the workers both materially and psychologically. Firstly, it was through trade union activism that the workers were able to secure the good wages and conditions that was so integral to the success of the workforce and the influence the workforce had on the city and the region. While the workers might have benefited from a favourable international market for their product, it was the workers and the trade union that ultimately won those benefits.

Secondly, the workforce was often identified with the strength, unity, and organization of their trade union, which arguably shaped their sense of justice and injustice within the workplace and in the wider community. Cormac remembers his first interaction with the trade union vividly.

I can remember the first time I had any contact with the union. It was when — came around with a jug. The paper mills were on strike and they were on strike for twenty-three weeks. And, he said, "We are collecting for the paper mills." So, I think I had five shillings a week, you know. So, I gave him a thrupence, a three pence I gave him, which was, you know—so, he took it out, "Here," he said, "you need that more than those men or their families who have nothing. They're on strike sixteen weeks." Or whatever it was. A shilling. I gave him a shilling. Now, I had nothing for the next two weeks. [Laughter] But, that was my first introduction to the union.

- Cormac, 60s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

The Waterford Crystal workers were also very involved in supporting the Liverpool Dockers' Strike and Welsh Miners' Strike in the United Kingdom. The strength and organization of the workers' trade union certainly factored into the way they perceived their relationships with each other and the wider community, both locally and globally. The former company physician²³ who still tends to many of the former glass workers, attests to the workers' continued spirit of generosity and altruism:

Just before the earthquake in Haiti, which was—and the earthquake in Haiti was in 2010, it's nearly two years now. I think it was the end of January 2010. But in November of 2009, I started going out to Haiti, it predated the earthquake, and I've been there four times since. And my nurse and myself have been raising money for a charity that is out there working on housing and sanitation and things like that. Uniquely, they're [the Waterford Crystal workers] amongst, still, even though they have nothing, proportionately they are the most generous group who contribute to our funding for that charity. Still, because they have a view that—look, there are always people worse off than us—which is really surprising. Then the people that you would think would give the most, don't. So, they've always had that generosity.

I think it goes back to the time when they were actually earning an awful lot of money, relatively speaking in the '80s, so therefore they had to give. But what transpired

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²³ Before I interviewed the former company physician, I informed him that it would be nearly impossible to maintain his anonymity. He gave me permission to use his real name. However, I have decided not to use his name here to do what I can to extend him the same level of anonymity in parallel to what I have done for most of my other research participants.

is that sense of—that's something that was just instilled in people then, so even though they didn't have it later on in their working careers at Waterford Crystal, they still gave. Even though they probably didn't have it to give. And now, when they definitely don't have it to give, they still find it hard not to give when an opportunity arises. So, they're quite an extraordinary group of people.

- Former Company Physician

While there are a number of factors that shape a person's sense of justice, many of the workers entered Waterford Crystal as teenagers from poor families at a time when Waterford was economically downtrodden. The workers remember when they had very little and the bulk of their wages would go to support the interests of their family as opposed to their own individual needs and desires. The workers grew up at Waterford Crystal and the trade union reinforced the workers' sense of solidarity both within and outside the workplace. As a group that was organized in large part through the trade union, the Waterford Crystal workers were able to influence their own social worlds.

5.2.8 Waterford Crystal Sports and Leisure Centre

In 1969, Waterford Crystal secured an area of land in Ballinaneesagh, which is just on the outskirts of Waterford and a short walk from the Kilbarry factory along the Cork Rd. This site was secured for the purpose of building a sports and leisure centre for the Waterford Crystal workers and their families. According to the company's annual report (Waterford Glass Limited 1969), "a contract has been placed for the creation of this Centre on a 7 acre [2.8 hectares] site opposite the new industrial estate in Waterford. Apart from playing fields, tennis courts and other outside recreational amenities together with appropriate dressing rooms, tea rooms, refreshment facilities, etc., a large indoor heated swimming pool is being built which will accommodate all

those working in the factory and their families."²⁴ The Waterford Crystal Sports and Leisure Centre (see Figure 8) was officially opened in 1972. It cost £100,000 to build, and by the time it was completed, it occupied an area of six hectares (Munster Express April 14th, 1972).

While the Centre was completely financed by the company, the impetus for the Centre came from the workers, namely those involved with the Sports Club Committee (Munster Express April 14th, 1972). It was this Committee that was responsible for developing and organizing the project (Munster Express April 14th, 1972). After the Centre was built, the operation of the Centre was financed through a nominal fee that was deducted from the workers' salaries through the payroll department at Waterford Crystal. The Centre was administered by a committee of volunteers that were elected by the employees on an annual basis. Over the years, the Centre played a significant role in the social life of the company's workers and families. Henry remembers the social aspect of working at Waterford Crystal fondly:

There was different social clubs in the place. And people would ask you, "What kind of sports are you involved in?" And people looked after local soccer teams and hurling teams and they would say, "Are you interested in joining?" You met an awful lot of people out there. And the social aspect of the factory was great.

- Henry, 40s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

Beyond the Waterford Crystal community, the Centre was hugely important to Waterford in general. The swimming pool was the only public swimming pool in the city (Hearne 2019, 215).

Many local children learned to swim at the Centre.²⁵

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²⁴ I was not able to confirm if Waterford Crystal purchased the land or reached an agreement with Waterford City Council for the use of the land. During the official opening of the centre, which was attended by the Minister of Local Government, Robert Molloy, TD, the Waterford Crystal Chairman, Paddy McGrath, pressed the Minister and his government to extend the type of grants and tax breaks that are available for comparable community facilities to the Waterford Crystal Sports and Leisure Centre in order to encourage similar private developments around the country (Munster Express April 14th, 1972). This could be an indication that the company purchased the land, but the use of the term "contract" for securing the land from the City Council could suggest otherwise.

²⁵ The Dungarvan factory had its own Sports and Leisure Centre, which played a similar function with respect to the workers and the community. At the time of research, I was unaware of the Dungarvan Sports and Leisure Centre and that is why it is not included in this chapter.









Figure 8. Pictures of the Waterford Crystal Sports and Leisure Centre.

Following the 1990 Strike and the subsequent restructuring programmes that were aimed at reducing Waterford Crystal's operating costs, the Centre was under a lot of pressure to be closed because it was losing money (O'Mara 1998). Historically, if the Centre was operating at a loss, the company would cover the costs of the facility. The Centre managed to remain open during this difficult period, partially by the Waterford City Council agreeing to fund "fifty percent of the operation and maintenance costs of the swimming pool so as to allow it to remain open" (Hearne 2019, 336 n53). If the pool closed, Waterford City Council would have to provide a new pool (Hearne 2019, 336 n53). According to Hearne (2019, 336 n53), the city's "dependence on Waterford Crystal for many of the city's amenities had been taken for granted and exposed Waterford [City Council's] negligence in these matters." By the late 1990s the Centre was falling into disrepair and needed a major investment. In 1998, the Centre received IR£1.875 million for a major refurbishment project through a private/public partnership, the Ministry for Tourism, Sport, and Recreation and the City of Waterford provided IR£1.5 million pounds for the project (O'Mara 1998). The refurbishment of the Centre took nearly a year to complete.

In 2005, the company sold off the playing fields and the lands surrounding the Centre, an area of nearly nine hectares, for €32.9 million (Curran 2005). The sale of these lands was announced shortly after the closure of the Dungarvan factory. The company stated that the money raised from this transaction would be used for "general corporate purposes," namely for the restructuring of the Waterford Wedgwood Group (Curran 2005). Many of the former glass workers felt that most of this money probably went towards the early retirement and redundancy packages that resulted from the closure of the Dungarvan factory. The sale of these lands was a bone of contention for many of the workers because it was the intention of Waterford Crystal's original ownership that the Centre would belong to the workers and the community of Waterford.

According to the company's annual reports (Waterford Glass Limited 1969): "While your company is playing a considerable part in the financing of these facilities, it is intended that the Waterford Glass Sports and Social Club, which is controlled by those working in the factory, will become the eventual owner of this Sports and Social Centre." During the official opening of the Centre, Paddy McGrath and Noel Griffin, the company's Chairman and Managing Director, respectively, stated:

While the major attraction of the Social Centre at this moment is the outdoor heated swimming pool, the other amenities which attach to the Sports and Social Centre are in the process of development so that in a few years time a complex of recreational, sporting, and athletic amenities will be available for all those working in Waterford Glass Limited. Many of these facilities will be available for people in Waterford City generally, like the swimming pool which at this moment is used by many people not directly concerned with the factory.

- Paddy McGrath, Chairman (Munster Express April 14th, 1972)

An industry is not established merely to provide dividends for shareholders or wages and salaries for those working in it. It also has a social and cultural responsibility and is of no value in the terms of our modern society unless the quality of life is improved not only within the industry but, as our Chairman has said, for the community as a whole.

While we in Waterford Glass Limited have provided the money for the building of the pool and other amenities, this has been purely on the basis that Sports and Social Centre members will, in due course, own it entirely.

- Noel Griffin, Managing Director (Munster Express April 14th, 1972)

The Centre was essentially a privately built public resource organized by the workers. Many of the workers were angry when this understanding of the Centre's role in the community was not respected when the playing fields were sold.

However, it appears that there was never anything in writing concerning the Centre's ownership and this lack of clarity was always an issue for some of the workers. According to Declan:

We had nothing in writing with regards to that social centre and we were paying deductions from our wages all those years—to keep that place. And they sold it and they

pocketed the money. They said they were going to put it back into the industry. They didn't put a shilling back into that place.

- Declan, 60s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

Many of the workers felt that their retirement and redundancy packages were being funded by a resource that already belonged to them. When Waterford Crystal went into receivership, the Centre was included as part of the company's assets. This further incensed the workers, because they felt that the receiver had no right to the Centre as it belonged to the workers. However, as stated above, there was never anything in writing to this effect. Furthermore, there were no overtures from the government to stake a claim for keeping the Centre in the workers' or the public's hands, even though it was public money that help keep the pool open after the 1990 Strike and provided the bulk of the funds for the Centre's refurbishments in 1998. Under receivership, the Centre was allowed to remain open because it was a valuable resource to the community, but on the condition that it cover its own costs. This left the Centre with a relatively minimal programme of activities to offer the public. However, the Centre stayed open until it was sold in 2013 to a local businessman, who was a former employee of Waterford Crystal. He and his partner now operate the business as the Crystal Leisure Centre (Waterford Today March 30th, 2016).

As for the playing fields and lands surrounding the Centre, Waterford Crystal sold them to a property developer under the condition that the land be rezoned from open space/community to commercial use by the Waterford City Council (Munster Express March 18th, 2005). In 2005, the developer planned to build a €250 million "mixed-use lifestyle village...[for] retail, leisure, offices, hotel and residential use" (C. O'Donoghue 2005). The development's inspiration was taken from retail outlet malls in the United States (O'Keeffe 2010). The first phase of the plan was approved in 2008 by the Waterford City Council, but since the financial crisis and the collapse of Ireland's property bubble, the developer's plans have faced resistance both on the City

Council and within the community (O'Keeffe 2010). There is a general feeling that Waterford does not need another massive development on the outskirts of the city, especially when there is plenty of vacant commercial space in the city centre available to be leased.

5.2.9 Butlerstown

In 1980, Waterford Crystal opened a new factory in Butlerstown dedicated to the company's lighting ware division, namely lamps and chandeliers, but over the years also manufactured decorations and cutlery (Waterford Crystal 1998). The Butlerstown factory (see Figure 9) was located on approximately eight hectares of land on the outskirts of Waterford along the Cork

Rd., not far from the Kilbarry factory and the Waterford Crystal Sports and Leisure Centre (Costello 1978). The factory cost around £20 million to construct and at its peak the factory employed approximately 350 people (Costello 1978; O'Mara 1998). Unlike the Dungarvan and Kilbarry factories, Butlerstown closed during a period of profitability for Waterford Crystal. In 1998, the company invested £30 million into the Kilbarry



Figure 9. Pictures of the former location of the Butlerstown factory

and Dungarvan factories to consolidate production (Irish Examiner September 19th, 1998). As a result, the Butlerstown factory was closed, and the workers were relocated. The factory and

surrounding lands were sold that same year for approximately £4 million to a law firm, which held it in trust "for a consortium of Waterford business interests" (J. O'Connor 1998). Over the following years, the area was developed into a mixed-use business park—the Waterford Business Park. As is evident from the pictures in Figure 9, the former Butlerstown factory is now a self-storage business.

According to Connor, the experience of working at the factory was shaped by the fact that it was a newer, smaller, and specialized glass manufacturing facility.

First of all, it was a brand-new building, everything was new there, like, the other factory would have been there since the sixties going into the seventies, we'd say. Everything in Butlerstown was new, even the area I worked was called the new extension. So, it was just completely different, it was clean. The people out there—what I found when I went in there, there were a lot of younger people there. What I mean by younger, is people in their thirties and that. I just found it to be a completely different experience to the main factory. But it was run, basically, as a separate entity, it was self-contained. You had a blowing room, you had the finishing, cutting, the acid, but what you also had out there, was the main thing, was the chandelier room—where they just specifically manufactured chandeliers and lamps, you know. So, that was the main kind of focus, and the set-up out there was kind of geared around the making of chandeliers. So, the blowers were probably—they might've been a little bit better trained in their art because you'd have to, you know the arms of a chandelier, you have to bend them and you'd want to be fairly skilled to do that type of work compared to just blowing a vase or something like that. And, even the cutters, there would be more intricate cutting on a chandelier piece rather than the big vases where they can just go in and crack it out.

But what I will say about it was it was a fantastic place to work, Butlerstown. It was great all together. Especially, at the time I was 17, I was still young enough, but the thing is when you go into a factory, you probably know, you probably heard from other people, you start to grow up fairly quick. But it was a good experience, and it was a great grounding out there.

- Connor, 40s, General Section, 25 Years of Service

Upon the closing of Butlerstown, a worker wrote in the company magazine, Crystal Clear (Waterford Crystal 1998, 34), that:

There was always a great buzz about the place especially when we produced special chandeliers. The dazzling chandeliers would hang fully assembled in the Chandelier Room for all to see before being shipped out to its final destination...One of the most noticeable things about the people who worked in the Butlerstown Plant was their

enthusiasm, they were indeed a close-knit team, very proud of their work and their achievements.

The Dungarvan factory was shaped by its location in Waterford County. The Kilbarry factory was characterized by its sheer size and the fact that it was the headquarters for the business, the Tourist Trail, and the bulk of the company's production. The Butlerstown factory identified through its specialization in lighting ware, namely Waterford Crystal's famous chandeliers.

While the camaraderie and the close-knit relationships of Butlerstown as a smaller factory may represent the experience of some of the workers, it does not represent all the workers' experiences. The following account details Michael's apprenticeship at Butlerstown, which was so disagreeable that he decided not to pursue a career at Waterford Crystal until thirteen years after the completion of his training period.

I got sent to Butlerstown, the lighting ware, I got sent up there for six month—remember I was saying that you got assigned to different guys—so I was asked to go up there and work up in that factory and I absolutely hated it. I worked for a few guys up there that were absolute bastards. They abused me mentally. They really did. I'll give you an example. There was one guy there and I won't mention his name, he was an electrician, I'll say that. He never did anything; he just stuck his nose in everybody's business. Anyway, my boss would come in on Fridays, I think it was twelve o'clock, he used to work a shift and he was a fitter as well. On the Thursday he said to me, "There's a cast iron mould there and the hinges are broken. Just fix it."

So, I fixed this thing on the Thursday and this electrician comes up to me and he's looking around. And, I say to him, "What's wrong?"

"None of my business. None of my business." He was up to no good. He said, "Well, I'm not telling you your job, but if he comes in and sees you after welding those hinges upside down, he'll fucking kill you."

I went, "They can't be upside down. They can't, they only go one way." But he convinced me that I had done it wrong. I broke my job, and I turned them upside down knowing this can't be right, but I did it. This was the Friday morning, and I was rushing to get it done before he came in at twelve o'clock. And he came in, and he smoked, and his cigarette used to always hang off the end of his lip and he used to blow smoke in your face when he would talk to you. He looked at the mould—now, cast iron is very brittle—and he looked up at me and said, "You fucking imbecile!"

And he got the mould and smashed it off the ground, it just went—psssssh—into smithereens, like glass. I just couldn't believe what had happened. And, I was an imbecile, I suppose. The other guy was off in the corner laughing, you know.

Now, I was sixteen. So, I got on the phone and called up the main manager back down in Kilbarry—I was upset, I was crying, you know. I said, "I don't want to be a fitter anymore. I want out of here. I'm leaving."

So, they just told me, "Hang up the phone. Just relax."

A very short time after, your man with the cigarette, he comes over to me and he says, "They want you down in Kilbarry. Pack up your stuff."

That was music to my ears. I got out of there. Basically, the guys in Kilbarry knew what was going on. They knew I was working with a bunch of bastards. There was about four of them, not in the maintenance department—they were nasty. So, I went back down to Kilbarry.

- Michael, 40s, Maintenance, 19 Years of Service

Michael completed his apprenticeship at Kilbarry, which proved to be a much more enjoyable experience than his time at Butlerstown.

However, unlike many other workers that completed their apprenticeships at Waterford Crystal, he decided to pursue other opportunities. His decision to not stay at Waterford Crystal seemed rash to his mother, given the wages, benefits, and perceived security of a job with the company. The following passage details his last conversation with his mother before he left for the United States and shows the importance of what it meant to be offered a job at Waterford Crystal.

I got to Shannon Airport. I was flying out with my friend, another Irish guy, we were heading over to Charleston. On the intercom in the airport, this voice says, "Will Michael———, please pick up the phone." I said, "That's me. Oh my God, something's wrong."

So, I picked up the phone in Shannon Airport, ready to head to the flight to New York and on to Charleston, and it was my Mother saying, "Waterford Crystal have just called and there is work out there."

I'm sitting in the fucking airport, "Mum, I'm going to New York." God love her, she was trying to look after her son because it was a damn good job. It was a really good job.

When I went back [to work at Waterford Crystal] in 1995, the likes and dislikes about that period were really all likes, I have to say, I loved it.

- Michael, 40s, Maintenance, 19 Years of Service

Turning down a job at Waterford Crystal, especially in the context of the volatile Irish economy of the 1980s, was not a decision to be taken lightly. Working at Waterford Crystal had the perception of economic security during uncertain economic times.

While a particular factory might come to symbolize a general experience, it does not subsume all meanings for every worker. For Connor the Butlerstown factory was indeed a great experience and a unique place to work within the larger structure of the company. For Michael, it was a difficult experience that resulted in him leaving the company. These experiences may be shaped by other factors such as, age, maturity, time period, type of job, and immediate co-workers. Nevertheless, the different experiences attributed to the Butlerstown factory by these workers is important because it demonstrates the ways in which alternative experiences, perspectives, and meanings associated with a particular place can be silenced by a dominant narrative. In general, Waterford Crystal is often mythologized as a wonderful place to work because of everything the company meant to the workers, their families, the city, and the country. However, while Waterford Crystal was in many ways a great place to work, it could also be a very hard place to work, as represented by these workers' experiences. The company had a high turnover of employees because the work was demanding and the work environment was difficult to adjust to, especially for the largely teenage workforce that was being recruited by the company. Part of the allure of working at Waterford Crystal was the opportunity to stay in Ireland when so many were leaving. But it was still an exploitative environment with workers producing surplus value for other people to accumulate wealth, which was accompanied with the requisite inequalities and power struggles among the workers despite having a well-organized, rank and file-driven, and democratically focused trade union.

5.3 WATERFORD CRYSTAL AND THE TRANSITION FROM FORDIST/KEYNESIAN CAPITALISM TO FLEXIBLE ACCUMULATION/NEOLIBERAL CAPITALISM

In the previous section, Waterford Crystal's built environment is presented in three ways. Firstly, it is depicted in photographs. Secondly, it is described through certain organizational information, such as, opening dates, closing dates, size, cost to build, and number of people employed. Finally, Waterford Crystal's built environment is imbued with meaning through the workers' stories, memories, and feelings about the places they worked. In contextualizing these various spaces associated with Waterford Crystal, our understanding of space goes beyond the materiality of Waterford Crystal's built environment to reveal a story about the workers' experiences with the company, as well as the role played by the workers and the company within the wider community. Following Lefebvre (1991, 36-7), these details constitute a discourse on "things in space" which supply clues and testimony about a productive process that "subsumes signifying processes without being reducible to them." For example, William Murphy's reminiscence of the construction of the Ballytruckle factory focused on the prospect of industry, work, and a better life in Waterford. His perspective was informed by years of working at Waterford Crystal and the life he was able to fashion for himself and his family. As a discourse on space, William Murphy's narrative also resonates with many people familiar and/or associated with the history of Waterford Crystal. At the same time, the re-establishing of Waterford Crystal was also the brainchild of Bernard Fitzpatrick, who saw a profitable business opportunity—an opportunity that was facilitated by political and economic turmoil in postwar Europe, as well as his powerful political connections who held a shared belief in economic nationalism with respect to Ireland's development and self-determination (see Chapter Four). On the one hand, Ballytruckle is symbolic of the so-called "good life," where people have work, a bit of security, and can afford the

comforts of life. On the other hand, Ballytruckle is symbolic of so-called "entrepreneurial spirit," the realization of a person's business ingenuity and foresight. As a symbol, Ballytruckle is not reducible to either narrative. However, in conjunction, these different discourses on the Ballytruckle factory form a basis upon which to examine the production of space—namely an understanding of space in its totality through exploring the various historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes that engender the mental and material spaces that constitute our social reality.

From the early 1950s to the mid-1980s, Waterford Crystal experienced a period of continued expansion. If Ballytruckle signified the prospect of industry and jobs in Waterford, then the Johnstown factory was the first incarnation of that initial perception of the company. At its height, the Johnstown factory employed approximately 1,000 people. This was at a time when not having a job meant facing the harsh realities of either living in poverty or emigrating for many people in Ireland. The significance of the Johnstown factory was that there was a lot riding on its success at a political and economic level. As outlined in Chapter Four, the state increased duties on imported glass and removed duties on raw materials for glass production to give Waterford Crystal a competitive advantage. Waterford Crystal was being developed as a mass produced, hand-crafted good for mass consumption in foreign markets and, thus, was serving as a test case for the direction of Irish industry after the 1958 Turn. Waterford Crystal's beginnings reflect Ireland's transition from autarky to an export-oriented market economy.

The nationalist sentiment behind the development of Waterford Crystal transferred into the management of the company. Up until the sale of Waterford Crystal to Globe Investment Trust, the company applied a paternalistic managerial approach with a focus on investing in Irish workers and Irish industry. The company was proud of the strong presence it had in the city and

the county of Waterford. The success of the Johnstown factory led to further capital investment and the expansion of Waterford Crystal's operation in both Waterford City and County, namely the move to the Kilbarry factory and the opening of the Dungarvan and Butlerstown plants. In establishing a manufacturing facility in Dungarvan, Waterford Crystal was intent on promoting investment in the development of rural Ireland to prevent emigration and, in this case, even work to preserve the Gaeltachts (i.e., areas in Ireland where Irish is the common vernacular). It is important to note that the preservation and promotion of the Irish language is foundational to Irish nationalism.

While Waterford Crystal brought welcomed jobs to the region, the working environment was not idyllic. For many of the teenagers who were taken on as apprentices, it was a very difficult transition. The environment was dirty and dangerous. The hierarchical structures of work were different from anything they had experienced before and in some cases the apprentices were subjected to horrible bullying and abuse by their more senior colleagues. Despite the good wages and benefits, there was a high rate of turnover because the demands of working at Waterford Crystal were not suited to everyone. Even though Waterford Crystal took pride in taking care of its workers with respect to wages, benefits, training, and education programmes, the conditions and benefits afforded to the Waterford Crystal workers were not simply the result of corporate altruism.

The Waterford Crystal workforce was well-organized, so it was able to maximize workplace benefits. The workers themselves recognized the opportunity to get the most out of the
company for themselves and their families. The Keyser Street Trade Union Hall was an important space attributed to the Waterford Crystal workforce because it was there that the workers
congregated to discuss and organize to achieve better terms and conditions at work. It was an

integral part of the trade union education that many of the workers talked about in interviews. Moreover, each generation of workers encouraged the next to attend their trade union meetings. Furthermore, the Keyser St. Trade Union Hall was also a place for people to meet and organize with respect to other issues that affected the life of the community in Waterford. It was these struggles over working conditions, pay, and benefits that ultimately gave the workers so much influence within the company, the city, and the region. As a group, they were some of the first workers in the city to be able to afford their own homes. The influence of the Waterford Crystal workforce can be seen in the development of private housing estates, such as the German Road and St. John's Park. One of the most significant spaces created by the Waterford Crystal workers was the Waterford Crystal Sports and Leisure Centre. It was a space, initially financed by the company, but organized, designed, and administered by the workers. It provided sports and social clubs for the workers and their families, as well as the general public. The Centre's pool was very important to children in the area learning how to swim because it was the only pool available to the public in Waterford. The Centre brought people together and contributed to a sense of community, both within and across sections of the Waterford Crystal workforce.

As a political force and a consumer base, the workers played a significant role in the development of Waterford as a centre of commerce in the southeast of Ireland. They spent their wages in the town, which affected the development of small businesses and charities that subsequently had their own effect on the socio-cultural and economic life of Waterford. It is important to note that the benefits bestowed by the company and the workforce on the city were not necessarily felt evenly by everyone. Many people in Waterford believed the success of the Waterford Crystal workforce made it difficult for other people to thrive in the city because the workers' good wages drove up prices in the town. However, in general, the workers benefited, the

company profited, and some of the benefits of this success were experienced by the wider community, as is characteristic more generally of the postwar boom and the Fordist/Keynesian capitalist period.

If we return to the notion of Lefebvre's (1991, 47-8) spatial code and what it means to be living in a particular "space, of understanding it, and of producing it," the period of expansion that Waterford Crystal experienced from the early 1950s to the mid-1980s was reflective of Fordist/Keynesian capitalism in Ireland. During Ireland's transition from autarky to an export-oriented market economy, Waterford Crystal developed as a reflection of aligning interests between capital and the state under a nationalist banner with respect to the future development of Irish industry and Irish workers. Waterford Crystal was an export-oriented, mass produced good with high demand in the American market. This required intensive capital investment as seen in the expanding built environment from the 1950s to the 1980s. This expansion translated into more jobs. The acceptance of working with organized labour under Fordist/Keynesian capitalism meant the workers had relatively significant input into the role of the company in the city and surrounding region. In doing so, the workers secured good wages, benefits, investments in houses and the local economy, as well as putting the structures in place for a facility like the Sports and Leisure Centre for the benefit of themselves and the wider community.

Unusually, Waterford Crystal, as a model of development, lasted well into the 1980s. The success of the company was relatively unaffected by the stagflation of the seventies as the company maintained profits throughout this period (Waterford Glass Limited 1980). However, following the 1979 Oil Shock, the company's fortunes began to change. According to Hearne (2019, 149), even though Waterford Crystal weathered the recessionary years following the 1979 Oil Shock, largely because of brand recognition, the company began to lose competitiveness as

the "costs of production increas[ed] faster than inflation." Furthermore, the company failed to "invest in new technologies" and take into account "consumers' changing tastes" (Hearne 2019, 149).

The tragic death of long-time managing director, Noel Griffin, in 1981 and the takeover of Waterford Crystal by Globe Investment Trust in 1984 marked a period of significant change in the character of the company from paternalistic to corporate (see Chapter Two for details). The takeover by Globe Investment Trust also coincided with a change in the company's approach to the marketplace. For example, according to the 1987 Waterford Crystal Annual Report (Waterford Glass Group PLC 1987, 6):

success in today's competitive marketplace requires that the group become market driven rather than production bound, that we remain flexible and responsive to the changing tastes of consumers by producing to demand and developing attractive new additions to our line.

The buzzwords of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, such as "market driven," "flexible and responsive," and "producing to demand," were now entering the Waterford Crystal lexicon as well as the latest version of Irish economic nationalism. The late 1980s and early 1990s constituted a transitionary period for the Waterford Crystal workforce. Globe Investment Trusts went to extreme effort to streamline the business, which ultimately translated into reducing the wage bill at Waterford Crystal. This resulted in a series of mismanaged restructuring programmes (see Chapter Two). The end result was another takeover, this time by Anthony O'Reilly, his Fitzwilton Group, and Morgan Stanley. The new owners were determined to restructure the company. Their hardline stance led them to break the collective bargaining agreement with the workers, which subsequently led to the 1990 Strike outlined in Chapter Two. Essentially, during this period of flux and turmoil, the Waterford Crystal workforce was

experiencing a change in the spatial code that coincided with the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

The Waterford Crystal workforce was now facing an era of unprecedented capital mobility under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, which ultimately undermined the workers' bargaining power and position in the city. The wages and benefits that the workers had secured over the previous four decades at Waterford Crystal was considered too high, especially when manufacturing could be done elsewhere for significantly less money. ²⁶ This wider political and economic context informed the new management team's restructuring programme. The company was losing money and threatened to relocate if the workers did not meet its demands. In the context of the 1990 Strike, the bargaining position of the workforce and their trade union were undermined by changes in the wider political and economic configuration of the capitalist mode of production. The workers' only leverage was the fact that the company and the product were still perceived by many as an iconic Irish brand, despite market research procured by Tony O'Reilly stating otherwise. The close association between the company and the city made it difficult to relocate all production without compromising brand integrity (see Chapter Four).

Still, the workers had to make a number of difficult decisions and compromises in order to maintain the production of Waterford Crystal in Ireland. The workers embraced the new technology introduced to the factory, such as automatic cutting machines and the tank furnace, which

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²⁶ In 2018, Ireland's Central Statistics Office (CSO) produced a chart titled "Real and Nominal Earnings of Industrial Workers in the Industry Sector, 1938-2017" (Central Statistics Office 2018). In 1989, the average nominal weekly wage for an industrial worker was €274.80 (Central Statistics Office 2018). In 1989, the average annual wage for Waterford Crystal workers was IR£19,500 (Hearne 2019, 305). Using Enda Hargaden's (2022), an economist at the National University of Ireland - Galway, online inflation calculator that converts the old Irish Pound to the Euro, IR€19,500 in 1989 is the equivalent to €44,031 in 2017. Using the CSO's (2022) online inflation calculator, €274.80 in December of 1989 is the equivalent to €475.95 in January of 2017. The Waterford Crystal workers' equivalent weekly wage, if we take their annual wage and divide it by fifty-two weeks, is €846.75. This is nearly double the average nominal weekly wage for industrial workers in Ireland in 1989. While these calculations are crude and overlook differences in wages of skilled versus unskilled industrial workers, it does point to many of the Waterford Crystal workers' assertions about being relatively well-paid job compared to other industrial workers.

entailed redundancies, the redeployment of workers out of the craft sections, and a move to shift work because the tank furnace runs twenty-four hours a day. They accepted the outsourcing of Waterford Crystal under a new brand, Marquis by Waterford Crystal, to distinguish it from the main line of Waterford Crystal (see Chapter Four for more detail). However, they eventually had to accept the outsourcing of some of the traditional Waterford Crystal lines. Furthermore, following the 1990 Strike, the workforce went on short-time work to restore the company to profitability. The logic behind the short-time work was that it was better to have more people with less work rather than some people with no work at all. Plus, if demand for Waterford Crystal improved, there would be workers available for the increase in production. But short-time work made it even more difficult for the Kilbarry workers to financially support the Dungarvan workers affected by the tank furnace fire because they were making less money. However, short-time work was done in an effort to keep production in Waterford and to sustain the workforce.

Spatially, their decisions kept the main production plants at Kilbarry, Dungarvan, and Butlerstown in operation, although Butlerstown would be subsumed by the other plants after changes were made in the organization of production. It is important to note that the Butlerstown plant was the only manufacturing facility to close in Ireland while the company was profitable. In search of efficiencies in production and ultimately profitability, capital was simultaneously invested in (i.e., Kilbarry and Dungarvan) and withdrawn from (i.e., Butlerstown) the built environment in Waterford. This occurred shortly after Waterford Crystal started outsourcing production following the 1990 Strike—or withdrawing/withholding capital investment from Waterford Crystal's Irish factories with the intention of re-investing that capital elsewhere to seek higher profits. In combination, these instances of withdrawing/withholding, consolidating, and re-investing capital, which includes the outsourcing of production, illustrate the ways the logic of

uneven development is continually working across different temporal and spatial scales (N. Smith 2008, 6).

Following the 1990 Strike, the presence of Waterford Crystal in the town would never be the same as it had been in the previous four decades. But despite being under the threat of capital flight, the workers were not just passive victims of wider political and economic forces, they were actively fighting to keep as many jobs as possible in Waterford. There was an implicit understanding of a change in the spatial code and what was possible with respect to influencing the company. But by making sacrifices to keep production in Waterford, the workforce maintained an economic presence within the city and the region as both a significant consumer base and as the main driver behind the local tourism industry, which had important implications for both the glass workers and people whose livelihoods were not directly tied to Waterford Crystal.

Along with changes in the organization of production, there were also significant changes in the direction of the Irish political and economic landscape. The restructuring of Waterford Crystal in the late 1980s and early 1990s coincided with the rise of Ireland's Celtic Tiger and European integration. As outlined in Chapter Three, Ireland embarked on a neoliberal model of economic development. Through low corporate tax rates, lax financial regulations, and an English-speaking, flexible workforce, Ireland was able to capitalize on foreign direct investment from large transnational corporations hoping to exploit the European market. The type of manufacturing jobs that Ireland was now attracting were in highly skilled, high-tech industries, such as pharmaceuticals and IT. By contrast, while handcrafted glass is also highly skilled, a similar product can be produced through industrial manufacturing elsewhere, mainly by machines, for much cheaper—like many other industries that fell prey to deindustrialization in advanced industrialized countries. The deindustrialization of Waterford Crystal was a relatively late and a slow

process largely because of its standing as an iconic Irish brand and the strength and organization of its workforce. In many ways, Waterford Crystal was considered a holdover from a bygone era. However, the single biggest change during this period was the state's attitude towards intervening in the market. The state's intervention in the market, especially under *Fianna Fáil* governments in the 1950s, was critical to establishing Waterford Crystal as an iconic Irish brand. By 2008, *Fianna Fáil's* unwillingness to intervene in the market would play a significant part in the demise of Waterford Crystal, especially in the eyes of the workers (this is discussed more explicitly in Chapter Seven).

As outlined in Chapter Two, Waterford Crystal returned to profitability in the mid-1990s. However, this situation was slowly undermined by the company, as it began to acquire other luxury tableware brands in an effort to corner the luxury tableware market. The company's profits peaked at the millennium, but gradually deteriorated after 2001 after the company's mismanagement was exposed by another global economic downturn that was subsequently exacerbated by the September 11th attacks (see Chapter Two). This time the Group was weighed down by debt from acquisitions it had made at the top of the market in the 1990s. To keep the Group afloat, the Dungarvan plant and the playing fields surrounding the Waterford Crystal Sports and Leisure Centre were sold to raise funds to reduce the workforce and restructure the company's operations. The sale of the playing fields was particularly contentious because many of the workers felt the resources associated with the Sports and Leisure Centre belonged to the workers and the community, as was the intention of the company's original owners. After the 2008 financial crisis, the company was unable to secure any more loans to restructure the company, including the loan guarantee for €39 million that the government refused to underwrite (discussed in Chapter Two). Despite calls from the workers and their trade union to nationalize the company, the

government refused to intervene on their behalf. In contrast, the government would later consolidate and nationalize the debt of five of the country's six largest banks. It is important to note that the collapse of the Irish banking sector was a byproduct of the lax financial regulations implemented under Ireland's neoliberal model of economic development, as well as the global trend toward financial deregulation under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism in general. As a consequence of the Irish government's decision to nationalize banking debt, the Irish economy required a financial bailout, which led to Ireland's agreed economic austerity programme with the Troika (see Chapter One). As a related consequence, the Irish government's decision to not nationalize Waterford Crystal meant that many of the workforce were dependent on some form of state welfare programmes in order to get by (see Chapter Eight). However, these programmes were being retrenched under economic austerity and increasing the precariousness of the workforce's ability to survive. The seriousness of this situation was amplified by the fact that much of the workforce was made up of workers nearing retirement.

It is in the context of the political and economic turmoil of the 2008 financial crisis that KPS Capital was able to purchase the Waterford Crystal brand and intellectual property rights, effectively severing the product from the people and place that established the product as a world-renowned brand. With the brand and intellectual property rights, KPS had the flexibility to produce Waterford Crystal in a manner that it deemed the most profitable, namely outsourcing the bulk of production overseas. While some production is carried out at the House of Waterford Crystal, its chief purpose is to maintain a link between the product and the city in which it originated to maintain brand integrity and benefit from the profitable tourism-end of the business. Notably, the state went to great lengths to provide subsidies for the complex in which the House of Waterford Crystal is located (see Chapter Six and Seven for a more in-depth discussion),

highlighting the internal contradiction of the so-called non-interventionist state under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. Intervention is acceptable if it is in the interests of market development, where the prime beneficiary is capital. Furthermore, the House of Waterford Crystal signifies the spatial retreat of a once important industry whose built environment expanded throughout the City and County. It also represents a substantial withdrawal of capital investment from the region.

5.4 CONCLUSION - EXPERIENCING CHANGE IN THE SPATIAL CODE

The decade from 1984 to 1994, or from Globe Investment Trust's takeover of Waterford Crystal to the company's return to profitability after the 1990 Strike, marks the Waterford Crystal workers' experience of the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. As part of this wider political and economic process, one of the ways the Waterford Crystal workforce experienced this reconfiguration in the relationships between labour, capital, and the state was through a change in the spatial code. As outlined in Chapter Three, the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism undermined the organizational power of labour on a spatial level. After the 1990 Strike, the threat of outsourcing and relocation undermined the leverage the workers had over the control of production in a particular place. As a result, after the strike, their collective action was a rearguard one in terms of attempting to limit the amount of change to the organization of production and protecting as many jobs as possible in Waterford.

Prior to the takeover by Globe Investment Trust, the Waterford Crystal workers were the beneficiaries of a version of economic nationalism that was established at the embryonic stage of the company. This was reflected in the company's paternalistic managerial approach, which

included a belief in developing Irish industry and Irish workers. This belief was also representative of the close personal relations between the business and political classes, as well as the close alignment of nationalist ideology and government policy at the time. Nevertheless, the workers, as a collective organized unit, fought hard to get as much as they could out of the company with respect to wages, conditions, and benefits. These experiences of the company are reflected in the built environment associated with Waterford Crystal. The period prior to the takeover entailed major capital investments and the expansion of the manufacturing presence of Waterford Crystal in the region. This had a knock-on effect with respect to the socio-economic development of Waterford, namely the workers spending the bulk of their wages locally. It also put the Waterford Crystal workers at the centre of economic and socio-cultural life. Working at Waterford Crystal came with a certain prestige because of the importance of the company to the region, but also because it was widely known that the workers were well paid.

The 1990 Strike and its aftermath signaled a period of withdrawal from and construction in the built environment. First there was the outsourcing of production that took capital investment away from Ireland. Then there was the consolidation of production as Butlerstown was subsumed by the Kilbarry and Dungarvan factories. Finally, there was the demise of Waterford Crystal altogether with the selling of the playing fields attached to the Sports and Social Centre and the closure of the Dungarvan and Kilbarry factories. This period of withdrawal also gradually diminished the importance of the company and the workers to the economic and socio-cultural life of the region. Waterford Crystal and the workforce transformed from a success story to a sad story in the end. The House of Waterford Crystal is all that is left of this once influential industry in Waterford. The next chapter extends the examination of the production of space

under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, but with respect to the House of Waterford Crystal and the development of Waterford's nascent tourism industry.

CHAPTER SIX

STRUGGLE FOR SPACE II - PRODUCING SPACES FOR CONSUMPTION

6.1 Introduction

In January 2010, Waterford City Council along with WWRD Ltd. (Waterford Wedgwood Royal Doulton) announced the opening of the new House of Waterford Crystal (The Sunday Times June 27, 2010). The new facility, complete with showroom, was established on The Mall in the centre of Waterford six months following the original announcement (see the top photograph in Figure 10). The House of Waterford Crystal was funded through a €25 million redevelopment grant from the South and Eastern Regional Assembly, which is funded by the Irish Exchequer and the European Regional Development Fund (South and Eastern Regional Assembly 2013; Irish Independent January 27th, 2010). This grant was also used for the restoration of an office block for the city council and an historic building for a new museum, Bishop's Palace, on the other side of The Mall (see the bottom left photograph in Figure 10) (South and Eastern Regional Assembly 2013). Along with Waterford's Theatre Royal, which is next to Bishop's Palace (see the bottom right photograph in Figure 10), this area of The Mall has been redeveloped largely for the tourism industry. The cost of the factory, showroom, and office block was estimated at €4.3 million by the construction company in charge of the project (Mythen Construction 2013). An important feature of this development was a scaled-down Waterford Crystal factory. While the House of Waterford Crystal does engage in some glass production, mainly high-end specialty items, the new factory was ultimately designed with tourists in mind.





Figure 10. Pictures of the three most prominent buildings on The Mall.

With the factories at Kilbarry, Dungarvan, and Butlerstown, Waterford Crystal focused primarily on manufacturing. In contrast, the House of Waterford Crystal is concerned mainly

with consumption in the form of tourism. Lefebvre (1991, 31) argues that "every mode of production with its sub-variants...produces a space, its own space...as an 'object' for analysis and overall theoretical explication." This chapter examines the House of Waterford Crystal and the development of Waterford's nascent tourism industry as a tourism/leisure space, or "sub-variant" in Lefebvre's terms, of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. While the production of tourism/leisure spaces are not unique to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, the tourism industry has benefitted greatly from the increased and accelerated movement of people, capital, labour, and goods and services under the open market and entrepreneurial principles associated with Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism (Schilcher 2007). According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization website (United Nations World Tourism Organization 2016):

Over the decades, tourism has experienced continued growth and deepening diversification to become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world. Modern tourism is closely linked to development and encompasses a growing number of new destinations. These dynamics have turned tourism into a key driver for socio-economic progress.

Today, the business volume of tourism equals or even surpasses that of oil exports, food products or automobiles. Tourism has become one of the major players in international commerce, and represents at the same time one of the main income sources for many developing countries. This growth goes hand in hand with an increasing diversification and competition among destinations.

This global spread of tourism in industrialized and developed states has produced economic and employment benefits in many related sectors - from construction to agriculture or telecommunications.

In terms of strategically situated ethnography, tourism/leisure spaces are sites where processes of globalization and "localization (or local differentiation)" collide (Salazar 2010, xvii). As the tourism industry continues to expand under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, places begin to compete as enterprises, or operate as place-based enterprises, to maintain competitiveness and remain viable as attractive tourism destinations (Keul 2014, 238). The success of

tourism/leisure spaces is dependent on their so-called unique tourism product. Costa (2009, 26) argues that: "In Ireland, each province, region, county, and city has become associated with a particular "brand" of gaze-ability, and many tourists are attracted to specific areas because of the unique branding that is their advertised foci." In doing so, the development of tourism/leisure spaces, as spaces for consumption, are perceived as a means of expanded economic growth.

Using the House of Waterford Crystal and the development of Waterford's nascent tourism industry, this chapter suggests that tourism/leisure spaces constitute, on the one hand, insidious spaces that obfuscates the social relations of capitalist production for both tourists and those who secure and maintain their livelihoods from the tourism industry. On the other hand, tourism/leisure spaces are also contradictory spaces and as such offer a potential space of contestation to counter the power exercised under the capitalist mode of production.

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section describes the House of Waterford Crystal and its role in the development of Waterford's nascent tourism industry. The second section uses the House of Waterford Crystal and Waterford's expanding tourism industry to examine the spatial code of tourism/leisure spaces under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

6.2 THE HOUSE OF WATERFORD CRYSTAL AND THE TOURISM INDUSTRY IN WATERFORD

I took the House of Waterford Crystal factory tour just before noon on May 30th, 2012. I purchased my ticket for the tour at a desk just outside the showroom, which was located inside the front doors of the office block pictured in Figure 10. The two members of staff, both women, behind the desk were cheerful and pleasant. After I purchased my ticket, one of the women informed me that an announcement will be made over the PA system for when the tour will begin.

I waited approximately five minutes before I heard the announcement for my tour. Our eighteenmember tour group gathered loosely in the lobby. Our tour guide, a middle-aged woman with
black hair and a pleasant demeanour, asked us to follow her outside. Our tour started by entering
the doors located on the far side of the courtyard, which can be seen in the bottom right corner of
the top picture in Figure 10. After entering the first room of the factory tour, the visitors were
given a brief history of the company, which acknowledged the role played by Charles Bačik,
Miroslav Havel, and the European craftsmen that were so integral to the early development of
the company. This talk also included a disclosure that the bulk of Waterford Crystal's production
was no longer done in Waterford. In this first room, there were a number of showpieces on display intended to illustrate the ways in which Waterford Crystal has changed over the years.

There were also some specialty pieces, such as a glass grandfather clock. These pieces demonstrated what is possible with respect to glass as an artistic medium and the skill of Waterford
Crystal's craftsmen.

After this brief introduction, the tour group is brought into a dark, mirrored room and shown a short audio-visual presentation, which was projected from panels near the ceiling. The video detailed the glass production process, with a focus on showing the craftsmen blowing and cutting the glass. The images were reflected off the mirrored walls, which I think was intended to create a sense of being immersed in the process. It felt a bit contrived. An integral feature of the presentation was Waterford Crystal's Millennial Ball that was designed for New York City's Millennial New Year's celebration. As part of the celebration, there is a giant, illuminated crystal ball that descends a flagpole beginning at one minute to midnight in Times Square. The ball comes to rest at the bottom of the pole at the stroke of midnight, signaling the New Year. The event is watched all over the world. It was a big moment in the company's history to design the

Millennial New Year's Ball. It was an optimistic time for the company because this was also occurring when the company was recording record profits (see Chapter Two). The audio-visual presentation includes images of the Millennial Ball with fireworks going off in the background. The music played during this presentation was quite loud and overwhelming considering the size of the room. As the presentation comes to an end, the lights were turned on slowly to reveal some signature Waterford Crystal pieces behind the mirrors. The tour group was then led out of this room and down what was essentially the beginning of a long L-shaped corridor that took the tour group through the glass production process.

The first stop along the corridor was at the mould room. It was a small rectangular room with a large window-like opening that allowed the tour group to see into the space. On this particular tour, there was no one working in the mould room, just examples of the wood moulds that were used traditionally in the glassmaking process. In this room, there were large counter tops, wood lathes, a band saw, and, hanging from the walls, there was hand tools (i.e., mostly different types of chisels) used for woodworking. As explained by our tour guide, the moulds made in this room were typically for the specialty pieces made at the House of Waterford Crystal.

After walking up a small flight of stairs, the next stop along the corridor was the glass blowing area. It was a much larger room, made up of two sections. In the first section, there is a large tank furnace, with lots of activity on the platform that surrounds the tank furnace. There were a number of workers performing different task, such as: collecting glass on long iron rods from the tank furnace; blowing the glass by blowing air down through the long iron rod; and, shaping the glass with various other tools. When the workers opened the door to the furnace it was possible to see the orange glow from the molten glass inside. There was a lot of noise from the machinery in this room and an exhaust fan running overhead, the workers were all wearing

ear protection. For a manufacturing setting, the room was quite clean, but the facility was also relatively new. The tour guide tried to coordinate her description of the glass blowing process with what the workers were doing behind her. While the workers were aware of the tour group, their focus seemed largely on making the glass. My experience of the tour did not involve the kind of playful interactions between workers and tourists, as told by the workers in Chapter Four, that occurred at the Kilbarry Factory.

After the glass has cooled, it is taken to the adjoining section where: the glass receives its first quality control inspection; protrusions from the glass blowing process and lids are detached using a diamond cutting wheel; and, the glass receives a rough polish and a wash. The workers in this room were set below the walkway where the tour group was observing them. There were two workers here, it did not have the same buzz as the blowing room. However, it was only in these two sections in the glass blowing area that I felt like I was in some semblance of a real factory.

After leaving this area, the tour group was led around the corner in the L-shaped corridor. The next stop was the marking room. Similar to the mould room, there was no one working to demonstrate how patterns are drawn onto the glass in preparation for the cutting process. There were just demonstration pieces for the tour group to observe, namely a couple of vases, bowls, and a London 2012 Olympics trophy, with lines drawn in black marker forming different patterns on the glass. The tour guide described how the lines are drawn onto the glass but did not demonstrate the process.

The cutting room was next. At this point the corridor opened up into a small room. On the lefthand side of the cutting room, there was a row of cutters working busily on diamond wheels. The tour group were able to get close enough to the cutters that they could engage them in conversation. This contrasted with the blowers, who were close to the tour group but not nearly as accessible. On the righthand side of the room, there were automatic cutting machines. The outward appearance of the machines was large, grey, metal, rectangular boxes that take up the space from the floor to the ceiling. The door to one of the machines was open and inside it was a demonstration piece. However, the machine was out of order, so the tour guide could not show how the machines work. The sounds of the diamond wheels spinning, the water running over the wheels, and the exhaust fan are loud. Again, the workers are wearing ear protection. But compared to the sections of the blowing area, the cutting room is not as expansive. Except for the cutting machines, the cutting room feels more like a small workshop than a manufacturing facility. I found it surprising that the use of automatic cutting machines in the production of Waterford Crystal was addressed on the tour, but it was portrayed as an inevitability of modern production and keeping up with demand by the tour guide.

After passing through a large doorway, the cutting room opens into another room that is slightly longer. This is the engraving room and the last stop on the tour. In this room, various show pieces and trophies were lined up on desks arranged along either side of the path that directs the tour group in a straight line through the room. During this tour, there was one worker at the far end of the room using a small copper wheel to engrave a large glass bowl. The tour group was told that the process of acid dipping, which gives the glass its glossy and polished finish, was done on an industrial estate in Waterford and not at the House of Waterford Crystal. The back of the engraving room marks the end of the corridor, the tour group exits through a set of doors to the left at the back of the room, which takes them to the House of Waterford Crystal's showroom. Here, the tour group were encouraged to purchase a piece of glass as a souvenir of their experience.

In terms of general impressions: this particular tour was okay. After all, there was no one working in two, the Mould and Marking rooms, of the six stops along the tour. When workers were present, the tour group were encouraged to ask questions and engage with the workers. But only a handful of people in the group spoke with the cutters and the engraver or even asked questions of the tour guide. There was no sense that the tour group was being rushed through the facility. All in all, the tour was a pleasant experience. But this is to be expected from a facility that is designed from the outset with the tourist in mind. As many of the former glass workers argued, visitors at the Kilbarry factory experienced an actual working factory, which gave them a more authentic experience of the manner in which Waterford Crystal was produced (see Chapter Four for a discussion of authenticity). There is merit in the workers' argument, in the sense that my experience of the House of Waterford Crystal factory tour was nothing remarkable. The factory tour was as much about the space they have created for the visitor as it was about the glassmaking process. As a presentation of the glassmaking process, the tour was well thought out, the space was designed around the movement of the tourist so they can see the different stages of the production process. However, the factory tour does not reflect factory life, especially in a way that is indicative of the former glass workers' experiences. It is also important to note that the workers in the factory were all male, middle-age to older workers, which raises the question: how sustainable is this tour if younger workers are not hired or if the company does not take on apprentices?

When I asked former Waterford Crystal workers how they felt about the House of Waterford Crystal, many of the former glass workers expressed their misgivings about the new facility. Henry, Finn, and Gearóid agreed that maintaining a connection between Waterford Crystal and the town is beneficial for the local economy, especially for the tourism industry. At the same

time, the presence of the House of Waterford Crystal, as an operational and functional business in the centre of town, is very upsetting for many of the former glass workers given the way they were made redundant.

I'm delighted they're back in the town because I think the town was going to die a death without them. If you've been down around that area of town now, you'll see the Bishop's Palace and the new House of Waterford Crystal and the showroom...After we closed down, people in the town were terrified, if there was nothing to bring the people in, which Waterford Crystal was the number one attraction—if there was nothing to bring them into the city, the city would die. In one way, I am delighted they're back and good luck to all the people that got jobs. I'm delighted for them. But I'm disappointed I didn't get an interview.

- Henry, 40s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

I've no time for it whatsoever. I think it's an insult to the people that built up Waterford. It's an insult to the name of Waterford Crystal. It's an insult to the workers that actually worked in Waterford Crystal. I don't begrudge anybody a job and the only good thing out of it is—and I don't even know if it will do the city any good, but it will bring some people into Waterford. That they might spend a few bob in the shops in the city.

- Finn, 50s, Craftworker, 40 Years of Service

I think most of the people who worked at the company would have a very negative view towards the House of Waterford and don't want to see it working, whereas the general community does—they wish it some kind of well-being. But I think its whole purpose, its sole purpose, is to try and fill some hotel beds for tourism. Every time you pick up a newspaper now in Ireland—what you're reading is the latest tourist attraction has just opened. Every community in the country is doing what they are doing here—some little mill that was opened in the eighteenth century is renovated to bring in the tourists—and do this to bring in the tourists.

- Gearóid, 50s, Craftworker, 40 Years of Service

On the one hand, many of the workers recognized the importance of the company to the identity of the city and the prosperity of the local economy, especially with respect to the tourism industry. All the workers I interviewed were happy for those who were hired by the House of Waterford Crystal. Nevertheless, some of the workers at the House of Waterford Crystal did mention that they felt some resentment from workers who were not re-employed by the company. For example: Alfie, who is in his fifties and worked as a craftworker for 40 years, said, "Yeah, a lot of people that I know—I worked with down through the years, some people won't talk to me. I

don't mind. I say, 'Hello,' to them." On the other hand, many of the workers were also cynical and skeptical about the purpose of the House of Waterford Crystal in the sense that they see the new facility as simply a tourism attraction that benefits business interests within the city.

When Waterford Crystal closed, the city council was very concerned about what kind of effect the company's closure would have on the city, especially the local tourism industry. According to Thomas, a former mayor of Waterford:

There was three major tourist attraction in the region, that was the magnet—crystal was huge from a manufacturing point at one level, but its visitors as well was huge, especially with the Rock of Cashel and Kilkenny Castle. It was a nice little thing. We wouldn't traditionally be strong on bringing tourists, as an industry, into the southeast. It was so nice down here, we wanted to keep it to ourselves, we didn't want to share it with anyone. But we wouldn't be as developed as the Galways and the Kerrys. This [the closure of Waterford Crystal] was going to pull the leg from a three-legged stool to an extent. It was a major attraction.

- Thomas, Former Mayor of Waterford City

Waterford Crystal was one of the largest tourism attractions in the country (see Chapter Four) and a major draw for tourists to come to Waterford and the southeast of Ireland in general. Now, while Waterford Crystal was seen as the cornerstone of the tourism industry in Waterford, its importance as a tourism-based income generator for the town is a contested issue.

According to an audit of Waterford's tourism industry by the Tourism Research Centre (2006, ii), the greatest obstacle to Waterford's tourism industry is "corridor tourism," which "means visitors are not spending long periods in Waterford" before moving on to other more desirable tourism locations, namely the southwest of Ireland (i.e., in Counties Cork and Kerry). Tourists tended to spend more time in Kilkenny, which had done a better job of developing their local tourism industry around Kilkenny Castle. The location of the Waterford Crystal factory at Kilbarry was seen as a contributing factor to the problem of "corridor tourism." The workers themselves were well aware of this issue. According to Cathal:

The fact where Waterford Crystal was, it was on the outskirts of town, so you had buses coming in and the majority of buses drove through Waterford, stopped at the glass factory, did the tour, went into the gallery, bought a bit of glass, and headed off to Killarney. There would have been a certain few that would've stayed in the town overnight, but come eight o'clock in the morning, they're on the buses and at half eight they're up in the glass factory...

[T]here was nothing to do at night in Waterford. So, you have the sight of dozens of tourists walking—during the boom times, before half the closures in the city—walking around Waterford city at night and there was nothing there for them to do. ——did the [walking] tours in the latter years. Besides going to T and H's for a bit of traditional music, there was nothing for them to do. So, I suppose, the city didn't see itself as benefiting from Waterford Crystal being where it was. So, when it closed, the priority was, we have to get something up and running. We have to get it in the town. It has to be in the center of town. That's what they did as quickly as they could. To set it up in the middle of town.

- Cathal, 40s, General Section, 25 Years of Service

While Waterford Crystal was a major contributor to "corridor tourism," the Tourism Research Centre's (2006, iv) audit also stated that Waterford Crystal was the city's best asset with respect to attracting tourists:

"Corridor tourism," particularly the significant number of visitors to the Waterford Crystal Visitors Centre (mainly North American) [sic], represents a considerable opportunity should the current offering be further developed so as to entice these visitors to remain in and explore the County. Tourism Ireland identified a "well of ignorance" in relation to the Ireland tourism offering, with visitors unaware of what there is to do during a visit to the area and this is reflected in this research in relation to Waterford City and County.

This audit was conducted three years prior to the closure of the company, so in 2009 Waterford was in the position of potentially losing what was perceived as the main driver of its local tourism industry.

According to James, a long-standing Waterford city councilor, the local council did everything possible to maintain a connection between Waterford Crystal and the city:

The name of Waterford Crystal is well-known throughout the world and that is why we were very conscious to hold on to that brand and help to develop it. We are not allowed by government statutes to get involved in Public Private Partnerships in the private sector, we can do it on road building and things like that, but we've broken all conventions here and we don't give a damn what the consequences are. We are committed to

Waterford Crystal and great credit has to be given to the managerial staff at Waterford City Council and the city councilors themselves, to a man [sic] they are behind Waterford Crystal.

It's against government principles to involve ourselves in private industry, so the money we invested in the property, we invested that in contravention of government policies. We did that knowingly; desperate situations need desperate remedies. We've committed ourselves, for the next eight years we have contracts with Waterford Crystal and the venture capitalist company to have a partnership for the next eight years and then that is to be reviewed and hopefully added to. So, we are very happy with the investment. Visitors are coming into here, but also it allowed us to put an industry in the centre of the city and attract people to stay overnight in the city...Now, they are staying in Waterford and the businesses are getting the off spin [sic] of the House of Waterford Crystal.

- James, Waterford City Councilor

Similarly, Brian, a *Teachta Dála*²⁷ for Waterford, talked about the political will to salvage something from the demise of Waterford Crystal.

I'd pay tribute to the city manager and others in the council, other directors of service and civic leaders, including the unions as well, who embraced the opportunity that came in terms of this facility. As the city manager put it, it is an attempt to salvage something from the wreckage. I think they've done that very successfully. So, that was a key intervention by the council that at least salvaged some jobs. It meant that the tradition of crystal making wasn't lost in Waterford. That was fantastic, but obviously that wasn't going to deal with the core grievances that the workers had lost their jobs.

- Brian, Teachta Dála for Waterford

As will be discussed extensively in Chapter Seven, many of the former glass workers felt betrayed by the fact that the same political motivation that was used to establish the House of Waterford Crystal was not put into effect to save their jobs and the old company. This partially explains why the House of Waterford Crystal is viewed with suspicion and cynicism by many of the former workers.

Furthermore, the closure of Waterford Crystal presented an opportunity for Waterford to re-imagine its tourism industry. By establishing a Waterford Crystal factory in the city centre, the city council was able to use the centrally located House of Waterford Crystal as a catalyst to

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²⁷ Member of Irish Parliament.

develop other aspects of the city's tourism industry. The House of Waterford Crystal is now the focal point of a larger tourism development within the city centre of Waterford. According to James:

Market research has shown us that Waterford Crystal is the catalyst for drawing in tourism to this area. We are lucky to be surrounded by Wexford, Kilkenny, and Tipperary, which have national monuments that people come along and see. Now, we are reinventing ourselves as a tourist orientated city. If you were here and saw the Tall Ships, it's the second time we've brought the Tall Ships to Waterford, we are putting some[where] in the region of a half million pounds into festivals, to create festivals, that will bring more and more people. And we recognize that the tourist trade is a very important trade and we need to attract more tourism, become more tourist orientated. There was a policy one time here that we didn't even open our shops in the nighttime. We were a city here where restaurants and eateries were few and far between, now there is an abundance of them all over the city and in this area here in the Viking Triangle—we are investing €15 million into—we have buildings that, for instance, Reginald's Tower over there that's the oldest civic building in Ireland, that's standing there since 900 A.D. Now, right behind that there are buildings that are 1,000 years old, we have buildings that represent different changes to our relations to domination by the British in here for 800 years. We have buildings that represent that period and we are bringing them back into public use, that we are opening up, we have a uniqueness inside of Waterford and it's a tourist thing we should have captured long ago, but we didn't. We have two cathedrals, Catholic and Protestant, that were designed and built by the same architect, that's John Roberts, which who the square is called after. As well as that, the ancient city walls date back to the time of the Vikings, now we've spent millions on doing them up again after centuries. Waterford is fighting for its fair share of the tourism market. We are the oldest city in Ireland.

- James, Waterford City Councilor

Waterford's new tourism development has been branded as The Viking Triangle (This connects with Costa's (2009) understanding of the branding of Irish tourism/leisure spaces mentioned earlier.). Waterford, which is a name derived from the Viking word *Vedrarfjordr*, was founded by Ragnall, grandson of Ivor the Boneless, in 914 and until recently has been considered "Ireland's oldest centre of continuous urban settlement" by archeologists and historians (McEneaney and Ryan 2004, 18). In 2018, archeologists discovered an urban Viking settlement in Cork that predates Waterford by fifteen years (B. Roche 2018). However, Cork has yet to lay claim to the moniker of "Ireland's Oldest City" (B. Roche 2018).

A significant feature of Waterford's Viking Triangle is Reginald's Tower (see Figure 11, top centre), which in an earlier form was most likely part of a fortified settlement established by Ragnall (McEneaney and Ryan 2004, 12). By 1088, "the Annals of Ireland are referring to a Dun or fort at Waterford" (McEneaney and Ryan 2004, 12). As for the name, it is suggested that Reginald's Tower stems "from Ragnall mac Gillemaire, a leading figure in Hiberno-Norse government of Waterford, who was imprisoned in the tower when the city fell to Strongbow and the Anglo-Normans in 1170" (McEneaney and Ryan 2004, 12). Under Anglo-Norman rule, Waterford was transformed into an important economic port, which marked the next major stage in Waterford's history (McEneaney and Ryan 2004, 36). Without delving further into the specifics of Waterford's ancient historical development, the transition from Viking to Anglo-Norman rule is indicative of Waterford's new tourism product. The Viking Triangle acts as a launching pad for tourists to begin to explore centuries of Waterford's history, largely through the city's built environment. So, while the House of Waterford Crystal might draw in the tourists, The Viking Triangle and Waterford's long and engrossing political, economic, and socio-cultural history is intended to keep the tourists in the city for longer periods of time. This was essentially the city's response to the tourism audit.

Map 3 shows a tourism map (Visit Waterford 2016) and a street map depicting the major tourism attractions in Waterford City, of which the highest concentration is on The Mall and within The Viking Triangle. The Visit Waterford website describes The Viking Triangle as follows (Waterford Viking Triangle 2016):

It's a quirky place, with interesting nooks and crannies for you to explore. This is where you can enjoy some of the key attractions of Ireland's Ancient East, including the House of Waterford Crystal, the award winning Medieval Museum, Bishop's Palace and Reginald's Tower.





Map 3. Tourism and Street Map of Waterford's Viking Triangle.

The Viking Triangle has lots of nice things to do and see. There are craft studios, cafes and lovely places to eat. Most of all though, there is a great sense of history. Waterford's city motto is "Urbs Intacta Manet," which means The Untaken City and in the Viking Triangle you will walk through over 1,000 years of history, you can almost hear the Viking voices, or picture the French Huguenot bakers, you can imagine the tall ships on the quay importing their wines from France and Spain.

Waterford's fascinating history is there for the taking!

The pictures in Figure 11 give a sense of the narrow streets and "interesting nooks and crannies" that tourists are encouraged to explore within The Viking Triangle. In conversation with Róisín²⁸ (personal communication, June 14th, 2012), a professor of tourism at the Waterford Institute of Technology, she suggested that: while the area the city council has marked for tourism development is rich in history, in the overall context of Ireland's tourism industry, Waterford has always been considered a living city in the sense that it has never been overrun by tourists, despite having one of the largest tourism attractions in the country. It has been a centre of industry and commerce that has served both the city and the surrounding region. This status is largely why Waterford has been late in developing its tourism industry.

The push towards developing Waterford's city centre for tourism was in the works prior to the 2008 financial crisis, which proved to be somewhat fortunate. According to Thomas:

We fell lucky in ways that a lot of projects the city needed, we got the go-ahead for them prior to the collapse of the economy. So, we got improvements in the city centre that has lifted it compared to a few years ago—the quays and the glass wall now, the things they're doing in the museums, and the work that we're doing with festivals. We are trying to draw people into it [Waterford], to get the spending power in. And, you are hoping then, that if you get that going then, you get jobs and the people that get jobs spend money. You get a multiplier effect and it's going to be slow and it's going to be incremental, but you have to make a go of it.

- Thomas, Former Mayor of Waterford City

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²⁸ This professor of tourism asked to remain anonymous.

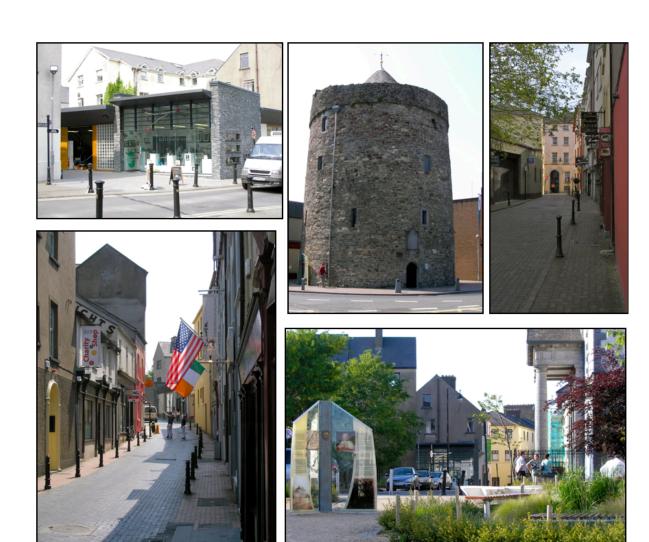


Figure 11. The "Nooks and Crannies" of the Viking Triangle.

The closure of the Kilbarry factory in 2009 and the possibility of a centrally located Waterford Crystal tourism attraction added to the impetus to develop and grow Waterford's tourism industry. The speed in which the House of Waterford Crystal was established was important because once the factory closed tour operators stopped coming to Waterford. This was very hard on the hotel trade in Waterford, which would be needed for future tourism development.

The tourism development of The Mall and the Viking Triangle have not been without their own problems with respect to revitalizing the city centre. According to Róisín (personal communication, June 14th, 2012), the new tourism developments have been very uneven in that

the development of The Viking Triangle is shifting the centre of town from John Robert's (or Red) Square, Michael St. and John St. to The Mall (see Figure 12). Furthermore, tourists tend not to venture very far from where the main tourism infrastructure is located, namely The Mall. Kneafsey (1998, 117) documents a similar phenomenon with respect to the visitor centre attached to the woollen mill in Foxford, Ireland. Kneafsey (1998, 117) states that the impact of the tourists on the town "is limited because they are usually deposited at the visitor centre and spend most of their time in there...[because of] the presence of a restaurant and shop and the fact that the visitor centre is located at one end of the main street in the town at some distance away from the other restaurants, cafes and pubs." In Waterford, the re-development of The Mall is taking away from the historic centre of the city, which is where most of the shops are located.

Figure 12 shows pictures of John Robert's (or Red) Square on a sunny weekday afternoon (1:00 p.m.) versus a sunny weekday evening (7:00 p.m.) in May. When I was doing field-work in Waterford (2011 and 2012), the square goes from a hive of activity to a virtual ghost town. It was the same in 2005 and 2006 when I would periodically be in Waterford for work. This stark contrast in activity between day and evening reiterates the observations of both the former glass worker and the city councilor above about there being very little for the tourists to do in the evening. While the area around The Mall and The Viking Triangle is beginning to develop, there is still a problem with the nightlife in the city centre of Waterford. There was a "6-9 Committee" established by the city council, which was responsible for keeping activities in the city going a bit later in the evening. However, outside of the pubs on the quay and around The Mall, where tourists can get a pint and maybe take in a bit of traditional music, there is not much for tourists to do, especially for those who do not want to venture too far from their hotels. The livelier clubs and pubs are located around John Street and cater largely to the Waterford Institute

of Technology students. Despite the political motivation to develop a more robust nightlife for tourists and people living in Waterford, many small businesses within the city centre were closing. As a result of the 2008 financial crisis, austerity, and subsequent job losses and economic uncertainty during this period, there was not the same economic and consumer base within the



Figure 12. Pictures of John Robert's (or Red) Square.

town to sustain many of these small businesses. Ultimately, it was a difficult time to be promoting the type of economic activity (i.e., small independent shops, restaurants, cafes, etc.) that coincide with the development of tourism towns.

While the House of Waterford Crystal does engage in the production of some high-end specialty crystal, its chief purpose is to encourage consumption in both a financial and experiential sense. Tourists pay for a tour of the factory and many will purchase glass upon leaving the factory, which may be produced in Ireland or elsewhere. The House of Waterford Crystal is at the centre of Waterford's tourism industry. As recommended by the Tourism Research Centre's (2006, 29) audit, the global recognition of Waterford Crystal is an important resource for drawing in tourists and subsequently spending money in the museums, pubs, restaurants, and shops in the city. Consumption at the House of Waterford Crystal is experiential in the sense that the tour is about capturing an experience—the visual and aural experience of the glassmaking process.

These experiences can be made more permanent when a tourist takes a photograph or video.

When asked about the House of Waterford Crystal, Darragh said:

The way I describe it is a headstone on the grave of a once great industry. And I think it is—it's really to salve the consciouses of the councilors in the town. It was done for the businesspeople because it is done to attract in the tourists.

- Darragh, 50s, Craftworker, 38 Years of Service

The House of Waterford Crystal could also be likened to a mausoleum, a grand building that houses the remains of a once great industry. Glassmaking once provided a livelihood for many people in Waterford and now it has essentially been reduced to a performance for tourists to come witness or experience. According to Kneafsey (1998, 111), paraphrasing Richards (1996) and Cloke (1993), "this is part of a broader European trend towards the conversion of former production spaces into spaces of consumption. Coal mines become museums, factories become visitor centres and...countryside becomes leisure landscape." While there was certainly an

element of performance at the Kilbarry factory on the old Tourist Trail (see Chapter Four), it was primarily a production facility designed to produce glass. The House of Waterford Crystal, as a space, has been conceived with the tourist in mind to manufacture an experience. This experiential understanding of consumption can also be extended beyond the House of Waterford Crystal to The Viking Triangle and other aspects of Waterford's nascent tourism industry. The development of The Viking Triangle is also about the consumption of space in the sense that the tourism industry aims to engender an experience for the tourist that is grounded in the ancient history of the city. It is this production of space for consumption that is examined more thoroughly in the next section.

6.3 TOURISM - PRODUCING SPACES FOR CONSUMPTION

The revitalization of historical infrastructure forms the basis for the development of Waterford's tourism industry. As aspects of Waterford's historical infrastructure are given more prominence in this process, they begin to shape residents' experiences of the city. Lefebvre (1991, 49-51) argues that while abstract space, the space produced by abstract labour (see Chapter Two), has taken over from natural or historical space, both types of space still live on as the "underpinning of representational spaces," or the imaginings and emotions associated with lived experience. This continued life can be manifested as feelings of nostalgia for historical spaces and feelings of regret for lost natural landscapes.²⁹ As a result, historic spaces and natural landscapes serve as important and useful sites for tourism. Tourism maps, like the one in Map 3,

²⁹ With respect to nature as regret, although not discussed extensively in this chapter, the Tourism Research Centre's (2006) audit identified the need to develop and promote the natural beauty of Waterford County.

serve an important function in directing tourists to these spaces. Lefebvre (1991, 84) suggests that tourism maps are intended to show:

"beauty spots" and historical sites and monuments to the accompaniment of an appropriate rhetoric, aim[ed] to mystify in fairly obvious ways. This kind of map designates places where a ravenous consumption picks over the last remnants of nature and of the past in search of whatever nourishment may be obtained from the *signs* of anything historical or original. If maps and guides are to be believed, a veritable feast of authenticity awaits the tourist.

As mentioned earlier, the highest concentration of tourism spots is located on The Mall and in the Viking Triangle. Moreover, the first attraction listed on the map's legend is the House of Waterford Crystal. While the House of Waterford Crystal is a modern facility, it does function as a form of historical tourism by using the craft of glassmaking to evoke feelings of nostalgia. At the House of Waterford Crystal, the workers' craft is turned into a performance and in doing so the craft becomes a form of "life tourism," or a tourism experience that "revolves around the production of everyday life as a consumer good" (Duffy 2013, 614). In other words, the tourists are aware that most of Waterford Crystal's glass production is done elsewhere, but the performance of mouth-blown and hand-cut glass projects a sense of living history that thereby engenders a sense of nostalgia and authenticity. The work is also tactile and tangible, so there is a romance to its hand craftsmanship, which has been lost through modern production methods (as elaborated upon in Chapter Four). Furthermore, the industry was historically very influential to the development of Waterford and the southeast of Ireland, so it offers a tourism experience that is representative of the people and place being visited by tourists.

However, Lefebvre (1991, 360) argues that historic and natural spaces only serve as useful sites for tourism if there are no other more profitable uses of these spaces. According to Lefebvre (1991, 360):

countries in the throes of rapid development blithely destroy historic spaces - houses, palaces, military or civil structures. If advantage or profit is to be found in it, then the old is swept away. Later, however, perhaps towards the end of the period of accelerated growth, these same countries are liable to discover how such spaces may be pressed into the service of cultural consumption, of 'culture itself', and of the tourism and the leisure industries with their almost limitless prospects. When this happens, everything that they had so merrily demolished during the *belle époque* is reconstituted at great expense. Where destruction has not been complete, "renovation" becomes the order of the day, or imitation, or replication, or neo-this or neo-that. In any case, what had been annihilated in the earlier frenzy of growth now becomes an object of adoration. And former objects of utility now pass for rare and precious works of art.

This can be seen to an extent in Waterford. The city was late in developing its tourism industry because the manufacturing sector has been at the centre of the city's growth. Furthermore, Waterford's industrial base, of which Waterford Crystal was the driving force for many years, was lauded throughout most of the latter half of the twentieth century. The success of Waterford Crystal stood out in the context of unemployment, poverty, and emigration that were endemic for so much of modern Ireland's history. Now, the House of Waterford Crystal serves as the centrepiece of Waterford's tourism industry. It is considered the biggest draw to attract tourists, so it becomes the site from which tourists can radiate outwards to experience other aspects of the city's tourism industry.³⁰

Beyond the role played by the House of Waterford Crystal in developing Waterford's tourism industry is the importance being placed on tourism in general as the linchpin for expanded economic growth for Waterford City and County. This is reflected in the ways in which local politicians discuss Waterford's tourism development. According to Brian, a TD for Waterford:

³⁰ Incidentally, during the construction boom of the Celtic Tiger, there was also a significant upturn in jobs for archaeologists because there was so much development that it kept turning up sites that required assessment. Between 2002 and 2007, there was a 263% increase (i.e., approximately 650 to 1,709 archaeologists) in professional archaeologists working in Ireland (McDermott and La Piscopia 2008). Most of these new archaeologists were immigrants (44.5%), with 23.5% coming from Poland (McDermott and La Piscopia 2008). Following the 2008 financial crisis, there was approximately 338 professional archaeologists working in Ireland, representing around an 80% decrease from 2007 (Cleary and McCullagh 2014).

In tandem with that [the House of Waterford Crystal], we had the whole redevelopment of this area—The Viking Triangle, the museums, which are now here and the Bishop's Palace building across the road, which has been renovated and this facility is all a part of a tourist attraction. So, a huge amount of this is tourism driven, but at least there is 130 jobs, and some of those are directly manufacturing jobs in terms of producing the high-end crystal. At least it is something, it is a positive development, and I think it's good that it is located in the centre of the city.

But there is an issue as well in relation to manufacturing in general because it wasn't just Waterford Crystal, it was a lot of companies on the industrial estate that closed over the last ten years, not just Waterford City, but Waterford County. A few weeks ago, 130 jobs gone from GSK in Dungarvan, which is one of the key economic drivers for the town of Dungarvan.

Again, there would've been a view from businesspeople and the city manager as well that Waterford was far too dependent on manufacturing and that dependency led to a lack of entrepreneurial development. And, basically, the point that they were making was that people could walk into a job in manufacturing, usually a well-paid job, and the motivation to start up industries was not really there and that led to a dearth of indigenous industry, small to medium size enterprises and that hurt innovation within the city. And they would argue that we are suffering the consequences of that now because the jobs are gone and the entrepreneurial drive isn't as strong in Waterford. The figures back that up in comparison terms, entrepreneurial start-ups are quite poor in Waterford compare to other parts of the region and the country. I would argue it's not an either/or situation, there are people that will need manufacturing jobs...There's a balance.

- Brian, Teachta Dála for Waterford

Thomas, a former mayor of Waterford, espouses a similar belief with respect to Waterford's manufacturing sector hampering entrepreneurial innovation.

In terms of the visitors and tourism and that, we're better at that than we used to be. To some extent, I'd take the view that some of the retail sector got very lazy when there was big wages in the glass factory because there was just so much money being spent that they didn't really have to become a magnet—you know, to get people to come in from outside in a way that other parts of the country—maybe people had to aggressively try and promote the retail sector. That's changing a bit, the progressive ones would be trying hard. I think there is a sense of unity in the city council and a fair number of the leaders in the business community and in the community generally getting on board and getting involved in projects. Were you here for the Tall Ships?

The actual scale of that that they were able to pull off—a huge amount of volunteers from all walks of life and getting in behind that. You get that spirit replicated and you get people that want to start their own businesses...Over 140 a year now would be starting their own businesses, now a lot of them would be using skills they had in jobs. If they were craftsmen or tradesmen, they go from welfare to where they are now legit. So, to that extent, I can see that growing here.

- Thomas, Former Mayor of Waterford City

Waterford's historically strong wage base is now being characterized as having been detrimental to entrepreneurship and innovation in the context of Waterford's current and future development. Furthermore, there is the belief that tourism is a key generator of new economic opportunities that could potentially correct the dearth of entrepreneurship and innovation in the city and the region. These perspectives are reflective of the importance of the tourism industry to the economic development of Ireland in general.

In Ireland, the tourism industry has proved to be valuable in attracting multinational corporations and highly skilled, mobile workers as part of its neoliberal model of economic development, or the Celtic Tiger (see Chapter Three). According to Cronin and O'Connor (2003, 3):

The young, urban professionals who make up the knowledge generating elites of the new economy are attracted to locations where working hard is rewarded by playing hard in the form of appropriate tourism and travel facilities. Being a tourist in one's own or someone else's country is seen, then, less as a form of alienation than as an attractive perk for deciding to locate highly mobile skills in one place rather than another. This explains why the much-vaunted incompatibility between the advertising campaigns of the Industrial Development Authority (IDA) and the Irish Tourist Board was, in fact, no such thing. They were complementary not contradictory. Critics failed to see how Ireland could present itself in IDA advertising as a progressive, modern economy and at the same time in tourism advertising, offer the image of a lackadaisical pre-modern culture, inhabited mainly by old men and (rusting) bicycles. Yet, what the modernists were unable to anticipate was that it was ultimately the pre-modern that would attract the post-modern.

The drive for entrepreneurism and innovation, buzzwords of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, resonates with the wider discourse on economic development in Ireland, both during the Celtic Tiger and since the 2008 financial crisis. According to Kirby (2010, 147-8):

Whether labeled as the "knowledge economy" or more recently as the "smart economy," the objective is "to make Ireland an innovation and commercialization hub of Europe—a country that combines the features of an attractive home for innovative R&D-intensive multinationals while also being a highly-attractive incubation environment for the best entrepreneurs in Europe and beyond" (Government of Ireland 2008:8). Yet while some successes are evident in terms of attracting more R&D by multinationals to Ireland, there is far less evidence of any breakthrough by indigenous firms.

In many ways, the House of Waterford Crystal is representative of the type of companies Ireland is trying to attract. It is a multinational corporation focused largely on the design, marketing, and research and development aspects of the business. However, rather than adapting a new approach to the policies that led to the 2008 financial crisis, subsequent Irish governments under the direction of the Troika have opted for a continuation of the type of policies that led to the Celtic Tiger, namely attracting foreign direct investment through open markets, low tax rates, lax financial regulations, and a flexible workforce (as discussed in more detail in Chapter Seven).

Returning to Lefebvre's (1991, 31) notion that "every mode of production with its subvariants...produces a space, its own space...as an 'object' for analysis and overall theoretical explication," how do we understand Waterford's tourism industry, and its spatial code, under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism? Developing a tourism industry is perceived generally as a successful strategy for generating economic growth in "regions deprived of alternative means of economic development" by orthodox economists under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism (Schilcher 2007, 168). In Waterford, this certainly appears to be the approach adopted by city council with respect to the amount of work that has gone into the actual re-development of Waterford's city centre in order to provide a tourism experience that both complements and builds on the House of Waterford Crystal following the 2008 financial crisis.

Another important aspect of Waterford's tourism industry, especially with respect to attracting tourists to the city, is the rise in number and scale of festivals that are now being hosted by the city. The success of festivals, such as the Tall Ships, hinges on a certain amount of community involvement, organization, and volunteerism. The organizers of the 2011 Tall Ships festival estimated that volunteers gave some 13,700 hours to make the event possible (B. Roche 2011). The volunteer-base upon which these festivals rely constitutes a form of unpaid labour

that both directly and indirectly supports various economic interests in the town and region. In other words, someone profits from this unpaid labour. The reliance on volunteerism for events such as the Tall Ships acts as a subsidy to the tourism industry. According to Volunteer Ireland (2021), there is a dearth of statistics on volunteerism in Ireland, with the most recent data coming from a Quarterly National Household Survey on volunteerism and well-being in 2013. In that survey, Ireland's Central Statistics Office (2015) states that 232.8 million volunteer hours valued at over €2 billion were worked nationally. While volunteering for events, such as the Tall Ships, is not new and while people's motivation to volunteer are myriad, in the context of my fieldwork, it was often presented to or discussed with me in terms of "keeping the town alive" or "bringing in the tourists." Here, it is worth considering Overton's (1996, 117) argument that "depressed areas are becoming increasingly important for tourism, but, in the process of tourism development, the impression is created that these are pristine societies untouched and unaffected by capitalism," when in actuality, tourism development locks people "into a state of underdevelopment through the world capitalist division of labour." This process is three-fold. Firstly, the development of tourism/leisure destinations is often defined by metropolitan needs, or spaces where there is ample full-time and more secure work (Overton 1996, 183). Secondly, the tourism industry is usually seasonal and highly susceptible to fluctuations in the economy, which makes people who are already vulnerable highly dependent on a volatile industry (Overton 1996, 117). Finally, some people or groups of people will benefit more than others, which leads to further class distinction or the out-migration of people who can no longer afford to live in the places they once called home (Overton 1996, 117).

In Waterford, many of these processes are manifesting themselves. The city was late in developing its tourism industry because it had a relatively strong industrial sector with well-paid,

full-time jobs. Following the 2008 financial crisis and the onset of economic austerity, developing Waterford's tourism, which is a large sector in Ireland generally, was seen as a lifeline for an area facing one of the highest unemployment rates in the country (Taft 2012; see Chapter Eight). As Waterford develops its tourism industry, it privileges an aesthetic aimed at beautifying the built environment, that highlights its ancient history to engender a particular kind of experience for tourists. The embrace of festivals "to bring in the tourists" is generating new economic opportunities but is heavily reliant on community involvement and the unpaid labour of volunteers, which is benefitting specific business interests more than the people of the town as a whole. Ultimately, the production of tourism/leisure spaces is a spatial code for marginalized people and places when other economic opportunities are disappearing or limited. According to Kneafsey (1998, 111), the European Union has promoted and encouraged rural tourism "as a means of 'bottom-up' local development" since the early 1990s. These efforts lead to the development of place-based enterprises producing spaces for consumption, which end up competing against each other. It is seen in the way the Waterford politicians and former glass workers talk about Waterford's tourism industry in comparison to that of Galway or Kerry and the type of efforts that need to be taken to catch up and compete for tourism dollars. The process of places operating as enterprises (Keul 2014) and producing spaces for consumption reflects the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

As discussed in Chapter Three, the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism was premised largely on: 1) the undermining of organized labour, which had the leverage and the ability to exercise power in a particular place; and, 2) the development of the avowedly non-interventionist state, whose only interventions should be limited to opening markets and creating business-friendly environments for capital to flourish. The tourism industry relies on the

flexibility and precariousness of labour while simultaneously producing spaces where people are encouraged to spend money. Moreover, tourism development is also perceived by governments as fostering economic opportunities that are not directly related to the production of tourism/lei-sure spaces. The Irish tourism industry has shown that tourism/leisure spaces can be important for attracting foreign direct investment or engendering entrepreneurism and innovation in other sectors. Premised on flexible labour and consumerism, the tourism industry plays to capital's interests. As spaces for consumption, tourism/leisure spaces act as place-based enterprises, which creates competition between places where success is determined by the market. Ultimately, the tourism industry enables the marketization of space—a process that reflects the ethos of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberalism capitalism.

6.4 CONCLUSION - INSIDIOUS, OBFUSCATORY, AND CONTRADICTORY

It is important to remember that the production of tourism/leisure spaces is not just the result of the interests of capital. Tourism development is often perceived as the last bastion of economic development for marginalized regions. As a result, developing a successful tourism industry can feel empowering for marginalized places and communities on the brink of ruin. The tourism industry is often perceived as offering a viable option for people to stay and work in their communities. It constitutes part of the spatial code of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism in the sense that tourism development is a way of "living in that space, of understanding it, and of producing it" (Lefebvre 1991, 47-8). While people have agency in the production of tourism/leisure spaces, it is also important to recognize the ways in which that agency may further entrench the social relations of the capitalist mode of production. As Lefebvre (1991, 383-5) and Overton (1996, 5) argue, leisure time gives people the illusion of breaking free from

their everyday routines, but to think of leisure time as an escape from participating in the capitalist mode of production is a mistake. The perception that leisure time is solely a form of respite
obscures the ways in which leisure time is part and parcel of maintaining productivity in a capitalist economy (Lefebvre 1991, 383-5; Overton 1996, 5). As people become increasingly alienated from their work, it is no surprise that they seek out experiences that promise escape from
their working lives. Tourism/leisure spaces are an integral feature of the spatial contradictions of
the capitalist mode of production. As Lefebvre (1991, 385) describes:

The space of leisure bridges the gap between traditional spaces with their monumentality and their localizations based on work and its demands, and potential spaces of enjoyment and joy; in consequence this space is the very epitome of contradictory space. This is where the existing mode of production produces both its worst and its best – parasitic outgrowths on the one hand and exuberant new branches on the other – as prodigal of monstrosities as of promises (that it cannot keep).

On the one hand, tourism/leisure spaces offer a glimpse of a life without the alienation of work under the capitalist mode of production. On the other hand, these spaces are integral to the reproduction of the social relations of capitalism. They are insidious in the sense that they offer socialled respite from work but take place within and further entrench the capitalist system. Moreover, the dreams these spaces engender are unattainable as a daily way of life for most people. Thus, tourism/leisure spaces constitute insidious spaces that obfuscates the social relations of capitalist production for both tourists and those who secure and maintain their livelihoods from the tourism industry. In Overton's (1996, 117) words, tourism/leisure spaces lock people "into a state of underdevelopment through the world capitalist division of labour."

In saying this, as discussed in Chapter One, the exercise of power is never absolute, there is always space for contestation and by allowing space to dream, tourism/leisure spaces present a potential limit to the exercise of power under the capitalist mode of production. This is what makes tourism/leisure spaces, as both spaces of consumption and contradiction, an interesting

reflection of the production of space under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. The next chapter examines the workers' struggle for social justice.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST SOCIAL INJUSTICE³¹

7.1 Introduction - "The government let us down."

On March 17th, 2009, Irish *Taoiseach* Brian Cowen presented US President Barack Obama with a Waterford Crystal bowl full of shamrocks as part of the Shamrock Ceremony at the White House. In Brian Cowen's address at the White House, he remarked:

Mr. President, there is a phrase in the Irish language—"Is féidir linn"—it may seem familiar. It translates as "Yes, you can." In that spirit, and in the spirit of friendship between our two countries, I am pleased to present you this bowl of Shamrock [sic] (The White House Office of the Press Secretary 2009).

Brian Cowen was referencing Barack Obama's wildly popular political slogan, "Yes, we can," which tapped into a fervour of populism during his 2008 US presidential campaign. After accepting the bowl of shamrocks, President Obama attempted to repeat the Irish phrase, with a little help from the *Taoiseach*, he pronounced "*Is féidir linn*" successfully to the laughter and delight of the press corps in attendance. In an interview with *The Munster Express* (March 27th, 2009), a former Waterford Crystal worker, recalls this pleasant photo-op quite differently:

I was absolutely savage with the fact that Brian Cowen was able to present Barack Obama with shamrock [sic] in a huge Waterford Crystal prestige centre piece, such a symbolic piece. Yet here he is, standing back, away from the actual closure of Waterford Crystal itself.

What's he going to do next year? Present Obama with a piece of Waterford Crystal produced in Slovenia or Slovakia? I can't see that happening somehow as I don't think it'll go down too well.

I just can't comprehend where the Government are coming from on this and why they're standing back the way they have.

³¹ A slightly different version of this chapter was published as "City: redundant workers, forgotten citizens? The case of Waterford Crystal" in The Sociology of Unemployment, Tom Boland and Ray Griffin, eds, Manchester: Manchester University Press (2015). Parts of this chapter have been reproduced with the permission of the editors and the publisher.

As Cowen was joking with Obama, the Waterford Crystal workers were embroiled in the occupation of the company's Visitor Centre and Showroom, a protest they continued for five more days.

Many of the workers expressed their anger about the government's reluctance to intervene on their behalf and save the company. For Liam and Aidan, the government's response, or lack thereof, to Waterford Crystal's closure was unforgivable.

I can never forgive the government—you are talking about one of the most iconic brands that you'll ever come across in Ireland. And they just let it slip through their hands like that.

- Liam, 50s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

I'm angry with the government in particular because they allowed a company to close that didn't have to close. That's the crime in all of this. And, I consider it a crime, maybe not on the statute books, but it is a crime in my books. The government is supposedly here to protect the people and society in general and allowed a perfectly viable company, where we put out clear alternatives to them and they completely blanked it. I'm desperately angry at that—the government is the real enemy in all of this. The government let us down. It made no intervention whatsoever. It did absolutely nothing to help. It completely abandoned Waterford Crystal and completely abandoned the workforce.

- Aidan, 50s, Manager, 36 Years of Service

In affixing blame to the government for not intervening in the demise of Waterford Crystal, the workers were conveying a sense of social injustice. This is not an uncommon experience with respect to being made redundant and unemployed (Bensman & Lynch 1988; Delany *et al* 2011; Silver *et al* 2009; Walley 2010). For that reason, to understand the former Waterford Crystal workers' experiences, we must also ask: why do they feel unjustly treated by the state in particular? Their convictions must be contextualized by exploring the historical, geographical, sociocultural, political, and economic processes that have engendered that experience as unjust. It is important to note that the opinions expressed by the former glass workers in this chapter were informed by two to three years of rumination and hindsight, which obviously informed their

analysis of what happened to them and must be taken into consideration. This chapter aims to explain the experience of social injustice as it applies to the former glass workers, especially as a predominantly older workforce.

By directing their anger towards the government, the former glass workers are calling into question the role of the state and the responsibility of its elected representatives to its citizens, particularly as workers. Citizenship is conventionally defined in terms of the social, political, and economic rights afforded to full members of a particular political community, which in most cases is the nation-state (Caldeira and Holston 1999; Marshall 2006[1950]; Turner 1997). However, in the case of the former glass workers, they are also afforded certain citizenship rights at the supra-state level through Ireland's membership to the European Union. While citizenship rights are often perceived and discussed in universal terms, the ability to exercise those rights is not always seamless, especially when they extend across overlapping political communities. As Caldeira and Holston (1999, 692) argue, "the development of [democratic] citizenship is never cumulative, linear, or evenly distributed for all its citizens, but is always a mix of progressive and regressive elements, uneven, unbalanced, and heterogeneous—in short...disjunctive." T.H. Marshall, in his seminal essay, "Citizenship and Social Class," suggests that citizenship is a system of equality, based largely on the redistribution of scarce resources, and that capitalism is a system of inequality, which produces disparities in wealth and power—i.e., social classes (Marshall 2006[1950]). While Marshall has been criticized for not addressing the significance of identity politics and identity-based rights, such as, Indigenous rights, religious rights, gender equality, and rights concerning sexual orientation (see Turner 1997), there is still merit to his argument. At the crux of Marshall's argument is that citizenship both mitigates and maintains the social inequality inherent in capitalism by producing a universal set of rights upon which a

political community finds common ground (Marshall 2006[1950]). This chapter suggests that the sense of social injustice experienced by the former glass workers constitutes a form of structural violence that stems from an inherent disjunction in exercising democratic citizenship rights, within and across the state and supra-state level, and the changing relationships within and between labour, capital, and the state under the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section outlines key moments in the demise and resurrection of Waterford Crystal to convey why the former glass workers feel so aggrieved at the actions or rather inaction of their government. The second section presents a parallel history that is referred to by many of the former glass workers when they are discussing their experiences of redundancy and unemployment. This accompanying history concerns Ireland's bailout of the banking system and subsequent imposition of economic austerity. The third examines the former glass workers' legal battle to recover their pensions and the ways in which their citizenship rights are simultaneously being claimed and undermined across the state and the supra-state level. The next section frames the workers' sense of social injustice in terms of structural violence. The final section places the workers' experience of structural violence in the context of disjunctive democratic citizenship and the changing relationships within and between labour, capital, and the state under the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

7.2 ABANDONED BY THE STATE - "THERE WAS TOO MANY POLITICIANS THAT STOOD BACK WHEN THAT PLACE CLOSED. THEY DID NOT DO ANYTHING."

As discussed in Chapter One and Two, in April 2008, the Waterford Wedgwood Group sought a €39 million loan-guarantee from the Irish government to complete a restructuring

programme that was intended to ensure Waterford Crystal's continued operation in Ireland. Given the status of the company as an "iconic Irish brand," the *Fianna Fáil*-led government considered intervening in Waterford Crystal's affairs (Curran and Clerkin 2008; McManus 2008; The Sunday Business Post May 18th, 2008; Waterford News and Star May 6, 2009). In the end, the Irish government refused to sign off on the loan-guarantee because it would set a precedent for other floundering companies seeking financial support from the state (Irish Examiner May 23, 2008).

Less than a year later, on January 5th, 2009, the Waterford Wedgwood Group went into receivership (O'Halloran 2010; Werdigier 2009). With the future of Waterford Crystal uncertain, there were appeals from multiple quarters for the government to intervene and save the company. The mayor of Waterford, Jack Walsh, argued: "Waterford Crystal is one of only a handful of iconic Irish brands and the gallery and the visitor centre at Kilbarry are among the most popular visitor attractions in the country. Given this, it is of major strategic importance that this company not be allowed to slip into oblivion" (McDonald 2009). Jimmy Kelly, the regional secretary for Unite, the trade union representing the glass workers, and a former Waterford Crystal worker himself, stated: "Certainly, the brand is obviously one that has been built up since practically the foundation of the state and we see that as something that should be protected for the future—to maintain as many jobs as possible in Waterford" (McDonald 2009). Now that the Waterford Wedgwood Group was in receivership, Waterford Crystal could be divided from the parent company and run as a profitable, stand-alone enterprise, which was suggested as a possible stipulation during the Waterford Wedgwood Group's pursuit of the government's loan-guarantee in April 2008 (Curran 2008; The Sunday Business Post May 18th, 2008). However, the Irish government still refused to intervene. As outlined in Chapter Two, the Irish government claimed that any intervention to save the company would be against European rules and would have to be approved by the European Commission Directorate-General for Competition and that such approval would be unlikely (Beesley and Hennessey 2008). This is despite the Director-General for Competition approving France's bailout of Renault under the condition that manufacturing operations in other EU member states were not affected (Gow and Traynor 2009). If there was the political will to do so, the Irish government could have sought a similar agreement. The discrepancies surrounding these cases call into question the actions and motivations of the governing politicians and the disjunctions in how rights are honoured for European citizens in different member states.

Waterford Crystal continued to operate as a going concern for three-and-a-half weeks before the receiver attempted to lock the workers out, a manoeuver that led to the workers' occupation of the Waterford Crystal Showroom and Visitor Centre. During the occupation, there were further pleas for the Irish government to intervene and nationalize Waterford Crystal to ensure its survival (Irish Independent February 3, 2009; The Munster Express March 27th, 2009). However, the government continued to refuse to intervene and on March 22nd, 2009, the workers agreed to end the occupation. In return, the workers received a €10 million *ex gratia* payment from the receiver and KPS to be divided among themselves. The workers' trade union developed a formula, which accounted for factors such as years of service and rate of pay, upon which to divide the money. The €10 million amounted to relatively little per worker, but even less after the appropriate taxes were applied to the payments. Figure 13 gives a breakdown of what Liam³² was awarded after taxes were applied to his share of the €10 million. Liam was fifty-seven and had given forty-two years of service to Waterford Crystal when he was made redundant. His

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³² Liam gave me permission to use this letter in my thesis.

WATERFORD CRYSTAL (IN RECEIVERSHIP) Waterford Crystal Limited Kilbarry Waterford Ireland Telephone (051) 332200 Fax (051) 378539

Unite

Keizer Street Waterford

1 October 2009

Waterford Crystal Ltd (In Receivership) Ref No:

Your PPSN:

Dear

I enclose a cheque representing payment from the Fund established in March on the sale of assets to KPS. The amount of your gross entitlement was provided by UNITE to me in my capacity as the administrator of the payments from the Fund. I had no involvement in the calculation of your entitlement. The enclosed payment represents the net position after the necessary deduction of the relevant taxes as follows:-

- Employers' PRSI is due at 10.75%;
- PAYE has been applied on the emergency tax basis. One week's standard rate cut off point (based on a single person) and one week's single personal tax credit has been given;
- Employee's PRSI has been applied at Class A1, i.e. 4% with a weekly exemption of €127;
- Health levy is calculated at a rate of 4% up to the weekly threshold of €1,443 and 5% thereafter, if applicable;
- Income levy is calculated at 2% up to the weekly threshold of €1,443, 4% on the next €1,922 and at 6% thereafter, if applicable.

Your net payment has therefore been calculated as follows:

 Gross Allocation from the fund 	14630.95
 Less: Employers' PRSI 	1420.16
Net Entitlement	13210.79
 PAYE 	5234.23
 PRSI and Health Levy 	1169.46
Income Levy	696.49
 Total Deductions 	7100.18
 Net Cheque Enclosed 	6110.61

Depending on your personal circumstances, you may be entitled to a refund of income tax / PRSI / health levy / income levy. You should use this letter to contact your local Inspector of Taxes and the Department of Social and Family Affairs in relation to this.

Yours faithfully,

For and on Behalf of Waterford Crystal Limited (In Receivership)



The Receiver and Manager contracts only as agent of the company and without personal liability.



Figure 13. Breakdown of tax deductions applied to the €10 million ex gratia payment won by the Waterford Crystal workers.

share of the \in 10 million was \in 14,630.95. He paid \in 8,520.34 in taxes and deductions, which left him with a net payment of \in 6,110.61. In other words, fifty-eight percent of his portion of the \in 10 million went to the state. While the taxes were in line with the Irish tax rates at the time, the taxation of the \in 10 million incensed many of the former glass workers because it served as another example of the way the state failed them. By not intervening, the government was perceived as standing back from the closure of Waterford Crystal. Despite amounting to very little per worker, the \in 10 million was something the workers had won for themselves through the occupation of the Showroom and Visitor Centre. Through the taxation of the \in 10 million, the state added insult to injury by claiming a significant portion of the money awarded to the workers by the receiver and KPS. Many of the workers felt that even though the government did not intervene in the closure of Waterford Crystal, it could have at least given a tax exemption on the \in 10 million. The Waterford Crystal workers perceived the state as having little regard for their welfare. This perception was reinforced by the way in which the House of Waterford Crystal was established.

In January 2010, Waterford City Council along with WWRD Ltd. (Waterford Wedgwood Royal Doulton), the new subsidiary company established by KPS following the closure of Waterford Crystal, announced the opening of a new House of Waterford Crystal (The Sunday Times June 27, 2010). The plans for the new facility included a scaled-down factory to produce a few high-end specialist items, and a new showroom, both designed for tourists to visit (see Chapter Six). Six months following this announcement, the new factory and showroom were established on The Mall in the centre of Waterford (see the top photograph of Figure 10 on page 273). The facility was viewed with much suspicion by many of the former glass workers. There were two aspects in particular that the workers focused on: 1) the speed in which the new facility was

constructed; and 2) the speed in which funding was secured to pay for the project. Ronan and Rory raise these issues below:

I haven't been in it. Anything that went up from scratch in six months—a beautiful iconic building, it's like something you'd see in New York. From closing down the place and six months later this just appears downtown. People are saying, "Hey! Hold on a minute now. Where did this come from and why so fast? Was this pre-planned?" That's the way people think.

- Ronan, 50s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

All of a sudden, Waterford Crystal closed, then all of a sudden, this place down here was built within 3 months. Now, we have a cancer hospital, Solace Center, the people of Waterford donated the money to build that place, it took about 3 years to build it. Yet, they could build that place in 3 months.

Now, they [KPS] don't actually own the building. They are only leasing the building from the City Council. I can't remember the number of million to keep the place outside open [the old factory]—and the government refused it. Yet, they give them money to build that place. They're after rebuilding all around that area. So, you tell me—and it just happened to be 18 months. If they built it within the year, people would've said this is all planned, but because it had gone over the initial year, it's like someone said, "Right, now we can start making plans for the new place." There was too many politicians that stood back when that place closed. They did not do anything.

- Rory, 40s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

As outlined in Chapter Six, the House of Waterford Crystal was funded through a €25 million redevelopment grant, which also included the restoration of other buildings on The Mall in Waterford (South and Eastern Regional Assembly 2013; Irish Independent January 27th, 2010). The total cost of the factory, showroom, and office block was €4.3 million (Mythen Construction 2013). Furthermore, in June 2012, the Waterford City Council also secured an additional €914,960 to pay for the extension and upgrading of the nearby Bolton Street car park for tour coaches visiting the House of Waterford Crystal (South and Eastern Regional Assembly 2013). As stated in Chapter Six, the funding for both projects were obtained through the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly, which is funded by the Irish Exchequer and the European Regional Development Fund. While there may be discrepancies between the different workers' accounts, in terms of the timeline of construction and the money spent, that was not as important as the

manner in which the former workers talked about and gave meaning to the speed of construction and funding for the new Waterford Crystal facility. Ultimately, the workers want to know why the same resources, in terms of money and political will, were not exercised when the old company was still in existence, when the workers could still have saved their jobs and their pensions.

For many of the workers, the loan-guarantee, the receivership, the occupation, and the taxation of the €10 million constituted significant moments when the state failed them by not intervening in their situation. The workers' anger with the state was then inflamed by how quickly financial resources and political will were employed to establish the new House of Waterford Crystal facility so soon after the closure of the old factory (see Chapter Six). The inconsistency in the government's willingness to intervene left the former glass workers both confused and disillusioned. These feelings were compounded by the bailout of the Irish banking system and subsequent austerity economy.

7.3 THE WORKERS' PARALLEL HISTORY - "AND YET, SIX MONTHS LATER, BILLIONS THEY GAVE TO THE BANKS."

There was a parallel history that the workers juxtaposed with the government's refusal to intervene in the closure of Waterford Crystal, which further exacerbated their sense of social injustice. In September 2008, the Irish government announced a €440 billion guarantee of the assets and liabilities of the Irish banking system (Allen 2012; Allen 2009; Blyth 2013; also see Chapter One). Of all the Irish banks, Anglo Irish was in the most trouble with a loan book of €73.2 billion, an amount equivalent to just under half of the Irish GDP (€160 billion) (Allen 2009; CSO 2011). In December, the Irish government injected €1.5 billion into Anglo Irish in an effort to recapitalize the bank (Allen 2009; Kollewe 2010). When that injection of cash failed to

prevent the bank's shares from dropping further, the government nationalized the bank on January 15th, 2009 (Allen 2009; Kollewe 2010). This was ten days after Waterford Crystal went into receivership and fifteen days before the occupation began. As illustrated by Henry and Roy below, many of the former glass workers were in disbelief over the amount of money given to the banks compared to what was needed to keep Waterford Crystal afloat.

The trade union approached the government before we closed down or just after we closed. They wanted €30 million. That was when they wanted to break away Waterford Crystal from the Wedgwood Group and just have it as a separate entity and keep jobs in this country, in our town. And they wanted a loan only of €30 million, just to do that, just to set that up. And, the government said, they weren't in the business of propping up other companies' factories.

And yet, six months later, billions they gave to the banks. That sticks in an awful lot of people's throats ever since.

- Henry, 40s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

For Roy, on top of the money given to the banks, a lot of his anger stems from the fact he felt Waterford Crystal was a special case given its status as an iconic Irish brand (see Chapter Four).

In the beginning of 2008, the company actually looked for a loan from the government for €39 million. We had meetings with the Minister of Enterprise, Trade, and Employment, who was Micheál Martin, who is the leader of *Fianna Fáil* now, to try and set up—"Look the company needs this money." You know? But the government wouldn't give it. And I think that was another issue, as well, that really made the workers angry.

Here was a company, an indigenous Irish company, a flag ship, the jewel in the crown—you know what I mean? It's up there with Guinness and everything else and the government wouldn't support that.

When you see the contrast now of what they're doing giving Anglo Irish unsecured bondholders—giving taxpayers' money to that. And they wouldn't do that for Waterford Crystal at the time, which could possibly have saved, I'm not saying it would've, but it could possibly have, you know what I mean. It could have possibly saved the company.

There is a lot of anger as a result of that and all the false promises that the politicians had made to the workers at the time during the occupation. So, we set about then, demanding that the government intervene in this and that they should buy the company. The minimum they should've done is protect the name. They allowed the name to be bought and to be taken out of the country. That was a national disgrace. Even if they had bought the name at least it would have stayed in the country and we would've had the opportunity to build it up.

- Roy, 50s, Craftworker, 20 Years of Service

From the workers' perspective, the €39 million sought during the period of the loan-guarantee, the receivership, and the occupation was a pittance compared to the billions invested in the Irish banking system. While comparing a national banking system to a luxury-product manufacturer may be considered ludicrous by some, for the former glass workers, it was the act itself that was significant. The workers felt that because they spent most of their lives as productive, tax paying, Irish citizens, they should have been afforded an opportunity to save their livelihoods. In contrast, the billions that were invested in the banks were covering the debts of property developers and speculators, key agents in Ireland's real estate bubble and subsequent economic collapse.

The sense of social injustice the workers felt over the banking bailout was just one aspect of a much bigger problem. Roy's reference to the "Anglo Irish unsecured bondholders" points to much larger issues, namely the government's policies around economic austerity and the loss of national sovereignty. He was recalling the government's decision to repay over €700 million to unsecured bondholders in November 2011 (Carvajal 2012; Ryan 2011). Unsecured bondholders earn higher returns on their investments because they are taking greater risk purchasing bonds that are not guaranteed (Carvajal 2012; Ryan 2011). The former glass workers, and Irish citizens in general, were incensed that these very costly bonds were being repaid when there was no legal obligation to do so. However, the European Central Bank warned the Irish government that defaulting on the payments to these bondholders could result in more financial turmoil for the already troubled Irish economy (Carvajal 2012; Ryan 2011). How do economic austerity and loss of national sovereignty figure in the former glass workers' experience of social injustice?

Many of the former glass workers felt that they were made redundant at the worst possible time. In order to re-capitalize the banks, the Irish government negotiated an €85 billion joint-loan from the European Union and International Monetary Fund, more than half of which was

swallowed up by Anglo Irish (Blyth 2013, 235). As part of the EU-IMF loan agreement, the Irish government agreed to implement structural reforms to reduce public spending—in short, austerity measures. After the closure of Waterford Crystal, Jack went back to school but did not hold any hope of securing gainful employment because of his age/ageism and the state of the economy.

I went back to school—back to education. We were made unemployed at a time when there's no jobs. There's no prospect of employment. I was just watching a promo on TV and a builder just said, "There's no point of telling people to look, there isn't anything out there."

I don't hold out any prospect of having gainful employment out of the course that I am doing. Partly, or mostly because of the reason that there are tens of thousands of people with all those skills that I'm only beginning to learn now and they have years of experience of using those skills and they can't get work.

- Jack, 50s, Craftworker, 36 Years of Service

Similarly, Aoife feels her age/ageism is a significant detriment to finding a job and that the longer she is unemployed, it is even less likely she will ever work again.

I don't think I'll ever work again. I'd prefer to see young women and young fellas getting jobs, to be honest with you. I'd like to see the kids not having to emigrate, but I don't think that'll happen. I think that what's going on in this world is worldwide now, so it's going to take a while to sort it out.

But I think I'm finished going working now. That doesn't mean I wouldn't take a job. I would, yeah. But there is nothing there, you know what I mean? Another three years down the line, I'll definitely be unemployable. People don't want people of my age.

- Aoife, 50s, General Section, 35 Years of Service

Many of the workers felt that the combination of their age/ageism, which is discussed further in Chapter Eight, and severe economic austerity would prevent them from ever being employed again.

According to Blyth (2013, 2), "austerity is a form of voluntary deflation in which the economy adjusts through the reduction of wages, prices, and public spending to restore competitiveness, which is (supposedly) best achieved by cutting the state's budget, debts, and deficit."

The argument put forth by the Irish government was that Ireland needed to regain its competitiveness and increase its market share of exports to get out of the recession (Allen 2012). As a member of the Economic and Monetary Union, Ireland was unable to devalue its currency, so instead the Irish government implemented public sector wage cuts as a form of internal devaluation (Allen 2012). Public sector wage cuts were intended to put pressure on wages in other sectors of the economy and drive down the price of labour to entice foreign direct investment. The Irish government's logic was that doing so would increase the confidence of international investors and not further depress the economy (Allen 2012). Ireland's economic austerity programme also included cuts to social welfare, education, health services, child benefits, the civil service, and old age pensions. Moreover, Ireland introduced new taxes and increased some existing taxes, notably property taxes, water taxes, and consumption taxes, which disproportionately affected low- and middle-income earners. At the same time, there has been no increase in corporation taxes or other significant taxes targeting wealth and capital. The 2013 national budget "increased taxes by 1.3% on those earning £20,000—seven times more than the 0.2% tax increase on those with $\in 100,000$ a year while those on $\in 200,000$ paid a mere 0.1% more" (Cahill 2013).

It is worth noting that the economic crisis in Europe is often portrayed as a sovereign debt crisis—the result of profligate state spending. Thus, as the argument goes, austerity was required to get state spending under control. However, this depiction omits the role played by a banking crisis that was subsumed by national governments. In April 2009, shortly after the occupation of Waterford Crystal ended, the Irish government set up the National Assets Management Agency (NAMA), which bought the toxic assets of Ireland's major banks. The government purchased these assets "at above book value with taxpayer money, sold shares of NAMA back to the banks, and they, in turn, used these shares as collateral to get liquidity from the European Central Bank"

(Blyth 2013, 235). Furthermore, the notion that public spending cuts leads to growth is nonsensical (Blyth 2013, 235). It produces a situation that Keynes referred to as the "paradox of thrift:' if we all save at once there is no consumption to stimulate investment" (Blyth 2013, 8). It is what Harvey (2010), paraphrasing Marx, calls a crisis of underconsumption, if there is no demand or if people do not have or are unwilling to spend their money, then the economy begins to slow down because profits decline and those with capital are reluctant to invest.

At the time of my research, national unemployment levels were around fifteen percent in Ireland and twenty-five percent in Waterford City (Taft 2012). Consequently, many Irish people were, once again, emigrating. For most of the former glass workers, this was not an option given their stage in life. However, it does not mean that they have not been affected by emigration. Finn's son was moving to Australia and he was concerned about his daughter's future.

As far as my children are concerned, I have one young fella, he's thirty-one, he's a plasterer, he has no work. Actually, in two weeks time he is going to Australia.

I have another young'un; she is twenty-two; she's in college. She's finishing now. Next May she'll be qualified as a secondary school teacher. I can't see a future here for her. I really can't. As much as I want her to stay, I'd be happy if she could go somewhere and get a job in the field that she is good at. If she does settle somewhere else, then so be it. I want her to be happy and have a good life and a good education. I couldn't ask for anymore.

- Finn, 50s, Craftworker, 40 Years of Service

As for the workers themselves, many of them now depend on state welfare programmes, which have been cut back under Ireland's austerity measures. So, despite paying into the social welfare system for most of their lives, the workers find themselves with very little in terms of state support and were finding it increasingly difficult to get by on a day-to-day basis. According to Rory:

Going back, when we were sacked, our social welfare was $\in 204$ [a week]. Because I'm married now you are only entitled to $\in 312$ between the two of you. So, we are down a hundred euro from three years ago. We still have a mortgage and it is about sixty euro a week. I still pay maintenance for two of my three kids, so that's seventy euro a week. So that's $\in 130$ a week out of say, I have a $\in 156$ and [his spouse] has $\in 156$ —so, you take

€26 out of that and we have €180 to live on and that means pay your bills and eat and all of that.

It's really hard now. I kept some money back for emergencies. At this stage I'm panicking—like everyone, they thought they'd be working—it'll be three years in January. Now, I find that I'm taking fifty or a 100 euro a week because things are coming up. This is on a Tuesday. Today, I think I have five euro in my pocket. So, it's hard. Again, only for having a few quid for the week, but that is slowly and surely coming down and I can see it coming down. And I knew three years ago that it was going to come to this and if there is one thing I don't like, it is feeling uncomfortable. The uncomfortable part is really hard.

- Rory, 40s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

The day-to-day reality of "feeling uncomfortable" under economic austerity reinforced that experience of social injustice. The workers felt that they had done all that had been asked of them, they worked hard for most of their lives, paid their taxes, and now when they needed the protection of a social safety net, there was very little net left to break their fall.

With respect to loss of sovereignty, in November 2011, a draft of the upcoming Irish budget was circulated through a German parliamentary committee before any details of the budget were released to the Irish public (S. Dowling 2011). Apparently, the draft of the budget was sent to all twenty-seven finance ministers of the EU member states, but because of a ruling in Germany's constitutional court, the finance committee must be included in any decisions on the bailout (S. Dowling 2011). The reality of the EU-IMF bailout is that Ireland handed over control of its economy to European technocrats unelected by the Irish people. The bailout was administered by the European Commission, European Central Bank, and IMF—or the Troika—of which only the EC and ECB are democratic institutions accountable to electors. However, that accountability is rather indirect with European Council being responsible for appointing the president and commissioners of the EC, as well as the president and executive board of the ECB.

Moreover, it is the mandate of these institutions to prioritize European interests over the interests of individual member states (Shore 2000, 19). When the Troika visited Ireland for their quarterly

reviews, they were often referred to, in everyday conversations, as absentee landlords coming to collect their rents. This depiction was not lost on the former glass workers. The following account is particularly interesting in the ways in which Darragh connects social injustice with imperial and class power:

I saw a thing—the slaves in Haiti were the first people to battle back against slavery and they ended up having to do a deal with France because France sought reparations from them—that was in the 1700s. But it ended up that it was 1946 before Haiti finally paid off the reparations to France. And it would be the equivalent in today's money of twenty-three or twenty-four billion euros. Now, look at what that money would do today for Haiti. And, if you look at a satellite picture of Haiti, it's absolutely bare and people think it is because it is rocky because you look over at the Dominican Republic and it is green. The reason is because the people took the timber to do cooking and used it for firewood and all that because they had nothing else...they were left that way by France.

Now, are France going to be any different today with Greece? You know what I mean? Those poor people in Haiti, France took...the same people that are running Europe today in France and Germany and Britain, all those countries, and the people at the top—are they going to be any different to the likes of Greece, or the likes of Ireland or Portugal today? They'll suck us dry.

- Darragh, 50s, Craftworker, 38 Years of Service

Ireland received considerable praise from the EU and IMF for the implementation of its tough economic policies. In 2010, the ex-ECB head, Jean Claude Trichet, stated, "Greece has a role model and that role model is Ireland" (Blyth 2013, 236). The Irish Finance Minister, Michael Noonan, boasted in 2011 that: "Ireland has consistently achieved—or exceeded—all of the targets set in the EU-IMF programme of assistance. We have implemented over 160 separate conditions of the programme and are determined to emerge from it at the end of 2013 and return to sustained market access" (Irish Independent June 23, 2011). Noonan also declared that: "Ireland is not Greece" (Irish Independent June 23, 2011). Between 2008 and 2012, the Irish government implemented €24 billion in cuts and planned for another €3.5 billion in spending cuts and €8.3 billion in new taxes for the following year (Blyth 2013, 237). With a population of

approximately 4.5 million people (Central Statistics Office 2012), the €85 billion joint-loan from the EU and IMF was a huge amount of money to absorb for a relatively small country.

When Waterford Crystal closed and the workers were appealing for the government to intervene on their behalf, it was a *Fianna Fáil*-Green Party coalition that was in power. This government also negotiated and implemented the EU-IMF bailout. However, after the 2011 election, it was a *Fine Gael*-Labour Party coalition government that was responsible for carrying out most of Ireland's austerity programmes, despite election promises that they would renegotiate the EU-IMF bailout. The government's about-face over the bailout was described in *The Sunday Independent* as "the most barefaced breach of election promises ever perpetrated by an incoming government" (Corcoran 2011). There was a perception among the workers that if they had no recourse with the government when Waterford Crystal was closing, then they had even less say in determining their future after the Troika was in charge of Ireland's finances. This perception was reinforced by the fact that after the election, in which *Fianna Fáil* lost two longtime seats in the Waterford constituency, nothing changed.

The inconsistency surrounding state intervention, the hardships of living in an austerity economy, and the workers' inability to exercise political influence served as the backdrop for the ways in which the workers made sense of their situation. The fact that the government took years to address the loss of their pensions only intensified their experience of social injustice.

7.4 THE PENSION CASE - "GIVE US OUR MONEY BEFORE WE DIE!"

According to Hearne (2019, 279), "Waterford Wedgwood's two defined benefit schemes were wound up with a deficit of €111million." Consequently, the former glass workers were only expecting to receive between eighteen and thirty-three percent of their pension entitlements. This

generated a great deal of anger among all the workers but was more poignant for the older workers who were not only closer to retirement but also dedicated most of their working lives in service to Waterford Crystal. Table 3 shows the Age and Service Profile of the workforce for Waterford Crystal when it closed in 2009. The majority of the workforce was between forty and sixty years of age and had served the company between twenty and forty years. The loss of their pensions meant their chance to retire or to live comfortably in retirement was being jeopardized.

Age	Number of Workers	Years of Service	Number of Workers
15 - 20	1	< 5	40
20 - 25	2	5 -10	60
25 - 30	17	3 -10	00
30 - 35	42	10 -15	80
35 - 40	60	15 - 20	33
40 - 45	108	20 - 25	97
45 - 50	117	25 - 30	72
50 - 55	194	30 - 35	88
55 - 60	126		
60 - 65	18	35 - 40	175
65 - 70	2	40 - 45	43
70 - 75	2	45 - 50	1
Total	689	Total	689

Table 3. Waterford Crystal Workforce - Age and Service Profile, 2009 (Unite Waterford Crystal Archives 2011).

In April 2010, ten former workers, funded by Unite, took legal action against the Irish government for failing to protect their pensions, a failure that they claimed was a direct violation

of Article 8 of the European Insolvency Directive. The European Insolvency Directive was introduced in 1980 to protect employees' and former employees' pension entitlements in cases where companies went insolvent. Even though this law had been in effect for over thirty years, it was continually resisted by the Irish government. In 1984, the Irish government established the Protection of Employees (Employers' Insolvency) Act, "which limits the payments to be made by the state to an insolvent employer's pension scheme to the twelve-month period prior to insolvency" (RTÉ April 12, 2010). The 1990 Pensions Act avoided the issue altogether and did not include any stipulations about a minimum guarantee for pension funds affected by a company's insolvency (RTÉ April 12, 2010).

In 2007, the case of Robins and Others (a group of former steel workers in the UK) vs. British Secretary of State for Work and Pensions set a legal precedent in the European Court of Justice concerning the loss of pension entitlements in cases of insolvency. Robins and Others were only expecting to receive between twenty and forty-nine percent of what they were owed after the company they worked for went insolvent. Upon hearing their case, the European Court of Justice ruled that benefits limited to twenty and forty-nine percent "was not adequate protection within the meaning of the Directive" (Augustus Cullen Law 2013). However, they did not determine a "minimum level of benefits which had to be guaranteed in order to ensure compliance with Article 8" (Augustus Cullen Law 2013). Following the ECJ's ruling, the UK government established the Pension Protection Fund to protect workers' pension entitlements. As a result, Robins and Others received upwards of ninety percent of what they were owed. It is worth noting that the Robins and Others case was also opposed by Ireland and the Netherlands, who submitted material to the ECJ in support of the UK's position to not protect insolvent pension funds (Robins and Others v Secretary of State for Work and Pensions 2007). One implication of

this intervention was that the Irish government had already effectively lost the Waterford Crystal pension case. Furthermore, after the ruling, every EU member state was contacted and informed of their obligations under the European Insolvency Directive. To mitigate Ireland's responsibility for pension protection and to address the increasing number of private sector pensions that were in trouble following the banking crisis, the Pension Insolvency Payment Scheme (PIPS) was established by the Irish government in February 2010. In the case of the former Waterford Crystal workers, PIPS improved their pension entitlements only marginally and not beyond the benchmark of forty-nine percent established by the European Court of Justice.

On April 25th, 2013, the ECJ ruled that Ireland was in "serious breach" of its obligations under the European Insolvency Directive. It also ruled that the economic situation in Ireland "does not constitute an exceptional situation capable of justifying a lower level of protection for employees" (RTÉ April 25th, 2013; Carbery 2013). Upon hearing the ruling, Jimmy Kelly of Unite said: "It is regrettable that the state chose to contest what should have been an open and shut case, causing distress and uncertainty for the workers involved and forcing the taxpayer to pick up a substantial legal bill...It is a crucial decision for Unite, Waterford Crystal, and the union movement as a whole as it affects any worker in an occupational pension scheme" (Irish Examiner April 25th, 2013). The case was then sent back to the Irish High Court to determine the amount the workers should receive, which at the time could have ranged from anywhere between fifty and one hundred percent of their pension entitlements. However, many of the workers doubted they would be as fortunate as the UK workers. Cormac was optimistic that they would get something from the court case, but not the entirety of what they were owed.

Well, hopefully now, we'll get a few bob extra out of that [the pension], you know what I mean? I'm confident that we will get something, but I don't know if we will get the same they got in England, you know. I think that they will find that the legislation in Ireland isn't in conformity with the Directive. But it'll be put back to a judge here, right?

But I just don't feel—the way, week by week, the way things are cranking up to a big fucking blow up, I just can't see them saying, "Give these lads ninety percent." You know what I mean?

I think it's going to be a lot lower, something over fifty percent, you know what I mean? It's just the feeling I have because the way things seem to be moving closer and closer to the edge—that's going to weigh heavily on anybody's mind who is making the call on this.

- Cormac, 60s, Craftworker, 42 Years of Service

Under economic austerity, the ECJ's ruling was bound to have wider repercussions because freeing up money to invest in insolvent pension funds would have required cuts or tax increases elsewhere in the national budget, which would need the Troika's approval. This situation is interesting with respect to disjunctive democratic citizenship and overlapping state and supra-state jurisdictions. Through Ireland's membership in the European Union, the former glass workers were
able to exercise rights under the European Insolvency Directive to reclaim their pensions, but at
the same time their rights as Irish citizens were being undermined through the Troika's administration of Ireland's economic austerity.

Many of the former glass workers also felt completely disconnected from the pension case. It was just something that was happening "out there" that they played no active part in and had no bearing on their day-to-day existence until some sort of decision was made in the courts. According to Darragh:

Yeah, it [the pension case] takes it away from the people, you now? It's gone out of your realm. Like I walk around the town, and I'm sure — would tell you the same. And, you meet fellas and say, "Any news?" Now, you have no more news than they have. You know what I mean? You just don't know what's going on and it's taken away from that realm and put into someone else's hands and you have no control over it. You either accept or reject and you really, when it's finished, won't be in a position to reject it. That's it, done and dusted. And the decision is made and there is no negotiation on it.

In terms of being in control of it yourself, getting the politicians to make a political decision, being active and doing things, occupying places, being a nuisance and forcing them into doing something, if we were doing that as a group, I think it would have been more effective.

- Darragh, 50s, Craftworker, 38 Years of Service

On July 17th, 2013, nearly three months after the ECJ's ruling, a group of former Waterford Crystal workers gathered outside Leinster House in Dublin to protest the government's inaction on the ECJ's ruling (Mac Fhearraigh 2013). They held placards that read, "Crystal Workers Demand Pension Justice for All" and chanted, "Give us our money before we die!" and "No Pensions! No Justice! No Peace!" (Mac Fhearraigh 2013). As governmental cars transporting dignitaries left through the gates, one worker pointed his finger, and said repeatedly, "Ye have your pensions!" (Mac Fhearraigh 2013). The Irish government's blatant inaction on the pension issue left the workers both angry and dumbfounded.

In November 2013, the Irish government introduced the Pension [Amendment] Bill, which was intended to protect insolvent pension schemes, like the Waterford Crystal workers' plan, but only up to the minimum fifty percent required under the European Insolvency Directive (Unite Website 2013). In March 2014, days before a court date was to be set for the pension case, the Irish government offered to invest approximately €100 million into the Waterford Crystal pension fund, which would have increased the glass workers entitlements to fifty percent of what they were owed (Rogers 2014; Weston 2014). A government source stated, "The fifty percent settlement is available immediately, provided all agree to it" (Weston 2014). At this point, it had been five years since the glass workers lost both their jobs and their pensions. Now that the pension case was expected to be heard on January 13th, 2015, the government was moving on the issue. The Irish High Court could not pass a ruling of less than fifty percent of what the glass workers were owed, so by not accepting this settlement the workers had little to lose, except a bit more time.

In August 2014, Unite agreed to a government offer to send the pension case to mediation before the Labour Relations Commission and in December, the Irish government and Unite announced a resolution to the long standing case. The agreement entailed:

- 1. a tax-free lump sum to the deferred members of the Waterford Crystal factory and staff schemes of €1,200 per year of service in the pension scheme;
- 2. Workers with pensions under €12,000 will get 90% of their pension;
- 3. Workers with pensions of between €12,000 and €24,000 will get 90% of €12,000 plus 67% of remaining benefit between €12,001 and €24,000; and,
- 4. Workers with pensions in excess of €24,000 will receive 90% of €12,000, 67% of benefit between €12,001 and €24,000 and 50% of any benefit above €24,000 (Department of Social Protection 2014).

The first payments were made to the workers in September of 2015. The total cost of the agreement was €180 million. Between the lump sum payments and the pension payments, the workers' received, on average, about eighty-two percent of what they were owed (McGreevy and Kane 2014). Upon agreeing to the deal, *Tánaiste³³³* and Minister for Social Protection, Joan Burton, a Labour Party TD, stated that the former glass workers had been left "pretty much high and dry" and that the agreement is a "very good outcome for the workers" (McGreevy and Kane 2014). It is difficult to see these statements as anything other than repugnant. The Irish government could have, and should have, acted on the pension case much sooner. Furthermore, given the legal precedent set by the Robins and Others case, the workers should never had lost their pensions in the first place.

From the time after the factory closed, thirty-four former glass workers died without ever seeing the issue resolved (Unite Website 2014). Connor lost one of his friends before the ruling.

Aslw	vas telling you, I lost a friend there last week. Three weeks ago, it's strange, myself
and —	——, we said we'd go out for a few beers and met this guy, who worked with —
	and with me. And all he says—talk is the usual, "What's happening with the pen-
sion -	?" You know, they see as kind of a figure, will know.

-

³³ Deputy prime minister.

"What's happening with the pensions? What's happening with this few bob? Are we getting a few bob back disability money? When will we have that?" All of his interest is in getting a few quid and that, you know.

Next thing I go out Saturday morning and this fella says to me, "Did you hear? He's dead."

"Fuck," I said. All this bother. Then it had me thinking, like. And, I'm saying, "Fuck, what about the people, like him?" Who got bare pittance—well, not pittance, but the bare amount that they could get out of it. No pension. No nothing. Nothing to go back to his family, absolutely nil. The place just went and that's that."

- Connor, 44, General Section, 25 Years of Service

As part of the agreement, Unite included provisions for the families of the deceased workers to claim the benefits owed to those workers (Unite Website 2014). While this may offer some consolation to the families of those workers, the workers themselves lived out the remaining years of their lives in financial insecurity. How were they spent?

Objectively speaking, it was in the financial interest of the Irish government to allow the pension issue to be delayed. The agreement on the pension case coincided with the Irish government's announcement that it was about to repay €15 billion to the IMF ahead of schedule and that after seven years of economic austerity the 2015 budget would include tax cuts and welfare expenditures (Boland and Moore 2014; RTÉ October 14th, 2014). This government spending also came a year before the next general election in 2016. While the Irish government may have paid more to the workers than it would have liked, the government also avoided having to cover the entire cost of the workers' insolvent pension fund. By delaying any decision on the pension issue, Ireland's tightly monitored and administered economic austerity programme was not complicated by any extra expenditures that might have resulted from an early resolution to the case. Furthermore, it allowed the Irish government to delay the passage of the Pension [Amendment] Bill, which in the end only protects pensions entitlements up to the minimum of fifty percent of what is owed.

It is little wonder that the former glass workers felt abandoned by the state and framed their experience of redundancy and unemployment in terms of social injustice. The political impetus to move on the workers' pension case was motivated more by a concern for economic strategy than for the welfare of the workers as citizens. Meanwhile, some of the older workers had died, lost the best years of their retirement without their pensions, and/or spent these years slipping further into poverty. It was nearly six years after the closure of the company before workers finally received their money. As of 2016, there are still approximately 100 workers waiting to receive their money after they appealed the government's decision not to make payments for years worked by those employed on a contractual basis as opposed to a full-time contract basis (Kane 2016). The next section frames the workers' experiences of social injustice in terms of structural violence.

7.5 SOCIAL INJUSTICE AS STRUCTURAL VIOLENCE: "ONE OF THE BIGGEST IMPACTS ON ME, RIGHT—APART FROM MAYBE THE MONEY SIDE OF THINGS AND LOSING MY JOB AND EVERYTHING—IT IS THE CONSEQUENCE OF THAT."

Stuckler and Basu's (2013) notion of body economics examines the ways in which economic policies affect people's overall health. They argue that economic crises can have a detrimental effect on public health because "when people lose their jobs, they are more likely to turn to drugs and alcohol or become suicidal," they are also more prone to issues concerning mental health, particularly depression (Stuckler and Basu 2013, xix). Similarly, according to Kwon and Lane (2016, 3), "the consequences of unemployment are long-lasting, affecting social and familial relationships, personal wealth, self-identity, and mental and physical health well after re-employment. People do not simply recover; their worlds do not just return to normal." Low- and

middle-income earners are disproportionately affected by these problems because they tend to have a higher debt-to-savings ratio and are more likely to be in a position to lose their homes or be unable to feed their families. The degree to which public health is affected by an economic crisis depends largely on the ways in which governments choose to respond to a major downturn in the economy—austerity or stimulus (Stuckler and Basu 2013, xix). According to Stuckler and Basu (2013, xix), austerity measures, such as cuts to social welfare, health care, and housing support, exacerbate public health issues because they place additional burdens on the economically marginalized. Stimulus programmes have the opposite effect. Investing in the social safety net, such as social welfare, public health care, and education, enables people who are economically marginalized to seek out and access the kinds of support they need to carry out and even better their day-to-day lives (Stuckler and Basu 2013, xix). Moreover, increasing public spending creates jobs, generates wealth, and stimulates the economy, while austerity further depresses the economy.

The former glass workers often make the argument that during the Celtic Tiger unemployment levels were as low as three percent some years—it is not as if a significant segment of the population arbitrarily decided to live on social welfare once the financial crisis hit. Many of the workers felt that if they had been made redundant ten years earlier, they would have had no problem finding work. The former glass workers' experiences of redundancy and unemployment have been worsened by economic austerity. As a consequence, the former glass workers were dealing with a number of social issues. Some of these have already been addressed in this chapter, such as: emigration; ageism; fear of long-term unemployment; the "uncomfortableness" of just getting by; increasingly less state support; and, workers passing away before seeing the issue of their pensions resolved. Other social issues faced by the former glass workers tended to follow

the issues that have already been mentioned. These included mental illness (e.g., depression, drug and alcohol abuse, gambling addictions), broken marriages, bankruptcies, and suicide. The former company doctor, who still treats many of the former glass workers, was treating a number of psychological conditions among the workers at the time of my research.

When I was in primary school here in Waterford, the big thing was to get into Waterford Crystal, to be a cutter, to be a master craftsman in Waterford Crystal because you'd be set for life and that was the expectation. And, to go from that to where it ended up was a very painful journey. But how it ended was particularly painful and the psychological sequelae of that were pretty catastrophic and—it has been the kind of eighteen months to two years afterwards—it was pretty devastating. And, yes, was there mental illness—it was out the door in terms of the trauma that was involved, both my nurse and myself have been as much counsellor as physician and nurse to most of these people.

- Former Company Physician

Below, Conal, Connor, and Finn address some of those social and psychological issues with respect to themselves and their friends.

One of the biggest impacts on me, right—apart from maybe the money side of things and losing my job and everything—it is the consequence of that. I'm not comfortable in my own head anymore. I don't sleep. I can't sleep. I'm angry all the time. I'm trying to be a bit more relaxed, but I'm not. All day and night, I'm consumed by the glass factory and what happened to us. The disaster that it was.

So, I just can't deal with it. I find that I'm having huge mood swings, which I never had. Now I go through huge periods of—all I can call it is sadness. A very melancholy kind of a state. I watch a funny programme and I don't laugh. I watch a sad programme and I don't particularly care much either. It's almost kind of a dead zone, it's very hard to describe it.

A few weeks ago I was coming home from Dublin and I was thinking wouldn't it be handy to drive in front of that big fucking lorry and just...(Clap!) That's frightening stuff and I'm not making this up. This is the absolute truth. You know, sometimes I'll be down at the river now and thinking wouldn't it be handy to just fucking jump in and it'd all be over. I actually have those feelings.

- Conal, 50s, Craftworker, 36 Years of Service

There are guys that I know that are in an awful state. Drink is just their life. They don't see anything else; they have nothing else. Marriage break-ups—you know what I mean—drugs, gambling. I'm talking to guys now who are getting their money on Tuesday, just for argument sake, and they are going straight to the betting shop to try and double it or to try and make something out of it. Because what they are saying is, "What good is that few pound to me anyway?" That's the way they're looking at it.

Now, I'm not saying everyone looks at it like that, but—I think that the human side of it—only time will tell. It will only play out. And I know that outwardly a lot of guys that I'm speaking with, they probably look okay, they're acting okay, but when they go home and close the doors it's a different ball game, you know?

- Connor, 40s, General Section, 25 Years of Service

I was really devastated when the factory closed, I think I actually cried. Sometimes I can still get very emotional over it. I knew I would never work again because of my health. The thought that there was people there that I was great friends with and to this day I still didn't see them—from the day we finished up, you know?

I'm one of the lucky ones, but I've seen other fellas and the way they're gone it affects me terribly to see. One man in particular, now I might ring him up at ten o'clock in the morning and the next minute I'd be talking to him, and I'd hear, "Tssst! Glulk!" I'd know he is having a can. I know he could be on a binge and two, three days he could be drunk—three, four days of the week. His whole life is just turned upside down. Now, he's not the only one. I know of other fellas that spent their money. All their money is gone.

I've seen a lot of fellas and this is what breaks my heart about the glass factory closing down—a lot of fellas I think in ten years' time there's going to be a lot of poverty, going to be a lot of fellas—I think there will be a lot of suicides down the road and I think that is going to be the legacy of the glass factory, a lot of broken homes, marriages, poverty. People are going to lose a lot. We lost a lot, but I think as time goes on people are going to lose a lot more because it's not going to roll in over two or three years, I think this is going to take effect in ten- or fifteen-years' time when fellas are sixty-five, seventy and they'll have the state pension. That's all they'll have to fall back on.

-Finn, 50s, Craftworker, 40 Years of Service

While some workers may have had certain propensities for mental illness, drug and alcohol abuse, gambling, and the like, there is little doubt that being unemployed in the context of economic austerity exacerbated these problems. In essence, the experiences of redundancy and unemployment that have been presented in this chapter constitute forms of structural violence.

The term structural violence was originally coined by Johan Galtung. In defining the concept, he distinguishes structural violence from personal violence, which occurs when an actor or person commits a violent act towards someone else (Galtung 1969). In the case of structural violence there is no actor, or at least no easily identifiable actor or actors; structural violence "shows up as unequal power and consequently unequal life chances" and stems from situations where the

"power to decide over the distribution of resources is unevenly distributed" (Galtung 1969, 170-1). As with personal violence, structural violence can have both physical and psychological effects. Galtung equates structural violence with social injustice (Galtung 1969, 171). The usefulness of structural violence as a concept is that it "renders visible the social machinery of oppression" (Green 2004, 319). The way things are organized to put certain categories of classes and people disproportionately in harm's way. As Bourgois and Scheper-Hughes (2004, 317) point out, "violence' is a slippery concept that goes beyond physicality to include assaults on self-respect and personhood" and that the notion of "structural violence is a vivid reminder that most violent acts are not deviant [but] defined as moral in the service of conventional norms and material interests." With respect to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, structural violence is an uncomfortable concept because blame is focused on the system as opposed to the individual. As Farmer (2004, 307) argues: "Structural violence is violence exerted systematically—that is, indirectly—by everyone who belongs to a certain social order: hence the discomfort these ideas provoke in a moral economy still geared to pinning praise or blame on individual actors."

With respect to redundancy and unemployment, the possibility of losing your job is perceived as given or natural, it is something that can happen and is subject to forces outside of a person's control. At the same time, continued unemployment, or long-term unemployment, is often perceived in terms of personal deficiencies (i.e., not having the right skills, education, or attitude). It is the individual's fault for their situation. However, as Marx (1990, 781-94) details with his concept of the "reserve army of labour," unemployment and part-time employment are a structural feature of capitalism that serves to drive down labour costs and increase profits. In other words, redundancy and unemployment, as well as their consequences, are built into the capitalist system and thus constitute a form of structural violence. Furthermore, workers' ability

to confront such structural violence can often be further complicated by other social processes or forms of structural violence, such as, xenophobia. For instance:

I didn't know where the social welfare [office] was to claim the social welfare benefit. I hadn't the first idea about it and so did ninety-nine per cent of the people working out there [Waterford Crystal].

When you are queuing up in the social welfare and you are looking at these guys that...first of all, there are guys that have never worked a day in their life. Secondly, you have these people that have immigrated and haven't paid a penny tax and every one of them is getting more than what you are getting. And, you go into these review boards, and they are talking down to you.

- Bill, 40s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

Immigration was essential to Ireland's economic boom and while some of the migrants were so-journ workers, many stayed in Ireland and became Irish citizens. However, the focus on these immigrants as being less Irish is a distraction from the way the inequitable distribution of wealth and power was structured both prior to and after the 2008 financial crisis. As Galtung originally argued, "those who benefit from structural violence, above all those who are at the top, will try to preserve the status quo...to protect their interests" (Galtung 1969, 179). These types of misplaced antagonism (see Carbonella 2014) raised by Bill prove useful in creating divisions among workers and protecting the status quo and, ultimately, those who benefit from structural violence.

With respect to the effects of structural violence on the former glass workers, their experiences of redundancy and unemployment produces what Fassin (2011, 293) identifies as "two traces left within the body." The first is the objectified trace, which includes the physical, the psychological, and the material condition of structural violence. For the former glass workers, this is the effect of poverty, watching the forced emigration of their children, drug and alcohol abuse, bankruptcies, broken marriages, mental illness, suicide, and the daily struggle of feeling "uncomfortable." The second is the subjective trace, which is their interpretation and analysis of what has happened to them; it is the way in which their experiences of redundancy and

employment influence the way they make sense of the world around them. For the workers, it is the sense of social injustice emerging from: 1) the government's reluctance to intervene in the demise of Waterford Crystal; 2) the bailing out of the banks and economic austerity; 3) the government's refusal to address the protection of their pensions; and, 4) the fact that they spent the bulk of their lives as hard-working, productive, tax paying Irish citizens, only to be abandoned and forgotten by the state when they needed its support the most. The next section connects the workers' experiences of structural violence with the inherent disjunction between democratic citizenship and the changing relationships within and between labour, capital and the state under the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

7.6 DISJUNCTIVE DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP UNDER FLEXIBLE ACCUMULATION/NEOLIBERAL CAPITALISM - "WHAT'S THE GOVERNMENT GOING TO GIVE US?"

While the concept of structural violence is useful for drawing attention to and offering a different way of thinking about everyday social inequities, it is similar to studying "experience" in the sense that it should constitute the beginning of our analysis. As a concept, structural violence can be all-encompassing, referring to racial discrimination, gender inequalities, poverty, or redundancy and unemployment. This is by no means an exhaustive list. There are many social phenomena that can be attributed to structural violence. However, to understand those social phenomena, they must be contextualized. According to Farmer (2004, 308), the "erasure or distortion of history is part of the process of desocialization necessary for the emergence of hegemonic accounts of what happened and why." This is why it is important to examine what engenders structural violence in particular historical contexts and the particular ways in which "inequality is structured and legitimized over time" (Farmer 2004:309; Wacquant 2004).

According to Fassin (2011, 281-2), following Weber, the state has a foundational relationship with violence:

the state is supposed to protect society from violence through law and law enforcement, and in exchange it is granted the monopoly of legitimate violence. The contract holds as long as individuals receive sufficient security from the state and are not overly subjected to abuse by it.

Furthermore, Caldeira and Holston (1999, 693) argue that democratic citizenship represents the relationship between the state and society:

although society needs protection from the state, it is only within the framework of the state that this is possible. Thus, citizenship is a complex regulatory regime by which the state moulds people into particular kinds of subjects, and by which citizens also hold the state accountable to their interests.

With its monopoly on violence and as the site where democratic citizenship rights, and their subsequent disjunctions, are ultimately legitimated, we must direct our attention to the state and the ways in which, as Marshall (2006[1950]) argues, citizenship, as a system of so-called equality, acts to both mitigate and maintain the social inequality inherent in capitalism.

During the workers' occupation of the Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre and Showroom, the trade union tried to convince KPS to purchase the company, not just the brand and intellectual property rights, and maintain a larger manufacturing presence in Waterford. Roy's account below recalls the trade union's negotiations with KPS and then speculates on KPS's negotiations with the Irish government over the plans for the new House of Waterford Crystal:

It's better to have it [the House of Waterford Crystal] there like that, than not to have it there at all. The city was hugely supportive of it—I have no doubt KPS were in the driving seat with city council because—and they had said this at a meeting with us. They were saying, "What's the government going to give us?" "If we are going to stay here and we are going to create these jobs in Waterford, what's the government going to give us?"

This is the way they were talking—"We're going to bring the tourists back to Waterford, that's our contribution to the city."

They weren't talking about jobs. They were talking about bringing the tourists back to Waterford. "That's our contribution to the city. Where's the government's contribution to us for doing that?"

The fact that there was 350,000 tourists that came through the original factory at one stage—maybe the company should've been saying the same thing KPS was saying. "We're bringing this into the economy of Waterford, which is bringing in taxes, revenues for the government, and you won't put a shilling into the company." KPS was very straight, "What's the government going to give us for giving you this?"

- Roy, 50s, Craftworker, 20 Years of Service

Roy's description above is a good example of Kirby's (2010, 188) argument that a core feature of Ireland's model of neoliberal economic development was that "the role played by the state has configured both the regime of capital accumulation and the regime of distribution in such ways that they respond much more to the needs of corporate capital rather than to the needs of its own citizens."

Harvey's understanding of the dialectical relationship between the territorial and capitalist logics of power is useful in terms of conceptualizing the ways in which the state facilitates capital accumulation. Firstly, there is the territorial logic of power, which concerns the strategies (e.g., "political, diplomatic, economic, and military") used by the state (local, national and/or supranational):

to control and manage the activities of the population within the territory and to accumulate power and wealth within the state borders. That wealth and power can be used either internally for the benefit of the people (or more narrowly to create a good business climate for capital and a local capitalist class) or externally to exert influence or exercise power over other states (D. Harvey 2010, 204-5).

Secondly, there is the capitalist logic of power, which encompasses the ways in which capital moves across geographical spatial scales, namely borders, in order to facilitate endless accumulation (D. Harvey 2010, 205-6). The territorial and capitalist logics of power "are not reducible to each other but they are closely intertwined" (D. Harvey 2010, 205-6). As Harvey (2010, 205-6) argues:

the capitalist holding money wishes to place it wherever profits are to be had...[and] therefore needs open spaces in which to move—and state borders can get in the way of that. Politicians and state bureaucrats typically seek to enhance the wealth and power of their state both internally and in external relations. To do so under contemporary conditions requires that they facilitate capital accumulation within their borders or find ways to extract wealth from elsewhere.

As already discussed in Chapter Three, the creation of open markets and ensuring capital mobility through the promotion of free trade agreements and limited capital controls is a central feature of state interventions under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. Consequently, the state balances creating desirable conditions for capital accumulation and maintaining an acceptable standard of living for its citizens, so that the state does not spiral into political and economic chaos.

The Irish government's, Troika-led, decision to institute economic austerity in response to the 2008 financial crisis supported an intensification of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalist practices and essentially double-downed on the notion that the Irish state places the interests of capital ahead of the Irish citizenry (Allen 2012). The economic growth Ireland experienced after its austerity measures were implemented were held up by the EU as evidence that austerity measures work. Once the "poster child" for neoliberal economic development in Europe, Ireland was now the "poster child" for economic austerity. But at what cost?

According to an Oxfam (2013) report released in 2013, Ireland's income inequality was four times higher than the OECD average, youth unemployment was nearly thirty-one percent, the long-term unemployed made up sixty-two percent of the total unemployed, and of the more than 300,000 people that had emigrated since 2009, four out of ten were between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five. By 2015, Ireland's gross income inequality was the highest in the EU and the top ten percent held up to fifty-eight percent of Ireland's wealth (O'Connor and Staunton 2015). Youth unemployment was lower, but still high at around twenty percent (Central

Statistics Office 2015). While the unemployment rate for the fourth quarter of 2015 decreased to 9.1 percent, the long-term unemployed only decreased to 54.5 percent of total unemployed (Central Statistics Office 2015). Emigration had remained at approximately 80,000 people a year since 2011, with fifteen- to forty-four-year-olds making up approximately 70,000 of the emigrants that left every year (Central Statistics Office 2015). These conditions create a "lost generation"—youth who have either never worked or emigrated and never returned (Stuckler and Basu 2013, 67). Many people were made victims of long-term employment and emigration while the interests and needs of capital were fulfilled by the Irish government. By pursuing economic austerity, the state undermined the ability of many of its citizens to stay and/or thrive in Ireland.

In this larger context where the state responds to the needs of capital better than those of its citizenry, the workers' use of legal action to reclaim their pensions exemplifies disjunctive democratic citizenship under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. Before examining this assertion further, it is important to note that pension provisions are a form of deferred wages. They are paid for out of a workforce's surplus value through: 1) deductions in the workers' wages by the employer and/or the state, in the case of national pension plans; and, 2) a company's profits through an employer's contributions and/or taxes paid to the state (Oran 2017, 149). Furthermore, as Oran (2017, 162) argues "the generosity of welfare services [such as pension plans] is contingent upon current production of surplus value [as a whole], class struggle over these funds, and political relations between the state and different classes." As a result, changes in pension provisions are reflected in the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

The emergence of pension provisions "as part of the working-class standard of living is an outcome of mixed historical developments and factors such as class struggle to sustain the living standards of the working period, at least partially, during retirement, as well as capitalists' effort to tie workers to production relations in a more stable and long-term fashion" (Oran 2017, 150). During the rise of Fordist/Keynesian capitalism, "pensions became a substantial element of social provisions in almost every country with developed capitalist relations" (Oran 2017, 153; see also Shilton 2016, 174). Consequently, pensions provisions feature largely "as a component of compensation [for] large, stable, unionized workplaces, offering permanent high-wage employment," which were characteristic of businesses, such as Waterford Crystal, under Fordist/Keynesian capitalism (Shilton 2016, 9).

With the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, these types of businesses and their corresponding jobs are disappearing from the labour market (Shilton 2016, 9). Smaller, more mobile and flexible firms are defining the labour market, which is leading to a rise in less secure and stable employment, and fewer opportunities to benefit from a company pension plan. Where pension provisions are offered in the private sector, there has been a shift in the type of pension provisions available, namely from defined benefit plans to defined contribution plans. Under defined benefit plans, pension benefits are predetermined and "pay out a specific and consistent income to employees after retirement" (Shilton 2016, 6). For defined contribution plans, employers are only required to pay a fixed contribution. Pension provisions are "neither guaranteed nor predictable" as they depend on the "overall capital amount an individual worker is able to accumulate over a working life and on conditions in the financial markets when the worker retires" (Shilton 2016, 6). As a consequence, the three main threats to the sustainability of a healthy pension plan—increased longevity, investment shortfalls, and interest rates—are shifted from the employer to the employee (Shilton 2016, 6). The worker now bears all the risk from market unpredictability.

The public sector is often upheld as the gold standard with respect to security and pension provisions (Shilton 2016, 9). However, even public sector pensions are increasingly under threat with the erosion of defined benefit plans and/or their conversion to defined contribution plans. Moreover, the benefits afforded public sector workers becomes a divisive issue between public sector and private sector workers and reinforces the perception of bloated government bureaucracies, which adds further impetus to the argument for smaller governments under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. Inequity in pension provisions is another way of dividing workers and replacing collective action with a politics of resentment.

This shift in pensions provisions is part of a broader trend under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism that is structuring pension provisions in terms of personal savings and investments, which contributes to the financialization of pension provisions as "pension contributions become dependent on the financial markets' profitability" (Oran 2017, 164). Furthermore, the financialization of pension provisions redefine an area of social welfare as an area of profit-making (Oran 2017, 164). In the case of Waterford Crystal, the workers contributed a portion of their wages to their pension plan for years. However, in light of the 2008 financial crisis, the workers' pension fund fell victim to a crash in the financial markets. Furthermore, the insolvency of Waterford Crystal meant there was no company left to build up the pension fund again. While this is a tragic situation, it was exacerbated by the state's dithering over the European Insolvency Directive. The Waterford Crystal workers' pensions should have been protected from such a tragedy. However, the process of individualization is pervasive under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. It is a process that engenders individual responsibility for financial security in retirement. Workers are supposed to prepare for their own retirement through investment strategies, such as savings, mutual funds, and housing. As a result, "the collective logic" of social welfare programmes is being abolished, especially as it applies to pension provision and the ability of older workers to extend their standard of living into retirement (Oran 2017, 166). This process of individualization extends to the workers' legal battle with the state to regain their pensions.

The tenets of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism have informed some of the most significant treaties and pacts advancing European integration, as well as the political and economic development of both Ireland and the EU (Hermann 2007; Stockhammer 2012; also see Chapter Three and Eight). This is significant because, as Harvey argues, the rise in rights-based activism corresponds with the global rise of neoliberalism. According to Harvey (2005, 176), "the neoliberal insistence upon the individual as the foundational element in political economic life opens the door to individual rights activism." In turn, this gives the judicial system ever more importance as a site to claim, fight for, and exercise rights—i.e., as a site of resistance and opposition. However, "by focusing on those rights rather than on the creation or re-creation of substantive and open democratic governance structures, the opposition cultivates methods that cannot escape the neoliberal frame" (D. Harvey 2005, 176).

Following Harvey, the former glass workers' capacity to claim citizenship rights through legal action at the supra-state level may have given them another avenue to exercise their rights, but only on the terms of the very system that had engendered the workers' sense of disconnection from their pension case in the first place. In other words, the workers' ability to win back a portion of their pensions may have mitigated the damage caused by the demise of Waterford Crystal, but the inequity of the system as a whole remains. The workers' pension case demonstrates the ways in which the courts can actually work to depoliticize rights-based issues. Their struggle for their pensions became a rearguard action—a struggle against a particular social injustice as

opposed to establishing justice for all in the first place. After all, the problem with insolvent pension funds extended far beyond the former Waterford Crystal workers. It was an issue of national concern for all Irish citizens who should have had their pensions protected under the European Insolvency Directive. In the end, the Irish State's Pension [Amendment] Bill (2013) established the minimum protection of fifty percent for insolvent pension funds, which meets legal requirements. But is it just? Moreover, is it sufficient for older workers facing redundancy and unemployment to maintain their standard of living in retirement? (For legalization of politics literature, also see: Brown 2019; Savage 2009; C. Smith 2014.) While rights-based legal action can be an important check and balance on political and economic power, it cannot be the only means to counteract social injustices. The Waterford Crystal workers were in the fortunate position to be members of a trade union with the organizational and financial capacity to wage a legal battle for the workers to reclaim a portion of their pensions, not every worker or citizen is in such a position.

7.7 CONCLUSION - UNDERSTANDING CLASS STRUGGLE FOR AND/OR WITHIN THE STATE

Engels (2013) argues that the formation of the state becomes a necessity at a particular stage of economic development following society's division into social classes. In its earliest stages, the role of the "state is to administer the class society in the interests of the ruling class...through its various military, legal, ideological, and economic arms" (N. Smith 2008, 61; paraphrasing Engels). Likewise, Gramsci (1971, 269) suggests "the fact that the state/government, conceived as an autonomous force, should reflect back its prestige upon the class upon which it is based, is of the greatest practical and theoretical importance, and deserves to be

analyzed fully if one wants a more realistic concept of the state itself." With respect to Ireland and Europe, the interests of the ruling class at the state and supra-state level are for the most part congruent.

Structural violence is the by-product of social inequities produced by Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism that democratic citizenship, as a mechanism of redistribution and a ground for claims-making, is unable to resolve but can mitigate in order to maintain the status quo. Moreover, the appearance of structural violence, such as redundancy and unemployment, as natural or given, fosters the perception that the ability to address structural violence is outside the scope of democratic citizenship. It is only when the effects of structural violence permeate throughout a political community that the citizenry might rise in opposition to the state through violent and/or nonviolent protest. The lesson from the former glass workers is that if we are to take Holston and Caldeira's notion of disjunctive democratic citizenship seriously, we must examine the ways in which the interests of labour and capital engage in class struggle for, against, and/or within the state and supra-state under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. In doing so, we must also scrutinize the ways in which the state simultaneously reflects and shapes that struggle across time and space. The next chapter examines labour market policies as political projects intended to shape social subjects, namely workers, in the image of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE STRUGGLE WITHIN

8.1 Introduction

In *Raise the Last Glass* (Kennedy 2009), a short documentary film about the closure of Waterford Crystal, the concluding scene listens in on a conversation between two former glass workers, both in their fifties, discussing their plans for the future:

Worker #1: At our age—I was forty years out there in The Glass. What can you do?

Worker #2: There's no jobs out there, so what they'll do then—they'll ask us to go for the computer courses, the first computer course.

Worker #1: I want to be an astronaut anyway. [*Laughter*]

Worker #2: I want to be an airline pilot. [*Laughter*]

Worker #1: I'm going to retrain. [*Laughter*]

Worker #2: Next week! [*Laughter*]

The notion of having to retrain and find a new job was not only daunting, but in some cases absurd, especially for those workers who were in some cases literally days away from retirement. However, this was the reality of redundancy and unemployment for the former glass workers.

On June 16th, 2010, the former Waterford Crystal workers, who were employed at the time of the company's closure, were approved by the European Union for €2.57 million in funding for career guidance, education, job-skills training, and enterprise supports under the European Globalization Adjustment Fund (EGF) (Department of Education and Skills 2012). Initially, the EGF's support was perceived as both positive and useful by many of the workers because of the extra funding it appeared to make available to help them find re-employment.

However, as the EGF programme was implemented, many of the workers became disillusioned about both the effectiveness of the EGF and their prospects of obtaining gainful employment. The EGF was inadequate for two interrelated reasons. The first reason is that the EGF did not have the capacity or the mandate to properly address the particular needs of the workers. When the glass workers were made redundant, most had an advanced age and low formal education-attainment profile. They needed specific job and education programmes that took these factors into consideration. The second reason is that the EGF did not take into account the political and economic context in which it was being implemented. In the case of the Waterford Crystal EGF, Ireland was in the initial phases of its, Troika-led, economic austerity programme. So, the workers were training for nonexistent jobs. Furthermore, many of the workers expressed concerns about ageism with respect to being older workers seeking employment in a very tight labour market.

It may appear that the EGF and economic austerity were working at cross purposes. On the one hand, by utilizing EGF funding, the workers were accepting aid from the EU to help them attain re-employment. On the other hand, the workers were accessing this aid under the Troika's economic austerity programme for Ireland, which resulted in: 1) more unemployment and a more competitive labour market as the Irish economy continued to shrink; and, 2) the retrenchment of the Irish welfare state, which made the workers' situation even more uncertain. Welfare reform was a key component of the bailout agreement reached between the Irish government and the Troika, which was highly critical of Ireland's so-called passive welfare regime (Boland, Griffin and O'Brien *et al* 2015; McGuinness *et al* 2011). Under the Troika's economic austerity programme, the Irish government agreed to take "a 'more *coercive* approach' to the unemployed, with tighter benefit conditionality rules and greater use of sanctions" (Heyes 2013, 76).

Further welfare reforms included a reduction in welfare payments, an increase in the length of time people must pay into the social welfare system before they are eligible to make claims, and a reduction in the duration of time unemployed people can claim social welfare benefits (Heyes 2013). Workfare was also introduced in the form of so-called internship programmes, such as JobBridge and Gateway (Boland, Griffin and O'Brien, et al. 2015). But if the EGF and economic austerity appeared to be working against each other, in actuality both programmes were working to engender more flexible and competitive work practices and labour markets—fundamental aspects of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. As addressed in Chapter Three, underpinning Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism is a market fundamentalism that operates under the "assumption that market forces are expressions of an inner rationality of universal human nature that is held to be the essence of the realm of freedom in political affairs...[thus] market forces have come to constitute the dominant principle of social organization" (van Apeldoorn, Overbeek and Ryner 2003, 18). The notion of the flexible, competitive worker is essential, both ideologically and materially, to the propagation of market fundamentalism as the basis for human nature.

This chapter examines the EGF in the context of economic austerity to explore how social subjects are shaped by the manner in which power is exercised, and by how it is resisted, through overlapping state and supra-state authorities under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. The EGF and economic austerity are political programmes or projects that work to shape social subjects to secure the hegemony of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism by engendering flexible workers and/or labour markets that conform to the needs and interests of capital. At the same time, these programmes produce their own inconsistencies (or incompleteness) that opens a space for resistance and the potential growth of counter-hegemonic

movements (G. Smith 2004; also see Chapter One). The manner in which these inconsistencies are realized, or not realized, as counter-hegemonic fields of force is important, especially with respect to how we understand resistance and the ways in which Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, as a hegemonic field, is secured and reproduced across time and space. This line of thought follows Roseberry's (1994, 360-1; also see Chapter One) assertion that the struggle to resist domination is "shaped by the process of domination itself."

This chapter is divided into four sections. The first section explores the workers' ability, or inability, to obtain gainful employment with respect to their experiences with retraining, reeducation, entrepreneurship, and internship programmes. The second section places these experiences in context by examining the EGF application process in relation to economic austerity and the introduction of Pathways to Work—the government programme initiated to address the Troika's concerns over what it perceived as Ireland's lax labour market policies. The third section situates the EGF and Pathways to Work in the development of active labour market policies in Europe and the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. The final section highlights the inconsistencies and/or incompleteness of the EGF and economic austerity as hegemonic projects of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. In doing so, the workers' experiences are used as a starting point for exploring the potential, or lack thereof, for the formation of a counter-hegemonic movement.

8.2 RETRAINING, RE-EDUCATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP, EMPLOYMENT, AND INTERNSHIPS

Much of the information presented in this section is specific to the EGF. However, it also reflects the workers' more general experiences of redundancy and unemployment as they attempted to secure gainful employment. There are five general experiences that came out of the

interviews I conducted with the workers about their efforts to attain re-employment: retraining, re-education, entrepreneurship, employment, and internships. Retraining refers to short and medium length courses that focus largely on developing new skills. Re-education concerns those workers that went back to college or university to pursue third-level certification. Entrepreneurship relates to the workers that set-up their own businesses following the closure of Waterford Crystal. Employment pertains to those workers who were able to find work after being made redundant. Finally, Internships document the workers' experiences with government programmes that are intended to keep people, especially the long-term unemployed, connected to the labour market.

8.2.1 Retraining

The majority of the 1,931 interventions made during the EGF on behalf of the glass workers were with respect to relatively short and medium-length retraining and new skills courses through various public and private operators. Following the appointment of a local EGF coordinator, information was gathered on the type of courses that might interest the workers. Based on the initial feedback received from the workers, the EGF outlined six potential training programmes, which included: horticulture, landscaping, community arts, tourism, and craft skills. After several consultation meetings, the horticulture and the landscaping/craft skills appeared to have the most interest among the workers. So, two programmes were designed around these interests. The horticulture course was overseen by the Vocational Education Committee (VEC), a local educational body focused on adult education. The landscaping/craft skills course was organized by *Foras Áiseanna Saothair* (FÁS), the national training and employment authority.

The landscaping/craft skills course was a forty-week programme, including ten weeks of work experience. The course included: kerb/flag/paviour laying, landscape construction, concreting, construction site drain laying, double dry stone walls, glasswork, woodwork, woodturning, picture framing, and upholstery. For the work experience project, the workers designed and built a community garden outside the FÁS training centre in Waterford (see Figure 14). The area was just grasslands before they began construction, and they completed the work on every aspect of the community garden.



Figure 14. FÁS Community Garden.

The following account summarizes issues raised in a group interview I conducted in June 2012 with seven of the former glass workers that participated in the landscaping/craft skills

course. Many of the workers started at Waterford Crystal as teenagers and often referred to themselves as being institutionalized. While they enjoyed the learning process, keeping busy, and the social interaction of the programme, they were disappointed when the course ended because their new skills did not put them in a better position to find re-employment. According to Allan, who is in his fifties and worked as a blower for twenty-seven years: "For us being retrained, whatever. Doing this gardening—this core skills and all this. There are no jobs in them areas either." The workers attributed their difficulty to finding re-employment to their age, short-sightedness in the retraining process, and the state of the Irish economy. Odhrán is in his fifties and worked as a cutter for thirty-six years. He argued:

You must remember. In my situation, I had 36 years in the factory. Who wants some-body that's fifty, fifty-five? They don't want you at that age, when you're over the fifty mark, like. They don't want to know you.

I think too, the money that was spent on these courses should have more—you can see what we done, and like, there was really nothing out of it for us because we've done woodwork, we've done glasswork, we've done stonework, but, like, none of us could get a qualification in any of it. I mean, we're talking about woodwork, not about carpentry. So, we couldn't go here and say we've done carpentry, you know. It should've been carried on further to give us some hope of getting a qualification in doing something.

- Odhrán, 50s, Craftworker, 36 Years of Service

Many of the workers I interviewed were frustrated that their retraining did not put them in a better position to find a job and that the only way to get a job was to know someone, especially given the state of the economy. The workers received certificates from FÁS for their training in landscaping and craft skills. However, when Ireland's property bubble burst and the construction sector collapsed, the type of jobs that might have accommodated some of these skills were no longer available. The workers felt that they were in a difficult situation given their age and educational background, especially in Ireland's economic context. They were more than ready to

work, but given their circumstances there was little opportunity for them to secure re-employment.

Moreover, under economic austerity, the Irish state was being retrenched and there was little impetus and/or few resources for establishing the kind of jobs programme that would address truly the workers' situation. According to Allan: "We had a night here, after it was done, and all the top people were here, the mayor and all them were here—the city manager—they'd say something would come out of it. "Would you do something in the town?" It was all talk."

There was no follow-up to the promises made by city officials and the sense of abandonment the workers already felt from losing their jobs and their pensions was amplified. The day of the group interview was the first time the workers had been together since the completion of the project, and it served as a small reunion. When the programme ended, the workers lost the routine of going to the FÁS training facility every day, the social interaction with their peers from the factory, and the sense of being productive as a collective unit working together towards a common goal.

The horticulture course was developed by the Waterford VEC in consultation with the workers and the local EGF steering committee. The VEC offered a two-year, part-time course in organic horticulture for the workers. The course began with the development of the site at the Adult Education Centre in Waterford, which included clearing the land, erecting greenhouses, constructing raised beds, and cultivating a range of organic crops. During the course, the former glass workers were encouraged to establish a not-for-profit business, which they named "The Organic Boys." The Waterford City Council and city manager used their resources to acquire a section of land on the outskirts of Waterford to establish their not-for-profit business (see Figure

15). Even though the workers on the horticulture course were able to extend their learning experience beyond the length of their course and put it to some practical use, overall they shared many similar experiences with the workers on the landscaping/craft skills course.



Figure 15. The Organic Boys' greenhouses at the Roanmore Hurling Club in Waterford.

The following account summarizes a group interview I conducted in July 2012 with three of The Organic Boys at their site on the outskirts of Waterford. Below Harry and Cathal discuss how The Organic Boys were established.

Harry: We only finished our course last Friday. We were on it for a year-and-three-quarters. We had this all set up through the European Globalization Fund. And this is ours now for the next ten years. Just work away and live out my life. But it's paid for. The lads at FÁS didn't get anything.

Cathal: The hurling club owned the land. We have a lease on our part. It was part of the deal of this being all set up here that [the hurling club] got the allotments on the other side. So, it was better for them. So that's kind of an income stream for them, you know.

We'll have a ten-year lease on this. The only condition that, I suppose, that the city manager attached to it, is that we have to set-up some kind of legal entity/business. So, we set up a business—a not-for-profit business because with fourteen people involved you're not going to make a profit. It's not enough to provide a wage, you know—a guaranteed wage, a weekly wage for fourteen people.

The workers suggested that the reason they were given the opportunity to start their own business, in contrast with the workers on the FÁS course, was that the horticulture programme included only former Waterford Crystal workers. To have enough people to go ahead with the FÁS course, unemployed people who had not worked at Waterford Crystal were included in the programme.

While The Organic Boys might have something more tangible for themselves following the completion of their horticulture programme, they are experiencing similar problems with respect to obtaining gainful employment. The exchange below discusses the difficulty of finding gainful employment in Waterford at the time of the interview.

Cathal: Well, I suppose this week all fourteen of us will have to go down to the social welfare office and sign back on.

Harry: So, in the meantime we'll still look for jobs. But regardless, this place is more like a hobby.

Cathal: We have to generate enough money to keep the place going because—we'll be liable for the utilities charges here. We'll have to pay for that. So, we'll have to grow stuff that we can sell to cover that, you know.

Josh: In terms of actual work...

Cathal: Actual work? I suppose from anyone you've spoken to, there is no work in Waterford, like. You walk around the streets of Waterford you'll see the amount of shops closed down, you know. And I suppose the scale of the job loss in Waterford—it's horrendous, like. I think we are probably one of the employment black spots in the country, if not the most—the biggest black spot in the country. Since we were made redundant, you've had the Talk Talk people, who is nearly 600 of them gone. A couple a hundred of them have been re-employed by a new company that started up. But it's only—it's all the small factories, the shops leaving, two people go here, three people go there that you don't hear about. And that's what's bringing the numbers in. As I said, you walk through Waterford city there now and, you know, it's desolate.

Similar to the workers in the landscaping/craft skills programme, these workers feel that their opportunities of attaining re-employment are largely determined by factors beyond their control. As already mentioned, during my fieldwork in 2011 and 2012, there were five neighbourhoods in Waterford City with unemployment rates over forty percent and two neighbourhoods over thirty-five percent (Taft 2012). The unemployment rate for Waterford City and Waterford County were the third and the tenth worst unemployment spots in the country, at 25.1% and 21.6% respectively (Taft 2012).

The state of the labour market in Waterford was not lost on the local employment services. Howard is a local employment services agent. He worked with many of the former glass workers after they were made redundant. He is soft-spoken and measured in his speech.

Jobs are an issue in Waterford, generally. You've been here long enough to understand that, and we are heading further down the hole. There are more companies, more of the multinationals slipping off, one, two, three, four, here and there and everywhere, so it's a critical issue. It's a bit of a blackspot at the moment in Waterford.

- Howard, Local Employment Services Agent

As a result of the poor labour market in Waterford, the workers' horticultural training is seen as more of a hobby than a way of re-entering the labour market.

For some of the older workers, the prospect of having to continually look for work is frustrating because, given their age, it is even less likely they will be able to find a job. They would much prefer to just enjoy their time at the site doing their gardening. Danny is outspoken and affable. He started working at Waterford Crystal at fifteen and gave forty-two years of service to the company as a glass blower before, as he puts it: "Then I just got a kick in the bollocks, get the fuck out—I was told to get out, to leave the premises. Threatened." Danny was sure that he would never work again: "Well Josh, I'm sixty years nearly, in the next two weeks, so I will never get a job again. I just hope to live out the rest of my retirement up here. That's only my opinion." Cathal questioned the logic of requiring some of the older workers having to look for work to maintain their social welfare benefits.

Like I said, we're all heading down to sign on this week. You even have the scenario where the lads over the sixty mark, you know—it's a condition of social welfare that you are actively seeking work, but saying to men who are sixty-one or sixty-two, are you looking for a job? The person who is asking you the question, kind of looks at you, you know, they have to go through the motions and ask you that. I have no doubt that half the people, half of us up here, we will be told that we have a course we want you to go onto, we want you to do this, we want you to do that. As a means of trying to get you off the Live Register³⁴ and putting you back into education, they'll put you onto something and if you refuse it, you get cut off.

- Cathal, 40s, General Section, 25 Years of Service

While the older Waterford Crystal workers still have much to contribute to Irish society, the likelihood of the workers in their early sixties and late fifties retraining and starting new careers was not very high at the time of our conversation during the fieldwork, especially in the context of

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³⁴ According to the CSO (2011, 23), "the Live Register is not designed to measure unemployment. It includes parttime workers (those who work up to three days a week), seasonal and casual workers entitled to Jobseekers Benefit or Allowance."

Ireland's then severely depressed economy. The pressure to find work or to at least appear they were looking for work was a needless stressor.

Where the experiences of The Organic Boys and the workers on the FÁS course differ greatly is that The Organic Boys' not-for-profit business gives them something to do in terms of maintaining a routine and social connections. The following account is from Cathal who was kept on at Waterford Crystal by the receiver up until September 2009 before being made redundant. He discusses the isolation he felt after being made redundant and the effect of not being in waged work on notions of masculinity.

September was grand. October wasn't bad. When it came to November and December—I live out in the country and my wife would take off with the kids in the morning and bring them to school, so she would leave at maybe eight o'clock. It was dark, you know. And you were in the house wondering what are you going to do today. And there's only so much housework a fella can do, and you can never do it as good as her anyway. You do what you have to do and unfortunately it coincided with a miserable period of weather. I always said that if I could get out for an hour or two in the day I was delighted, but you couldn't go outside. So, from the time she left at eight o'clock in the morning you're stuck in the house until she came home at half five, six o'clock.

So, I've been with the lads since November 2010. But we're out of work again and if I don't get a job, okay, we'll be out here, but come the winter again we won't be up here as much. So, you're back to that, you know, how do you spend your days? I think, an awful lot of people found that. You have to have some sort of a reason being out of work, you have to have a reason to get up, especially when you've been used to getting up and even used to going to work and bringing in a wage. Any of the lads here whose wives are working, you know—it would be the same, it's very hard when your wife is the breadwinner now, and not you. Even though down through the years, my wife had worked, — wife had worked, and — wife had worked while we were working, but I suppose you're the breadwinner and now you're not.

- Cathal, 40s, General Section, 25 Years of Service

While having the connection to the site goes some way to prevent social isolation, it does not bring in anything like a living wage. The adjustment to being unemployed was very difficult for the workers because they had spent most of their lives doing wage work outside the home. According to Kwon and Lane (2016, 6), "what it means to be an adult male in many societies is intimately linked with the securing of formal employment." For some of the male workers,

redundancy and unemployment resulted in them confronting their own understanding of masculinity and gender roles (see Wadel 1989). While the male workers had no problem with their wives doing wage work, losing their status as a breadwinner made them feel uncomfortable. Not being the breadwinner ran contrary to ideas that the workers, and unemployed males in Ireland in general, had about the man being the breadwinner in his household and the woman, even if she also does wage work, is identified more than men with caregiving (Cleaver 2002; Delaney, Egan and O'Connell *et al* 2011; Goodwin 2002).

The workers' experiences also ran contrary to preconceived ideas about gendered spaces, namely the domestic sphere belonging to women and the public sphere belonging to men (M. Rosaldo 1974). In Winson and Leach's (2002, 145) study on unemployment, "when men lost jobs they found adjusting to being at home and losing their role as breadwinner extremely difficult, and they also encountered more expectations to share familial and domestic responsibilities." As outlined in Chapter Five, the role of women as mothers and caregivers in the home is formalized in the Irish Constitution (The Journal.ie January 21st, 2022). Consequently, redundancy and unemployment also put a strain on the workers' relationships at home, especially for those households that had a starker division of labour. For instance, this was Conal's experience (he was not one of the Organic Boys):

It [unemployment] was different for me and my wife. She's a full-time stay at home mother and I was a full-time, out every day working man. So, to be unemployed meant I had a lot more time at home. And, what I found was that—I was even better than a lot of the other guys because I had a lot of outside interests. So, I still had stuff to get up for and go out, but even with that I remember one time her saying to me, "I hope you get a job soon or I'll kill you," jokingly of course.

It's just that even being around those extra times, I'd be wanting to read or watch tele or something, and she'd be hovering around the house with the Hoover and making noise and banging things. It was just these simple little things that make no difference—suddenly became big things. And then, you know, she said another time, "You better get a job soon or we'll crack up."

So that was the first kind of thing that I could sense within our own sort of life and relationship—tensions! Another time she said to me, "You are getting very sharp with the children." Some of the things he'd [his son] ask or some of the questions he'd have for me, I'd snap back at him for some reason. I didn't really notice that, but it was she that said it to me and he himself actually said to me—my son. So, I knew then that I was changing. And that was all down to the stress of being unemployed.

- Conal, 50s, Craftworker, 36 Years of Service

It was also down to being unoccupied and not participating in the unpaid domestic labour that still needed to be done. There was a general perception that the female glass workers handled redundancy and unemployment better because of their roles as being the primary housekeeper and caregiver for children. In other words, there was a perception of women being less defined by who they were as wage workers and defined more and/or equally by their domestic roles and relationships (also see Winson and Leach 2002). The male workers did not necessarily disparage the domestic labour of their partners directly, but by not being able to reconcile their lost status as breadwinners they implicitly undervalued the importance of unpaid domestic labour in maintaining the household. At the same time, some of the oldest, male workers found themselves enjoying their time as caregivers for their grandchildren. Returning to The Organic Boys, they are in a better position than many of the other workers because their not-for-profit business has allowed them to maintain some of the structure and social connections that were lost in their lives when Waterford Crystal closed. However, they are still dealing with many of the same financial concerns as most of the other unemployed workers.

8.2.2 Re-education

When the EGF concluded in August 2011, it was estimated that eighty of the workers were involved in some form of education or training programme (Department of Education and Skills 2012). There was no specific distinction made between education and training in the EGF

report. The expectation of many of the former glass workers when they were younger was that they would find a job and contribute to the family income as soon as possible. As a result, many of them left school as teenagers. Jack and Darragh went back to school and have enjoyed capitalizing on that missed opportunity.

I must say now, returning to education and it's not even returning to education because I left school when I was fifteen, so I'm more or less restarting and I found it excellent. And, it was adult education, everyone in the class was certainly over twenty-one or twenty-two. Some a bit older. One or two a bit older than me.

I'm fifty-three now and two years ago I started the third level in September. So, I don't hold out much prospect for employment out of it because I'll be fifty-seven or eight by the time I finished and unless, as I said someone picks up the phone, and says, "Well ———, there's a job going."

I don't hold out any prospect of having gainful employment out of the course that I am doing. Partly, or mostly, because of the reason that there are tens of thousands of people with all those skills that I'm only beginning to learn now and they have years of experience of using those skills and they can't get work.

- Jack, 50s, Craftworker, 36 Years of Service

I fell into a course during the sit-in and it was a foundation course run by the institute of technology. There's a teacher—a lecturer there, — and a group of people, they prepare you for going into third level. And it is supposed to be a course that is run over twenty-six weeks or something like that, or twenty-four weeks—but they put on one. The semester was coming to a close, and they put on one for people in the factory who were in trouble. And I've always been interested in education, so I said, "Look, I don't want to be wandering around the town." So, I went in on this course and they put the twenty-four weeks into eighteen weeks. Or, thirty weeks into eighteen weeks it was. And I literally started in March when the place finally shut and continued from that September and went into the first year of a BA Honours degree in the college. And there is a group of us that have done that, you know. And it has just been non-stop since, you know.

- Darragh, 50s, Craftworker, 38 Years of Service

Many of the workers who decided to go back to school did so for their own personal development and to keep busy. There was rarely the expectation that their re-education would lead to paid employment. Again, this was largely because of their age and the state of the Irish economy.

Those workers that went back to school with the notion that it might lead to re-employment still found themselves facing a very tough labour market. Henry thought he would be in a better position than he was after finishing his initial courses.

To be honest about it, I really didn't think—if somebody said to me that first day that in two-and-a-half years' time you'll still be out of work. I wouldn't have believed them. I really thought—I'll give it a year now and something will turn up. I'll get something.

They had the open days for us. In fairness, the trade union did get off their backside very quickly and started arranging the open days for us with the recruitment agencies and the FÁS people that run courses. So, I had my name down for two courses, got those done straight away and I thought something would come of these, but...

In 2010, there was a big open day down in the Tower Hotel and we had all the local colleges from all around the southeast. They had an open day telling us what's available. So, I applied for another course then, it was IT—Business Studies, a two year course. I started that last August. So, I should have my results this week or next week and hopefully I can start the second year in September. So that's kind of basically what I've been doing over the last two-and-a-half years.

I'm still looking for work. I'm still applying for jobs, but there is nothing out there. On top of that, it is something to get me out of bed, doing these courses, it's just to keep the mind active.

- Henry, 40s, Craftworker, 30 Years of Service

In most cases, the workers were retraining or going back to school for jobs that were scarce in the context of Ireland's economic recession. Even when the economy recovered or their training or re-education was complete, it was still going to be difficult for them to find work given their age and how long they had been out of the workforce.

With respect to re-education, there were also workers that were just not interested in going back to school and saw little purpose in continually retraining and re-educating for jobs that they would most likely never be able to obtain. According to Moira:

I suppose a lot of people are after doing courses. Some people are after doing so many courses, you know—I didn't do any courses, I refused to do them because I have no interest in computers, number one, but a lot of the people who came out of Waterford Crystal were a certain age, they are never going to get a proper job again. When the young people can't get work, how are the old people going to get work?

They should have done something for them that wouldn't involve doing a course here, then putting them into another course, then putting them in another course because they're not going to get anything out of the courses. If they had done a co-op or just

something that everyone could have got involved in, I think it would have been much better.

We got money from the EU for all these courses, and I suppose if six people got work out of them—out of all those people that had done those courses—what a waste of money? You could have started something up or done something with that money. Anyone I meet after doing a course, I say, "Where are you working?"

They say, "No place."

They have degrees in this and degrees in that and the next degree they're going to get is their pension book. It's true though. The unemployment here in Waterford would frighten you.

- Moira, 50s, General Section, 36 Years of Service

For these workers, the push towards retraining and re-education did not address the problem that, given their age and educational background, they were in a disadvantageous position for attaining re-employment. As a result, they did not see retraining and re-education as a meaningful approach for helping the workers after the closure of Waterford Crystal. With respect to the Waterford Crystal EGF and re-education, Róisín (personal communication, June 14th, 2012), a professor at the Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT), said she felt that "there was very little coordination between WIT, the VEC, and FÁS" and that "they were all just fighting for funding" from the EGF. Consequently, the focus of the EGF was less about how it could be used to genuinely help the workers and more about how it could be spent, with the EGF money acting more as a subsidy for government agencies and private training providers.

8.2.3 Entrepreneurship

According to the Department of Education and Skills (2012): "a total of 37 eligible redundant workers started new enterprises with EGF support during the programme period. Certain of these businesses have established not just domestic networks to sell their products but have also identified new markets and outlets overseas." Those workers that opted for self-employment were relatively positive about their experiences with the EGF, which for them was administered

through Waterford City's Enterprise Board. However, the workers found the process of accessing the EGF money very stringent. Below are Michael and Luke's experiences with the EGF.

Now, the whole thing, EGF funding and that, it wasn't money for jam at all. People might think when I say I got funding—"Oh! You got money."—I got fifty percent less VAT off anything. I got a percentage back. That was it. It wasn't just money handed out to you at all. And there was so much red tape.

When we bought all the equipment, we had to show, not only receipts, not only bank statements where the exact money came out—that's only the tip of the iceberg. They were out taking photographs of the equipment as well. There was just absolutely no way a guy could take off to the Caribbean. That was not going to happen at all. So, it was really strict. I sometimes questioned—why are they so strict? But, it's European money, I suppose. I suppose without it, we wouldn't have the business up and going. We were just very small, not that it's huge now. There are only two of us employed. Next year, hopefully, it will get bigger.

But without the EGF funding, I suppose it would have been to the banks and the banks don't really give out money anymore. They used to a few years ago. [Laughter]

- Michael, 40s, Maintenance, 19 Years of Service

I can say straight up, without it we wouldn't have got—we wouldn't have got started. We had great help from the Enterprise Board, and we got a lot of funding. We got particular equipment, the likes of machinery, we got half the money back. The Enterprise Board gave us half the money back between the EGF and their own capital grants. Without it we wouldn't have got as far as we are. But it's been difficult enough to access it, you know.

- Luke, 40s, Craftworker, 22 Years of Service

The now self-employed former Waterford Crystal workers represent a very small portion of the Waterford Crystal workforce. Moreover, for the review of the EGF programme to simply state that thirty-seven workers started new enterprises overlooks the long-term viability of these new enterprises.

The workers who were managing some success at being self-employed were often worried about the insecurity of their situation. Michael was very worried for the future of his business.

I think I'm probably happier and more scared now. Every day—this thing might hit the wall with the recession. We're finding it difficult, we're only scraping along, but I'm happier because I'm not working shift work anymore and I don't think you can do that

forever. You really can't. They say that shift work actually does knock years off your life expectancy and your body gets all fucked up.

I think I'm happy enough now, but I'm not as secure as I was before. I'm not saying money wasn't an issue, but everybody was the same—we were all in the Celtic Tiger and in Waterford Crystal and the combination was good.

- Michael, 40s, Maintenance, 19 Years of Service

Aidan has similar concerns over a business he established with a former colleague. Given the nature of their business and the fact that it is a start-up, their work is intermittent, which makes it difficult to budget with respect to their income.

The work that I'm in now, because I set-up my own little company, I now have to work wherever I get the work, so I spend lots of weeks outside of Waterford living in hotels and bed and breakfasts in places like Dublin and Donegal and Cavan and anywhere the work happens to be. So, at a time when I should be at home with my family, I'm having to start a different life. What young people would have done travelling around the country when they were starting work, I'm now doing towards the end of my working career. [...]

It is very hit and miss. You could have a month of good solid work, or you could end up with a month or two months afterward with not one single cent. So you are trying to budget for a year on a couple of months of money. So, what we've actually done, and this is the truth, we set a weekly wage for each of us. We take out the money from the company, even if we happen to make more in a given week. We have to try and budget across the lowest level we can get by on so that you might have something left in the company to keep going.

- Aidan, 50s, Manager, 36 Years of Service

The EGF's focus on entrepreneurship does not address the wider structural problems of Ireland's economic recession. Just as some workers are training for jobs that are non-existent in the Irish economy, other workers are being encouraged to establish businesses in a very difficult economic environment. This is a key aspect of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism—take security away and make everyone responsible for managing their own risk (Gershon 2014; O'Connor and Staunton 2015; Wilson and Yochim 2015).

The entrepreneurism route also had very little room for flexibility in terms of accommodating the particular situation of the former glass workers. Gearóid had returned to school but

was hoping to start up a side business. However, the Enterprise Board would not accommodate his situation.

I want to do garden design and I'm doing a degree course. I wanted to set-up a home office—decent computers, decent printers and a workspace and I wanted help doing that. They did the EGF through the Enterprise Board and the Enterprise Board dealt with it as if you were a prospective—they didn't treat it as a whole shit load of workers have been made redundant, they dealt with it as if you were a budding entrepreneur. And, you had to have that attitude to access the money.

The first meeting I went to, the first time I got wind of it, I was down at a meeting with about thirty people and these guys are up there bouncing around and energy—"Do you want to be millionaires?" For fuck's sake, no, I just want money. What's going on here?

Now, you had to have your business plan in by three weeks' time or you won't fucking qualify. I said, "What business plan?" People are saying to them, "What's going on here?" It was very, very badly handled.

I was turned down because I had to do a ten-week course on setting up your own business and I didn't have the time at the moment. At the time, I wrote to them and said, "I don't have the time. I'm prepared to do it in the summer."

"No," they said. I wasn't a "serious entrepreneur." You were supposed to work twenty-four hours a day to become a millionaire, that's what they wanted.

- Gearóid, 50s, Manager, 40 Years of Service

For Gearóid, starting his own business was not about becoming a millionaire, it was about finding a way to make a living now that he was out of work and back at school. As a result, he was dismissed for not taking the process seriously enough. The implication is that to be a successful entrepreneur, a person must have the right personality traits or mentality. Entrepreneurship is only for certain types of people. Consequently, this worker felt the EGF was mishandled because of the inflexible approach that was taken towards those that were interested in entrepreneurship.

In general, the workers were critical of the programme for not going above and beyond what they were already entitled to from the state. According to Steven, who was a member of the Waterford Crystal Workers EGF Committee:

Whatever the blame that's behind it, or the bureaucracy, or whatever else, it [the EGF] was blown up to be this major thing. Now, some people I would say have done okay. They've done pretty okay out of it. Even on the enterprise side of it, I remember having an argument with the guy in the city Enterprise Board. Early days again, we kept talking

about what was there for people. And, he said, "Yeah, they can get the employment grant."

And, I just said to him, "Yeah, okay, right, we've established that." Now, there are already measures in place again for an ordinary person who goes into the Enterprise Board. "So, this is on top of that?"

"No, no, no."

And, I said, "What do you mean 'no, no'? These people should benefit additionally because they are eligible for this EU funding."

"No. To be in truth," he said, "our budgets are not there, we don't have any budgets. They're gone. We don't have it. What we're telling you is that only for the EGF, these people wouldn't have the opportunity."

[...]

What I will say is that they gave some people the opportunity to start the business they normally wouldn't have had sanctioned, which I didn't necessarily agree with either. My point was if you get fifty people together with ideas and you know in your heart and soul twenty of them haven't a chance—they haven't a hope, you are giving them false hope. Now, he twisted it and said, "You are denying those people an opportunity to have a shot at it."

Now, what actually happened, and I was proved right, but I never got a chance to have this out, a number of those people were given each the opportunity. What they were doing—they were taken straight away, they were taken through all the mentoring—start your own business—all the mentoring, the pitfalls, all this, at a cost, I may add, to the EGF. Then some of them were given the grant and next thing they started up and they discovered very, very quickly that their business was a non-runner. It was ridiculous. They couldn't, they just couldn't sustain an income from it. So, my suggestion at the time to him was—get the fifty into a room and give them the very basic presentation on business, how it operates, what you need, your projected income, all that, which would only cost a one-night session for three hours maybe. Now, I think at the end of that, twenty guys would have walked away, they would have said, "It's not going to work."

But, no, they took them through the hoops and they took them all the way then to discover—Like I said to him, "If you are going through the normal run of the mill at the city Enterprise Board and you have fifty guys come in off the street, you are going to get rid of forty of them because their ideas don't stack up."

He said, "That's true."

Well, I said, "Why should this be any different?" If there are twenty genuine good ideas that have a chance, give them more money to give them a realistic chance of survival.

"No, no."

So, if I want to be bitter about it and I want to be—I felt that they were using all these people—Yeah, bring them in. We'll get them a mentor. We'll give them this, we'll give them that. But all this mentoring was all costing money and there were so many hours a week. I could be bad and say these mentors were their cronies, they were connected to the Enterprise Board, and these were the guys who were on the win-win

because they were being paid. Now, I could be bad enough to say that—that's one train of thought.

- Steven, Member of the Waterford Crystal Workers EGF Committee For Steven, he was concerned about getting the most out of the EGF by strategically supporting those workers that had the best chance of creating successful businesses. However, he was told that by doing so he would be denying other workers the opportunity to create something for themselves. Underlying this argument is the notion that in a free market everyone is afforded an equal opportunity to succeed or fail based on their own merits as individual entrepreneurs. However, in the wake of the 2008 financial crisis, as the Irish and global experience attests, it has become quite apparent that success and failure is not based on merit alone. Indeed, some businesses were deemed "too big to fail," while some corporate and banking executives are not held financially, or criminally, responsible for their financial misdeeds. Intervening in the open market is okay for some, but not for others. This hypocrisy underlined the workers' experiences of the inflexibility of the EGF money used to support those interested in entrepreneurship. In the end, it can be argued that the EGF did more for a cash-strapped government looking for ways to subsidize public and private training providers, as well as take people off the Live Register for a time, than it did for the workers. Ultimately, the Irish Exchequer and those industries profiting from others' unemployment were the main beneficiaries of the EGF.

8.2.4 Employment

When the EGF concluded in August 2011, "it was estimated that some 207 of the cohort [of 653] have found employment" (Department of Education and Skills 2012). However, the Waterford Crystal Workers EGF Committee Report (2012) argues that the employment figures "fail to take account of the significant number of ex-Waterford Crystal workers who were made

redundant and were immediately re-employed by KPS" at the House of Waterford Crystal. The report does not state how many former workers were re-employed at the House of Waterford Crystal. But when the new facility opened it employed approximately eighty to ninety full-time staff and thirty to forty seasonal staff, of which the vast majority would have been ex-Waterford Crystal employees (Reuters January 25, 2010; The Irish Examiner October 17, 2008). These glass workers were re-employed in positions they had held for years with the previous Waterford Crystal enterprise. Their re-employment was not the result of retraining and re-education. Here is Alfie's account of being hired at the House of Waterford Crystal:

We got word that the glass factory was going to reopen here on The Mall and that they were going to employ people. So, we were waiting and waiting because there was nothing happening and then—word of mouth. There was so many people that worked in Waterford Crystal the minute somebody found out that there was going to be application forms out, the whole place knew about it within, I'd say a half-an-hour. Everybody was going to ring somebody—yeah, the applications are out.

We found out that we could download the application on the internet. I did. Looked at it. To this day I am still looking at it because there were so many pages on it—on it was your education. That was straight-forward because I left primary school at fifteen, I didn't go to university, I trained for ten years as a cutter. That's your university along the way. The application form is saying what kind of experience you have and all that. And, I mean, all I can put down is that I'm a master cutter and that's it. We did courses within the factory, like, using computers for drawing and health and safety and first-aid. Well, that all went down on it. But to hand it in and get a phone call to say that you have an interview was nerve-racking.

When I started in The Glass at fifteen an interview meant two minutes talking to a person. There was no big application form and a couple of people there asking you questions and stuff like that. It was really, really nerve-racking. I think for every person, bar one or two, it was the same. I was going into apply for a job that I had done for forty years, and I was still nervous. It's probably unique. There's not very many people that can actually say you applied for a job that you've done for forty years.

- Alfie, 50s, Craftworker, 40+ Years of Service

Despite the fact he was applying for a job that he had done for years; the application and interview process was very daunting for Alfie because it had been so long since he last applied for a job. For many of the former glass workers, especially for those applying for jobs in new fields, applying and interviewing for jobs was a difficult process.

The workers who were hired at the House of Waterford Crystal consider themselves extremely fortunate to have jobs. However, they still faced some very significant economic realities. Alfie is going to have to work for longer than he had planned.

The wages, now, are a lot less. They are about half of what we were on the last time. A lot of people will say to you, you are working for half. It's a job. That's the way I look at it.

Josh: How much longer do you think you'll be working?

The short answer to that is as long as I can. It's as simple as that. If I can still do what I am doing now in five, six, seven years' time I'll do it. I was planning on retiring, totally different from what I wanted to do. Just retire. Do a bit more traveling. I could go away, instead of one or two weeks on holidays, go away for two months and just—that kind of stuff. It would be nice to just go away and relax somewhere with no worries or anything like that. Whereas, we are not too bad now, we still have our worries. Your wages are not what they were. Your lifestyle had to change. It changed drastically when you left the factory.

- Alfie, 50s, Craftworker, 40+ Years of Service

Despite the drop in wages, the workers at the House of Waterford Crystal were happy to have a job. Compared to many of their former colleagues, they were in an enviable position. However, given the status of their Waterford Crystal pensions at the time, these workers were also looking to the future with respect to how long they could feasibly work to recover some of what they lost through savings and their new pension plan through the House of Waterford Crystal. Furthermore, the retirements that they had envisioned prior to the closure of Waterford Crystal had to be re-imagined.

As for workers who found employment that was not associated with the House of Water-ford Crystal, their experiences resonated with what many of the workers stated during interviews—that securing employment is about "who you know, not what you know." This was Charlie's experience.

I was two years unemployed. I am working in ———. I'd say in the end how I got it—I have a brother there. It was always the way in Ireland, as in many other countries,

it's who you know, not what you know. But I tell you one thing, in a recessionary time, it's even more so. Only for he is there, I firmly believe I wouldn't have got the job. I did get it, thankfully. I love it. You feel that your self-worth is back again. You have a purpose in life, you get up every morning. I'm the most relaxed person you can imagine now... This job I just go in—toolbox—machine is broken, fix it, and go off. My wife has even said that she can't believe how relaxed I am. The stress is gone. I'm a different person.

- Charlie, 40s, Maintenance, 24 Years of Service

While Charlie did do some training courses, he feels his brother played an important role in securing his employment. Furthermore, he had a wider and more transferrable skill set with respect to other workers in the factory. His ability to fix and maintain different types of machinery would have given him more job opportunities than the craftworkers, whose skills were limited to blowing or cutting glass.

Gearóid has also picked up some contract work doing glass designing for other crystal manufacturers. He too secured the work through his own personal contacts.

I like the freedom, the flexibility of working away myself and you can plan to do things around your life. It means you might have to work Saturday and Sunday or you might be working at twelve o'clock at night or getting up at five o'clock in the morning, but you don't mind that. It's just that, if that's what suits you then that's what suits you. That's the way I'm working around now, you know.

[...]

Now, if it comes to the point that one of them offers me full-time work and a sense of security, say a two- or three-year contract. Then I'd have to take it.

- Gearóid, 50s, Craftworker, 40 Years of Service

Many of the workers liked the idea of work being more flexible. This relates to what many of the workers said about being institutionalized in Waterford Crystal. They spent most of their working lives doing the same and/or similar job within the same factory for one company. In this sense, flexible work practices offered the potential of something different to the routine and monotony that characterized some of their experiences working at Waterford Crystal. They are now enjoying the opportunity to learn new skills or go back to school, opportunities that were not available to them when they were younger. However, they also felt the insecurity of short-term

contracts was an abusive component of flexible work practices (see Chapter One on precarity). In the end, the former glass workers who were able to attain re-employment were just happy to have a job and some form of income. They also expressed their sympathy for their former colleagues who were not as fortunate.

8.2.5 Internships

As mentioned above, many of the workers appealed for some sort of jobs programme to address their particular situation. With respect to alternative programmes for the glass workers, many of them were encouraged to participate in the Department of Social Protection's (DSP) Community Employment (CE) schemes, which were designed as a form of alternative employment for the long-term unemployed. Below is how Howard described the programme:

One of the things that is very good in this country is the Community Employment Schemes because it does allow older people to be contributing in their local community—nineteen and half hours a week, they retain their benefits, and they have the opportunity to pick up a bit of part-time something or other, a bit of landscaping, a little wood-cutting or something. It keeps them engaged.

Josh: It's only good for a year, isn't it?

Depending on your age it can be up to three years and then in certain cases it can be longer, but even that is a bit of a minefield to try and get around. It is one way of keeping people engaged and getting out the door every day and contributing something every day and that's really important. We've had people in here that are suffering. I think they have mental health issues, depression, alcohol and other substance abuse I would imagine. Totally lost, totally cut off from their—the Crystal was its own community really and they're cutting themselves off. Some of them had their whole world turned totally upside down and may not recover from that. I have no medical background, but...

- Howard, Local Employment Services Agent

CE schemes are intended to help the long-term unemployed by placing them in part-time (19.5 hours/week), temporary (one year) positions with local voluntary or public organizations to gain

added work experience and new skills. If participants are under fifty-five, they can renew their involvement in the scheme for up to three years and if they are over fifty-five, they can renew for up to six years. However, renewals are not guaranteed and depend on DSP approval, availability, and budgetary constraints. In terms of remuneration, workers are guaranteed €208 a week on a CE scheme. If their social welfare payment is already over €188 a week because of dependents, then they receive an extra €20 on their social welfare packet.

These type of internship programmes were expanded under economic austerity as a response to the Troika's concerns over what it perceived as Ireland's passive social welfare system. It was deemed passive because it relied too heavily on income replacement rather than programmes that forced the unemployed to engage actively in the labour market. The most notable programmes established under economic austerity were Gateway and JobBridge. The Gateway programme was launched in 2013 and follows a similar approach to the CE schemes. Under Gateway, the focus is primarily on outdoor work. To be eligible for Gateway, a person must be unemployed for twenty-four months and be claiming social welfare during that time. Gateway participants work 19.5 hours/week for twenty-two months. They receive an extra €20 on their social welfare packet, which is taxable depending on a person's circumstances. Participants can pick-up part-time work if it does not interfere with their placement and can terminate their placement if they are offered full-time work.

JobBridge is slightly different in that it is not specifically geared towards the long-term unemployed. All unemployed people claiming benefits are eligible for a JobBridge internship.

These internships are thirty to forty hours a week for six to eight months. Interns receive an extra €50 on their pay packet for participating. For employers, or host organizations, an intern cannot displace an employee from a job or fill a vacant position. However, it is unclear how this rule is

monitored. According to Boland, Griffin and O'Brien *et al* (2015, 14), "JobBridge positions have been advertised that scarcely constitute internships, as they involve unskilled labour; conversely, internships have been offered for university research assistants, and others which require a Ph.D. qualification." In 2016, the rates of pay for both of these programmes received a top-up of ϵ 2.50 for meals and travel costs (Irish Examiner October 13, 2015).

CE schemes, Gateway, and JobBridge may be beneficial to the extent that they keep older workers and/or the long-term unemployed engaged in the community or connected to the labour market. However, they are not actual employment. These programmes are a form of workfare that are: replacing real paid jobs with internships; subsidizing companies with free labour; distorting unemployment figures; putting existing jobs at risk; and, being used to make up for a shortfall of skills in the public service (Allen and O'Boyle 2013; Grady 2017). In a comparative study of workfare programmes in the United States, Canada, and Australia, Crisp and Fletcher (2015; quoted in Garland (2015, 103)) found that: "Workfare is least effective in getting people into jobs in weak labor markets where unemployment is high." This raises the question: what is the connection between ageism, workfare, and the reserve army of labour in the context of an economic downturn? O'Brien (2010, 240) contends that:

government policy mechanisms can remove older workers from the labour force in periods of labour surplus and mobilize them back into the labour force during periods of labour shortage. At the heart of this rationale is the notion that this 'reserve army of labour' can be mobilized to reduce constraints on increased production and reduce upward pressures on wages in the interests of capital. The "army" is then deemed expendable in periods of downturn or stagnation.

In a weak labour market, workfare is also a way of disciplining the reserve army of labour in preparation for periods of labour shortage while still managing to place downward pressure on, and undercut, the wages of those still in full employment (Garland 2015, 101). In addition, as Wilson (2020, 477) argues, workfare programmes that require people to participate or lose their

benefits "augments the number of workers in the reserve army of labour" and thus increases precarity in the labour market overall (see Chapter One). In the context of an economic downturn, the promotion of workfare constitutes an example of what Kasmir and Carbonella (2014, 15-17) describe as the "politics of dispossession" or the ways in which capital and state work to undermine and disorganize working class power and labour politics (See Chapter Three).

Most importantly, in the case of the former Waterford Crystal workers, these programmes do not necessarily prevent older workers from spending the remainder of their working lives slipping slowly into poverty, nor do they address comprehensively the range of psychological and social issues associated with ageism and redundancy and unemployment. Rather than addressing the political and economic system that engenders unemployment, programmes such as these create an even more precarious labour market and place further burdens on individual workers to adapt to insecure employment and/or chronic unemployment. It is also important to note that these type of workfare programmes "have both persisted and proliferated throughout Europe despite dubious empirical records" since the 2008 financial crisis (Umney, et al. 2018, 334). The next section provides further insight into the workers' experiences with redundancy and unemployment by contextualizing the development of the Waterford Crystal EGF and Pathways to Work programme under economic austerity.

8.3 CONTEXTUALIZING THE WORKERS' EXPERIENCES - THE EUROPEAN GLOBALIZATION ADJUSTMENT FUND, ECONOMIC AUSTERITY, AND PATHWAYS TO WORK

The European Globalization Adjustment Fund is intended to "provide support to people losing their jobs as a result of major structural changes in world trade patterns due to globalization, e.g. when a large company shuts down or production is moved outside the EU, or as a result

of the global economic and financial crisis" (European Globalization Adjustment Fund 2014).

The former glass workers qualified on both accounts.

In terms of support, the EGF is depicted as "an instrument of *solidarity* with redundant workers and does not finance the restructuring of companies or sectors" (Department of Education and Skills 2012, 8). It is intended to produce "short-term outcomes in terms of returning people to work as quickly as possible and is not intended to be an alternative to national labour market activation policies and programmes" (Department of Education and Skills 2012, 8). The EGF provides:

specific, once-off, time limited support to facilitate such re-integration. It also aims to promote entrepreneurship and aid for self-employment. EGF measures may include but are not limited to job search assistance, occupational guidance, tailor-made training and re-training, outplacement assistance, certain related allowances (e.g., mobility, participation in lifelong learning and training activities) though the EGF does not finance passive social protection measures (Department of Education and Skills 2012, 8).

The EGF is quite explicit about not being a programme intended to provide structural solutions for cases of redundancy and unemployment (i.e., "does not finance the restructuring of companies or sectors," "not intended to be an alternative to national labour market activation policies and programmes," and "does not finance passive social protection measures"). This is despite the fact that the EGF exists to aid workers who are the victims of structural causes of redundancy and unemployment (i.e., outsourcing and the 2008 financial crisis).

It is interesting that the EGF invokes the term *solidarity*, a concept historically associated with the workers' movement and left-wing politics. It suggests that the EGF is a genuine form of aid that is intended to help redundant and unemployed workers. However, the term *solidarity*, as it has been used by workers and left-wing political movements, is derived from a position that is anti-establishment in the sense that workers and marginalized people must unite to combat the structures of governance, whether company and/or state, that disempower them. As the following

examination of the EGF application process will show, if the EGF was truly "an instrument of *solidarity* with redundant workers," it would be easier to access and provide more comprehensive aid to workers.

To access the EGF, an application must be submitted by a European Union member state within twelve weeks of a large-scale redundancy, which is defined as 500 or more jobs lost in an enterprise over a period of four months. EGF programmes are projects co-financed between the EU, which is responsible for sixty-five percent of the funding, and member states, which cover the remaining thirty-five percent. The duration of an EGF programme is two years and begins on the day the application is submitted. However, it takes approximately a year before the application is approved by the European Commission and the European Parliament. Furthermore, any money that has not been spent by the end of the programme must be returned to the EGF. So, the funding for an EGF programme is front loaded by the member state. Any funding that goes over the thirty-five percent that the member state is responsible for can be claimed retroactively after the approval of the application.

In the case of Waterford Crystal, the Irish government made €1.38 million available for the glass workers when their EGF application was submitted to the European Commission. Be that as it may, it is unclear if any of that funding was utilized prior to the EU's approval of the Waterford Crystal EGF programme (Waterford Crystal Workers EGF Committee 2012). At the time of the Waterford Crystal application, the Irish government was in the process of cutting back on all social spending to deal with the fallout from the 2008 financial crisis and the collapse of the Irish banking system. According to the Department of Skills and Education's (2012, 20) review of the EGF application process:

The Evaluation found that the long EGF approval process can be considered to be too slow to offer a genuinely rapid response mechanism in time of crisis. Among the policy

recommendations made by the Evaluators was for increased flexibility in the implementation of measures...Also recommended was the review of possibilities to speed up the application process as it was found that some Member States were not able to provide start-up funding in advance of EGF resources arriving. As they did not have the national resources to provide this, it meant that there was often a significant time period which elapsed until redundant workers were able to access more tailored support measures.

There was little incentive for the Irish government to invest heavily in the Waterford Crystal EGF programme, especially when it might represent a potential extra expense if the application was not approved. For instance:

The capacity to front load supports in advance of EU approval of EGF applications is constrained in Ireland by national budgetary rules and circumstances relating to the prevailing economic conditions and the state of the public finances. Moreover, should an EGF application not be approved by the EU, then the Exchequer would have to carry the cost of all relevant measures fully (Department of Education and Skills 2012, 12).

Given the lengthy and rigid application process, the EGF hardly lives up to its claims as "an instrument of *solidarity* with redundant workers" intended to produce "short-term outcomes in terms of returning people to work as quickly as possible." If anything, the inflexibility and the slow response time of the institutions in charge of implementing the EGF engendered cynicism and disillusionment among the former glass workers.

Although the bulk of the workers were made redundant in January, a number of workers were retained to finalize the closure of the company by the receiver. These workers were gradually let go as they were no longer required. The Waterford Crystal EGF application was submitted in August 2009. The former glass workers were made aware of the EGF application at a public meeting in November, which was attended by EU officials who discussed the merits of the EGF and the different entitlements that the workers would be able to access through the EGF. This meeting proved to be a source of confusion for many of the workers because some of the entitlements that the EU officials discussed as part of the EGF were not included in the original application and therefore not available when the application was approved in June 2010.

With respect to the application itself, the Irish government sought funding for programmes that were already financed by the state. According to the Waterford Crystal Workers' EGF Committee (2012): "In reality, if the EGF never existed, the redundant Waterford Crystal workers would still have received most of these supports, as they are standard state interventions." According to Howard:

The EU, being the institution it is, will always say it is up to member states because, as you know—you've been here long enough to understand sovereignty issues—the EU is an oversight type of operation, if I can put it that simply, or an umbrella. Member states interpret at a local level around national policy. And, the European Commission won't intervene in that, quite rightly. So, what they are saying is there's the money, you made the application, but everything is subject to national policy. So, for example, if FÁS decide that they don't fund laptops, which they don't, that's national policy. If the Higher Education Authority decides we'll fund everything that is written on the course as being critical or essential for you to participate, then that is national policy. So, the EU won't override that. And that's absolutely right because then you are dealing with, in this case, sovereignty issues and it becomes bigger than the EGF. Because that is direct EU intervention in Irish legislation or French or German or whatever, and they can't do that.

- Howard, Local Employment Services Agent

The application is very important because it determines the ways in which the EGF money can be spent. This is why EGF (2013) regulations explicitly state that the workers (or beneficiaries) of an EGF programme should be consulted in compiling the application and kept informed during the application process:

The coordinated package of personalized services shall be drawn up in consultation with the targeted beneficiaries or their representatives, or the social partners. (EGF Regulations, Article 7.3, 2013)

In the interest of beneficiaries and bodies responsible for implementation of the measures, the applicant Member State should keep all actors involved in the application process informed of the progress of the application. (EGF Regulations, Preamble (14), 2013)

Once the application is submitted, there is very little flexibility with respect to changing how the EGF money can be used to support the workers.

The Workers EGF Committee (2012) were adamant that there was no consultation during the application process:

At this point it is worth noting that, neither the Waterford Crystal workers, nor their representatives were consulted in the drafting of the Waterford Crystal EGF application. The requirement for inclusion and consultation with the workers/workers representatives is mandatory under the rules governing the EGF process and the Irish authorities failed to comply with this requirement. The Irish authorities continue to claim that worker representatives were involved in the drafting of the EGF application and we are clearly stating that this is not the case.

The Workers EGF Committee (2012) goes on to state that for the:

EGF to be effective and provide meaningful support to redundant workers, the authors of the application need to have a genuine desire to assist the workers and to be prepared to put the required time and effort into the crafting of the application. This can best be achieved through meaningful consultation with the redundant workers and their representatives.

As a result, many of the former glass workers complained that the EGF did not provide them with any additional resources beyond what they were already entitled to as Irish citizens. This was Charlie's criticism of the EGF:

They never looked outside the box because they didn't want to, do you understand? They just said we are going to have a bill for all these people to provide FÁS courses—ridiculous FÁS courses and here is a way that we can get two-thirds of that paid. They didn't say, "What can we give them that is extra to that? Because they are victims of what happened to them, they should be entitled to more."

As I said to them one day, "We are eligible for EGF, we shouldn't be penalized for that. That should be additional because of the circumstance in which we lost our jobs." They never looked at it in that light at all. Never. And it maddened me because they tried everything to string you along, string you along, give you some kind of hope that you are going to be able to get something. It's a waste of time.

- Charlie, 40s, Maintenance, 24 Years of Service

This quote reflects a widespread sentiment among the workers: the EGF money acted more as a subsidy for state agencies and private training operators as opposed to something extra that would specifically benefit the glass workers. Ultimately, the Waterford Crystal EGF was very

limited in terms of its scope, and this largely comes down to the application and the structure of the EGF as a funding body.

After the application was approved, a local steering committee was established in June 2010 and a local EGF coordinator was confirmed a month later. This left just over a year for the EGF programme to engage actively with the former glass workers and make use of the EU money that was now available, by which point, many of the former glass workers had become despondent about the whole process and were reluctant to engage with the EGF programme. Several strategies were tried in an effort to reach out to the workers, such as letters, cold-calls, information sessions, and regular follow-ups. According to Howard:

[Between] July last year [2010] to August this year [2011], there were twenty-one active measures to engage people, that includes cold-calling and people could drop-in, we didn't have appointments all the time. People's interpretation of what the Fund was about was just wild compared to reality.

[...]

What we tried to do with each—Now, we are dealing with adults, we tried as far as we could to talk about career path planning. And, many came in with fixed ideas on what they wanted to do and that's absolutely legitimate and we'd support that. Many came in with no understanding of where they wanted to go—almost like a daze situation and they still hadn't dealt, I suppose, with their whole redundancy issue and the pensions and all associated.

[...]

When we realized the level of dependency, which was very soon after we started the interviews, of workers on the company to do things for them. We took control of that. We would go through what they wanted and the next time they contacted us...we'd have the paperwork ready for them. All we required was signatures. So, we kind of tried to take that load away to help access, but it wouldn't have worked for everyone.

- Howard, Local Employment Services Agent

Looking only at the total amount spent, after the workers started to engage with the EGF, the Waterford Crystal programme appears to be quite successful with respect to other EGF programmes in Ireland. The Waterford Crystal workers spent a greater share, 78.1%, of the money available to them than the DELL and SR Technics workers who spent 59.7% and 39.7%

respectively in their EGF programmes. Furthermore, according to the Department of Education and Skills (2012), the EGF was responsible for "the provision of some 1,931 interventions to 532 individual eligible workers [of a possible 598 targeted for assistance] across the broad range of guidance, education, training and enterprise supports." These numbers show that the majority of the glass workers availed themselves of multiple courses or supports in an effort to attain re-employment. Moreover, many of the workers took it upon themselves to do as many courses as possible to use up the EGF money. They did not want to see the money returned to the EU. Despite the statistical success of the EGF, as the workers' experiences demonstrate, the overall success of the EGF is debatable. The numbers, especially with respect to money spent and interventions made, indicate that the Waterford Crystal workers engaged seriously with the EGF. However, their engagement with the programme did not necessarily translate into the workers attaining reemployment. Most of the workers were now dependent on the state for both welfare benefits and employment assistance, which was drastically changing under economic austerity.

In 2012, the Irish Government unveiled its Pathways to Work programme, which was intended to "ensure that Ireland's greatest resource, its people, will no longer remain on the Live Register for lengthy periods without an appropriate offer of assistance from the state. In return, individuals will be made aware of their responsibility to commit to job-search and/or other employment, education and training activities or risk losing welfare entitlements" (Government of Ireland 2012, 5-6). Pathways to Work is organized around five "strands." The first strand is "more regular and ongoing engagement with the unemployed" (Government of Ireland 2012, 13). Through "deeper and more regular engagement" with local employment services, the unemployed will be "offered job search assistance with appropriate education, training or work experience opportunity to increase their employability and keep them close to the labour market"

(Government of Ireland 2012, 13). Essentially, the unemployed will be subjected to greater surveillance and pressure by the state to find employment.

The second strand is "greater targeting of activation places and opportunities" (Government of Ireland 2012, 14). The Irish government describes this measure as an investment "in a high level of education, training, job placement and work experience places, with a large percentage of these focused on the unemployed" (Government of Ireland 2012, 14). It was through this initiative that workfare programmes, such as, Gateway and JobBridge, developed.

The third strand is "incentivizing the take up of opportunities," which the Irish government describes as ensuring the "social protection system incentivizes rather than *blocks* the return to work for unemployed people, including those with families, through ongoing reform of the system" (Government of Ireland 2012, 18; emphasis added). The use of the word "blocks" is interesting because it implies that people are refusing work because the social welfare system is too lucrative. It re-enforces the stereotype, propagated by Irish politicians and the Irish media, that unemployed people are lazy or work-shy (Boland, Shearer and Tuite 2015). Incentivizing is code for placing more conditions and sanctions on the unemployed for non-compliance. For example, the:

Department of Social Protection will continue to implement its powers to sanction individuals who fail to engage with the "Pathways to Work" approach. The Department will also review the current rules under which sanctions can be applied and will as necessary strengthen these rules through legislation to ensure that individuals must engage with "Pathways to Work" (Government of Ireland 2012, 18).

This notion of incentivizing the unemployed to take work is more accurately described as disciplining in the sense of rebuking and/or punishing them for non-compliance and training them to obey. The fourth strand is "incentivizing employers to provide more jobs for people who are unemployed" (Government of Ireland 2012, 19). Employers are given tax breaks to take on new employees. The wages of employees participating in government sponsored internship programmes, like JobBridge, are subsidized by the government. For employers, the incentives actually constitute incentives in the sense that they are offered rewards as a form of motivation or encouragement for participating in these programmes.

The final strand is "reforming institutions to deliver better services to the unemployed" (Government of Ireland 2012, 19). Under Pathways to Work, the Irish government consolidated a number of welfare services and training agencies in order to reduce costs and streamline their operations. The drastic cutting of access to particular services creates an opening for the privatization of services once provided by the state. For instance:

Given the urgent need to address unemployment and to develop a flexible and responsive system, the Department of Social Protection is examining the potential of contracting with the private sector as a means of complementing its own resources where required to deliver service and build up/access new skills and competencies in areas such as case management of clients, employer engagement and job-matching/placement (Government of Ireland 2012, 20).

Overall, according to Boland, Griffin and O'Brien *et al* (2015, 11-12), Pathways to Work has subjected the unemployed to the following conditions:

- 1) Monitoring: More supervision, more demand for evidence, less trust.
- 2) **Interventions:** Attendance at group and individual meetings with case officers.
- 3) Contractualization: Payments depend on individuals carrying out certain tasks.
- 4) **Direction:** Individuals are required to apply for certain jobs or take certain courses.
- 5) **Threats:** Non-compliance with any of the demands of the welfare office can be met with sanctions, either of a €44 cut or a suspension of up to nine weeks of welfare payments.

Since the implementation of Pathways to Work, the programme has been renewed, expanded, and intensified in ways that further discipline the workforce.

The purpose of the EGF and Pathways to Work is to engender social subjects that perceive social reality in terms of individual responsibility—neoliberalized selves (Gershon 2014; Urciuoli 2008). The notion that retraining, re-education, and entrepreneurship are the best solutions to redundancy and unemployment assumes that redundancy and unemployment are the result of personal deficiencies, such as not having the right training, qualification, or entrepreneurial spirit. The retraining, re-education, and entrepreneurship approach detracts from structural causes of unemployment, such as the financial crisis, offshoring, and economic austerity. The use of contracts and sanctions ensures that people feel the effects, and respond to, this form of social conditioning that places the burden of redundancy and unemployment solely on the individual as opposed to wider political and economic problems. Kingsolver (2016, 126), found that "people will take the risk of contingent employment...because of the stigma of being called lazy or receiving unemployment benefits." Moreover, the experience of this social conditioning is compounded by economic austerity. For those with the wrong educational and/or work background in an economy where overall growth is slow and jobs are limited, the experience of precariousness is heightened. In such cases, people are in desperate situations and any job or support will suffice. Meanwhile, fully employed people will also make sacrifices to keep their jobs. As outlined in Chapter One, increasing precarity through an expanding "reserve army of labour" is a structural feature of capitalism to ensure a more compliant workforce. The next section situates programmes such as the EGF and Pathways to Work in the wider historical development of active labour market policies (ALMPs) in Europe.

8.4 SECURING THE HEGEMONIC FIELD OF FLEXIBLE ACCUMULATION/NEOLIBERAL CAPITALISM WITHIN EUROPE

The now-widespread idea that the route to achieving re-employment is to avail oneself of apt training or come up with a viable business idea has its origins in a broader political and economic approach towards redundancy and unemployment known as active labour market policies (ALMPs). ALMPs are often contrasted with so-called passive measures that focus on income replacement, such as social welfare benefits. While the use of ALMPs varies depending on national and economic contexts, many scholars (Bonoli 2010; Heyes 2013; Martin and Grubb 2001; van Vliet and Koster 2011) agree that ALMPs have taken on greater importance in the labour market policies of European countries since the 1950s. Given the cross-country variation of ALMPs, Bonoli (2010) has highlighted four general classes of ALMPs that may exist and operate together in different ways in different national contexts. The four classes are:

- 1) **Human Capital Investment** "consists of providing vocational training to jobless people or, if needed, basic education. The idea here is to offer a second chance to people who were not able to profit from the education system or whose skills have become obsolete" (Bonoli 2010, 12).
- 2) **Occupation** "its objective is not primarily to promote labour market re-entry, but to keep jobless people busy, also in order to prevent the depletion of human capital associated with an unemployment spell...this consists of job creation and work experience programmes in the public and non-profit sector, but also training in some cases, such as shorter courses" (Bonoli 2010, 12).
- 3) **Employment Assistance** "consists of measures aiming at removing obstacles to labour market participation...These include placement services, job search programmes...counseling and job subsidies" (Bonoli 2010, 11-12).
- 4) **Incentive Reinforcement** "refers to measures that aim at strengthening work incentives for benefit recipients...for example, curtailing passive benefits both in terms of rates and duration. Benefits can also be conditional on participation in work schemes...Finally, incentives can be strengthened through the use of sanctions" (Bonoli 2010, 11).

Along with these four classes of ALMPs, Bonoli (2010) also identifies three periods that are significant to the development of ALMPs in Europe. The first period covers the 1950s and 1960s. ALMPs are largely thought to have originated in Sweden with what is known as the Rehn-Meider model, which was intended to develop "equality in the wage distribution, sustainable full employment, and the modernization of Swedish industry" (Bonoli 2010, 15). The post-war years marked a period of labour shortage, the Rehn-Meider model, and similar models enacted in other countries, were intended "to provide appropriately skilled workers to expanding industrial economies" (Bonoli 2010, 15). The focus of these ALMPs was on human capital investment in the form of vocational training and education (Bonoli 2010, 15). The second period occurred following the 1973 Oil Shock. This period was characterized by high unemployment rates and economic stagnation (see Chapter Three). ALMPs focused on occupational strategies, such as job and retraining programmes "in order to prevent the depletion of human capital" in the labour market (Bonoli 2010, 15). The third period began in the mid-1990s and continues to the present. The current focus of ALMPs consists largely of a mix of employment assistance and incentive reinforcement (Bonoli 2010, 15). Unemployed people are assisted through job guidance, career counselling, and job placement programmes to facilitate their re-entry into the labour market (Bonoli 2010, 15). However, incentive reinforcements, such as sanctions and conditions placed on their social welfare benefits, are used to punish lack of, or unsatisfactory, participation in employment assistance programmes (Bonoli 2010, 15).

According to van Vliet and Koster (2011), there are two EU policies that are significant to the growth and expansion of ALMPs in Europe over the last thirty years—namely, Economic and Monetary Union (EMU) and the European Employment Strategy (EES). These policies are also significant to the entrenchment of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism within the

European unification process. According to van Apeldoorn, Overbeek, and Ryner (2003, 18), the "neoliberal content and social purpose of...European integration was affirmed in the Treaty of Maastrict," which instituted Economic and Monetary Union and the Stability and Growth Pact. In order to join the Eurozone, member states had to meet the Maastricht convergence criteria, which required member states "to cut [and maintain] their deficits to 3 per cent or below of gross domestic product (GDP), and reduce gross debt to 60 per cent of GDP" (Shore 2000, 97). According to Shore (2000, 107), to:

meet the Maastricht convergence criteria, governments took drastic measures [e.g., tax cuts, public sector lay-offs, privatization programmes, and deregulating the financial sector] to reduce inflation, budget deficits and public debt. The result of these deflationary, neoliberal policies was sweeping cuts in government spending, similar to those carried out by Margaret Thatcher's government in Britain during the 1980s.

These reforms coincided with a period of economic recession in Europe, which was worsened by the Maastricht convergence criteria as European countries refused to increase government spending to stimulate the economy (Shore 2000, 107). This led to mass protests against the EMU in France and Germany (Shore 2000, 107). The European Commission officials:

refused to acknowledge any link between EMU and rising unemployment. In their view, the cause of the current economic troubles were not the tough economic measures demanded by the Maastricht Treaty but deeper structural flaws in Europe's economies. These austerity measures were 'the solution, not the problem'; monetary discipline was necessary with or without the single currency" (Shore 2000, 107).

These measures provide a critical backdrop for increasing the flexibility and competitiveness of European labour markets. The pressure to meet the Maastricht convergence criteria meant that national governments were restricted in terms of what they could do to address rising unemployment. This increased the significance of the European Employment Strategy.

The EES was introduced in 1992, with the intention of coordinating "national labour market policies, using a set of non-binding instruments such as guidelines and benchmarks" (van

Vliet and Koster 2011, 220). For example, the EES "define[s] targets...with respect to the employment rate, the unemployment rate, and the activity rate...[M]ore importantly, the guidelines provide specific policy norms, stating that member states should focus more strongly on ALMPs," thus supporting "the diffusion of a paradigm of activation through the member states" (van Vliet and Koster 2011, 220). Even though the EES targets and guidelines are non-binding, there is significant pressure within the EU to comply with the EES. Member states are given annual reviews and recommendations with respect to their labour market policies (van Vliet and Koster 2011, 220). These reviews are often used by political parties and interest groups to influence change in the domestic labour market policies of EU member states (van Vliet and Koster 2011, 220). Also, member states will often mimic labour market policies of other member states through a process of mutual learning, which has been institutionalized by the EU under the directive Open-Method Coordination (OMC) (van Vliet and Koster 2011, 220). For example, Pathways to Work "is based on the UK system of the same name" (Boland, Griffin and O'Brien, et al. 2015, 9). Economic Monetary Union has greatly strengthened the OMC process with respect to the European Employment Strategy because member states have less control over their monetary policies, which becomes extremely significant during economic downturns, such as the 2008 financial crisis (Boland, Griffin and O'Brien, et al. 2015, 9). To maintain the Maastricht convergence criteria, social expenditures are tightly controlled during economic downturns, usually through increases in indirect taxation—that do not directly target wealth and capital—and the further retrenchment of the welfare state (Allen and Boyle 2013; Heyes 2013; van Vliet and Koster 2011). This is exactly what happened under economic austerity in Ireland. As a result, member states are more likely to adopt labour market policies promoted by the EES, namely "incentive reinforcement" ALMPs (Heyes 2013; van Vliet and Koster 2011). By adopting EES

guidelines, the state's social expenditures are reduced in four ways: firstly, by job cuts in the public sector; secondly, by reducing welfare payments and benefits; thirdly, by placing sanctions and conditions on unemployed people's social welfare benefits for not, or for unsatisfactorily, participating in employment assistance programmes; and, finally, by saving on wages through the increase of workfare-type programmes in the public sector (Heyes 2013; van Vliet and Koster 2011). The immediate savings is just one benefit of this approach. The long-term value lies in creating a flexible workforce that develops its own ways to cope with, and adapt to, precarious labour markets, such as emigration or multi-generational households as in the Irish case. With respect to the principles upon which the EES is based, they have been driven forward by the interests of capital within Europe.

In 1983, European capital established the European Round Table of Industrialists (ERT), a "transnational planning body to guide Western European policy in areas crucial to capital accumulation" (Holman and van der Pijl 2003, 80). The ERT has had a significant influence on labour market policies over the last thirty years. Throughout the 1990s, the ERT promoted the deregulation, flexibility, and increased competitiveness of labour markets. The ERT claimed that "the cause of structural unemployment in Europe and the weak response of employment to economic growth were mainly due to institutional rigidities and high levels of social protection" (Holman and van der Pijl 2003, 82). In a 1993 report, *European Labour Markets*, the ERT suggested that: "Even painful measures should become socially acceptable, provided they contribute to a sustained improvement of the unemployment situation" (Holman and van der Pijl 2003, 82). An essential aspect of the ERT's influence on European unification was the introduction of the neoliberal management concept of "benchmarking into the European policy vocabulary" (Holman and van der Pijl 2003, 81). According to Holman and van der Pijl (2003, 81-2):

The ERT report, *Benchmarking for Competitiveness*, of 1997 aimed at generalizing the idea of exposing all social and political activity to competitive pressures for which the norm was set by the market...[For instance,] "Benchmarking passed into the mainstream of EU thinking, and ERT pressure may have helped to ensure that the jobs summit of 1997 adopted a benchmarking approach, geared to such topics as entrepreneurship, skills and innovation, rather than a renewed round of social regulations as at one stage seemed likely.

The growth of "incentive reinforced" ALMPs and a commitment to lifelong learning programmes produce the type of competitiveness and flexibility the ERT desired with respect to labour markets (Holman and van der Pijl 2003, 81-2). The ERT's position was hugely influential in forming the basis for the EES (Holman and van der Pijl 2003, 81-2). Finally, the ERT has been firmly against the notion of establishing a European-wide employment policy stating that: "Experience shows that top-down bureaucracy in detailed matters and excessive central influence significantly slow any structural change...There is little that can be done at the Community level to directly solve the unemployment problem" (Holman and van der Pijl 2003, 83). In other words, labour market policies should be left to the European member-states because that will ensure competitiveness within Europe and beyond (Holman and van der Pijl 2003, 83). This approach builds on a form of competitive corporatism that was developing concurrently in Europe, and Ireland specifically, with respect to labour markets.

In the 1980s and 1990s, there was a re-emergence of national corporatism with respect to labour market policies in European countries (Bieling and Schulten 2003, 239). These new agreements focused largely on labour market flexibility and competitiveness (Bieling and Schulten 2003, 239-242). According to Bieling and Schulten (Bieling and Schulten 2003, 242), competitive corporatism entails:

1) The commitment of trade unions to a policy of pay restraint based on pay levels remaining below productivity increases, a (partial) opening of pay bargaining from sector to company level, and acceptance of higher pay differentials.

- 2) The reconstruction of Fordist labour market and welfare state institutions in order to make the labor markets more flexible and to achieve a significant reduction in social security contributions and welfare expenditure.
- 3) The reform of the tax system geared towards a gradual shift of focus from direct to indirect taxation and in particular a comprehensive reduction in company taxes.

Ireland's notion of social partnership, which was implemented under the 1987 Programme for National Recovery, was archetypal of the competitive corporatism that developed during this period and critical to the success of Ireland's Celtic Tiger (see Chapter Three).

In establishing social partnership, the Irish government used notions of "patriotism" and "responsibility to the wider community" to bring together government, employers and trade unions as so-called partners to form national wage agreements (O'Leary 2010, 278; also see Chapter Three). In theory, all three parties were to make concessions to "regenerate the economy and improve the social equity of [Irish] society through their combined efforts" (Programme for National Recovery 1987, 5; quoted in Allen 2000, 59). Furthermore, local city and county development boards, as well as organizations working in the community and volunteer sector were incorporated into social partnership as the programme expanded. For these different groups, social partnership was seen as a platform to lobby the government, promote their interests, and increase their funding. Initially, social partnership was perceived as a progressive and socially responsible policy with respect to business/labour relations and was seen as having a positive influence on the economic growth of the Celtic Tiger period (Kirby 2010). However, many scholars (Allen 2003; Coulter 2003; O'Hearn 2003) now argue that social partnership played a significant role in weakening organized labour, which led to wage suppression and labour flexibility in Ireland. In the decade that followed the first agreement, there was a "systematic transfer of wealth to the better-off sections of Irish society" as "the share of the national economy going to wages,

pensions, and social security declined by 10 percent," while "the share going to unearned income in the form of profits, interests, dividends and rent" rose by 10 percent (Allen 2000, 59). Across the Irish economy, profits rose by 144 percent between 1990 and 1997, while wages only grew by 59 percent (Allen 2000, 60). Plus, social partnership allowed the state to stifle advocacy and dissent from the community and volunteer sector. According to Kirby (2010, 178-9), the general "dependency of the community [and volunteer] sector on state funding" enabled the state to "limit or prohibit the funded organization from engaging in advocacy and dissent" by placing "restrictive criteria" on the ways in which state funding could be utilized.

In 2009, the employers withdrew from social partnership because the agreement would restrict their ability to make pay cuts in light of the 2008 financial crisis. According to Allen and O'Boyle (2013, 142), after the breakdown of social partnership, Ireland's trade unions were faced with a strategic choice: resist or capitulate. The trade unions capitulated by endorsing the Croke Park Agreement, which allowed for 17,000 redundancies in the public sector (Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 142). Part of the strategy behind capitulating was that it might lead to electoral growth for the Labour Party, which would eventually bring some relief for public sector workers (Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 142). However, after the Labour Party partnered with *Fine Gael* to form government in 2011, the new coalition government wanted to reduce the public service by another 30,000 to 40,000 workers (Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 142).

Despite the collapse of social partnership in 2009, the processes and ideology of social partnership were still in place (Allen and O'Boyle 2013, 139-40). The trade union leaders were accustomed to working with government officials and employers. Furthermore, they had more in common with government officials and employers than the rank-and-file in terms of their pay and positions on the boards of directors of various state agencies. This is reminiscent of

Durrenberger (2009, 16) argument that in many cases trade unions have become "professionalized bureaucracies whose leaders are hard to distinguish from their counterparts in the corporate world." As outlined in Chapter Three, the process of incorporating trade union leadership into the structures of governance has a history that extends back to Ireland's postwar economy (Allen 2000, 112). However, the co-optation of trade union leadership in Ireland reached new levels under social partnership and the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. Ultimately, the trade union leadership in the form of Irish Congress of Trade Unions and the larger trade unions, alienated their membership as the interests of the rank-and-file were largely overlooked in favour of the aligned interests of capital and the state (Allen 2000, 112). This breach is hugely important with respect to the formation of counter-hegemonic movements, including in the former glass workers' case. Even though the glass workers' trade union, Unite, is one of the more radical unions in Ireland, it is a relatively small trade union operating under a governance structure that limits and constrains its overall influence (see Chapter Three).

Returning to the EGF and economic austerity, these programmes are essentially outgrowths of the historical and spatial connections that constitute the development of ALMPs, competitive corporatism (e.g., social partnership), and the institutionalization of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism within the EU. As Gavin Smith (2004, 217) argues, a hegemonic field "requires stable institutions, cultural reproductive habits, and the securing of real or imagined territorial mastery." The EGF and economic austerity are part of the historical formations upon which the hegemonic field of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism is cemented in this context. Furthermore, it is important to address the fact that the European Union was created by "diplomats, bureaucrats, and multinational corporations," and that the EU has never experienced a "phase of democratization or socialization" (Cafruny and Ryner 2003, 3; also see Shore

2000). Not to mention, "during the first thirty years, working-class parties and trade unions either actively opposed the EU or were absent at its creation" (Cafruny and Ryner 2003, 3). As a result, European unification has largely been driven by the interests of capital. According to van Apeldoorn, Overbeek, and Ryner (2003, 38), "the process of European integration must be situated in the context of transatlantic and transnational class formation, not as an autonomous process...[T]he foundation, development, and periodic expansion of European integration are fundamentally moments of the expansion of the transnational capitalist political economy." The most significant treaties and pacts advancing European integration occurred during the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism at the international level during the 1980s and 1990s (Gill 2003 Hermann 2007; Cafruny and Ryner 2003). The advance of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism was championed by the World Bank, IMF, and the US Treasury Department, as well as others representing the interests of American capital and American political leadership. According to Gill (2003, 63), "the Delors Committee responsible for coming up with the blueprint for the EMU, for example, was dominated by the neoliberal 'epistemic community' of central bankers who by then, through the Atlanticist for associated with the BIS[Bank for International Settlement], the IMF, and the US Treasury and Federal Reserve, had developed a marketmonetarist, elite consensus." With respect to the rise of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, there are historical and spatial connections linking institutions, organizations, politicians, capitalists, and bureaucrats and technocrats, which operate within and across national, supranational, and transnational spaces. With respect to the glass workers' experiences, the global nature of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism was disempowering because the economic and governmental structures in which they exist seem beyond their ability to influence.

At the heart of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism is a notion of individualism that is nurtured through creating economic precariousness and then framing the solution to the problem of economic precariousness in terms of flexible and competitive workers and labour markets (see Chapter One on precarity). The tenets of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism are being institutionalized through the reconfiguration of state forms, such as the EU as a top-down polity. According to Gill (2003, 66), a central objective of this reconfiguration "is to prevent future governments from undoing the commitment to a disciplinary neoliberal pattern of accumulation." However, retraining, re-education, and entrepreneurship do not offer a panacea for every instance of redundancy and unemployment. The former glass workers are a good case in point. The next section draws attention to the inconsistencies and/or incompleteness of power within the hegemonic field of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

8.5 THE INCONSISTENCIES AND/OR INCOMPLETENESS OF POWER AND THE INSTILLING OF RESIGNATION

Many of the former glass workers who obtained gainful employment were rehired by the House of Waterford Crystal. A few workers were able to forge new careers for themselves through retraining, re-education, or self-employment. However, the majority of the glass workers were not as successful. Their desire to work was frustrated. They were no longer highly employable, and this was difficult for them to accept. The challenges facing these workers was not lost on Howard and the local employment services.

In Waterford Crystal, we had quite a high age profile and a low education-attainment profile, so that meant interventions were at a much—educationally lower—the types of jobs we were looking for were types of jobs that are coming out of most economies because they're repetitious, low educational standards, all of those things. So that meant a retraining process, or an up-skilling process is a potentially longer-term process than

someone who is at third-level and is looking for an extra qualification here or there. They already have those particular skills. So, it was quite a challenge in that sense.

One of the biggest obstacles to placing people in that age group is their own sense of worth and sense of value. You may have heard this—I'm such and such an age. Who is going to want someone at fifty or fifty-five or whatever? And it is a common theme—this common self-perpetuating theme where they don't think they have a role, and they don't see a role. And, they've never had that life experience or many of them haven't had that—where they've been challenged, or they've had to work flexibly because it's been so routine and laid out for them. Where younger people are now in an environment where you don't have that job loyalty anymore. You constantly move to upgrade your position, and you can't condemn people for that, but this whole cohort of people never had that experience, and they are totally in an alien world now.

- Howard, Local Employment Services Agent

As previous quotes show, many of the glass workers did believe that their age was hindering their chances at re-employment and that no amount of retraining or re-education was going to change that reality. However, blaming their unemployment on low self-esteem or resignation suggests that the main problem is a deficiency in the workers' character, rather than a structural situation of high unemployment and ageism among potential employers—neither of which they had any control over.

In the wake of the 2008 financial crisis and the onset of economic austerity, the former glass workers were not the only victims of structural causes of redundancy and unemployment in Ireland. Most notably, workers in the construction sector and building trades accounted for almost a quarter of the increase in unemployment following the collapse of Ireland's construction bubble (Boland, Griffin and O'Brien, et al. 2015). The unemployment rate went from 6.4% in 2008 to 12% the following year and as high as 14.7% in 2012; the unemployment rate only gradually decreased in the following years to 11.2% in 2014 (Central Statistics Office 2015). As for the long-term unemployed, who are defined as being unemployed for over a year, the level increased from 1.7% in 2008 to 6.7% in 2014 (Eurostat 2015). The very long-term unemployed—workers who have been unemployed for over two years—increased from 0.9% in 2008 to 4.8%

in 2014 (Eurostat 2015). Long-term unemployment also disproportionately affects youth and older workers. In addition, these unemployment statistics do not take into account the number of people who have left Ireland following the financial crisis. Between 2009 and 2015, 560,700 people out of a population around 4.5 million have emigrated (Central Statistics Office 2015). This led to a negative net-migration rate in Ireland between 2010 and 2014, which also marked a significant slowdown in the population growth that characterized the Celtic Tiger period (Central Statistics Office 2015).

The local employment services were in no position to address structural causes of redundancy and unemployment. They were caught between the workers' particular situation in the context of economic austerity and the goals and mandate of the EGF programme they were obliged to deliver. The disconnection between the majority of the workers' situation (i.e., their age, formal education-level, and the Irish economy) and the mantra of retraining, re-education, and entrepreneurship was an inherently structural problem. Many of the former Waterford Crystal workers, especially the older workers, were never going to secure paid employment again, which raises the questions: was retraining, re-education, and entrepreneurship even a viable solution for many of the glass workers? If not, why were other approaches, beyond poorly paid internship programmes or workfare, not considered to address the workers' situation specifically?

Many of the experiences described by the workers in this chapter are congruent with the deprivation theory of unemployment, which suggests that "the unemployed are without the social status, solidarity, regular activity, sense of collective purpose and structured experience of time that are available to those in work" (Boland and Griffin 2015, 2). With respect to deprivation theory, the problem of unemployment is solved by employment (Boland and Griffin 2015, 2). However, as Boland and Griffin (2015, 2) argue:

unemployment is more than just the absence of work; it is an experience of being defined by the state as a certain type of individual, with a certain relationship to the labour market and then being subjected to a host of government interventions. Instead of a neutrally observed occurrence, unemployment is an actively produced category.

Likewise, Kwon and Lane (2016, 6) argue that "what counts as employment is a political issue with profound consequences...race, gender, and class have long delimited what may be regarded as legitimate employment and who may work particular jobs" (e.g., domestic labour, child rearing, and work in the informal economy). Essentially, unemployment is a culturally constructed category. ALMPs are an important part of not only defining and categorizing these workers in relationship to the labour market, but shaping workers and their activities with respect to the ways in which they engage with the labour market and the economy in general. The implication of the ALMPs administered under programmes like the EGF and Pathways to Work is that the solution to unemployment is down to the individual worker because it is the individual that is responsible for acquiring the necessary skills and experiences to be competitive in the labour market.

However, the experiences of unemployment are also grounded in the material conditions of being unemployed (i.e., reduction/loss of wages, loss of benefits, and impoverishment in terms of feeding, clothing, and/or sheltering themselves and/or their families, as well as the attendant emotional and social issues), which are tangible for the workers. Unemployment and part-time employment are structural features of capitalist production. Returning to Marx's (1990, 781-94; also see Chapter One) notion of the "reserve army of labour," unemployment is intended to increase competition and insecurity in the labour market, thus driving down labour costs and increasing profitability. The redundancies and unemployment brought about by the 2008 financial crisis and economic austerity were not a result of personal deficiencies. The Waterford Crystal workers and the local employment service agents were aware that retraining, re-education, and

entrepreneurship were not going to lead to re-employment for many of the former glass workers. The disconnection between the type of supports offered through ALMPs and the economic realities of the 2008 financial crisis and economic austerity represents a space of inconsistency and/or incompleteness in the hegemonic field of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. This disconnection opens space that enables criticism, dissent and/or a "critical politics" (Li 2019). However, even though a significant number of Irish workers, including the Waterford Crystal workers, were in a similar situation as a result of the 2008 financial crisis and economic austerity, their shared experiences did not provide the basis for a widespread counter-hegemonic movement.

When discussing the former glass workers' situation, a common refrain was: "Ah, sure, what are you going to do about it?" Many of them felt that they had very little recourse, as individuals or as a group, within a political and economic system that was operating across local, national, and supranational spaces. Another common refrain used by many of the workers was: "It'll do your head in." The phrase implies that dwelling on their situation only makes matters worse. I had requests for interviews denied by a number of former glass workers because they did not want to rehash the past. They had accepted what had happened to them and wanted to move on. They felt bringing up the closure of Waterford Crystal all over again was only going to upset them. These various reactions to the workers' situation all constituted a form of resignation about their position in and/or influence on the wider political economy.

Barber (1990) documents a related instance of resignation with respect to what she calls the culture of "making do" in small mining and fishing communities on the island of Cape Breton on Canada's Atlantic coast. According to Barber (1990, 374), the culture of "making do" was "forged through the collective experience of surviving adversity...in which people were forced to

rely on kin and neighbours for basic survival under the brutal conditions imposed by the domination of mining capital and later, entrenched in the peripheralized economy." For Barber (1990, 374), the culture of "making do" represents a form of resignation stemming from the ways in which people in these communities adapted "to structures of domination and the vagaries of political economy" (There is more on "making do" and resistance in the conclusion.).

For some of the glass workers, resignation acted as a way of protecting their mental health in the sense that even if they lose everything, they will maintain their sanity. Resignation represents an important limitation in terms of the extent in which power can be exercised. However, it is a therapeutic/mental health approach to politics that subsequently protects the wider system by serving as a form of individualized resistance. As Roseberry (1994, 361) suggests, Gramsci's notion of hegemony is a "common material and meaningful framework for living through, talking about, and acting upon social order characterized by domination," which, as Gavin Smith (2004) would argue, is grounded in past hegemonic work. If part of that past hegemonic work includes the individualization of resistance, it is difficult to change the system as a whole (also see Chapter Seven on rights-based legal battles). The cult of the individual becomes a powerful tool in maintaining the hegemonic field of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. In Li's (2019) terms, the power of individualism is in the ways in which it allows "critical politics" to be "blocked" and/or "interrupted."

8.6 CONCLUSION - BUILDING RESISTANCE FROM RESIGNATION

If resistance is "shaped by the process of domination itself" (Roseberry 1994, 360-1), then resignation can be perceived as a form of individualized protest reflective of the individualism of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. The consequence of this dynamic is that it

atomizes society. However, a system based on individualism that fosters inequality can only be sustained for so long. Such a system eventually reaches a breaking point as entire blocs of workers live on the edge for so long, they no longer have the capacity to just make do.

Returning to Polanyi's (2001, 3) notion of the "double movement," the self-regulating market is a utopian idea that cannot "exist for any length of time without annihilating the human and natural substance of society." This is why society has historically "taken measures to protect itself" (Polanyi 2001, 4; also see Chapters Two and Three). Roosevelt's New Deal and the rise of Fordist/Keynesian capitalism was a response to the political and economic crises of the 1930s (see Chapter Three). While the development of the welfare state during this period and the postwar years was designed to stabilize capitalism, "the expansion of social welfare programmes" under Fordist/Keynesian capitalism had "undeniable benefits for [certain] working-class men and women" (Harvey 1990, 59; also see Chapter One on precarity). Standing (2014, 977) suggests that the period from 1980 to 2008 represents a dis-embedding phase of the economy, or, in Polanyi's terms, a period of separating the economy from political control to realize a self-regulating market economy. Standing also perceives the precariat as a potential class force capable of initiating a re-embedding phase, or a period of re-establishing political control over the economy through new economic regulations, social protections, and redistribution (Standing 2014, 977). However, the precariat can only become a class force if it is able to overcome its internal divisions (Standing 2014, 977; also see Chapter One). While overcoming internal divisions will be a challenge for any nascent class force, so will counteracting resignation. If a period of re-embedding is to happen, it will require a better understanding of resignation and the ways in which social subjects are shaped through the particular ways in which power is exercised and resisted.

In Barber's (1990) case study, when one of the local fish processing plants implemented a new corporate structure and modernization programme, the culture of "making do," namely the reliance on close ties of kith and kin for survival, provided a social network and platform for a trade union drive to organize the fish plant workers and resist some of the company's new measures. This relates to Li's (2019) work in the sense that we need to examine under what conditions does a complaint become a critique and the basis for effective politics as opposed to what conditions lead to politics being interrupted. Benson and Kirsch (2010, 461) argue for an "agentive reading of resignation" that can form the basis for "transformative politics." By "showing how political resignation is produced and operates creates an opportunity for people to rethink their relationship to capital." (Benson and Kirsch 2010, 475). In doing so, it may be possible to chart a path through and/or from resignation, similar to Barber's fish plant workers, and move beyond the political and economic domination of the cult of the individual under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

CHAPTER NINE

STRATEGICALLY SITUATED ETHNOGRAPHY AND NARRATING THE STRUGGLE FOR WATERFORD CRYSTAL

9.1 Introduction

The closure of Waterford Crystal in 2009 constitutes a moment in time and space that I chose to launch my version of the story of the Waterford Crystal workforce. That said, my research took place two years after the closure of Waterford Crystal happened, during a period of political and economic uncertainty following the 2008 financial crisis, the collapse of Ireland's so-called Celtic Tiger, and the onset of Ireland's, Troika-directed, economic austerity programme. Between the closure of Waterford Crystal and the time of my research, the workers I interviewed had a significant amount of time to ruminate on what had happened to them. The memories and meaning the former glass workers attached to the closure of Waterford Crystal in 2009 extended well beyond that moment temporally and spatially. This ethnography is my interpretation of the ways in which the Waterford Crystal workers interpreted their working lives as a whole in those two to three years following the closure of Waterford Crystal.

Underlying my interpretation of the Waterford Crystal workers' story is an ethnographic, historical, and scaled analytical approach that constitutes the basis of my understanding of how to carry out a strategically situated ethnography, which "attempts to understand something broadly about the system in ethnographic terms as much as it does its local subjects" (Marcus 1998, 95). This approach entails contextualizing the workers' experiences, memories, and narratives by examining the ways in which various historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes operating across the local, national, and international scale have influenced their lives.

9.2 LIMITATIONS AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

As discussed in Chapter One, most of my research participants were older, male craft-workers, who represented a key segment of the Waterford Crystal workforce with respect to the development and image of the company, as well as the labour politics of the trade union. With respect to limitations in my research, I do not adequately address the experiences of female workers at Waterford Crystal. While I tried to include as many female voices as possible, a greater breadth of thoughts and opinions from female workers would enrich my research and provide a fruitful area for further research. Specific areas that need to be examined with respect to the experiences of female workers at Waterford Crystal include: overcoming the marriage bar; the fight for equal pay; the role of gender politics within the trade union and the company; and, female workers' experiences balancing work at Waterford Crystal and work at home.

There are other lines of inquiry that would supplement my research as well and they are: the experiences of the immigrant families, namely the children and grandchildren, of the initial craftworkers that settled in Waterford during the early years of the company; the experiences of senior management; a more detailed examination of the labour politics between different sections of the workforce; a multi-sited ethnography that includes the experiences of workers in overseas factories used by Waterford Crystal; and, the social reproduction strategies of the Waterford Crystal workforce pre-, peri-, and post-Waterford Crystal. While addressing these limitations would enhance my research and add another layer to the story of the Waterford Crystal workforce, their omission does not compromise the overall goal of this strategically situated ethnography—which was to learn, in tandem, something about the former glass workers and the historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes that have shaped their lives across time and space.

9.3 STRATEGICALLY SITUATED ETHNOGRAPHY: APPLYING AN ETHNOGRAPHIC, HISTORICAL, AND SCALED APPROACH

Each chapter in this ethnography, barring Chapter Three, centres on an ethnographic tension: the 2009 Occupation; the authenticity of Waterford Crystal; the House of Waterford Crystal (which informed my decision to look at the longer history of Waterford Crystal's built environment in Chapter Five); the workers' pension case; and, the workers' struggles to obtain gainful employment after the closure of Waterford Crystal. From each ethnographic tension I expand my analysis temporally and spatially, following lines of thought revealed to me by my research participants.

My ethnographic, historical, and scaled approach is established in Chapter Two. The 2009 Occupation, the event in which I was introduced to the Waterford Crystal workers' story, cannot be understood fully without knowledge of the 1990 Strike. These two events occurred nineteen years apart but were linked and shaped by political and economic processes operating over that period and across multiple scales. At the ethnographic/local level, there was the workers' concern for their livelihoods, the trade union politics around communication, militancy, and possible outcomes, as well as what the closure of Waterford Crystal would mean for the wider community. This was set against the company's desire for profitability and the possibility of relocating production to realize those profits. In the case of the receivership, the goal was to liquidate the company to repay creditors. At the national level, the 1990 Strike and 2009 Occupation were affected by the Irish government's decision to embrace a corporate friendly, neoliberal model of economic development in the form of social partnership in 1987. In 2009, it was the Irish government's position to not intervene in the so-called free market that justified their

refusal to nationalize Waterford Crystal. At the international level, there was the recession of the late 1980s and early 1990s and the fallout from the 2008 financial crisis. Moreover, spanning these two events was the global shift to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism and the consequences of that shift, namely the undermining of organized labour and the deregulation of financial markets that led to the 2008 financial crisis. Revealed in the workers' experiences, memories, and narratives of these events are the interactions within and between three groups of social actors influencing their future. These three groups of social actors are categorized under the headings labour, capital, and the state and are important for understanding the workers' struggle for Waterford Crystal across time and space.

Chapter Three is the outlying chapter with respect to its ethnographic focus. However, the analysis is still historical and scaled. This is purposeful. Using the labour/capital/state framework distilled from the workers' experiences, memories, and narratives about the 2009 Occupation and the 1990 Strike, this chapter explores the broader political and economic context at the national and international level for the ethnography as a whole. The context provided in this chapter is important for understanding the changing relationships within and between labour, capital, and the state during the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. These different regimes have different implications for workers, the working class, and labour politics in general. The most significant change demarcating Fordist/Keynesian capitalism and Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism is the increased mobility of capital and the threat of outsourcing and/or relocating production under the latter regime of capitalism, which affected workers ability to place demands on capital to improve wages, benefits, and conditions in a particular place.

An examination of these different regimes of capitalism also supports Braudel's (1960) assertion that there are certain long-lived structures in the *longue durée* of history, namely the capitalist mode of production as an organizing principle of social life, that have the ability to encumber history. This notion is bolstered by the ideas of Kasmir and Carbonella's (2014) "politics of dispossession," Masco's (2017) crisis framework as a counterrevolutionary force, and Polanyi's (2001) "double movement," all of which explore the ways in which capital and the state use political and economic processes to "block" (Li 2019) possible alternative futures and ensure the survival of capitalism, especially in times of crisis and/or struggle. This chapter also establishes that social partnership, a key component to the success of Ireland's Celtic Tiger, was a long-standing interest of Irish capital and Irish politicians to incorporate and control the labour movement through nationalist rhetoric.

Returning to my ethnographic, historical, and scaled approach, the workers' concern over what constitutes authentic Waterford Crystal in Chapter Four is more clearly understood in the context of the company's early growth being closely associated with Ireland's desire to assert it-self politically and economically on the global stage. In addition, an important aspect of Waterford Crystal's development was the role of the Irish diaspora and Irishness having political and cultural cachet in opening up international markets, especially the United States. Despite the importance of Irishness in the success of Waterford Crystal, the trade union's legal action for geographical indication through the European Union was undermined by the company's internationalist origins and decision to outsource production following the 1990 Strike. Waterford Crystal's authenticity was defined in terms of brand recognition and quality as opposed to place of origin. This disregard for recognizing the connection between people, place, and production in what the former glass workers perceived as authentic Waterford Crystal led to them using notions of

authenticity as a critique of capital mobility, deindustrialization, globalized systems of production, and what the state's obligations is to its citizens as workers.

The examination of Waterford's built environment in Chapters Five and Six simultaneously provides insight into the glass workers' working lives at Waterford Crystal while highlighting the significance of the workers and the company to the development of Waterford City. By examining the built environment associated with Waterford Crystal, these chapters document Waterford City's transition from a place of production to a place of performance and consumption as the manufacturing sector declines and the tourism sector grows. These changes in the built environment reflect patterns in the wider transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, especially in post-industrial and/or historically marginalized areas seeking economic viability.

In Chapter Seven, the workers fight to recover their pensions was possible through the European Court of Justice and their rights under the European Insolvency Directive as citizens of the European Union. There was not much political will to save Waterford Crystal or the workers' pensions in Ireland. However, the Irish government's decision to spend billions bailing out the banks responsible for the collapse of the Irish economy was perceived by the workers as a further slight against them. This bone of contention helped inform how the workers viewed the social injustice of the Irish government's response, or lack thereof, to their situation. While the workers won their legal action, many of them were detrimentally affected (i.e., death, bankruptcy, broken marriages, and mental illness) by the Irish government's delay in addressing the pension issue. The social injustice experienced by the workers is a form of structural violence stemming from an inherent disjunction in exercising democratic citizenship rights within and across the state and supra-state scale. In the end, their rights-based claim through the courts amounted to a rearguard

action, which is reflective of individual rights activism under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. As a site of resistance, the courts are not about ensuring social justice through democratic governance (Harvey 2005). Instead, the courts serve as a place to fight against forms of social injustice that already exist within the frame of Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. It is important to note that the courts are an important check and balance on political and economic power but not everyone has the means or capabilities to appeal to the courts to fight against social injustice. The workers' trade union was crucial to the workers recovering part of their pensions and ensuring pension protection for Irish citizens in general for the future.

Chapter Eight examines the workers' ability, or inability, to obtain gainful employment through Waterford Crystal's European Globalization Adjustment Fund (EGF) programme in the context of Ireland's, Troika-directed, economic austerity programme. A key reform of the Troika's bailout agreement with Ireland was a greater focus on active labour market policies (ALMPs) as opposed to income replacement policies which were perceived as a passive approach to the labour market by the Troika. The EGF is also based on ALMPs, which has a long history in the European Union's approach to the labour market. Underlying ALMPs, as examined through Ireland's Gateway and JobBridge initiatives under the Pathway to Work programme, is a greater focus on individual responsibility and punitive measures for people participating, or not, in government jobs programmes. These types of programmes are a way of disciplining the workforce in ways that reflect the importance of individual responsibility under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. However, given the older age profile and low formal education profile of the Waterford Crystal workforce, the EGF and overall adherence to ALMPs did not make sense for most of the Waterford Crystal workforce, especially in the context of economic austerity. As a result, many of the workers felt they were the victims of ageism and

continued to be unemployed and training for jobs they were not likely to obtain. Many of the workers became resigned to their situation as a way of protecting themselves and their mental health. However, resignation as an individualized form of resistance can atomize society and only serves to protect the cult of the individual under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism. The implication for workers and the working class is the depoliticization and disorganization of the labour movement.

By taking an ethnographic, historical, and scaled approach to strategically situated ethnography, I address concerns raised by other scholars (Braudel 1960; Burawoy 2000; Durrenberger 2009; Kasmir and Carbonella 2014; Kwon and Lane 2016; Li 2019; Marcus 1998; Moore 1987; Portelli 1991; Roseberry 1994; G. Smith 2004; N. Smith 2008; Walley 2013; Winson and Leach 2002) about what can be learned from examining the ethnographic moment in relationship to wider political and economic processes over time and space. The value of strategically situated ethnography as an ethnographic approach is that it provides a conceptual framework to think about our research participants in conjunction with the wider system in ethnographic terms.

Moreover, strategically situated ethnography combines well with other theories to reveal further insights about our research participants and the wider political and economic systems that influence their lives across time and space.

9.4 ELUCIDATING THE POWER OF CAPITALISM THROUGH STRATEGICALLY SITUATED ETH-NOGRAPHY

On the surface, an ethnography of the Waterford Crystal workers appears restricted—circumscribed to a particular group of people, company/product/brand, and place. However, from its inception as the Waterford Glassworks (1793 to 1851) to Waterford Crystal (1947 to 2009) to

the House of Waterford Crystal (2010 to Present), the company/product/brand and the accompanying workforces have existed as part of political and economic processes operating across the local, national, and international scale.

The Waterford Glassworks was established in the context of: 1) the political and economic context surrounding the American War of Independence; 2) Waterford's strategic position in the transatlantic trade routes of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century; and 3) displaced British glassworkers. The company's resurrection as Waterford Crystal was aided by: 1) Ireland's political and economic opening after decades of autarky; 2) a postwar political economy driven by the standardization of international trade under the Bretton Woods Agreement; 3) European glassworkers displaced by WWII; and, 4) an increasingly wealthy Irish diaspora longing to reconnect with their roots. As for the House of Waterford Crystal, it: 1) is now owned by the Finnish housewares conglomerate, Fiskars; 2) depends on non-Irish workers carrying out the bulk of production outside of Ireland; 3) functions as a symbolic link between the present company and its past incarnations for the sake of brand integrity; and, 4) is a key site of tourism, which is vital to the future economic development of Waterford. The experiences, memories, and narratives of the Waterford Crystal workers are woven into the fabric of this larger political and economic history, which, using the language of Braudel (1960), I argue constitutes the *longue* durée of capitalism.

With respect to my narration of *The Struggle for Waterford Crystal*, a key aspect of my interpretation of the workers' story hinges on the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, which I characterized as a shift within the structure of the *longue durée* of capitalism. The workers' experiences, memories, and narratives span this shift and offer a unique perspective into its effects on the workers' lives across time and space.

Underlying my analysis of the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism is the labour/capital/state framework, established in Chapter Two, because it is the relationships within and between the social actors representing labour, capital, and the state that influence the workers' experiences, memories, and narratives of these different manifestations of capitalism. It is also the relationships within and between these social actors that influence what is possible with respect to achieving a certain degree of security from their working lives.

The capitalist system does not only constrain (Herod 1997) but enables certain kinds of actions by people, groups, and communities in ways that advance, sustain, and/or resist the expansion and development of capitalism to their own ends across time and space. Starting from the premise that the Waterford Crystal workers are agents of history operating in the *longue durée* of capitalism (Portelli 1991), I employed Roseberry (1994) and Gavin Smith's (2004) understanding of hegemony, as well as Lefebvre's (1991) notion of the production of space to provide greater insight into the ways in which capitalism encumbers history in the *longue durée* (Braudel 1960). For these theorists, any agentive reading of struggle must be understood as being conditioned by the various historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes that inform any particular moment of struggle. Moreover, Roseberry (1994), Gavin Smith (2004), and Lefebvre (1991) complement my ethnographic, historical, and scaled approach to strategically situated ethnography.

Roseberry (1994, 360-1) suggests hegemony offers a way for understanding struggle as "a common material and meaningful framework for living through, talking about, and acting upon social orders characterized by domination." Resistance is shaped by the process of domination itself and is useful for conceptualizing what is perceived as possible in moments of struggle.

Lefebvre's (1991, 47-8) idea of the "spatial code"—as the "means of living in space, of understanding it, and of producing it"—serves a similar function but with a spatial focus. The "spatial code" offers a way to conceptualize how physical and mental spaces, which are also characterized by struggle and the process of domination, operate across multiple scales and simultaneously shape and reflect what is perceived as possible with respect to the production of space and its correlating social relationships.

For example, in the context of the postwar economy, Waterford Crystal benefitted from a form of economic nationalism that promoted and supported investment in Irish industry and Irish workers. This philosophy was reflected in the paternalistic management of the company. The workforce was well organized, militant, and able to maximize their share of the company's profits. During that era, Waterford Crystal's built environment (e.g., factories, housing, and recreation facilities) was an expression of this relationship between the workers, the company, and the various governments that supported this form of economic development. However, in the years following the 1990 Strike, Waterford Crystal's large-scale manufacturing presence began to recede as operations were consolidated at the Kilbarry plant or moved overseas. The workers made a concerted effort, namely by appealing to notions of authentic Waterford Crystal being produced in Ireland, to limit the amount of change at the company and maintain as much production in Waterford as possible. However, the workers were ultimately undermined by structural changes in the political economy and a lack of political will to change or mitigate their circumstances. Waterford Crystal's built environment was likewise transformed as manufacturing and production gave way to tourism, performance, and consumption. These changes reflected the transition from Fordist/Keynesian capitalism to Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism.

For Gavin Smith (2004, 217), hegemony "captures the unevenness and incompleteness of [the securing and/or destabilizing of hegemonic fields] at any given moment in history." In order to gain insight into any given moment, we need to understand the complex histories that inform that moment because "hegemonic fields need to be secured for the future, yet carry with them the residue of past hegemonic work" through "stable institutions, cultural reproductive habits, and the securing of real or imagined territorial mastery" (G. Smith 2004, 217). For example, to say the 2009 Occupation failed because the workers were the victims of an overstretched company in the midst of a global credit crunch, while true, lacks the nuance and insight that comes from examining the workers' experiences, memories, and narratives of the 2009 Occupation in connection with wider historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes, such as: the 1990 Strike; the establishment of social partnership; European unification and US transnational corporations using Ireland to access the European common market; and, the undermining of organized labour under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism in general. These different lines of thought add layers of complexity to our understanding of the Waterford Crystal workers and the ways in which the capitalist system has influenced their lives across time and space.

The notion of struggle being conditioned by various historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes raises important questions for those interested in the emergence of "critical politics" and their potential to become "historically effective" or "blocked" (Li 2019). How do we move struggle and resistance beyond the process of domination itself? How do we develop counter-hegemonic movements into a material force (G. Smith 2004, 221)? How do we disrupt the "spatial code" in a way that produces enduring revolutionary spaces (Lefebvre 1991, 54)? The Waterford Crystal workers' story does not answer these

questions. *The Struggle for Waterford Crystal* is a story of the ways in which capitalism prevails. In Li's (2019) terms, it is a story of how complaints, critiques, and the rise of critical politics are interrupted and, ultimately, blocked. A consequence of the encouragement of autonomy and individualism under Flexible Accumulation/Neoliberal capitalism, which has been extremely effective in increasing precariousness and depoliticizing workers, the working class, and labour politics in general.

Despite the Waterford Crystal workers' efforts, there was nothing certain or enduring about the lives they forged for themselves. The security they had struggled for and maintained for most of their working lives was lost, undermined by a political economy built and sustained by precariousness. *The Struggle for Waterford Crystal* is both part of and a representation of humanity's collective story under the *longue durée* of capitalism.

To sum up, the story of the Waterford Crystal workers is intertwined in wider historical, geographical, socio-cultural, political, and economic processes across time and space. In terms of strategically situated ethnography, the Waterford Crystal workers' story constitutes an excellent instructive case study. Furthermore, a strategically situated ethnography of the Waterford Crystal workers exposes how the power associated with and/or attributed to the capitalist mode of production, pervades our social reality across time and space. Capitalism, as an organizing system of social life, is not natural nor is it inevitable. The stories of the non-hegemonic classes count (Portelli 1991). They expose the contingency of capitalism and in doing so develop our critical analysis to effect change.

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