

Part 2

Performing Heritage: The Globalisation of Tourist Products and Practices

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Chapter 4

'The Cracked Pint Glass of the Servant': The Irish Pub, Irish Identity and the Tourist Eye'

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Introduction

The 'Irish pub' is crucial to Irish tourism. In the first instance, this is due to the range of practical services that many of Ireland's more than 8000 public houses provide, ensuring that they are part and parcel of the island's tourist infrastructure (Scott, 1994). CERT (the State Tourism Training Agency) has argued that the pub in Ireland is not only important 'to the life of local communities' in small towns and villages but that in larger towns 'pubs have become central to the overall tourism product offering food, drink, entertainment and in some cases even accommodation' (CERT, 1993: 71). However, the Irish pub is more than a tourist service provider. Over the last decade the concerted drive to sell Ireland as a tourist destination has seen the 'Irish pub' emerge as a key marketing motif. In large part this is due to the place of the pub in external perceptions of Ireland and of Irish people. Many foreign visitors regard Ireland's pub culture as one of the most distinctive and attractive elements of modern Irish society. It is also tied very closely to images of Irish people themselves, who form a critical component in the appeal of the Irish pub to the tourist eye. This chapter will examine why this is so and what implications this might have for tourist development in Ireland and for its culture and people. It will argue that aspects of Irish pub culture have been objectified and commodified for the tourist experience. The form this commodification has taken has been, in large part, dependent upon tourist expectations, generated not only by tourist promotional material but also by other longer-term social and cultural processes. Ultimately, the pub has emerged as the site for a form of cultural tourism in which a socially constructed conception of Irish people

is consumed in a setting that also allows for tourist 'escape, hedonism and exploration' (Craik, 1997).

In the first instance, images of Irish culture and the social lives of Irish people being inextricably bound up with pubs and alcohol in the minds of many tourists needs to be put into an historical perspective. It is not a new phenomenon. Indeed, the image of 'garrulous paddy' has a long lineage and is deeply embedded in dominant representations of the Irish throughout modern history. An almost invariably alcohol-centred 'stage Irish' persona is reflected in early travel writing on Ireland from at least the late 18th century onward helping to establish a series of easily recognisable and historicised symbols and cultural reference points for contemporary external visions of Ireland. Alongside avowedly negative portrayals of 'Irishness' such images also forged a romanticised link between the 'Irish Other' and conviviality, ease of communication and an escape from 'time-work discipline'. This, it will be suggested, has been of particular significance in the attractiveness of Ireland as a site for leisure consumption.

Images of Ireland held by people elsewhere have also often depended upon their view of the Irish, and of things 'Irish', in their midst. Images associated with the marketing of Irish alcoholic export products have helped shape the preconceptions which tourists have prior to their arrival in Ireland. Similarly Irish migrant culture (and host perceptions of that culture) have also helped shape the link of the Irish with the pub. Both have proved important to the rapid spread of 'Irish theme bars' in many parts of the globe during the last decade. The rise of the Irish theme bar has paralleled the rapid expansion of tourism in Ireland and the two processes are, in many ways, interwoven. The initial impetus for the spread of the 'theme bar' was, in large part, dependent upon an opportunity identified through tourism. In turn, the increased global profile of the Irish bar that the theme pubs have given rise to has helped feed tourist expectations in a very specific way. The impact of the Irish theme bar upon tourism and upon the commodification of Irish identity must therefore be examined before the role of Irish pub culture in contemporary Irish tourism can be assessed.

Tourism is concerned with the consumption of place and the consumption of goods and services in that place. The economic context of both Irish pub culture and the Irish drinks industry is also therefore of critical importance in assessing the importance of both for tourist development. Both pubs and Irish alcohol production are important areas of economic activity and this material dimension is far from negligible in their relationship to tourist promotion. This link is further evidenced in the increasing importance of brewery and distillery visitor centres as profitable tourist attractions in their own right.

Ultimately, however, it is with the contemporary representation of the

Irish pub in the promotion of Ireland as a tourist destination and its role in the tourist experience with which this chapter is concerned. It will be argued that an essentialised notion of Irishness is in part constructed through the specific spaces, activities, sounds and symbols of the Irish bar. The cultural reproduction of such ethnicised signs represents a reification of their meaning. What is commodified and consumed in the tourist experience of the Irish pub is a notional experience encapsulated in the concept of the 'craic'.² Commodifying the 'craic', it will be suggested, represents a form of cultural tourism. Given the great emphasis placed upon the social actions and identity of Irish people in the commodified 'craic' there is a sense in which they, too, are being consumed by the tourist. This may have significant ramifications not only for the way that Irish people will be seen by the tourist but also for that richly diverse and almost indefinable explosion of human interaction which the concept of 'craic' attempts to encapsulate.

'Garrulous Paddy' and 'Time-Work Discipline': 19th Century Tourism, Stage Irishry and the Emergence of an Alcohol-centred Identity

From a very early date Ireland was established as a regular destination for the English tourist and one that also 'consistently impressed visitors by its foreign quality' (Hadfield & McVeagh, 1994: 134). The Irish landscape and many aspects of Irish society provided this sense of the different, the romantic and the exotic. However, it is noticeable that late 18th- and early 19th-century English travellers in Ireland regularly commented on the drinking habits of the peasantry and, indeed, of other social classes too, in large on the basis pre-conceived perceptions. Travel book representations of Irish drinking habits tended to oscillate between moral condemnation and a celebration of the exotic and primitive but seldom was an alcohol-centred identity far from the scene (Hadfield & McVeagh, 1994: 161). Indeed, such images continued to be very much to the fore through the 19th century as various social and economic changes made Ireland an ever more regular Victorian tourist destination (Grimes, 1980; Harrington, 1991).

These depictions of the drinking habits and social life of Irish peasants in early tourist writing emerged in tandem with (and were greatly fed by) the increasingly recognisable depiction of the 'comic Irishman' on the English stage (Edwards, 1994; Kiberd, 1995; Waters, 1984). Conventions for the portrayal of Irishmen and women on the popular stage were already fairly well established by the Victorian era but became even more clearly defined in this period. The Stage Irishman was a 'merry, whiskey drinking pugnacious clown' who could similarly be identified both with conversation and

articulacy, as an 'outsider' who combined the romanticism of the rogue with the exotic threat of the unknown (Waters, 1984: 6).

This dual imagery of the Irish within the tourist and colonial mind (of drunken dissolution and roguish romanticism) stood at the juncture of two distinct elements of English Victorian moralism. The first was an avowed antagonism toward intoxicating drinks that was, in turn, part of a wider drive to promote 'time-work discipline' (Dingle, 1980: 8; Harrison, 1971; Shiman, 1988: 2; Thompson, 1963). Closely allied to this was a 'Eurocentric' and imperial view of colonised peoples, whose social lives and cultures were similarly seen as anti-progressive and the antithesis of modern civilisation. The 'Colonial Other' often became the symbolic mirror, the binary opposite for an emerging conception of Englishness and imperial patriotism (Memmi, 1990; Said, 1993; Samuels, 1989). In the imagery of the whiskey-loving Irish these two processes merged. In the process a pool of discursively constructed signs and symbols was established through which Irish people negotiated their relationship to the outside world for many years to come. As Terry Eagleton (1998) has recently argued the 'Celt in English eyes has meant sociability as well as savagery, the clubbable rather than the calibanesque'. This, it could be argued, has become increasingly the case for non-English eyes as well.

'Selling Beer, Selling Ireland': The Drinks Industry and Images of Irishness

That Irish drinking habits, public houses and the culture of sociability that went with them were regarded as distinctive and different abroad was not, however, solely dependent on the symbolism of 'stage Irishry'. It was also in part grounded in certain material realities. The increasing importance of the Irish brewing and distilling industries was one important factor that helped foster the image of the Irish bar and an alcohol-centred Irish identity abroad that would also have a direct bearing on future tourist development. An essentialised and reified conception of Irishness emerged as a key component of product branding by the Irish drinks industry. This process of ethnic commodification was one that has ultimately fed into the commodification of Irishness in the tourist experience of the Irish bar.

In the late 18th and early 19th century Irish breweries and distilleries tended to suffer at the hands of competition from England where mechanisation and large-scale factory production took a much earlier hold. By the end of the 19th century, however, an increasing export orientation and the trend toward an ever-greater concentration of industrial production had some dramatic results. By the start of the 20th century the production of

Irish whiskey accounted for 25% of the total UK output and the orientation of the industry was thus more and more geared toward export. At the same time as the domestic market was contracting, those abroad stimulated ever-greater production. In Ireland the impact of the temperance movement and teetotalism was reflected in the falling rate of per capita whiskey consumption in the second half of the 19th century from (an admittedly high figure by today's standards) 1.1 gallons in 1857 to 0.63 gallons by 1910 (Ó Gráda, 1995: 298). The export of Irish spirits, however, doubled in the 1860s and 1870s, and doubled again by the 1890s. In 1907 two-thirds of Irish whiskey went to markets overseas and increasingly firms such as Bushmills and Jamesons had come to dominate production (Cullen, 1972: 157–8). The relationship of spirits to the image of Ireland and the Irish was, therefore, likely to be largely immune to changes in Irish drinking habits to the external eye.

Similarly, while the number of Irish brewing firms fell from 247 in 1837 to only 24 by 1920, the output of the brewing industry increased threefold between 1850 and 1914 with as much as 40% of the total being exported by the early 20th century. Although some (such as Murphy's and Beamish) continued to cater for largely local markets the Guinness brewery had, by that time, become the largest in the world. As well as obtaining an overall dominance of the domestic market it also accounted for the overwhelming share of beer exports from Ireland; as much as 96% by the start of the 20th century. This trade was significant to the Irish economy. In 1914 beer and ale accounted for 3.2% of all Irish exports (Ó Gráda, 1995: 298). Nor did political independence substantially change this situation. In 1926 brewing accounted for 30% of net manufacturing output and was one of the very few industrial sectors to export a significant proportion of that output (Ó Gráda, 1997: 108). On the eve of the economic war with Britain in 1936 (which led Guinness to establish a brewery in London) the company exported 1.3 million barrels per year, though this dropped to 0.8 million by 1938. This is a figure that has never reached the same height again, although this is due to the fact that Guinness emerged in the post-war era as a multinational corporation with production sited around the globe, rather than its demise as a major player in the brewing business (Kennedy, 1988: 47).

Historically, then, Ireland's image abroad was always likely to be closely associated with those products that were most readily recognisable and accessible as distinctly 'Irish'. It was similarly in the interests of the Irish drinks industry to continue to foster the link between Irishness and their products. As consumption became increasingly dependent upon marketing in the latter part of the 20th century and the vogue for ethnicised consumer objects took an ever firmer hold, so the imagery of the Irish bar

and of 'romantic rogue' stage Irishry constituted a language through which the seller could speak to the consumer. Marketing Irish beer and spirits abroad would increasingly provide an important part of the material basis for the imagination of the Irish bar in the outsider's mind.

The Irish drinks industry is keen to celebrate the extent to which their brands are virtually regarded as national symbols of Ireland in the wider world. In part this is because they continue to feature so prominently in Ireland's foreign trade. In 1995, for example, the phenomenal success of Baileys cream liqueur ensured that its foreign sales accounted for 1% of total Irish exports (Ó Gráda, 1997: 129). Between 1979 and 1991 export of alcoholic beverages from Ireland increased by 315% in real terms. Guinness, today one of the most recognisable brand names in the world and undoubtedly the most well-known commercial Irish symbol, continues to exemplify the link between the political economy of the Irish drinks industry and an Irish alcohol-centred identity.

It is also clear that many of those involved in the Irish drinks industry recognise the importance of images of the Irish bar and of a notional conception of Irish people for their continued high profile, particularly in recent years. The marketing campaigns of various Irish beers and stouts during the 1990s emphasised key elements of the contemporary construction of a stage Irishness. Emigration, an idiosyncratic sense of wit, spirituality and 'romanticised roguery' have all been prominent elements in the selling of Murphy's, Caffreys, Beamish and other Irish alcoholic products (McGovern, 1999). Adverts for Irish beers and spirits also parallel the tourist images of Ireland as a rural 'natural' and anti-modern place (Author's interview, 2000b). Such marketing strategies both illustrate the existence of and further reinforce pre-conceived and socially constructed images of Ireland, framing the context within which tourist expectations are constructed long before their arrival.

In addition, the drinks industry is quick to point out the link between the perception of Ireland abroad, the profile of these alcoholic products and tourism. Given that their advertising campaigns often emphasise their imagined 'Irish character', it has been argued by the lobbying organisation of the Irish brewers and distillers that they offer 'free advertising for Irish tourism' (O'Hagan & Scott, 1993: 37). The high product profile of various Irish alcoholic drinks, and of the site of their consumption, is therefore seen as having a direct impact on tourism; 'stout, Irish whiskey, cream liqueurs, and most important perhaps the Irish pub', an Irish drinks industry report concluded 'are significant in international perceptions of Ireland' (Drinks Industry Group, 1993). They also, of course, ensure that the consumption of Irish beers and spirits is closely tied to the idea of what Ireland is to the visitor (Drinks Industry Group, 1993). The pursuit of increased volume

sales of beer and whiskey, outside Ireland as well as within it, has placed a premium on the promotion of an alcohol-centred Irish identity. This has also helped feed another recent development that has impacted significantly on tourist expectations of a visit to Ireland: the rise of the Irish theme bar.

'Tourism without Travel': The Emergence and Impact of the Irish Theme Bar

The Irish theme bar is a global phenomenon of the 1990s. In the last decade over 1600 'new Irish bars' have appeared everywhere from Berlin to Beijing (The Irish Pub Company, 1997). To no small degree this rapid expansion has exploited a previously untapped market first identified in relation to tourism in Ireland. With supposed 'authenticity' guiding their design, Irish theme bars construct a notion of Irishness around an anti-modern nostalgia. As Jennifer Craik (1997) has argued, it is within the original culture of the tourist that expectations of their destination are shaped. As a result, Irish theme bars may have proved important in determining tourist expectations of what their travel experience in Ireland will be like.

The rapid rise of the Irish theme bar in the last decade was, in many ways, due to the recognition of a potential market identified in the expectations of the tourist. The drinking of Guinness was already a well-established element of the tourist experience in Ireland and the company saw in this a potential untapped opportunity for future expansion. If tourists, on their return home, did not continue to drink Guinness then this was, in large part, seen as due to the absence of a suitable social setting for them to do so. Exporting the 'ambience' of the Irish bar, therefore, became the means to increase the volume consumption of Irish alcoholic products. From the early 1990s onward, Guinness' world-wide operation, therefore, worked to provide certain services and incentives to create a network of Irish bars, run almost invariably by Irish staff, that could establish the social setting seen as a necessary prerequisite for the consumption of their products (The Irish Pub Company, 1997: 2).

Often working in tandem with Guinness The Irish Pub Company, 'the largest supplier of Irish pubs in the world', is a Dublin-based design agency established in 1991. It specialises 'in the design, manufacture and installation of authentic [*sic*] pubs worldwide' and has developed a series of design concepts which were intended to encapsulate the 'Irish pub experience'. Three designs are supposed to reflect the 'evolution of the Irish pub', from 'country cottage', to the 'Irish pub shop' and the 'Victorian Dublin pub', emphasising the appeal of a pre-modern nostalgia and the way in which

the Irish bar is, in some senses, about travelling in time as well as space. Two further design concepts, the 'Gaelic pub' and the 'Irish brewery pub', are specifically designed for markets believed to be less familiar with Irish pub culture but with an interest in Gaelicism (mainly Germany and the USA) (Author's interview, 1999d).

In the last decade the Irish Pub Company has been responsible for the design and construction of over 400 separate bars, mostly in Europe, and they are currently expanding rapidly in both America and the Far East. According to a representative for the company the choice of design is made on very specific local conditions, rather than the identification of national cultural preferences or perceptions of Irish people: 'Location', it was argued, 'is everything' (Author's interview, 2000a). Location dictates, in particular, the demographic profile of the potential consumer to be targeted, according to age, socioeconomic group, disposable income etc. At the same time the overall design concept is intended to be adaptable to create different environments to suit different groups of people (as distinct consumer markets) through the day. Indeed, when the original concept was conceived in cooperation with Guinness, the aim was to achieve potential appeal across the 'social scale'. Such a marketing logic and design characteristics have also increasingly come to inform the layout and look of pubs in Ireland itself, where The Irish Pub Company has become more and more active in recent years. The key element identified in the design of such 'Irish theme bars' is a supposed 'ambience' of 'casual and attractive sociability' where people can 'enjoy the art of conversation', 'revel in music and song' and imbibe 'satisfying and distinctive drinks' (The Irish Pub Company, 1997: 12–17). The dominant perception of the Irish pub as a 'social centre' informs the sense, too, that there is a level of 'social acceptability' for public drinking in Ireland because it is a 'part of the culture' (Author's interview, 2000a).

In almost identical vein the largest Irish theme pub chain in the UK, O'Neill's (a division of the Bass Leisure Corporation created in 1994 that now includes well over 100 outlets) suggests in its promotional material that its premises are designed to create 'an environment which encourages the rich human interaction perceived to be the key feature of traditional Irish bars' (O'Neill's, 1997). Part and parcel of the package is, therefore, the Irish people themselves. As a niche design and identity management organisation, The Irish Pub Company initially had a recruitment agency in order that they could provide Irish bar staff for their potential customers. Ironically, as the state of the Irish labour market has improved, they have ceased to provide this new variant on the 'assisted passage'. However, Irish bar workers, the company argues, provide 'vital dimensions of authenticity and ambience, in terms of accent, friendliness, professionalism, good humour and conversa-

tion'. In America, for example, they have sought to 'deconstruct the prevailing service formula' and replace it with a more informal and apparently casual approach identified as intrinsically 'Irish'. This constructed conviviality is also clearly linked to perceptions of the Irish migrant. Emigration (particularly in the last three decades) is seen as having been crucial in ensuring that the Irish are 'recognised as sociable animals [who] speak romantically about home' (Au*thor's interview, 2000a).

All in all, the design of the bars is, therefore, intended to create opportunities for informal and regular social interaction, to 'force people together' precisely because this is seen as the unique appeal of the 'craic' and the Irish. The design cues and codes employed are, therefore, intended to 'comfort and cosset people against the perils of the world outside' by representing a 'traditional view of Ireland' and reifying the experience of the 'craic' community (Author's interview, 1999d).

The link between the commodified 'craic' of the Irish theme bars and Irish tourist development are most clearly to be found in the realm of tourist expectations. This is certainly the view of those responsible for selling Ireland to tourists. One senior tourist executive saw the work of The Irish Pub Company and of the 'commodified craic' as critical (Author's interview, 1999a);

the whole association of the pub culture thing with Ireland has influenced tourist growth in a huge way ... I mean you go to cities like Oslo, Helsinki, Frankfurt, Dusseldorf, Lyon, Rome, Venice, they all have Irish pubs ... they have Irish staff, they have Irish music, they have a whole catalogue of Irish musicians who they bring in and a lot of these cities and a lot of these other cultures didn't have anything like that so ... no 'craic' and they didn't know the meaning of 'craic' and then an Irish bar opens and it's thronged ... it's an extraordinary phenomenon and so for people that might be their only introduction to Ireland, that might be their first exposure to Ireland and the Irish and that has been very, very helpful to us ... people feel they are meeting Irish people, that they are really getting a true Irish experience ... people love it, that has been a great support to us. It means people are well-disposed to Ireland, they'll say, 'we'll go down to our local Irish bar and if Ireland is anything like that sure it must be great.'

There is also a sense in which the theme bars themselves represent a form of 'tourism without travel' in the ethnic bazaar of an emerging global culture. Here is a way in which the 'tourist' can 'travel' to a notional Ireland without having to go to the trouble of travelling to the 'real' one. As Chris Rojek and John Urry (1997) have argued, 'cultures travel too' and through the Irish theme bar, with its calculated design codes, its 'authentic' Irish artefacts and,

most obviously, through its imported Irish people, the non-travelling tourist can have an Irish experience and the 'craic' delivered to his/her door. Clearly the non-travelling tourist is likely to be fully aware that this experience is 'inauthentic' or staged but, as various theorists have argued, this need not be a disincentive to consumption (MacCannell, 1992; Urry, 1995).

At the same time, this is a process which has resulted in the objectification of a series of social and cultural actions most readily associated with the Irish migrant. For Irish migrants themselves and, most obviously, for those who find employment in such bars, the 'craic' as a means of negotiating the potentially alienating impact of their migrant status has itself therefore become alienated in the process of commodification. Nowhere is this more evident than, for example, in the management and staff training programmes for the O'Neill's chain of Irish theme pubs in Britain, where instilling a sense of the 'craic' forms a key element (O'Neill's, 1997). There is a sense, then, in which such workers and Irish migrants more generally face the same dilemmas as those peoples whose cultural performances have been transformed by tourism, changing the very meaning of the 'craic' itself (Greenwood, 1989; Hall, 1994).

A further issue arises, however, when the potential impact that the theme bar may have on Ireland's pub culture and wider society is considered. As Rojek and Urry (1997: 10–12) go on to suggest, if there is an increasing presence of reconstructions of ethnic spaces (Mediterranean villages, Mexican saloons, Thai restaurants) in the cities of the advanced industrial world this exerts a pressure for 'ever more contrived representations of the apparent reality' of the places they are standing in for. The heavily-coded, globally present Irish theme bar may increasingly shape what it is that tourists seek when they come to Ireland itself and that may, in turn, directly affect what it is they will find. With the expansion of theme bars continuing apace, particularly (as in the largely now saturated continental European market) where received ideas about Ireland have previously been relatively weak, then they are liable to play an important part in fostering the future re-staging of 'stage Irishry'. If, as one commentator noted (Author's interview, 1999d), the image of the Irish theme bar will lead tourists to see 'Irish people as the core attraction of a visit to Ireland, the beauty [of the landscape] is relative' then this clearly may have important social implications.

'Public Drinking' in 'Safe Places': Irish Drinking and the Pub as a Tourist Site

The association of the Irish with drink, the pub and convivial sociability is therefore rooted in a longstanding, socially constructed 'stage Irish'

persona, in the identity branding of Irish products and in dominant perceptions of Irish migrant culture and the rise of the Irish theme bar. All of these have helped to shape the prevailing expectations (and the attractiveness) of Irish pub culture to the potential tourist. It is also clearly dependent on the perceived role that the pub plays in modern Irish social life and the nature of Irish drinking patterns. The particularly 'public' nature of Irish drinking would appear to have important consequences for the way in which foreign visitors frequent Irish bars.

Irish drinking habits have been the subject of some analysis in recent years. A rise in the general level of consumption has been a dominant feature through much of the last four decades. This is largely attributable to an overall rise in living standards and disposable income, shifts in gender relations that have resulted in a far greater rate of female consumption and a parallel fall in the rate of total abstinence. The huge social changes that have had a profound effect on Irish female drinking patterns have been particularly significant in this regard, although the end of the Irish pub as a predominantly male institution is still some way off (Drinks Industry Group, 1993; O'Hagan & Scott, 1993; Scott, 1994). Yet, there are trends that contradict what would, at first, appear to be a greater increase in the amount of alcohol being consumed. In keeping with wider European trends per capita alcohol consumption rates in Ireland have decreased in the last two decades. In 1980 the average adult consumption of alcoholic beverages was 10.8 litres of pure alcohol per annum. By 1990 that figure had fallen to 9.9 and in 1997 to 9.1 (Irish Brewers Association, 1997; O'Hagan & Scott, 1993: 12–13). The general trend would, therefore, appear to be for more people in Ireland to take a drink but more people are drinking less. In addition, international comparisons have shown that per capita alcohol consumption in Ireland is, if anything, relatively low, though it does have a higher than average rate of beer consumption. Of 20 European countries whose per capita consumption rates were compared in 1997 Ireland came 12th, far behind not only the more wine-orientated states (such as Portugal, France and Spain) but also beer-dominated markets like Denmark, Austria and Germany. The Irish are not, then, on average significantly bigger drinkers than others.

However, what is perhaps most distinctive about Irish drinking habits when compared to elsewhere is its public nature (Cassidy, 1996: 16–17). A study in 1990 showed that Ireland had an extremely low level of home consumption of beer. In Denmark 74% of total beer sales were for home consumption, in France the figure was 65%, in The Netherlands 62% and in Germany 60%. Even in Spain and Britain, where the figures were relatively low they were still 25% and 20% respectively. In Ireland home beer sales accounted for a mere 6% of the total. Whilst this picture is changing, to

some extent drinking in Ireland is still far more likely to take place in the pub than it is anywhere else or than generally happens in every other European country. In addition, Tanya Cassidy (1996) notes, Irish non-drinkers are also far more likely than their European counterparts to socialise in public houses. The pub may, in other words, play a relatively far more important part as an arena for social interaction in Irish society than an equivalent institution would do in other parts of Europe.

It is this public nature of Irish drinking, and the culture that is seen to be associated with it, which provides an important part of the appeal of the Irish pub to the visitor. Certainly that appeal seems to be substantial. A study undertaken for the (then) Department of Tourism and Transport in 1993 showed that only shopping and heritage sites attracted a higher percentage of overseas tourists than 'singing pubs'. Approximately 40% of tourists visited these very particular kind of public houses, about one million in total. If all pubs had been included the number would have been even higher and it seems likely that a very high percentage of all tourists to Ireland will, at one time or another, avail themselves of the facilities of an Irish pub. In similar vein, a survey of licensed premises also conducted in 1993 found that tourists accounted for over 15% of total business for more than 17% of pubs outside Dublin, and over 12% for those in the capital. Approximately 15% of all pubs also put on some form of entertainment (usually traditional music) which was specifically aimed at the tourist market (O'Hagan & Scott, 1993: 39–40). The Dublin Tourist Board recently conducted a survey of visitors to their main tourist information office asking people to indicate the images they most associated with the city: 73% said that it was 'people laughing and having a good time, the atmosphere of the "craic"' (Author's interview, 1999a).

In addition, large numbers of tourists go annually to the Visitors Centres attached to Ireland's most well-known breweries and distilleries. This, in itself, constitutes a particular form of heritage tourism and further evidences the link made between the consumption of Ireland as a tourist destination and the drinks industry. For example, in its first full year of operation, the Visitors Centre of the Old Jamesons Distillery in Dublin had over 136,000 people through its door, over 94% of whom were from abroad with over 50% coming from the UK. The Hop Store Visitor Centre at Guinness' St James's Gate Brewery is currently being substantially extended in order to cope with the increase in numbers (Author's interviews, 1999a,b).

Whilst there remains a need for a thorough study of the social background of those tourists who go into Irish bars of all descriptions there is evidence to suggest that a substantial number are middle-class 'high-yield' tourists who would not normally consider socialising in a pub in their own

countries (Author's interviews, 1999a,c). Although many of those engaged in tourist promotion are at pains to suggest that it is not so much drinking itself that is important to the image of the Irish pub but the culture that goes with it, the two cannot so easily be separated. Indeed, as the volume of visitors to the distilleries and breweries illustrates, Irish drink products are themselves invested with cultural significance and heritage value. The important thing is the perception that there is little or no social stigma attached to public drinking in Ireland. As a leading marketing officer for the Dublin Tourist Board argued, 'in other countries going to a pub is perceived as a bit low-life, a very negative thing. But they have no problem doing it here because it's quite acceptable' (Author's interview, 1999a). Middle-class tourists who would rarely if ever go into bars at home avail themselves of the Irish pub because 'for a lot of these visitors one of the reasons they want to go to Irish bars is to meet Irish people'. The Irish pub, therefore, offers both a relatively safe environment and a 'novel experience'.

It is not unimportant that 'high-yield' tourists are the primary market at whom much Irish tourist promotional material is aimed (it is perhaps worth noting, too, that it is for the foreign middle-class consumer that many of the Irish theme bars are designed to cater). What therefore emerges is a pressure to manage both the tourists' perception and experience of the Irish bar so as to highlight its social acceptance and status and downplay what might be regarded as the 'less salubrious', more volatile and frenetic elements of the 'craic' culture. Middle-class tourists may want the 'native' and the 'exotic' but they want it in a way that continues to offer the shelter of safety and 'quality service'.

'The Craic and the Emotive Experience': The Tourist Experience and the Irish Pub

If the image of the 'craic' is linked to the culture of Irish migration, it is also tied to the vision of Ireland as a 'traditional society' in which certain collective actions, bonds, emotions and experiences supposedly lost to the modern world can be (albeit briefly) 'lived' by the tourist. The 'emotive experience' that is such a critical component in the selling of Ireland as a tourist destination is a product of this phenomenon. This image of Ireland as a pre-modern place must be realised in concrete social situations and specific spaces for the tourist expectation to be realised. Given the fact that this 'emotive experience' requires an opportunity for a sense of contact with Irish people themselves then the Irish pub and the 'craic' emerge as a key dimensions of the tourist visitors' 'emotive experience' of Ireland.

As Barbara O'Connor has argued, tourist images of Ireland have been

dominated by the idea of the island as an 'empty place' of picturesque beauty (itself invested with metaphysical meaning) that plays host to a social order which is at least one step away from the atomised, frantic, insecure and 'inauthentic' condition of late modernity (O'Connor, 1993). The appeal of Ireland to the burgeoning market of 'post-modern' middle-class 'cultural' tourists has often been seen to lie in the retreat it appears to offer from the alienation and often seemingly meaningless nature of the advanced industrial world (Kneafsey, 1994). This image tends (in the main) to apply to the island outside of Dublin and it is not insignificant that Dublin has adopted an increasingly distinct tourist marketing strategy (aimed at the short-stay city-break market) in which it tends to be presented as a modern European capital offering a wide, 'cosmopolitan' range of cultural and leisure attractions. Even with Dublin, though, the social and cultural lives of Irish people themselves plays an important part in the city's appeal and this relates directly to perceptions of Dublin's pub culture.

However, the emphasis upon the supposedly particular nature of Irish people is even more important in the representation of the rest of the island and, most obviously, those rural areas that are primary tourist destinations (O'Connor, 1993: 72–3). This is closely linked to the construction of Ireland as a 'pre-modern' place. As O'Connor goes on to suggest, Irish people have proved to be an 'essential ingredient' in the packaging of Ireland as a tourist destination because they often appear to personify the retreat from the modern that is a key tourist goal. In such a perspective the Irish are constructed as an objectified 'other' inscribed with certain notionally 'pre-modern' and 'peasant' qualities (friendliness, honesty, naive charm). Contact with people exhibiting such traits is then regarded as an integral element of tourist expectations. As a result, an essentialised image of Irish people has been seen as critical to the 'emotional experience' of a visit to Ireland.

This has certainly been the case for Bord Fáilte. The Irish Tourist Board launched its 'Ireland – Live a Different Life' campaign in 1997. The idea of the 'emotional experience' was seen as the crucial in this marketing initiative, the 'core brand essence for Ireland tourism' (Bord Fáilte, 1997: 8). Clearly this campaign was designed to maximise the marketing potential of the particular place occupied by Ireland in the global tourist industry. This, in turn, is highly dependent on already established perceptions of Ireland abroad. A key dimension identified as framing this 'emotional experience' was the 'ease of interaction with Ireland's friendly and engaging people'. Even more significantly it was argued (based on a Visitors' Attitude Survey conducted in 1995) that 'while other destinations may boast friendly people, all visitors to Ireland have highlighted the ability to mix and interact with the Irish as being absolutely unique' (Bord Fáilte, 1995).

This 'unique' opportunity for social interaction might be achieved in a variety of locations but there is no doubt that the pub has been regarded as perhaps the most important. The Irish tourism training agency (CERT) has argued that 'visitors enjoy the informality of Irish pub life and the opportunity to mingle with local people'. 'The Irish', it was suggested, 'have a reputation for being gregarious and the type of casual acquaintances that may be struck up in pubs is an attractive facet of Irish life for visitors'. In addition, the link between the pub, the image of Irish people and pre-modernity is emphasised in the fact that 'traditional entertainment' (particularly music) whether 'planned or impromptu' was seen as 'an appealing feature of pub life for tourists, as are old style ambience and open fires' (CERT, 1993: 72). In an analysis of Irish tourist literature aimed at a continental European market, Bernadette Quinn noted that the emphasis on the rural and 'pre-modern' nature of Ireland was combined with a concentration on 'traditional pub life' as the 'night-time option' (Quinn, 1994: 69).

Rural Ireland's imagined pre-modernity and supposedly 'timeless' value system and social relationships are seen to be encapsulated and manifest through the 'craic'. 'Authentic' folk music, an atmosphere of easy conviviality, the sense of a collective, communal existence and a supposed ethnically-specific verbal dexterity and conversational skill, therefore, emerge as key motifs defining the objects of tourist consumption that can be readily accessed through the pub. Such notions owe much to the historically derived images of Irishness. For example, the emphasis upon conversational performance (the 'gift of the gab') is very much rooted in the tradition of 'stage Irishry' and is one of the most important aspects of tourist expectations on a visit to an Irish bar.

This is perhaps nowhere better illustrated than in the words of an American ethnographer (who unwittingly evidenced his own status as an 'intellectual tourist') engaged in a 'metaphorical journey' through 'global cultures' for whom the pub conversation acted as a 'metaphor' for Irishness itself. 'Irish pubs', writes Martin Gannon (1994: 192-3),

are probably the site of the most lively conversations held in Ireland. The Irish tend to be very sociable people who generally do not believe in drinking alone . . . Even more important than a good drink in a pub is a good conversation. The Irish are famous for their storytelling and it is not unusual to find an entire pub silent while one man tells an ancient folktale or what happened to him that afternoon. It is not unusual for someone to recite Shakespearean play from memory in its entirety. Besides stories, many a heated argument can erupt in a pub. The Irish seem to have a natural love of confrontation in all things.

The Irish pub conversation and the 'craic', therefore, emerge as the constructed antithesis to the tense, atomised and insecure condition of modernity and, as a result, essential to the experience of the cultural tourist to Ireland who is in retreat from the same.

This process also, of course, places a heavy burden of expectation and constructed meaning upon the moment of interaction with Irish people themselves which can, in turn, have great implications for the very culture that is the object of tourist consumption. The potential for tourism to directly affect and alter a pre-existent culture has been a major concern for many analysts. Certainly this has been so for a number of critical commentators on the trajectory of Irish tourist development, particularly in rural areas of the West. The 'staged authenticity' of heritage sites and tourist attractions has been identified as already having impacted upon not only the landscape of the West but also upon the 'thought worlds' of its inhabitants (Byrne *et al.*, 1993). As Irish pub culture and its attendant social activities become increasingly subjected to the presence and gaze of the tourist, it is highly unlikely to remain unaffected. Change should not, of course, in and of itself be regarded as a bad thing. However, given the role the pub and the 'craic' have played in the social world of rural communities then the result may be the loss of an environment in which a distinctive collective experience was lived. The objectification of the self that such a process can also bring in its wake may also be seen as having potentially dramatic social and psychological consequences.

In addition, the commodification of the 'craic' and the changing cultural context within which it operates ensures that the Irish pub has itself become an arena for 'staged authenticity' (MacCannell, 1973: 1249–58). Studies of cultural performances that have moved away from their original function within the local community to form part of the tourist product have shown that the social and cultural implications of such a shift can be far-reaching (Greenwood, 1989; Hall, 1994). In terms of Irish pub culture, the nature of the music 'session' may be undergoing a similar process (at least in certain areas and contexts) as the players and musicians become less the bearers of an indigenous, distinct and living culture than cultural workers in the tourist industry. The social relations of the session in tourist pubs and areas are increasingly defined by a performer–audience divide that equates directly to that of producer and consumer and which is at odds with the more collective experience of the session in its original setting. Similarly, the very content of the session can be altered as the space for difference and musical experimentation gives way to the need to perform that which is congruent with what the visitor expects Irish music to be. In either case there is no doubt that the culture itself can be significantly affected by the demands of the tourist eye and ear.

In many ways, it is the immediacy and ease of access to an apparently 'authentic' aspect of Ireland's culture that is the key element of the appeal of the Irish bar to the tourist. The Irish pub is a place of relatively easy and causal social interaction that can be entered into with a limited sense of intrusion and in which can be found a specific series of cultural practices. As such, the Irish pub links directly to the primary role of various forms of 'cultural tourism' to Irish tourist development. There is little doubt that Ireland has been heavily marketed as a destination that will attract the 'cultural tourist'. The emphasis upon Ireland's supposed 'difference', the importance of the island's history and culture in tourist literature and the notion of the 'emotional experience' as the 'core brand essence' for Irish tourism would all suggest as much. Cultural tourism has been identified as one of the key areas for government investment during the last decade (O'Donnchadha & O'Connor, 1996).

For a number of analysts, the concept 'cultural tourism' has two distinct elements: 'heritage tourism' and 'experiential tourism' (Zeppel & Hall, 1991: 87). The numerous recently established heritage centres (including those based on brewery themes), well-visited sites of historic interest and the general prominence given to Ireland's (in particular literary) past in tourist promotion all evidence the importance of the former to Ireland's tourist appeal. 'Experiential tourism', in contrast, is based on 'being involved in and stimulated by the performing arts, visual arts and festivals'. Whilst there have been attempts to devise cultural events in a range of venues and formats the forms of cultural performance and patterns of social interaction that take place in many Irish pubs ensures that the tourist experience of the Irish pub could be understood as such 'experiential tourism'. In addition, it has been suggested that whilst there are 'cultural tourists' whose primary focus is upon 'self-improvement, education [and] discovery', there is a wider constituency of 'culturally-inspired' or 'casual cultural tourists' for whom the consumption of culture is a part, but by no means necessarily an all-consuming aspect of the tourist experience (Author's interview, 1999a). People want to 'experience' culture but they do not necessarily want to have to work too hard at it or take it too seriously. They may also want to satisfy other less edifying, more hedonistic but nevertheless key tourist desires, goals and expectations.

A broad definition of what constitutes 'cultural tourism' that includes the pub has been evident in the thinking of those charged with promoting Irish tourism:

When we sell cultural tourism we're selling it in the broadest sense. We're selling it as everything from just sitting in a pub drinking a pint and just listening to the banter around you, to buskers on the street, art

exhibitions around the Green to more 'upmarket' culture with the traditional museums, a lot of the national cultural institutions. But the pub scene we have always used as something quite unique, that it's not the same type of culture that you would get in other countries (Author's interview, 1999a)

The pub can, therefore, offer itself as a site for what might be termed 'encultured hedonism'. The archetypal tourist can have a 'good time', enjoying (at least the representation of) the 'craic' and still feel that they are gaining an insight into a unique, and therefore 'worthy', cultural experience. Thus, whether the visitor to Ireland is considered to be in search of the 'authentic' (gaining a glimpse at the 'back region' of an indigenous social experience) or playing the ironic, semiotic games of the 'post-tourist', the pub may prove to be of primary importance as a site for the materialisation, performance and consumption of a rarefied and essentialised conception of Irish culture that also proves to be 'good craic'.

Conclusion: 'A New Stage Irishry'? Tourism, the Irish Pub and the Tourist Escape from 'Time-Work Discipline'

There are, then, a number of factors that have ensured that the Irish pub is a central element of tourist expectations and experience of a visit to Ireland. The practical and material contribution of Ireland's public houses to the island's tourist infrastructure matter but of perhaps greater importance is the cultural construction of the pub as a quintessentially Irish institution that offers an ideal opportunity to 'consume' Irish culture and people. Such expectations, often generated in the visitors' own culture through a variety of media-derived, historically-inherited and/or product-orientated images, construct Irishness as (in part at least) an alcohol-centred identity associated with the 'pre-modern' values of sociability and witty conviviality. Images of the Irish developed first in those societies that saw a significant influx of Irish migrants and over the last 150 years have since become almost globally recognisable. To no small degree this has been directly linked to the recent commodification of aspects of that culture in the form of the Irish theme bar. Such perceptions have subsequently been critical in shaping what it is tourists expect to find when they arrive in Ireland and (increasingly perhaps) what it is that they are subsequently offered. In addition, the Irish pub offers a relatively accessible arena in which the 'casual cultural tourist' can satisfy his/her desire take in a unique cultural experience with the less elevated (but perhaps more immediately satisfying) goal of imbibing the best that Ireland has to offer.

Perhaps tourist representations and perceptions of Irish pub culture may be seen to rest upon a new variant of 'stage Irishry' that has translated

the 'anti-time-work discipline' ethos associated with the pre-industrial 19th century Irish into an object of desire for the contemporary tourist fleeing their post-industrial condition. In the realm of tourism as a leisure pursuit a people long seen as having a peculiar gift for pleasure-seeking, wit and conversation may find themselves elevated from the status of the work-shy to a model of the right living. Significantly, of course, the essentialised construction of such a people may be vogueishly re-interpreted but it is still left ultimately intact. The 'romantic rogue' imagery of the 19th century Irish has, in other words, found a new updated niche for itself in the tourist eye that (as Declan Kiberd (1995) discussed in relation to its historical antecedents) also offers itself as a series of symbols and signifiers through which many Irish people will themselves construct, negotiate and contest their sense of self. It is in perceptions and consumption of Irish pub culture that much of this construction, negotiation and contestation takes place. Looking through the 'cracked pint glass of the servant' the casual cultural (and pleasure-seeking) tourist is invited to briefly escape the regulated and fractious condition of his/her everyday life and enter a land of conversation, song and slightly risqué (but ultimately relatively safe) new 'romantic roguery'.

Notes

1. In the first chapter of *Ulysses* James Joyce employs the image of the 'cracked looking glass of the servant' to portray the difficult and complex relationship between the idea of 'Irishness' and Irish culture given the pervasive influence of the external, colonial eye.
2. The term the 'craic' (pronounced and sometimes written 'crack') is a bowdlerised Irish word of disputed etymological origin that has a variety of uses but is generally taken to refer to having a good time!

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Chapter 5

Constructing an Exotic 'Stroll' through Irish Heritage: The Aran Islands Heritage Centre

EAMONN SLATER

Introduction

On the 13 November 2000, the Minister for Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands announced details of a £100 million expenditure plan for Irish heritage projects (*The Irish Times*, 13 November 2000). Such a large investment suggests that Irish heritage has become a crucial component in the Irish tourism industry. In the 1980s and early 1990s, it seemed that every local community was attempting to develop heritage 'attractions' such as historical houses and castles, wildlife parks, historical monuments and heritage gardens. However, many of these local initiatives in the heritage industry revolved around the provision of a visitor/heritage centre by these communities. Why the centre became the lynch-pin of these initiatives is that tourists demanded an immediate confrontation with the past (Sheerin, 1998: 46). To respond to this demand, the centre had to 'visualise' its past so that it could be easily consumed by their visitors. And in attempting to visualise the past, heritage had to move from being 'locked' into written texts and local folklore to be 'imaged' in a display performance in the new heritage centre. One consequence of the emergence of this visualisation of local heritage is the privileging of space over time in the presentation of the past (Johnson, 1999: 187).

In this chapter, I want to suggest that the dominance of the visual imagery (visual narrative) over chronology (written narrative) in the presentation of heritage in these centres is the key to understanding how knowledge is constructed. The reason for this is that these centres are essentially about providing pleasure to the visitor. The consequence of this is that the visit to the centre is 'constructed' as a 'stroll' through a reconstructed landscape made up of 'exotic' visual imagery. I want to conclude

that such a flaneur's stroll can only concentrate on the visually exotic, where space dominates over time. In order to arrive at this end point, we need to enter a heritage centre, the one I have chosen is on Inis Mor, the largest of the three Aran Islands. And before we begin our sojourn into the epistemological structures of this particular centre, I want to assert that this analysis of mine is about an attempt to understand how knowledge is structured in this location. It is not about how an audience may interpret that epistemological structure.

The Aran Islands of Western Ireland have become a 'Mecca' for those interested in Irish culture. This is not a new phenomenon. It has been going on for the last two centuries. Writers, artists, scientists and movie and TV producers have visited Aran and according to J.C. Messenger, the anthropologist, many of their works have 'served to familiarise the world with the unique and picturesque way of life of the islanders' (Messenger, 1967: 15). In doing so they have successfully signposted these islands as an exotic location for tourists to visit. On 5 August 1995, it was reported that the residing population of the islands (3000) had swelled to 13,000 people (*The Irish Independent*, 14 June 1996). Accordingly, it is an important example of how diverse cultural signposting can impact on a local community and its economy, through encouraging an interest in a place. But now, it has a new cultural signpost, in its heritage centre. In order to discover the type of culture being presented to these growing masses of tourists we need to get inside this centre. The centre was opened to the public in 1992 and is situated just outside the village of Kilronan, in the old coast-guard station.

The Visual as Exotic

As you pay you are handed an introductory leaflet.¹ Under its title and subtitle it states: 'Aran's Heritage, where your visit to Aran begins . . .' and it continues, 'Aran's Heritage Centre will not only introduce you to the landscape and traditions of the Aran Islands, but also to a culture that once spread over much of Western Europe. The history and present day lifestyle of the people of Aran are highlighted in the centre by the use of informative charts, photographs and maps'. So the opening line of this leaflet states emphatically the main thrust of the centre's ambition and establishes its own sense of self.

On entering the exhibit area you pass through a curtain rather than a door. This curtain is closed and only opened by the centre's cashier / usher to allow you in. The curtain and its theatrical opening heightens one's excitement, as it suggests the fact that one is leaving mundane reality and entering a world of performance. Having passed through this dramatic threshold prop, the first object encountered is a display panel, which is a

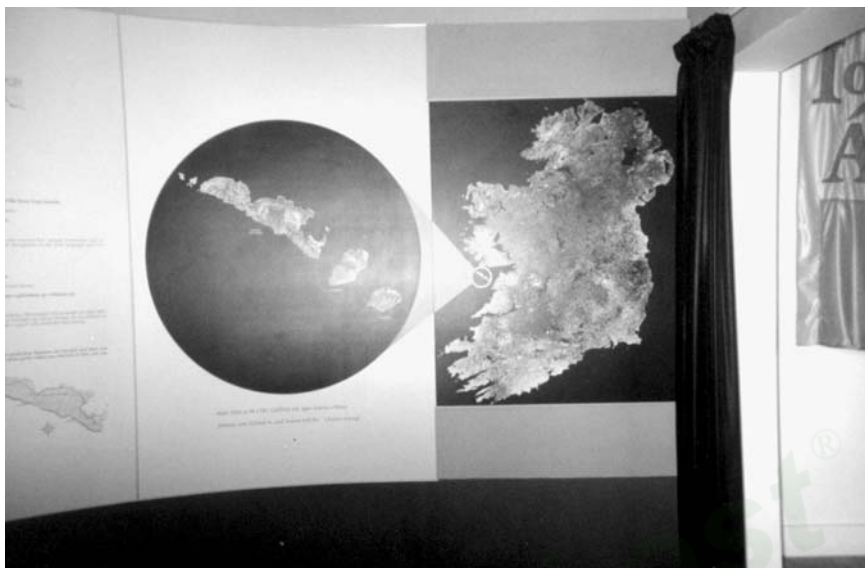


Figure 5.1 Locating the Islands from outer space

panoramic outer-space photograph of Ireland, in which the location of the Aran Islands is circled (see Figure 5.1). These circled islands are blown up in the next panel, with the following caption, first in Irish with an English translation underneath: 'Athenry was, Galway is, and Aran will be [Aran saying]'. Even in this first encounter between the visitor and the Centre's display, we can detect the style of presentation. First, the display is presented within a panel and a number of these panels make up a gallery. Second, each gallery is concerned with a specific topic or subject matter. Third, this style of presentation presupposes a walking tour, which creates the way in which the exhibits are to be viewed and read. And fourth, the design of the panel has created its own structured order of interpreting, so that you encounter the panel initially as a complete visual entity, where the visual representations are intermingled with the spaces given over to the written narratives. And since the visual image is bigger than the written caption, your attention is attracted to the visual and then to the verbal. The written narrative is framed within the visual structure. In this context, the display narrative is not a 'book on the wall'. The display panel operates in the realm between the visual and the verbal but with written text acting merely as an appendage to the visual. In this context, we can observe two contrasting narratives – the written and the visual – coexisting and impacting on each other. However, the structure of the presentation of the

information within the centre is not being determined by a linear logic within the written narrative but by the appearance of an object or an image of an object on the display panel. The written narrative responds to the visual narrative in order to make sense of the presence of the image or the artefact within the gallery.

Since the size of the display panel within the gallery is physically designed only to allow a single person (or a couple) to view and read in comfort, the experience of the Centre is to be of an individual nature. This structuring by the architectural design of the panels in this Centre is no different from the old type in the museums. The visitor is borne along and directed only one way – forward (Brett, 1993: 188) and in silent solitude rather than in a guided group. This silent sojourn around the centre replicates one of the essential characteristics of museum visiting in the 19th century, and this is the sense of aura, which accompanied such visiting. This insight comes from the work of Walter Benjamin (1973: 216). Benjamin has suggested that the architecture of museums and the ways in which works were displayed (the viewer is not allowed to touch them) created an atmosphere of church-like reverence which alienated the viewer from the objects displayed. Upon entering the majestic doorways of the museum, the viewer felt compelled to contemplate the works displayed in hushed silence, always maintaining a respectful distance from them. Benjamin conceptualised this mood as aura. An aura which is now maintained not by one object alone but by respect for the collective representations of a culture. This feature of the museum seems to continue into modernity and specifically into these centres. With no facility for guided tours or no physical room to guide herds of enthusiasts around the centre.

As you can see the next gallery is made up a number of panels (see Figure 5.2²) which deal with a general view of the physical landscape – the geological formation of the islands, the types of rocks on the island, the formation of limestone and how the fossils become trapped in the stone. Again, the panels tend to be grouped around a specific theme – the geological structure. However, what is interesting is that each gallery is physically highlighted by the presence of a real object/ artefact in the gallery display. In this case, the real artefact is a granite erratic resting on a bed of limestone.³ Here we see the crucial difference between the museum and the heritage centre in that the centre is essentially made up of images of artefacts, rather than real artefacts. And unlike the museum artefacts, these objects have no documented history to them (no date given when they were found or by whom). They are in the centre because they fit into the overall structure of the display by exhibiting the necessary visual characteristics. But the essential difference from the museum displays is that here there are



Figure 5.2 The exotic granite erratic

many more representations of objects than there are real artefacts. As a consequence of this, the actual display of real artefacts becomes the exotic aspect of the centre, as they stand out from the visual representations. Examples of such exotic artefacts include a curragh, a kelp creel, a butter churn and a Galway hooker filled with turf, etc. These real artefacts seem unreal in two senses. First, these mundane objects of the real world appear out of context in an exhibit. Their very mundaneness becomes the exotic in this artificial image landscape. Second, the artificial light directed upon these objects pushes them beyond the reality of everyday life into objects of performance.

The tug-of-war rope (see Figure 5.3) is a good example of an object performance. The rope is displayed lying in a pile on the floor. It has not fallen from a hook. There is no place to hang it on the wall. The haphazardness of its position on the floor highlights an attempt to transform the mundane into the exotic. This rope and other newly created exotic objects are crucial in focusing the attention of the viewers as they pass from one gallery to the next. They function not only as attention grabbers but also they focalise the panels around them. As the exotic centrepieces of the centre they create the order of viewing the displays. Since there is neither



Figure 5.3 The tug-of-war rope

an obvious chronological ordering nor thematic order to the centre, each gallery centres on its own exotic subject matter and subsequently creates its own self-contained explanatory order. There is no thematic link between the galleries and consequently no established order in which to view them. Because of the discrete nature of the galleries, they are likely to be experienced by the viewer as a series of items, of the same weight and significance. No one gallery dominates the centre, as a way of a conclusion to the experience, or as an attempt to tie up the themes within the various galleries. Consequently, the physical structure of the design panels does not allow for the possibility of a comprehensive survey of the islands' economy or culture. Discreteness reigns in the centre, the discreteness of the visually exotic.

Therefore, it is likely that the visitor is borne along from one gallery to the next by first locating the visual curiosity of the real artefact in the gallery and then moving on to the surrounding display panels and finally on to the written captions. It is the visual, which is the key to understanding how knowledge is constructed in the centre.

The 'Exotic' Within the Written Narrative

But, since artefacts and their images 'cannot speak for themselves', they need written captions and labels to give them meaning (Jones, 1992: 915). These are taken from direct quotations from visiting writers or from the pen of the anonymous author of the master narrative. The first writer quoted is Roderic O'Flaherty [1648], under a display panel entitled the 'Rock Garden'.

THE ROCK GARDEN

"The soil is almost paved over with stones, so as, in places nothing to be seen but large stones with wide openings between them, where cattle break their legs. Among these stones is very sweet pasture so that, beef, veal, mutton are better and earlier in season here than elsewhere".

The first thing to notice about this quotation is that it highlights the exotic nature of the Aran landscape and a sense of otherness. Exotic in the sense that there seems to be a reversal of the normal relationship between soil and rock, in that here on Aran the rock seems to cover the soil rather than the other way round. Aran from the O'Flaherty quotation is constructed as a unique location, beyond the mundane mainland, with bountiful natural forces, except, of course, for those, which break the legs of the cattle.

The exoticism of nature on Aran is further reinforced in another display panel on the weather, two captions are used, one quoted from a published source, the other from the master narrative:

The Weather

The Weather in the islands is drier than that on the mainland because rain generally does not form until moist air from the sea reaches the mountains of Connemara.

"The meteorological aspirations of the Aran farmers are for rain, diametrically the opposite of what their brethren on the mainland desire".

Oliver J. Burke, 1887

This idea of otherness is again highlighted in the most dramatic gallery of the centre – the cliff gallery. Here, for obvious reasons, the real artefact of a cliff does not appear but its imagery does which is captured in photographs and in line drawings. Again, this is a crucial point to make. The ability of the heritage centre to include pictorial representations allows it to provide a more comprehensive survey of the island's artefacts, especially the non-moveable ones, than a museum. By presenting these images or

views, it allows the anonymous narrator of the centre the power to classify real artefacts in the real landscape as if they were actually in the centre rather than just pictorially displayed in a panel. Therefore, the power to include the representations of physical phenomena seems only to be limited to their visibility. In this respect, the heritage centre is much more powerful in classifying than the museums, which were themselves limited to the display of real and authentically documented artefacts. Above the central panel of the cliff gallery is a panel containing a drawing of a storm beach. But, like all the natural features highlighted on the island, this is no normal storm beach:

Storm Beach

Most beaches are of pebbles or sand worn smoothly by the sea. But the huge storm beaches on the Cliffs of Aran are on a scale with the full power of the Atlantic Ocean.

Storm waves have ripped huge boulders from the edge of the cliffs and gradually forced them inland into a gigantic cluster. Some of these storm beaches have piled up on Cliffs up to 100 feet above sea level.

The focus of the verbal/written narratives in addition to the visual concerning the physical aspects of the island is to emphasise the exotic aspects of these features.

Compositional Techniques of the Visual

In this cliff gallery, there are two line drawings depicting fishing from the cliff top and the activity of hunting birds on the cliffs. These drawings allow the panel designer to depict images beyond either the historical time of the camera or the scope of the camera, i.e. a drawing showing a cliffman crawling along a ledge of the cliff face in the middle of the night in the 19th century. The second line drawing depicts the thatching of a roof (see Figure 5.4).

The original illustration of this thatching scene was drawn by Jack B. Yeats for Synge's *The Aran Islands*, published in 1907. The image shown is a close-up representation of work being done. But by 'cartoonising' this representation, the harshness and the dullness of this type of work is excluded (Barrell, 1980: 149; Jones, 1992). In a sense, the particular type of mediation used in this panel, anaesthetises the reality of an island work practice, as it represents it. Accordingly, we need to address not only the content of the centre's representations – its message – but also the style in which that content is expressed – the medium. I would claim the medium is as important as the message, if not more so. For example, with regard to the use of



Figure 5.4 A line drawing of work being done

paintings (reproductions) in the centre. On a side panel of the cliff gallery, there is a reproduction of George Petrie's 'atmospheric view of Dun Aengus'. Petrie has himself described this fort as 'probably one of the most barbaric monuments in the West of Europe' (De Courcy & Maher, 1985: 47). In painting the fort in a particular style, Petrie has 'framed' it into a sublime landscape, by exaggerating the overhanging cliffs and the turbulent seas below. Here, the compositional techniques of the Claudian picturesque are used to create an 'atmosphere' for the fort.⁴ Therefore, the real artefact of the fort has been mediated in two ways. First, the fort is visualised as a reproduced image in the panel and second, this image has become 'aestheticised' through the compositional techniques of the picturesque. And in aesthetising the image of the fort, the image has become more visually exotic.

The compositional techniques can make not only the style of representation exotic but also make the representation of time exotic. An example of this is from the panel shown in Figure 5.5. Here, we have a series of black and white photographs depicting scenes of island people with animals. I want to suggest that there is something rather odd about this series. In using the medium of black and white photographs, the concept of time has nearly been collapsed. In the first photo, a woman as indicated by her garb is of the 19th century, feeding her ducks and hens. She is probably part of the 1890s' egg economy of the West of Ireland. However, a problem emerges with the other two photographs. On close inspection, their clothes and shoes suggest that they are children of the 1970s, i.e. the shoes of the kid, holding the kid-goat and the bell-bottoms of the donkey drover. These last two representations would normally be taken through the medium of



Figure 5.5 Time emptied through photography



colour photography but here they have been made ageless, through the use of black and white. Here, we have an example of how time has been compressed by the way the final reproduction of the images in the display panel suppressed the difference of their original reproduction (black and white, and colour). This highlights the power of the display designer to manipulate the past to suit contemporary demands of presentation.

The Exotic as Unsolved Mysteries

Another way in which the exotic is constructed is by the creation of a sense of mystery and intrigue around the images presented. Again, the cliff gallery provides an example of such an endeavour. Below the panel showing a panoramic view of the Dun Aengus is a caption from Tim Robinson's *Stones of Aran*: 'Dun Aonghasa, heavy with centuries, dreams upon a pinnacle of another world'. The mystical and mysterious tone of the narrative is continued in the next written caption:

Dun Aonghasa

Named after the mythical hero Aonghas. Dun Aonghasa has all the

appearance of a military fort, but there is no fresh water inside so how could defenders hope to survive for long? And who could live here during a violent storm? Some experts say it was a ceremonial theatre and ... some say it would be more suitable for the worship of storms.

What do you think?

In asking the last question a number of issues are raised. First of all, by asking the individual spectator for their opinions, the master narrative is attempting to engage the reader in reflexive thought (Giddens, 1990: 88). Second, how can we as mere spectators 'think' in this situation and provide an answer to the question (see Figure 5.6).

The only way I suggest we can attempt to provide an answer is by looking back at the photograph of the fort and coming to some sort of opinion based upon our visual surveillance. This again highlights the dominant principle of visibility in the structuring of knowledge in the centre. However, before we leave this image, I want to point out another feature of this representation. In that this is no ordinary or mundane photograph of this artefact in the landscape. It is a panoramic view, shot from an



Figure 5.6 The mystery of Dun Aengus from the air

exotic angle that is from the air and over the sea. The average tourist would not be in such a position to take this photograph.

But another consequence of asking the question is the adding of a greater sense of mystery to this artefact of Dun Aonghasa. In that it is not the physical presence of the artefact in the landscape, that is doubted but the attempted immersion of that artefact into a societal setting. It is the people of Aran who made the fort that have become the mystery as we attempt to discover the rationale behind their construction. This is highlighted in the caption under another special aerial photograph of the Black Fort: '... Was the Fort built by a warlike people who needed massive defence against a strong enemy – or is the entire site simply an elaborate display of power? Archaeologists are still arguing.' This mysterious aspect of the Aran Islander's character spans the centuries. As is revealed in the glass cabinet display of a model wearing traditional garb. The accompanying caption is from the pen of the Irish 19th century novelist – Mary Banin:

"Many of the women looked strangely like their own Eastern ancestresses: the sandalled feet, Venetian red petticoat, and, with many of them, bawneen or white flannel jacket worn, covering the head, forehead and body in truly Eastern style".

Mary Banin, *The Aran Isles*, 1896

Here we see the exotic nature of the islander's appearance is attributed to their eastern origins. But how have the people on the furthest fringe of Western Europe end up looking like their 'own eastern ancestresses'? The mystery is left unanswered. In the opposite cabinet stands a male model in his stockings, shoeless in order to draw attention to his footwear – his pampooties. The captions read as follows:

"The fisherman of Aran has sure feet. He wears a rough sandal of untanned cowhide, without heels, open at the arch, and tied with rawhide laces".

James Joyce 1912

Pampooties – ideal for climbing over rocks and working in boats. To keep them soft, the men had to wet them constantly by walking into the sea or soaking them overnight in a pot of water.

The unusual treatment of these 'shoes' reveals how the people of Aran have oriented their garb and themselves to their exotic landscape. And in doing so, they themselves have taken on the characteristic of being – exotic. This exotic relationship between the natural and the human aspects of Aran reaches its dramatic climax in the artefact of the land itself:

The Land of Arainn

Many of the fields of Arainn are man-made. There was probably a time when the limestone rock of Arainn was covered with a thin but fertile soil held loosely in place by plants and tree-roots. When the first farmers came to the island, they cut down the trees to plant their crops.

But as soon as the protective tree-cover was removed the fragile soil began to be eroded by wind and rain. Soon a bare limestone desert was created.

Ever since the people of Arainn have had to make their own land from sand, seaweed and handfuls of soil gathered from between the rocks. This is particularly so in the extreme west of the island at Bun Gabhla where most of the land has been made by hand.

The truthfulness of the 'master narrative' in this panel is taken for granted as it is displayed like all the other vignettes of information in the centre but in actual fact it hides the controversies over what the original landscape of Aran looked like and the how and when the fields were made. Opposing points of view which do not get mentioned suggest that it is mere speculation to propose that once Aran was covered with fertile soil. Second, most of the artificial soil of Aran has been created since the 1920s, when the appearance of the parasitic 'eel worm' necessitated land fallowing. The soil manufacturing activity was spurred on by government subsidy (Robinson, 1986: 66). Therefore, not only are the people of Aran depicted as mythical, but also the depicting narrative itself ends up as myth.

Constructing a Stroll for the Modern Flaneur

It could be argued that the heritage centre is like the museum, in that the centre still creates the illusion of adequate representation of a world by taking objects and images of objects out of their real specific contexts and displaying them in a recontextualised environment (Giddens, 1990: 88). But there is a crucial difference – unlike the museum the heritage centre tends to display more images of artefacts than real objects. And because of this, the centre has a greater power to appropriate exotic things. Therefore, the heritage centre because of the technologies associated with the paintbrush and the camera can achieve greater mastery over its surrounds by being able to impose its classification procedures on immovable artefacts in the landscape. For example, Dun Aengus is represented through three differing types of media – as a plastic model, as a painting and as a

photograph. The more media are used, the more comprehensive a survey can be presented in the centre.

As we have seen the visualisation process in the Aran heritage centre operates on a number of different levels. First of all, we have discovered that the layout of the exhibits is determined by the visibility of the exotic real artefact, leading the viewer from one gallery to another. Within the gallery structure itself the visual dominates over the verbal as the visitor's attention moves in sequence from the real artefact to the images of other artefacts, and then onto the verbal captions. If one was to use a television metaphor, the design of the centre with regard to the dominance of the visual over the verbal is like a subtitled programme. The sequence of attention moves from the action to the subtitles. Second, the most important aspect of the visualisation process is the ability of the centre to capture images of real artefacts in photographs (both moving and still) and in pictorial representations. In doing so it allows these media to 'aestheticise' their subject matter according to their respective methods of composition. For example, the camera can take panoramic shots, black and white or colour, in order to create visual sensations. The panoramic perspective in the centre's photography and landscape painting can thrill the viewer by giving an all encompassing perspective. This perspective not only thrills but also provides a commanding view (Smith, 1989). The consequence of creating these exotic perspectives is that there is a distancing of the viewer from the grim appearance of everyday life and reality.

In extracting the exotic from the complex reality of the island life, the Centre's narrative, both visual and verbal, has created a dichotomy between us, the viewers, and them – those who are viewed and 'captioned' in the display panels. The 'not-us', those others have always to be 'out there', to be recorded, interpreted and explained.⁵ But, in establishing this difference, which is a logical consequence of attempting to discover the uniqueness of a locale or the exotic nature of a landscape and its inhabitants, the master narrative must speak in place of the represented – the other. The represented other can never speak on its own behalf, as this would undermine the carefully constructed exoticism, by overcoming the created distance between them and us. In speaking directly to us and sounding normal, they would no longer seem exotic or mysterious. Therefore, the depicted people of Aran have to remain mute in order to maintain their supposedly unique exotic nature.

Therefore, the medium is the main mechanism for creating the exotic – the visually exotic. For example, landscape painting can use the compositional techniques of the picturesque in creating opposing images of the beautiful and the sublime. The technical means of the visualisation of the artefacts in the centre creates the material structures for the emergence

of the aestheticisation process. Therefore, real artefacts of the landscape are mediated in three ways. First, they are reproduced as images on the panels, and second, these objects become visualised and finally they become aestheticised through the various compositional techniques available.

At this point in our analysis, we can assert that the construction of the 'exotic' in the centre has a tendency to mould the viewer into becoming a flaneur. The flaneur can be seen as an actor in modernity and even post-modernity, according to certain cultural theorists. These have attempted to use the work of Baudelaire, Benjamin and Simmel to account for the new experiences of modernity in the big cities of Europe. Charles Beaudelaire focused on Paris of the 1840s and 1850s. Later Benjamin and Simmel focused on Berlin and in particular on the emerging consumer society. The modern city was seen as a site for experiencing the intoxication of the dream worlds associated with modern consumerism – a world full of a constantly changing flow of commodities and their exotic images in shops, department stores. And crucially, these new forms of experiences of modernity were to be discovered through walking through the boulevards and streets of these cities. But, it was not just through walking that one enjoyed the visual sensations of modernity but significantly through a particular style of walking – strolling.

Therefore, the stroller or flaneur has come to hold a considerable fascination for the cultural theorists of modernity. The stroll is now being associated with the way a person experiences and enjoys the delights of modern consumer society. In this cultural framework, differing ways of walking are directly connected to differing ways of understanding and interpreting one's immediate surrounds.

According to Game, strolling or wandering is to move away from the straight and narrow and to be led astray by what takes one's fancy (Game, 1991: 38). I may add this fancy is a visual fancy. In contrast, non-strolling or purposefully walking is concerned with arriving at a particular destination and usually within a particular time period. Walking to work would be an example of the latter. Strolling has none of these constraining considerations with regard to space and time. The stroll has no concern with arriving at a particular end or destination; it is merely interested in distraction and the attraction of the visually exotic. In following one's sense of curiosity one is lead along an uncharted path within the dreamworld of sensational consumer images.

I now want to suggest that this urban stroller of modernity has actually been created by the physical layout of the centre and the social constructions of the image representations in the centre. In our discussion of the architectural design of the panels and the galleries, we discovered that the experience of the centre was structured to be a walking tour – a sojourn of

silent solitude. Also, with regard to the processes of visualisation and crucially aesthetisation, the heritage flaneur or stroller is led through this labyrinth of sensational visual images. According to de Cauter (1993), the magnificent dreamworlds of the flaneur wherever they are located, including now the heritage centre, all fit into the cult of distraction. In the centre, the flaneur is not on a purposeful walk, the stroll has no concern with a purposeful end, it is merely interested in distraction and the attraction of the exotic. In following one's sense of curiosity one is led along an uncharted path. All the differing ways of walking are directly related to different ways of understanding our immediate surrounds and are about moving through space and time. In the heritage centre the construction of space is determined by the representation of other spaces through the images presented to be consumed. Therefore, the experience of space is twofold. First there is one's own physical movement through the centre and second there is the observation of space in the displays. Both experiences are similar to sightseeing and everyday strolling. The crucial difference is that the latter experience is artificially constructed by the centre. For example, the images of the forts are displayed in a few square feet of each other while in reality they are located a number of miles away from each other. Consequently, space and time are compressed in the representation of island spaces (both old and new). Their history and culture have become a compressed artificial landscape, in which the modern heritage flaneur is guided through. And because of the way they have been represented here: 'Their time is not Our time, and Their space is not Our space' (Peace, 1989: 94).

Notes

1. However, there is a problem with this so called introductory leaflet, and that is its length. It takes about five minutes to read it, which can only be done by standing in a public passageway. I want to suggest that because of time needed to read it, it performs another function or functions, rather than its stated intention as an introductory text to the centre. Essentially, I see it as a political statement, as it attempts to lessen the fears of the native islanders, who are also engaged in tourism, that the centre will not deflect the tourists away from the other tourist services in the island. This is a real fear on account of the vicissitudes of the Irish weather and the impression given that the centre can show all that is to be seen on the island, without the inconvenience of physical travel and its expense. Therefore, the leaflet attempts to represent the centre as a guide to the island and islands. Also, as it is taken away by the tourist, it probably becomes more of a summary and a memory of the experience, when the tourist finds time to read it.
2. As you turn away from the first panel, you get a glimpse of the real artefacts also on display. Immediately, you get the impression that you have entered a museum. The original intention behind the establishment of museums was that they should remove artefacts from the context of private ownership and

use, and insert them into a new environment with public access. Within these museums, the collections of artefacts on display were not arbitrarily arranged but were organised according to systematic principles and a recognisable scheme of classification. These classificatory procedures were being determined outside the museum walls, by archaeologists and antiquarians, who in their writings were attempting to apply evolutionary categories of species and chronological time, as was occurring in Natural History under the influence of Darwin. Therefore, the development of museums in the 19th century was governed by the principle that it was possible to give a total representation of human reality and history, by an ordered display of selected artefacts reflecting this reality.

3. A granite erratic is a rock which has been transported by a glacier during the last ice age and dropped on the limestone rock structures of the Burren and the Aran islands.
4. The Claudian dualism of the beautiful and the sublime in painting has had a profound effect on landscape painting in the 18th and 19th centuries (Le Bris, 1981) *Romantics and Romanticism*, pp. 28–30.
5. According to James Clifford (1985) the word ‘appropriate’ comes from Latin meaning to make one’s own – one’s own property.

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Chapter 6

‘Come and Daunce with Me in Irlande’: Tourism, Dance and Globalisation

BARBARA O’CONNOR

The title of this chapter ‘Come and Daunce with Me in Irlande’, is a line from a 14th-century anonymous Irish poem and popularised more recently by president-elect Mary Robinson in her inaugural speech of 1990. It neatly encapsulates the long association between tourism and dance in Irish culture. In following the trajectory of this invitation we might want to sketch in some key moments. We could include how dance became a marker of ethnic/national identity for the Irish diaspora, (see Cullinane, 1997) and how their descendants returned to Ireland as tourists and performers in the World championships decades and generations later. We might also want to point to the professional theatrical performances of Irish dance for tourists such as those of Siamsa Tíre and the dance acts in hotel shows and cabarets over the last decades. In a contemporary context, we might want to depict the increasing popularity of dance generally (both performance and participative) as part of a selection of ‘fun’ things to see and do in a ‘festival culture’ (see Peillon, 2000). With reference to ‘traditional’ dance specifically, we might explore the role played by summer schools and weekend set-dance workshops catering for tourists. And we might want to highlight the way in which the success of *Riverdance* has enhanced the visibility of step-dance as a marker of Irish culture for tourists and has resulted in an increased provision of dance for tourist entertainment.

It is easy to understand why dance has been central to both tourist imagery and practice. Dance fits easily into the ‘tourist package’ since it is regarded as a traditional and unique expression of the host culture, facilitating relaxation and fun (and learning new skills in a fun way in the case of participative dance), and providing an opportunity for involvement,

however fleeting, with local culture. The increasing popularity of 'traditional' dance as part of the tourist experience is not peculiar to Ireland and can be seen as part of a wider process of the globalisation of ethnic dance cultures. Just as *Riverdance* initially attained a global reach through the Eurovision Song Contest, flamenco reached a worldwide audience during the opening ceremony of the 1992 Barcelona Olympics and subsequently led to an increased interest on the part of tourists in experiencing this aspect of Spanish culture (see Malefyt, 1998). The purpose of this chapter is to address some issues in the relationship which has developed between tourism, dance and globalisation through empirical research on a dance show catering for tourists in Dublin city.

Dance, Tourism, and Globalisation

Current debates on cultural performance and change are centrally informed by the related concepts of 'globalisation' and 'authenticity'. These debates are complex and extensive and here I merely want to draw attention to the general thrust of the arguments. To caricature slightly, at one end of a continuum are those who welcome the mixing and interchange of 'traditional' cultural forms and practices. They see cultural hybridity as a genuine attempt to further the development of multiculturalism. Others welcome cultural hybridity as a form of consumer pluralism. At the other end of the continuum are those who adopt a negative approach to mixing cultural forms and practices because they argue that global capitalism controls cultural production, that local and indigenous cultures are transformed for dissemination in the global marketplace and that these cultural products and performances are impoverished or eroded in the process. Concepts such as McDonaldisation, McDisneyisation and wall-to-wall Dallas have become catch-phrases for the standardisation which is perceived to be a consequence of cultural flows – a standardisation which is regarded as a prerequisite for success on the global market. The latter type of position is generally associated with Marxist and neo-Marxist schools of thought and with critiques of culture in late capitalism. These are powerful but partial arguments.

While acknowledging that the critical approach to globalisation sketched here exhibits diversity, I would like to raise three problems with it. The distinction drawn between the local and the global as hermetically sealed units is over-emphasised (an argument which is also made in this volume by Kneafsey, and Quinn). The claims regarding cultural impoverishment are usually made on the basis of an analysis of the political economy of production often emphasising the aspects of ownership/control. All too often cultural production is treated in mechanistic terms

and does not take into account the crucial element of human agency in the production of a cultural performance.

And, finally, the concept of culture is regarded for the most part as content rather than process-based. In relation to the latter point, I find Friedman's (1995) work on globalisation instructive in that he argues, convincingly, in my view, that to adequately understand globalising processes we must approach the concept of culture not as a vessel in an essentialist way but as a process in which social actors are forging new patterns and identification within the 'space of modernity'. Indeed in the following extract he uses the hypothetical example of dance cultures to illustrate the problems which arise when culture is perceived in an essentialist way:

If Brooklyn-born Polynesian dancers represent the Hawaiian Hula to tourists by putting on a Tahitian fire dance on a Waikiki stage (though this no longer occurs in today's world of monitored authenticity), this need not be understood as postmodern chaos. On the contrary, it is surely one of the constants of global cultural history. It is only chaotic for the culture expert whose identification of origins is disturbed by the global processes of changing identities, a disturbance that is, consequently, translated into a de-authentication of other people's 'actually existing' cultures. The problem can only arise on the basis of the notion of culture as essence or substance. (Friedman, 1995: 85)

Research on tourist dance tends to reflect the general positions on globalisation as outlined here. For example, Malefyt (1998) in his analysis of Spanish flamenco, argues that performances for tourists have concentrated on display and objective commodification for its publics and he sees it as contrasting with the tradition of 'private' flamenco clubs where a more authentic version is performed. He supports his arguments with similar findings from other sources who claim that commercialised flamenco has become more spectacular, in line with tourist entertainment expectations, and less rooted in the meanings of the local community. A similar point is made by Travelou (2000) in the context of tourist entertainment in night-time Athens. She argues that the dance performances are based on and include spectacular elements for tourist entertainment rather than being part of any authentic dance tradition. Parallel arguments are advanced in relation to touring objects / commodities. Sherlock (1999: 205), for instance, in analysing *Riverdance: The Show*, cautions against the effects of commodification:

While audiences may be responding to resonances of homeland and nostalgic memories of community, the feeling of cultural belonging can provide sinister as well as positive connotations. These can be

related to both faces of nationalistic belonging. Riverdance may be shown to provide a sense of a new cultural identity for Ireland, but it should not be forgotten that as a cultural commodity it is serving the interests of capitalist profit-making.

However, other writers take an opposite view. For example O'Toole (1997) regards *Riverdance* as the exemplar of the liberation of Irish dance. He sees it as a unique expression of a national sense of self-confidence and pride which enables us to play with traditional cultural forms and re-assemble them in innovative and imaginative ways. He contrasts the spectacular and exciting new style of Irish dance favourably with the competitive dancing of the era of the 'feiseanna'¹ which had preceded it and which was characterised, in O'Toole's view, by a rigidity and lack of imagination emanating from a cultural climate of narrow nationalism and puritanism.

While the critical comment on dance tourism tends to emphasise either the positive or negative end of the globalisation continuum, some writers acknowledge the complexities involved in specific cultural milieu. Each case, therefore, must be judged on its own merits and any understanding of globalisation should be a matter for empirical investigation rather than a foregone conclusion. As Malefyt (1998: 71) notes in this regard:

[T]ourism can act negatively to co-opt local festivals of their historic meaning and 'commoditize' them for general consumption (Greenwood 1972, 1989) . . . and it can also raise local self-consciousness by bringing to the community the idea of otherness, creating a new conception of community (Nogues Pedregal, 1996). In these varied ways tourism can be viewed as destructive or as invigorating the local cultural system.

Tourism, Dance and Authenticity

The concepts of globalisation and authenticity have generally been intertwined in cultural debates to the extent that a binary opposition is often constructed between local/traditional cultures which are seen to be authentic and global cultures which are seen to be dis-embedded from the local and consequently inauthentic.

The concept of authenticity has been germane to debates on cultural tourism. MacCannell (1976, 1989), one of the first writers to theorise the concept in relation to tourism, has claimed that authenticity is the cornerstone for understanding contemporary tourism since the primary motivation for tourism in western societies is precisely a search for the authentic in an increasingly inauthentic world. This quest is usually

pursued by seeking out 'simple' places and people and 'traditional' ways of life. However, according to MacCannell, while people seek they do not often find. He utilises Goffman's distinction between 'frontstage' and 'backstage' regions to develop the idea of 'staged authenticity' by which he means that what is usually on offer to tourists is a 'frontstage' (inauthentic) disguised to look like a 'backstage' (authentic).

While MacCannell's foundational work on authenticity has contributed much to debates on tourism, it has been critiqued on a number of counts. Of interest in the current context is the critique of his historicist and object-oriented approach to the concept. Wang (1999: 9) pinpoints the problems with such a perspective as follows:

Traditionally 'authenticity' from a historicist perspective, it is usually assumed that authenticity is equated to an origin in time. This then implies that subsequent alteration, creativity, transformation and emerging attributes are inauthentic in terms of this origin. However, the problem is that there is no absolute point of origin, nor is anything static; rather change is constant.

Wang suggests that we should re-evaluate authenticity as it relates to tourism and goes on to offer the concept of 'experiential authenticity' which she sees as operating in the following way:

tourism involves a bodily experience of personal authenticity. In tourism, sensual pleasure, feelings and other bodily impulses are to a relatively large extent released and consumed and the bodily desires (for natural amenities, sexual freedom, and spontaneity are gratified intensively). In short, all these aspects of tourism constitute an ontological manifesto for personal authenticity.

Given the importance of the body in 'experiential authenticity', one common way in which it can be experienced is through participating in dance performance.

The importance of the body in tourism generally, and of dance in particular, is also addressed by Jokinen and Veijola (1994: 133), in the context of their plea for embodying studies of tourism, and in their related critique of the 'tourist gaze':

Isn't it rather the tourist body that breaks with established routines and practices? We do gaze at dance performances and museums at home don't we? But instead, hardly ever engage ourselves in singing and dancing together; very rarely at home do we share the feeling of being together in this big, wild incomprehensible world, whose words and

gestures don't say anything. Here we know it in our conscious bodies that are temporarily united in an utterly physical ritual.

While Wang (1999) and Jokinen and Veijola (1997) bring the body back into the equation, their emphasis is on the experience of the tourist. Of particular interest in the current context is the way in which this sense of bodily engagement is further developed by Daniel (1996) to include the dialectical relationship between the experiences of the tourists who participate in the dance and the dancers themselves. Based on her ethno-choreological work in Cuba and Haiti she (Daniel, 1996: 789) refers to the ways in which dance can transform the tourists' world by temporarily enabling them to escape the quotidian:

As performing dancers, tourists access the magical world of liminality which offers spiritual and aesthetic nourishment. Tourism in moments of dance performance, opens the door to a liminal world that gives relief from day-to-day, ordinary tensions, and, for Cuban dancers and dancing tourists particularly, permits indulgence in near-ecstatic experiences.

It is worth noting that these ecstatic experiences are linked to tourists participation in the dance rather than being simply spectators. I will return to this point later in the discussion.

While acknowledging that dance performances are to some extent commodified like other cultural and artistic forms and products, Daniel (1996: 782) claims that they are also unique in that

[D]espite shifts in scale and context, dance performance for tourists remains 'authentic' and creative. Possible explanations for this include the manner in which 'authentic' and 'creative' are defined, the unique properties of dance as expressive behavior, and the particular politico-economic situation of differing tourism settings.

She goes on to develop a definition of 'authenticity' as follows:

Authenticity prevails when the individual is affected/touched so that she/he feels that the 'real' world and the 'real' self are consonant. It is here that touristic dance performance runs parallel to living history projects in that it relies heavily on the desire for 'authentic' experiences of the performer to satisfy the tourist's desire for 'the authentic' (Daniel, 1996: 783).

She argues for both authenticity and creativity on the part of the performers themselves. 'What happens to the performer is often deemed

critical in determining “authenticity” (p. 785). And to ascertain whether it is an authentic performance one must turn attention to the performer:

the performer is often the critical item, the indicator of authenticity. What happens to the performer in the process of or as a result of a performance is often deemed critical in determining ‘authenticity’. In fact both within or outside of the tourism setting, authenticity that is located within the performer’s dancing is a critical criterion in judging and evaluating dance performance. Beyond this setting, on the concert stage, this criterion is noted by critics in terms of ‘the performer’s commitment to the dance’, in terms of the ‘transformation’ that occurs in performance, or in terms of the effect experienced by the audience due to the intensity of the dance. (pp. 785–6)

The foregrounding of the dancers’ experience which was called for in previous discussions of globalisation and authenticity, is also reflected in other writings in performance and tourism studies. In the context of the former, Schieffelin (1998: 198) claims that ‘the burden of success or failure in a cultural performance is usually laid on the central actors, but the real location of this problem (and of the meaning of the terms ‘actor’, ‘spectator’, ‘participant’ is the relationship between the central performers and others in the situation’. He continues, to suggest that ‘it is important to make the relationship between the participants and other in performative events a central subject of ethnographic investigation’(p. 204). Brown (1996: 44) makes a similar argument in relation to tourism research and suggests that the proper focus of study is not the tourist, nor indeed the host but the relation between them. While the current research does not include the response of tourists in this setting, it goes some way to achieving these objectives by concentrating on the dancers experience and the meanings of the dance for them, including their relationship with their audience.

Performance and Authenticity in the Irish Context

It is to this relationship that I now turn. I chose to examine dance performance in Fitzsimon’s pub in the Temple Bar area of Dublin city. The show which had been running for approximately five years, at the time of the research took place on week nights, Monday through Thursday, on Saturday and Sunday afternoon, and on Sunday evening. I interviewed a number of the regular dancers about their experience of dancing in this venue. The research took place during the months of July and August (high tourist season) of 2000 and the discussion here is based predominantly on interviews and group discussions with eight dancers, seven female and one male aged between 16 and 23 years.² I also observed the performances

and spent time in the 'backstage' region where performers met before the show and to which they retired during their break. I had a number of informal discussions with the entertainment manager for the dancers and also with other dancers and one of the musicians. The formal interviews included questions on: the trajectory of the dancers' career; comparison of performance contexts, motivations for dancing in Fitzsimons, dance repertoire and basis of selection; favourite and least liked parts of the dance routine; and perceptions of, and interaction with, audience.

Performance and Identity

Comparing performance settings

I was curious about how the dancers experienced the performance setting of Fitzsimons as compared with others. One of the most immediately obvious things to emerge from the interviews was the dancers' enthusiasm about performing in the pub context. Generally, they compared the current context to the competitive context of the 'feiseanna'. Although all of them had been centrally involved in 'feiseanna' (and some still are), in their estimation, the latter compared unfavourably with dancing in Fitzsimons. The former appeared to be a source of considerable stress and anxiety, whereas the latter performance environment was perceived to be conducive to their own enjoyment which included audience appreciation as the following accounts testify:

There used to be only competitions. At 'feises'³ you are being judged, people waiting for you to make a mistake. (Cathy)

There's a rush... exhilarating... I thrive on it. It has helped so much in confidence... It's completely different from 'feiseanna' where you are judged. Here you are being complimented. (Jill)

The 'feises' are full of politics and the adjudicators have their favourites, whereas [dancing in Fitzsimons] is a great bit of 'craic'.⁴ (Rachel)

Empowerment, confidence and pride

I tried to get a sense of how dancers felt during the performance⁵ and found that performing helped to give them a very positive sense of self. They have all been dancing from a very early age (3–4 years in most cases) and are all highly skilled. This means that they do not have to concentrate on the steps but even if they do make a mistake it will go unnoticed by the audience. In addition, part of the pleasure of performing is the knowledge that they have a skill which is relatively rare and which cannot be easily acquired. Indeed, it appeared that part of their sense of pride came from this distinction between themselves and the audience. As Nathalie com-

mented 'they [the audience] can't do it'. Cathy said that because Irish dancing takes years of practice you can always differentiate between Irish dancers and modern dancers who have learned some Irish dances for a particular show. Jill talked about the current craze for 'Riverdancing' classes in America and how Americans think they can gain proficiency very quickly because it looks so effortless in *Riverdance: The Show*. With some pride she also recounted an anecdote of a tourist who happened to be a professional dancer and who asked Jill to show her some foot/ankle movement at the interval. The dancer thought that she would be able to pick it up very quickly. After 20 minutes trying, she still could not do it. Mark thought that some people don't realise that Irish dancing takes so much time and practice and when parents do not see any great improvements, they take their children out of classes. These comments make it clear that the dancers were fully aware of the time, effort and discipline that their levels of skill entail and consequently they feel that there is a greater appreciation on the part of the audience.

Dancers talked about how an appreciative audience imbues them with a sense of enthusiasm, confidence and pride:

When the crowd are really into it I get a great buzz. You might be tired starting but once you start dancing you get into the buzz. (Cathy)

I feel proud, really positive . . . even more so when doing it as a group . . . It's a team effort . . . they break up [i.e. do individual steps] and then all four together . . . The timing is perfect. There's an adrenalin rush. (Jill)

When you get a good crowd you dance well. You go home feeling good. (Nathalie)

All those people are watching you and it makes you feel special. If the crowd has energy it gives you more energy and the show is more enjoyable. It is great to see them enjoying it. (Mark)

The audience has a lot to do with the way you feel. (Jill)

How you feel depends on the crowd. If you get a good response you dance well. (Rachel)

Jill, in talking about evenings when she was present at the show but not dancing, said that she could feel a knot in her stomach because she wanted 'to be on that stage'. She indicated that this was a common feeling among 'the girls'. Nathalie said that on nights when she is not dancing but watching the show, she feels really proud of the other dancers.

It is clear from the dancers' comments that the audience played a major role in affecting the mood of the performance. My initial assumption had

been that since the audience members do not participate in the dancing that there would not be such a synergy between them. However, this does not appear to be the case and seems to contradict the suggestion that physical participation in the dance is a prerequisite for a feeling of 'existential authenticity'. Indeed, it could well be that the relative physical restraint required by the audience enhances rather than quenches the desire for movement.⁶

The dancers were keenly aware of their audience and adept at differentiating between 'good' and 'bad' audiences. They thought that audiences were generally appreciative regardless of ethnic origin or prior knowledge of Irish dance. They estimated that many of the tourists are American but there are also tourists from Britain, Japan and mainland Europe. The Americans were perceived to be most interested in Irish dance as judged by the way they approached the dancers to ask questions after the performance. Nathalie said that they were the most interested in learning about Irish dance because many of them were here tracing their Irish roots. While they assumed that many of these visitors would have seen *Riverdance* or its equivalent, they felt that they would not need an intimate knowledge of Irish dance to enjoy it. Indeed, the lack of knowledge on the audiences' part, as we saw earlier, was a source of pleasure for the dancers.

The unappreciative or 'dead crowds' were mainly visitors for stag weekends and football fans. The dancers make a distinction between the afternoon gigs on Saturday and Sunday where one was most likely to get the 'dead' crowd' and the night-time slots when they were most likely to get the 'good crowd'.⁷ In addition to the type of audience which the night performances attracted, Jill drew attention to another factor which made dancing at night more enjoyable: 'The evening has more energy, when it gets darker, then the lights go up. It becomes more of a show. Maybe its a power thing', she mused.

The spatial geography of the pub also seemed to assist in generating a good rapport with the audience. The stage, though elevated from floor level, was small and gave the impression of intimacy. The space in front of the stage was uncluttered with furniture and allowed people to stand close to it so that there was a physical proximity between performers and audience. Jill gave some idea of the way in which this setting created a chemistry between performers and audience by comparing it favourably to her experience of dancing in a pub in Montreal. In Fitzsimons, because the audience members nearest to the stage were standing rather than sitting, they appeared to be more enthusiastic. She also claimed that the elevated stage allowed more people to see the footwork. And dancing to live music, she felt, added considerably to the atmosphere of energy and excitement.

It is clear from the dancers' comments that dancing was a really enjoy-

able experience and that they were both committed to the dance and were transformed within it. This high level of experiential authenticity during performances was intrinsically connected to the enthusiastic audience response. It was also apparent that the pleasures of performing were not guaranteed but could vary according to context. Indeed, the fragility of 'experiential authenticity' was borne out by the dancers recounting of neutral or negative responses to their performance. They all stressed that these are the exception rather than the rule but they were very conscious of them when they did occur. Of interest in this context are the strategies the dancers used to regain this sense of 'experiential authenticity', both for themselves and the audience. While there were about 15 dances in their repertoire, they discussed the up-coming number at the end of each dance and could choose which one to perform next. They claimed to know which dances the audience liked best and least. Jill said that the crowd responded more to the hard shoe reels.⁸ Nathalie, in commenting on her favourite parts of the dance routine, said she liked what she thought the audience liked best: 'The acapella dancing and the set where you are doing a swing. The crowd likes a quick beat. It's better when the crowd like it.' Alternatively, if they thought the crowd was 'really dead', they would not do a hornpipe because it was 'too slow'. And in the same situation they would probably include two set-dances rather than one because it was lively, fast and involved swinging with other dancers.

Spectacle, Power and Gender

The power of the 'male gaze' has been a central theme in discussions of women and public space generally and in relation to women and dance specifically (e.g. see Thomas, 1993). Mindful of this literature I had anticipated prior to fieldwork that the dance situation might lend itself to a sexual objectification of the female dancers in particular. In such a situation I estimated that 'experiential authenticity' in terms of a consonance between the 'real world' and the 'real self' would be compromised. This did not appear to be the case. While the dancers recognised an element of voyeurism (Jill said that 'when you are dancing you think the men are looking at your footwork but when you sit down after the dance they are still looking') they are not unduly troubled by it and said that 'You don't let it get to you'. Gillian remarked that this kind of male attention is commonplace – 'You get the same thing on the street or in your car'. The dancers were not disturbed by this and appeared to handle these situations with a mixture of good sense and humour. Indeed, the incidents about troublesome or voyeuristic men were recounted to me as comic anecdotes and seemed to have become part of the repertoire of shared memories and

mythic stories, functioning to create a sense of security and belonging among the group. Anne, the dance manager, said that she looks out for the girls and that the bouncers also look out for 'trouble-makers in the audience'. Though not incident free, overall, one got the impression of a safe environment in which any potential objectification or harassment of dancers was quickly defused.

I had also anticipated that experiential authenticity could be compromised by gender stereotyping within the dance performance. For instance, I have argued elsewhere (O'Connor, 1998) that *Riverdance: The Show* accentuated 'traditional' masculinity and femininity by various means. And, here again, I was curious as to the possibility of this gendering in terms of visual style and in terms of choreography. At the time of my research the dancers were predominantly young women but during the research period a male dancer joined the troupe. Sartorially, the style could be described as 'subdued *Riverdance*' in that the female dancers wore short black dresses in soft material (though any kind of black dress would suffice) and black tights. This certainly had the effect of emphasising both body contours and leg length. Mark, the male dancer, wore a plain black trousers and black shirt but was definitely not into what he referred to as 'macho image of the leather trousers and tight muscly tops' of the male dancers in *Riverdance*. It seemed to me that visually, the female dancers were more sexualised than the male.

However, in choreographic terms gendering was not in evidence. From observation it was clear that the stage was too small to allow for the expansive movements and gestures of a lead / 'star' dancer. Both male and female dancers did the same steps and routines. Mark corroborated these observations and elaborated when I asked whether being the sole male made a difference in this respect. He thought that while it is theoretically possible for the male to take the lead, that in practice it did not happen. He talked about dancing in another pub where he had the lead in one dance. But in other dances the female dancers would have had the lead. In Fitzsimons, however, they did more or less the same steps so there was no question of the male dancer dominating.

The *Riverdance* Factor

There is no doubt that the Fitzsimons show is heavily influenced by the spectacular global extravaganzas, *Riverdance* and *Lord of the Dance*. According to Anne, the dance manager, the initial idea for the show itself was generated because of the success of *Riverdance* when she realised that all kinds of people could find Irish dance entertaining. It was also evident that the influence of the 'big shows' was also present in choreographic elements

such as the acapella dancing and in aspects of the visual style. Yet these features were not slavishly copied and it was evident that the pub context provided scope for individual improvisation and negotiation of personal styles and identities.

The dancers were conscious of the influence of *Riverdance* on their performance and saw this influence as positive overall. They commented on the fact that the new shows provided them with an opportunity for dancing which they would not otherwise have had, since the majority had given up competing in 'feiseanna' at 15 or 16 years of age and would not have had another expressive outlet since then. Jill, for example, said that she had quit Irish dancing when she was 16 but returned three years later because of the influence of *Riverdance*. She was attracted by the increased visibility of Irish dance and by the possibility of doing shows. Cathy, who had also stopped enjoying dancing and going to dance classes, decided to return again when she started dancing in Fitzsimons. Mark pointed to the fact that *Riverdance* has generated more shows so that it was now possible to have a career in dance and to travel. He regarded it as a reward after all the years of hard work. Many of the other dancers also mentioned the opportunity to travel which the globalisation of Irish dance presents and some expressed an ambition to join one of the well-known travelling shows.

In addition to increasing the popularity of Irish step dancing, *Riverdance* was also seen to alter its cultural status and trendiness. A number of dancers mentioned that, whereas previously they would have been reluctant to tell their school mates that they were Irish dancers for fear of being perceived as 'untrendy', they were now relaxed about doing so. As an example, Cathy said that in her school music class she now helped classmates to differentiate jig-time from reel-time by dancing the beat for them.

However, while the overall response to *Riverdance* was approving and enthusiastic the dancers were also critical of some developments which they associated with the 'big shows'. For instance, they contrasted their own relatively relaxed dance environment with the treatment of dancers and their responses in the latter. Nathalie reckoned the dancers were treated like a 'herd of cattle'. She spoke of her own experience of participating in a workshop for one of the shows, and of how the auditioning dancers were required to stand in line with number tags, and of how there were pools of water running down the walls due to condensation and gathering on the floor because of the lack of proper ventilation, and of how the overall experience was 'so degrading'. They told of how they had heard stories from friends who worked in the 'big shows' of extremely hard work with endless hours of rehearsal and problems of dehydration, blisters, sprained and broken bones and limbs. There were also stories of dancers being

kicked out for using cocaine, and of the increasing problem of anorexia and bulimia among dancers.

Conclusions

This chapter is an attempt to address the relationship between tourism and dance in the context of the increase in step-dance entertainment for tourists visiting Ireland. The concepts of globalisation and authenticity were used to address these issues. My general predisposition towards the tourist dance shows prior to conducting the research was towards a 'negative globalisation' interpretation given the proliferation of the '*Riverdance*' style in a number of entertainment venues. I had anticipated that I would find a substantially commodified, and standardised situation which worked to objectify the performers and some of the research questions (such as the presence of the 'male gaze') were constructed on the basis of my expectations. During the research process, however, what struck me most forcibly was the sheer vibrancy, excitement and energy of the show. My 'conversion' was due to the time spent observing and talking to the dancers and confirmed the importance of attempting to understand the meanings of the situation from the point of view of the dancers themselves.

But what exactly does this perspective based on the empirical research tell us about the relationship between tourism, dance and the issues of globalisation and 'authenticity' which I set out to address? With reference to globalisation, it was apparent from the research that the show was strongly influenced by *Riverdance* and *Lord of the Dance* in terms of style and choreographic elements but this did not seem to lead to a blanket standardisation or commodification. And while dancers welcomed the advent of the celebrity shows because they offered them a new status and opportunities, they were critical of the commodification of dancers which they saw as a feature of those shows.

As regards authenticity, if we return to the two models of authenticity outlined earlier, it is clear that the Fitzsimons show is authentic in terms of the 'experiential' model but is not in terms of the 'object-oriented /historical' model. The findings clearly indicate that 'commitment to the dance' and 'transformation' on the part of the performers were present in the performance context. Dancing in Fitzsimons was a joyful and pleasurable experience providing an important expressive outlet and promoting a sense of self-confidence and pride. The dancers worked to build a good rapport with the audience and the audiences' response was a pre-requisite to their enjoyment. However, if I had adopted an exclusively object-oriented and historicist view of authenticity, the performance would have to be deemed inauthentic because it was obvious that many aspects of the

step-dancing performance style have changed and evolved over the years (see Brennan, 1994; Hall, 1997).

The picture emerging from the Fitzsimons case is that of the everyday context in which the dancers perform and the ways in which they constructed meanings around the performance. This approach enables us to see the dancers' performance in terms of identity construction and to see cultural performance in terms of social agency. To return to Friedman's (1995) terminology, we might see the dancers as 'forging new patterns of identification within the 'space of modernity'. The meanings associated with dance for them included, expressivity and performativity, freedom, travel, self-confidence, skill, pride, discipline – traits, accomplishments and activities which are positively valued within contemporary society. While the meanings and experience as identified by the dancers gave priority to the positive aspects, it is also possible, even plausible, to suggest that other, less positive, but commonplace, meanings were experienced by dancers but not manifest because they are less amenable to articulation either because they might not have been perceived as socially acceptable (e.g. narcissism) or were unconscious.

It is also important to acknowledge that the cultural meanings of the performance for the dancers themselves are not the only ones available and I would concur with Ward (1997: 14) when he states that 'a dance's meaning might be quite different to the feelings a dancer is experiencing'. Indeed, one might suggest that other meanings associated with the dance shows include: the valorisation of youth and beauty, ambition, competitiveness, success and desire for celebrity status – meanings which may be seen as either positive or negative.

To highlight the necessity of addressing experiential authenticity does not, in my view, obviate the need to retain an 'object-oriented' or historicist account. It is also important to ask questions about the specific ways in which the increasing popularity of theatrical / commercial shows are influencing Irish step-dance. For instance, if tourists prefer hard-shoe dances associated with rhythm, will it lead to a decline in the performance of soft-shoe dances? Or, similarly, if tourists prefer fast-tempo dances will it lead to a decrease in the slower?

Any comprehensive assessment of dance in tourist settings would entail an integration of the research presented here with work on the political economy of dance in tourist settings, with structural analysis of the dance, and with the experiences of the tourists themselves. What I have been arguing in this chapter is that attempts to understand cultural performances in the context of global cultural flows of commodities and people in the form of tourists, must take into account the role of the performers and, more specifically, the meanings which the dancers attach to their perfor-

mance. It is this aspect which has been the most neglected in discussions of tourist dance and globalisation to date.

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Notes

1. Feiseanna is the name for the competitions which had been the dominant form of institutionalised exhibition of Irish step-dancing from the 1930s.
2. Since the dancers to whom I spoke were self-selecting it is necessary to bear in mind the possibility that those who were most willing to participate in the interview were the most enthusiastic about their experience.
3. Although the plural of the Irish word 'feis' is 'feiseanna', the word 'feises' is commonly used in English and the dancers themselves generally used the latter term.
4. The word 'craic' is generally used in the context of having fun in a convivial group atmosphere.
5. Some dancers found it difficult to have an extended conversation on this aspect of their performance: a difficulty commonly experienced in trying to communicate bodily feelings verbally.
6. It might be useful to think of this situation as analagous to the Lacanian 'mirror stage' of development in which the child thinks that his/her motor skills are more developed than they actually are thereby creating an illusion of perfect power.
7. They do not perform on either Friday or Saturday nights as the pub runs a disco on these nights.
8. All the numbers are hard-shoe dances apart from one soft-shoe reel. This is probably due to the influence of *Riverdance*.

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