HERITAGE AS TOURISM? A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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To my parents

Delma and John Sheerin

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism has been widely recognised throughout the country as Ireland's fastest growing industry. Reflecting global trends in which tourism is regarded as a panacea for countries, or regions within a country, which have either lost their manufacturing base, or which lack the potential to develop growth in manufacturing or other areas, tourism in Ireland is regarded as an industry with the greatest potential for economic regeneration in particular. This can be seen in figures produced by Bord Failte in their publication, 'Tourism Growth' (1992). This showed that 92,000 people were employed in the industry in 1991; foreign revenue earned through foreign visitor spending in the country was £1.310 billion; and there were over 3 million visitors to the country (1992:4). Bord Failte's 'Annual Report' of 1992 also showed that approximately £770 million was invested in the tourism product range (1992:11).

One of the most crucial products in the tourism industry is the heritage product. So crucial is this product, a heritage industry has evolved, again reflecting world trends, around the demand for heritage attractions from both resident and overseas visitors. A recent survey carried out by Tourism Development International in 1991 shows the importance of this industry to tourism and ultimately economic regeneration. The following figures were produced by this survey which was taken on 88 of the 148 Irish heritage attractions. It showed that in 1991 there were 4.6 million visitors to heritage attractions in Ireland (1992:1). Almost 40% of these were from both the Republic and the North of Ireland. A breakdown of the country of origin of

the rest of the visitors show that 17% hailed from Britain, 13% from North America, 10% from Germany, 6% each from both Italy and France, with almost 10% from other places around the globe (1992:25).

For 79% of the visitors to heritage attractions it was their first visit to the particular heritage site in question, and a substantial 21% had made one or more previous visits to the site. As far as expenditure is concerned, 4.6 million visitors spent on average £2.49 each, giving a total figure of £11.45 million spent altogether in Irish heritage attractions in 1991 (1992:3,49).

The heritage attractions were broken down by the survey into five main categories: historic houses and castles - at which 28% of the visits were made; heritage or interpretive centres, museums and folk parks which hosted 21% of the visitors; nature and wildlife parks - 21%; historic monuments -16%; and heritage gardens - 9% (1992:17).

Finally, the source of awareness of Irish heritage attractions cited by visitors in order of frequency were: guidebooks and tourist literature; friends, relations, word-of-mouth; common knowledge or previous visit; road signs; tourist office: newspapers, magazines, television and radio; accommodation; package tour or touring; posters and leaflets (1992:30).

The heritage industry has emerged then, in response to those demands which necessarily accompany the movement of such large numbers of visitors, from

a wide variety of markets, generating vast amounts of capital, along with those which accompany the provision of varied heritage attractions and the array of techniques for promoting these attractions to resident and foreign visitors.

Heritage, therefore, is an important business. But what is heritage? The heritage product, I have said, is a crucial one in the realm of tourism. Thus there is an obvious link between heritage and tourism: heritage is emerging as the tourism industry's chief commodity or selling point to visitors. However, in this thesis I wish to explore the nature of heritage in detail and in doing so I must engage in an investigation of this link between heritage and tourism. In this I wish to show that heritage is not only dictated by the needs of tourism but is in fact a product of tourism, its development and practices.

To define heritage itself is a difficult task. Most meanings of **heritage** relate to its general interpretation as that which is inherited from the past. A 1983 National Heritage Conference defined heritage as

> "that which a past generation has preserved and handed on to the
> present and which a significant group of the population wishes to
> hand on to the future" (R. Hewison, 1989:16)

For the purposes of this thesis I will be defining heritage in broad terms to incorporate both natural and cultural heritage. David Herbert, in his work 'Heritage, Tourism and Society' (1995), draws the distinction between these two: the former drawing its qualities from nature, the latter from its association with people or events (1995:9). These two types of heritage are not mutually

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exclusive: Avondale House, for example, where Charles Stewart Parnell lived, is added to as a heritage attraction by the beautiful natural scenery which surrounds it. Conversely, spectacular scenery - such as that found on the Aran Islands - is given additional meaning by the link with a well-known person who lived or worked there such as John Millington Synge.

As heritage emerges as an element of tourism however, it takes on new meanings. In this thesis it will become clear that heritage is not just that which is inherited from the past but, in its connection with tourism, becomes a social construction and, as such, is affected by societal change and development.

As this investigation develops, various crucial factors relating to the study of heritage as an element of tourism will emerge such as regimes or modes of representing the past, the development of museums and heritage centres, the provision of pleasurable experiences and the social construction of Irish landscape.

Because tourism and heritage are subject to societal determinants, this thesis, I believe, is particularly relative to the discipline of sociology. John Urry's work 'The Tourist Gaze' (1990), contributes to the grounding of tourism studies in sociology. Here he put forward the notion of touristic practice as one of *'departure'* - as the limited breaking with the established routines and practices of everyday life and allowing one's senses to engage with a set of

stimuli that contrast with the everyday and the mundane (1990:2). As a sociological thesis then, this notion of departure becomes a useful tool in which I can gauge 'normal' or routine practice, behaviour and thought at various stages in the development of tourism.

As a literature review, this thesis will explore the expanse of literature concerning heritage and tourism. Throughout, I will present an overview of the predominant theories relating to the topic. Both enduring theories as well as contradictions will be considered and these will form the basis of my arguments. The literature review involves the accumulation of both recent and earlier texts, as well as current journals, reports and magazines. Those written in an Irish context will be used specifically to assess how Ireland fits into the global picture. Finally, as a literature review, this thesis will highlight gaps in the various studies, and will also point out new and relevant areas requiring further study.

In order to put the overall study into context, Chapter One will introduce the notion of modes of representing the past by looking as the presentation of the past in museums of the nineteenth century. In this chapter, I will highlight different authors' views on what a museum is and what are its functions. I will draw attention to contradictions in these texts to highlight the essential functioning and operation of these museums, and what they were trying to achieve in the context of nineteenth century society.

In Chapter Two, I will begin to investigate the link between tourism and heritage in modernity. In order to do this however, I will first trace the historical emergence of tourism, concentrating on studies carried out on the rise of the seaside resort as the origin of mass tourism. I will then proceed to investigate the reasons for the rise in interest in heritage as an object of the (mass) tourist gaze and the various social and economic factors which have determined this interest in the past. Most importantly, I will show how this interest in the past is being harnessed by the tourism industry. I will also engage in a brief discussion of heritage centres as new modes of representing the past in which the tourism industry's influence in manifest.

In Chapter Three, I will add statistical weight to these issues, in an Irish context in particular, by concentrating on the organisation and structure of both the tourism and heritage industries in this country. I will engage in an analysis of publications and literature produced by various organisations involved in the tourism and heritage industries here. Again I will show the link between tourism and heritage showing how heritage has emerged as the tourism industry's main product, with the greatest potential for increasing numbers of visitors to the country. I will show also how strategies being adopted for interpreting and presenting our past to visitors have become increasingly dictated by the needs of tourists.

In Chapter Four, I will discuss new modes of representing the past in the heritage centre. These, I will show, are to be summarised in the process of

'visualisation', in which images of the past are created through different media, enabling visitors to visualise life patterns and events from times past. The influence of tourism on such methods of representation will be stressed. I will also show how current visual representations of Ireland being used to attract increasing numbers of visitors to the country have emerged from deeply-rooted, unconscious assumptions in these new regimes of representation. These representations again will be traced back to tourism by a discussion of the origins of visual representation of Ireland in the English travellers' construction of the Irish landscape. I will then discuss the problems effected by visual representation such as those incurred in representing the world as spectacle and the absence or ignoring of the local voice in such representations.

Finally, in my Conclusion, I will draw together the main arguments discussed in the previous chapters. I will then highlight principal issues which I believe encompass the essential, socially constructed nature of heritage, such as the modes of representing the past in the hertiage centre and the importance of seeing the representation of the past in the context of the provision of pleasure, which show heritage to be ultimately a product of tourism.

CHAPTER ONE

MUSEUMS: THEIR ORIGIN AND

FUNCTIONS

According to Luke Dodd in his article 'Sleeping with the past' (1991), museums in Ireland first came into being in the nineteenth century, when those objects which formed the collections of the wealthy and the ruling classes in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were transferred to public ownership (Circa No 59,1991:28). The objects were housed in buildings, classified and made available to the general public. Prior to this, Llewellyn Negrin informs us in his essay 'On the Museum's Ruins' (1993), came the 'project of the museum' which evolved in Western Europe in the late eighteenth, early nineteenth century and which gave rise to the institution of the museum as a physical entity. The project of the museum, he says, was not to be equated with the museum itself, but referred instead to a set of guiding principles which have determined the nature of the collection and display of art (and historical artifacts) for the last two centuries in the western world. What is different from private collections is the fact that the project of the museum sought to display as wide a range of artworks or objects as possible from different epochs and cultures, whereas the works contained in private collections reflected particular tastes and 'schools' of art ('Theory, Culture and Society', 1993:99-100).

This drive to assemble a comprehensive collection of artifacts was a feature not just of art galleries but manifested itself in other areas of culture as well. The nineteenth century saw the development of the first encyclopedias, for example. It saw also the era of the stamp album and the establishment of museums of natural history and ethnology, history museums and museums of

science and technology (Negrin, 1993:100).

In the museum then, according to Dodd, these formerly private collections would serve a new function: the instruction and edification of the general public (1991:28). Writing on museums in general, Dodd sees the museum functioning as an expression of how a culture or people view themselves or, more particularly, would like to be viewed. Museum practice, he suggests, involves one fundamental factor: the re-presentation of the past through the display of objects from earlier periods (1991:28,29). Museums, it would appear then, are in effect a public manifestation of a people's culture, their aim being to inform, instruct and generally enhance the public's appreciation and knowledge of a particular culture.

Herein, however, lies the first problem in the perceived function of the museum. If we were to take on board Dodd's notion that museums function as an expression of how people view themselves or would like to be viewed, it would appear that what goes on display in a museum corresponds to the real life of certain peoples and their culture. Most significantly the statement seems to suggest that the people - those who form the subject of museum displays - have a definite input into the display, that is, they have a say in what should or should not be included. To say that museums express how people view themselves is an over-simplification of how museums function insofar as it ignores the role of those personnel who have been involved in museum operation from the beginning - a role which has always been a very

significant one. This is because, in reality, it is not the people who decide what goes into a display but those who own or control the museum such as the curator or the public body responsible for the museum. It is true that the emergence of the museum took collections away from the private arena for public appreciation, but while they were meant for the people we must be aware of the fact that displays were not and are not by the people, but are instead a reflection of the views of those responsible for museums.

In effect then, museums did not function as an expression of how people viewed themselves or would like to be viewed but as an expression of how the museum administrators viewed the culture and lives of people, on behalf of the people. And, as such, a more realistic aim of museums seems to be to generally enhance the public's appreciation and knowledge of *their* own view of history and particular cultures.

Contemporary authors on the subject of museums see them as representing more than just the past. Robert Lumley, in his introduction to 'The Museum Time-Machine' (1988), regards them as a potent social metaphor and a means whereby societies represent their relationship to their own history and to that of other cultures (1988:2). Through the medium of the museum then, it seems that societies represent these relationships by showing how they see their past and that of other cultures. This is again debatable however, because, as we have said, the museum is not representative of society but of those who control the museum. On this note Lumley recognises this problem stating that studies

have been done highlighting problems with accounts of history in which history is used as a political resource whereby national identities are constructed and forms of power and privilege are justified and celebrated. So, because museums are in the business of representing history, they too must be called into question (1988:2).

Tony Bennett's recent work on 'The Birth of the Museum' (1995), is a useful study to further investigate these problem areas of the functioning of museums. He sees the role of museums as public institutions indulging in a form of power domination. He explains how the opening up of private collections to the people reflects how culture came to be thought of as a resource to be used in programmes which aimed at bringing about changes in acceptable norms and forms of behaviour (1995:23). This "governmentalisation" of culture was an innovative form of social management. By exposing more people to culture in the museum environment - an environment previously associated only with the upper echelons of society - those exposed would be led to progressively modify their thoughts, feelings and behaviour. This would work in such a way as to make the people believe that they themselves were choosing a life characterised by moral constraint, by choosing to visit a museum.

This is more clearly illustrated in three major issues raised by Bennett in relation to the new public museums. The first concerns the refashioning of museums so that they might function as a space of emulation in which civilised forms of behaviour might be learnt and thus diffused more widely

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through the social body (1995:24). The museum's new conception as an instrument of public instruction envisaged it as, in its new openness, an exemplary space in which the rough and raucous might learn to civilise themselves by modelling their conduct on the middle-class codes of behaviour to which museum attendance might expose them (1995:28). The second issue for Bennett regards the nature of the museum as a space of representation. Rather than merely evoking wonder and surprise for the idly curious, the museum's representations would so arrange and display natural and cultural artifacts as to secure "the utilisation of these for the increase of knowledge and for the culture and enlightenment of the people" (G. Goode quoted in Bennett, 1995:24). However, I will be taking up issue with this point later in this chapter, as this act of evoking wonder and surprise was in fact the very means by which the museum was able to project its own view of history in such a way as to deny any criticism on the part of the visitor.

The third issue concerns the museum visitor rather than its exhibits in which there was a need to develop the museum as a space of observation and regulation in order that a visitor's body might be taken hold of and moulded in accordance with the requirements of new norms of public conduct (1995:24). So, as Bennett points out, rather than embodying an alien and coercive principle of power which aimed to cow the people into submission, the museum, by addressing the people as a public, as citizens, aimed to inveigle the general populace into complicity by placing them on this side of a power, presenting it to them as their own (1995:95).

With this in mind then, let us now turn to the methods used by museums in presenting the past to the visitor - their modes of representation - which become vital to the functioning of museums. Gaining an insight into modes of representation will not only help us to understand museums but will also enable us to highlight further certain problem elements of museum operation.

MODES OF REPRESENTATION: A 'SYSTEM OF OBJECTS'

In his essay 'Objects and Selves - An Afterword'(1985), James Clifford looks at the traditional mode of representing used by museums which begins with the act of collecting (G. Stocking (ed.)1985:237). This act of collecting, we will see, has important implications for the individual collector, the museum and for the visitor to the museum.

THE INDIVIDUAL COLLECTOR

Collecting, according to Clifford, has, in the West, long been a strategy for the deployment of a possessive self, culture and authenticity (1985:238). Looking first at the individual, collecting endows the collector with a sense of self as owner - giving rise to a kind of "possessive individualism", to quote MacPherson (1962), in which the ideal individual surrounds himself with accumulated properties and goods (Clifford,1985:237). The owners of the private collections of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries would have typified such individuals. An identity is created by the collector through the

accumulation of objects from the material world. These objects, Clifford argues, once in the possession of the collector, enable the individual to mark off a subjective domain which is not other (1985:238). This idea of something being 'other' implies an entity separate from the self, having a distinct identity - unrelated and independent of the individual. The collected object however, becomes no longer something outside the grasp of the individual. He owns it and so it becomes a part of himself, its totally separate identity emerging as part of the individual's identity. In making the world one's own in this way the individual becomes empowered. To illustrate this point let us take an example given by Eileen Hooper-Greenhill (1988), who identifies the 'cabinets of the world' as being a development of the late sixteenth, early seventeenth centuries. These private collections, she points out, were meant to be no less than a representation of the universe. The ways in which these cabinets were organised were attempts to represent the world, and its order, as it was perceived by their owners (cited in K. Walsh, 1992:19). Through the possession and identification of objects, Kevin Walsh points out in his work, 'The Representation of the Past' (1992), the collector could articulate his universal knowledge - to name an object is to know it and understand its position within the order of things (1992:20).

These attempts to represent the world, however, are called into question by Clifford. He recognises that, despite this possessive individualism, the art of collecting is subjected, often unconsciously, to external influences: wider cultural values, such as those relating to age, gender, class, race and creed, for

example, are very much present in collections (1985:238-239). Because the individual cannot have everything in his/her collection, arbitrary systems of value and meaning are automatically brought to bear on the collection and these tend to be a reflection of those cultural values (1985:238-239). From this then, it seems that the individualism of the collection is not quite as subjective as it appears. The collection is necessarily affected by something outside of the individual - his cultural values - which he has little conscious control over. Thus he learns to select, exclude, order and classify in hierarchies in order to make a 'good' collection - a collection which, in its representation of the world, makes the world his own. However, as Clifford observes, collecting tends to create merely an illusion of adequate representation of the world precisely because the act is affected by hierarchies of value, exclusion and meaning and, as such, an individual's collection tends to be more representative of the individual than of the world itself (1985:239).

COLLECTING IN THE MUSEUM

These processes involved in collecting are repeated in the museum. In removing artifacts from the world of private collections - from their seventeenth and eighteenth centuries' context of ownership and use - in order to make them available to the public, the museum instead became the new owner of collections, making its own decisions, as we have said, on what is to be included or omitted. Like the individual collector, the museum purports to adequately represent the world but, unlike the private collection, a lot more

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is at stake in its representation because it is open to the public and, more importantly, because museums claim to contribute to the education of the public by imparting knowledge, enlightening the public on histories and other cultures.

At this point we must become aware of the role of the artefact in the museum which is vital to our understanding of the functioning of museums. This is because of the way that the artefact is employed in the museum's environs. Kevin Walsh's work, 'The Representation of the Past' (1992), will give us further insight into the use of the object in the museum. He looks at the museum's representation of the past in the context of modernity. Modernism, he states, can be considered as a set of discourses concerned with the possibilities of representing reality and defining eternal truths. A part of Enlightenment thinking, modern thought is an idea of progress, escaping from the debilitating elements of the past and moving ever forward to new horizons.

This idea of progress, according to Walsh, has underpinned the nature of many representations of the past which came about through a new conception of time and history as linear and non-cyclical, the past being dominated by change and progress towards the ever more modern world (1992:7-9). Museums which developed in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were influenced by this modern idea of progress. The very fact that objects were placed in ordered contexts reflected this nineteenth century conception of the unilinear development of progress. To explain this let us take Walsh's example of the

Pitt-Rivers Museum and the British Museum. In 1883 the Pitt-Rivers Museum arranged its artifacts according to evolutionary ideas. It wanted to show that all man-made objects follow in an ascertainable sequence and that improvements are being made all the time. In the British Museum, one exhibition entitled 'Industrial Progress' represented the evolution of Bronze Age Metalwork. The display case, he points out, was filled with sequences of axeheads and spearheads. Each artefact was named and positioned within a framework of evolution, each series of artifacts being divided into a phase following the progress of various technical achievements throughout the ages (1992:35-36).

What is actually happening here then, is again a form of power domination. As Bennett argues, the museum's modes of representation - its ordering of objects in such a way - aimed at encouraging people to civilise themselves and help keep progress on path by treating the exhibits as props for a social performance (1995:47). Visitors are provided with an opportunity to actively insert themselves into a particular vision of history by fashioning themselves to contribute to its development (1995:47). What is crucial to note however, is the fact that, in their constant emphasis on progress, museums are promoting the notion that expansion and progression is always a good thing, with benefits for everyone. But as Walsh recognises, quoting E. H. Carr (1987), "progress does not and cannot mean equal and simultaneous progress for all" (1992:37). Those who suffered at the hands of steady technological advancement through problems stemming from urbanisation, for example, are being called upon to

accept the museum's vision of history - the implications being that, by so doing, they will find their problems can be easily overcome.

Museum authorities can further emphasise their vision of history by the meanings they give to their acquired objects. According to Jean Baudrillard (1968), the artefact in the museum becomes part of what he terms a "system of objects" (quoted in Clifford, 1985:239). Within this system, he explains, collected objects create a structured environment which substitutes its own temporality for the 'real time' of historical and productive processes (1985:240). In such an environment the object takes on a whole new meaning. Like the object in the possession of the individual it is now owned by the museum, no longer something separate from it. It is now part of the institution of the museum. Because of this, the museum has the authority to endow the object with certain meanings to support its own vision of history. Susan Stewart points out that the museum claims to adequately represent the world by first cutting objects out of specific contexts and making these 'stand for' abstract wholes. A scheme of classification is then elaborated for storing or displaying the object. The objects on display are accompanied by labels which function to represent the context in which to locate the artefact (Steward cited in Clifford, 1985:239). Also important to note here is the fact that the objects were placed in glass cases, removing them physically from the visitor.

In striving to promote a particular view of history then, the museum, like the individual collector, brings its own values to bear on its displays so that the

specific histories of the object's production and appropriation is overridden. This is carried out successfully by the museum by emphasising what Walter Benjamin termed the *'aura'* of the object (1973:215). Here the object is elevated to a status in which it will be appreciated for its own sake. It is, argues Clifford, endowed with a sense of depth, assuming aesthetic proportions in the environs of the museum (1985:241).

This system of meaning and value bestowed upon the object is, according to Stewart, mystified as adequate representation (Clifford, 1985:239). Promoting appreciation of the object for its own sake, as a thing of beauty in itself, deliberately allows little room for interpretation. Focusing on the object like this draws the visitor's attention away from other aspects of the object - its contexts of production, its use, for example. As Shanks and Tilly (1987) argue in their work 'Reconstructing Archaeology' (1987), the aesthetic qualities of the artefact are supposedly immediately perceptible and as such context and critical analysis are relegated (1987:73). Contradicting Tony Bennett's suggestion that the museum tried to use objects to increase knowledge instead of merely evoking wonder and surprise, the modes of representation instead allow the museum to promote a certain view of history, supported by its use of the object in such a way as to make it difficult for the public to be critical - and thus to accept - the museum's representation of the past.

IMPLICATIONS OF COLLECTING FOR VISITORS

Traditional modes of representation as forms of power domination can be further highlighted when museum operation is looked at from the point of view of the visitor. Because the object's meaning is altered in such a way as to endow it with aesthetic qualities and making it representative of abstract wholes, Bennett argues that collections in museums only function in this manner for those who possess the appropriate socially-coded ways of seeing - and, in some cases, the power to see - which allow the objects on display to be not just seen but seen through to establish some communion with the invisible (such as the past) to which they beckon (1995:35). Thus those who have the cultural competence to recognise the conferred meaning given by the expert in the museum, to see beyond the auratic display, can naturally gain more from their visit to the museum.

However, those who do not possess such cultural competence must rely heavily on the experts who set up museum displays. For example, they must accept whatever information is given in the written caption accompanying the object. These labels become a very important aspect in the exhibition for the visitor in that they represent the context, as I have mentioned, in which to locate the artefact. Without the written caption the visitor may be left with no clue as to the identity of the object. As Kevin Walsh suggests, they must accept the naming and identification of the object by an authority (1992:36). It is also important to point out that the written caption shows the power which the museum has over its collections (and the visitor) in that it is the authority

in the museum who decides what is to be included in the typed label. In effect then, it is the museum itself which creates the contexts for the objects in its collections.

The visitor must also accept the auratic presentation given by the museum in which the object is to be seen as a thing of beauty in itself and something that only represents the benefits of progress and modern technological advancements. Because of this trust that the visitor must place in the museum authorities, he must also accept their denial of consideration of more common processes which affect the everyday lives of the ordinary public. Aesthetic appreciation would not have constituted common processes in the lives of most people. Thus the visitor, in accepting the museum's representions of the past, would also have engaged in a denial of consideration of, for example, any negative effects which progress may have had on certain sections of society and which was excluded from displays.

Museums of the nineteenth century managed to obtain this sense of trust in their authority from the visitor by their adherence to the principles of modernisation and progress. Using Anthony Giddens' theory on *disembedding*, Kevin Walsh emphasises the importance of 'distancing' which was central to modernist thinking. He explains that the experiences of modernity were experiences influenced by processes which have been increasingly removed from the local (1992:26). This came about because of the institutionalisation of many services which would have compelled the

urban dweller in particular to rely on - or have faith in - people whom he does not know and on whom he must now depend for provision of services. This differed from pre-modern times during which local communities would have relied on their own resources. Since the Enlightenment, Walsh notes, there has been a proliferation of expert groups with monopolies on all services with the result that the wider public were denied access to much information and knowledge, and no longer needed it (1992:26-27).

This institutionalisation of knowledge is epitomised in museums which Giddens regards as "disembedding mechanisms" (quoted in Walsh, 1992:27). The processes of studying, interpreting and representing the past have been removed from the day-to-day experiences of the general public, so the visitor to the museum must trust the professionals because he does not have the information or the knowledge to even be critical of the museum's representations. Thus, the expertise of the professional - the curator of the museum, for example - is, according to Giddens, a knowledge based purely on trust (Walsh, 1992:27).

The opening up of museums to the general public then, allowed the visitor to gain access to ideas that, before the nineteenth century, were denied him. And, because of their trust in the experts, the visitor could accept the museum's representations of the world - its past and its progression into the present. And so, in their new-found knowledge, they too, like the individual collector, could create a sense of identity in which they were empowered.

In conclusion then, we can see that it is the collection which represented reality in the museum. The museum's 'system of objects' constituted its modes of representation which, as we have discussed were, in effect, modes of power domination aimed at maintaining progress towards the ever more modern world. Such methods of representing the past were of a closed nature. The act of placing objects in display cases - physically removing them from the visitor - meant that the visitor was distanced from the representation of the past and therefore could not question it. This also meant that the visitor was distanced from those processes which create the contexts for objects. It was his role to stand back and observe the display of the past. In the museum then, the wonders of progress were held up to the public as something to be emulated and this was carried out in such a way as to deny any attempts at criticism or investigation, and thus presenting only one option to the people - that of accepting without question the museum's own vision of history.

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONSTRUCTION OF TOURISM AND

HERITAGE

Looking at the museum's modes of representation has enabled us to explore the notion that museums not only interpret or represent the past to us but also, and most importantly, interpret the present by showing nineteenth century modernist thinking on progress and expansion. Thus the way in which museums represent the past has, I believe, as much to do with present society as it has with the past. This can also be seen in the fact that modes of representation change. Modes of representation are altered according to the changing needs of society, or the powers that be in society. So it was in the nineteenth century when museums came into being in answer to the state's new educative and moral role in relation to the general public, and so it is today as these museums find themselves in a struggle to survive alongside new modes of representing cultures and their histories: the heritage centre.

NEW 'LIVING' MUSEUMS: THE HERITAGE CENTRE

According to Eilean Hooper-Greenhill in her work 'Museums and the Shaping of Knowledge' (1992), museums are no longer built in the image of the traditional museum. A museum today can be found in anything - farms, boats, coalmines, prisons, castles, cottages, disused warehouses and factories (1992:1). Unlike the old-style museum these sites have become places for visiting exhibitions, eating, studying, conserving and restoring artifacts, listening to music, seeing films, holding discussions and meeting people (Lumley, 1988:1). Luke Dodd points out that even the word 'museum' no

longer denotes the monolithic mid-nineteenth century national collection full of important, often rare and priceless artifacts. It also includes ethnographic collections, museums of folk-history, museums of popular culture, toy collections and museums dealing with political history (1991:28). The very nature of the museum and all that institution stood for since it came into existence has changed. According to Lumley the museum is no longer a collection for scholarly use but has become instead a means of communication (1988:15). On this point, John Urry, in his work, 'The Tourist Gaze' (1990), points to an increased emphasis on the degree of participation by visitors in the exhibitions themselves, on 'living' museums, open-air sites, on visitors not being separated from exhibits by glass (1990:130).

Before proceeding any further we must first be critical of Lumley's statement on this notion of the museum becoming a means of communication. As it stands it seems to suggest that the old style or traditional museum (looked at in the last chapter) does not engage, or wish to engage, in communication with the visitor, while the new style of museum or heritage centre does by virtue of the fact that it provides interactive and participatory devices for the visitor so that he or she can enter into direct communication with an exhibition. Openness on the part of the heritage centre and exchange between centre and visitor seem to embody the notion of communication for Lumley. To suggest however, that the old style collections of priceless artifacts, displayed in glass cases and accompanied by typed labels, were any less communicative with the visitor seems to be a misrepresentation of the role of the traditional museum.

For one thing, and Lumley says this himself, the educative function of the traditional museum has been almost entirely subordinated to the satisfaction of visitor expectations (1988:15). Education, in the form of communicating certain ideas to the general public has been an important function of museums as we saw in the last chapter. Lumley also states that fine art galleries are nearest to the model of the open text: paintings accompanied by the minimum of information communicate on their own terms their value as original works of art (1988:15). The display of collected objects in the traditional museum also communicated their value as symbols of progress through the way in which they were ordered in an exhibition.

Thus to refer back to Lumley's original statement, we must be aware that museums have not only recently emerged as a means of communication. Today's heritage centres are merely engaging in a new form of communication by encouraging visitor participation in their exhibits. More importantly, we must be aware of the fact that this encouragement of visitor participation does not necessarily mean that the new style museums are more open about their methods of representing the past or other cultures than traditional museums. The spirit of openness and exchange is merely a new mode of representation employed in contemporary museums - a novel form of representation still as closed as ever. This is because, the heritage centre, like the traditional museum, does not include in its representations of the past any evidence of the methods of selecting what is to be put 'on show': processes both of selectivity and decontextualisation of objects, for example, still remain implicit.

The change in the nature of museums is epitomised in the heritage centre or interpretive centre and the theme park. The last fifty years has seen these centres being built all over the world. Large amounts of Government spending is being poured into the creation, improvement and maintenance of these sites. They have grown up alongside the notion of 'heritage'. An heritage industry has developed and it now embraces almost everything to do with the past and its cultures, and the representation of that past through both traditional and modern methods.

Before investigating the new modes of representation which are to be found in the heritage centre we must first explore the notion of heritage and the heritage industry. In his article, 'The Construction of Heritage'(1993), David Brett teases out the notion of heritage. He sees tourism as integral to the whole topic of heritage (B. O'Connor and M. Cronin (eds.), 1993:183). Boniface and Fowler, in their preface to 'Heritage and Tourism in the Global Village' (1993), support Brett's statement saying that the "lifeblood of the tourist industry is heritage" (1993:xi). With tourism fast becoming the biggest industry in the world, and with ever-increasing amounts of leisure time and leisure money at the disposal of more and more people (which pushes both recreation and tourism high up on government policy priority) it is not surprising that, according to Boniface and Fowler, there is an apparent burgeoning of a symbiotic relationship between tourism and heritage imagery (1993:xi). The two industries are constantly feeding off each other as they each grow.

In order to draw out the essential nature of heritage, I must now identify the link between tourism and heritage. This however can only be achieved by carrying out a detailed enquiry into tourism and its changing nature throughout the years.

HISTORICAL EMERGENCE OF TOURISM IN BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Before the nineteenth century tourism or travel for pleasure was very much the preserve of the elite classes of society. The 'Grand Tour', Urry informs us, was firmly established by the end of the seventeenth century for the sons of the aristocracy and the gentry, and by the late eighteenth century for sons of the professional middle-classes (1990:4). This was not only travel for pleasure but became an integral part of the education of the English aristocracy embracing many historic buildings and monuments of Europe particularly in Italy where the privileged classes spent their time studying the legacy of classic civilisation.

It was not until the nineteenth century that the idea of travelling for pleasure became a more universal experience for all classes. The onset of the industrial revolution in Britain and other European countries in the course of the nineteenth century made travel possible for the middle and eventually working classes. In Urry's study on the tourist gaze, he puts forward the notion of the democratisation of travel (1990:16). It is interesting to note that this

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democratisation of travel, this belief in the right for all people to travel for reasons unconnected with work, led the masses to places previously regarded as exclusive havens for the dominant social elites and so changed the very nature of these places. This in turn led to changes in the perceptions and desires of those embarking on travel.

To illustrate this historical emergence of the phenomenon of 'mass tourism' let us look at two studies carried out in recent years on what was typically associated with mass tourism up until the 1960's in Britain and here in Ireland: the seaside resort. The respective works on seaside resorts in Britain and Ireland of John Urry and John Heuston serve as historical sociologies which give us insights into social thought and practices in both countries. As Urry has suggested, the study of tourism is significant in its ability to reveal aspects of normal practices which might otherwise remain opaque (1990:2). Similarly, Heuston's work on Kilkee in the West of Ireland reveals social developments that occurred in this country over the last two centuries. (Heuston's study is not meant to be a comparison with a typical English resort, for a comparison see K.M. Davies study on Bray: 'For Health and Pleasure in the British Fashion' in O'Connor and Cronin (eds.), 1993).

John Urry's study on the British seaside resort shows us how the mass tourist gaze was initiated in the backstreets of the industrial towns and cities in the North of England (1990:16). His study begins in the eighteenth century during which another form of travel (apart from the Grand Tour) constituted the lives

of the dominant social classes: the annual visit to one of the many spa towns which had developed in the eighteenth century. Alot of these spa towns were also beside the sea but at the time bathing in the spa waters and in the sea was for medicinal reasons mainly. They were also very much socially restrictive. Quoting Younger (1973), Urry shows that life in the seventeenth and eighteenth century watering places resembled in many ways "life on a cruise or in a small winter sports hotel [where] the company is small and self-contained" (1990:17). Most importantly, Urry points out that the beach was a place of medicine rather than pleasure. Similarly in Ireland spa towns developed during the 1700s in places such as Lucan, Mallow and Castleconnell. These too, according to John Heuston, were restricted mainly to the dominant social classes which in Ireland at that time were the Anglo-Irish elite (O'Connor and Cronin (eds.),1993:14).

Out of this fashion for sea bathing grew the seaside resort. Such resorts were to become, according to Urry, extremely popular objects of the tourist gaze, a novel gaze which came about through certain features of nineteenth century industrialisation. Urry sets out some of the preconditions which led to the rapid growth of this new form of mass leisure activity in Britain centred on the seaside resort.

One of the conditions he suggests was the considerable increase in the economic welfare of substantial elements of the industrial population, enabling large sections of the working class to accumulate savings in order to take a

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holiday each year. Also, the process of rapid urbanisation led to previously small towns becoming large urban areas within each of which its residents came to associate themselves with social equals, that is, working class residents, in other large urban towns in different cities. The result of this was that these were more self-contained social groupings judging themselves according to working class standards throughout the country as opposed to standards of more dominant classes, and thus they desired a union with those perceived as having similar practical interests, similar tastes and culture, rather than trying to emulate elite groups of the wider social system. As a result, suggests Urry, such communities were important in developing forms of working class leisure which were relatively segregated, specialised and institutionalised (1990:19).

Another precondition suggested by Urry was the newly emerging concept in the nineteenth century of the rationalisation of leisure which came about from a regularisation of hours of work in which working hours were reduced. Half-day holidays, especially on Saturdays, were introduced and eventually longer breaks such as week-long holidays which saw the closure of whole factories for a particular week during each year. From the 1860s onwards these weeks came to mainly involve trips taken en masse to the seaside. (Later developments here include the introduction of holidays-with-pay in the 1920s) (1990:19-20).

Such desired forms of recreation for the masses were enhanced further by great

improvements in transportation. In the 1840s railway companies began to realise the economic potential of the mass, low-income passenger market where before they had catered only for goods traffic and more prosperous travellers. Thus new railway lines were opened up throughout Britain bringing a huge influx of visitors to various seaside resorts. Also, enormous programmes of investment in many resorts resulted in these places becoming major urban centres in themselves complete with new hotels, houses, promenades, gardens, parks and swimming pools (1990:25-26). By the second world war then, the democratisation of travel was firmly established. Holidays according to Urry, had become almost a marker of citizenship, a right to pleasure - everyone became entitled to the pleasures of the tourist gaze by the seaside (1990:27).

Underlying all of these preconditions was a desire to escape from routine and everyday practices. The seaside stood in stark contrast to the industrial cities from which the visitors hailed, not only because of its natural amenities but also because of its ever-increasing provision of pleasure. As Urry puts it, touristic practices involve the notion of 'departure': tourism is a leisure activity which presupposes its opposite, namely regulated and organised work. Work and leisure in the modern industrialised societies were organised as separate and regulated spheres of social practice. Tourism involved a journey away from normal places of residence and work; a search for gazes which offer distinctive contrasts with work and home life; and an anticipation of intense pleasures which differed from those customarily encountered (1990:2,3). We

will see later in this chapter how change in the notion of separated spheres of social practice contributed to the developments of new forms of tourist activity.

It should be noted that the arrival of the masses at the seaside resorts led to a movement away from such resorts by the previous holiday-makers there - the dominant social elites. Just as the working classes sought out the tourist gazes in keeping with their equals throughout the country, so too, the more 'respectable' families sought to spend their time on holiday in the company of their own class. What came into play then in the nineteenth century in Britain was the notion of what Urry termed a 'resort hierarchy' (1990:16). Here Urry points out that as travel became democratised, so extensive distinctions of taste came to be established between different places. Blackpool, for example, became synonymous with the idea of mass tourism and was considered inferior by the dominant social groupings who travelled elsewhere in search of better accommodation, scenery and most importantly social tone, that is, where they could mix with people of their own social class. Status attributions, according to Urry, are made on the basis of where one stayed, who else stayed there also and how many people stayed there (1990:16-24).

John Heuston's study on Kilkee in his essay 'Kilkee - the Origins and Development of a West Coast Resort' (1993), shows how the Irish seaside resort also reflects social developments in Ireland over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries which were in part similar to those in England although, as we will see, other aspects of life peculiar to Ireland such as religion and a

much slower process of industrialisation came also to symbolise the mass tourist gaze in this country.

Like Urry, Heuston begins his study in the eighteenth century when the west coast of Clare held great attraction for travellers motivated by the intellectual climate of the time, leading to the development of scenic tourism amongst the upper-classes and an appreciation of mountains, rivers, lakes, the sea and stretches of coastline (O'Connor and Cronin (eds.), 1993:14). Although originally a small fishing village, many people began to travel to Kilkee in the 1820s and 1830s for the sea bathing and for its spectacular coastal scenery. Just like British seaside resorts at this time, the social origins of the visitors to Kilkee was exclusively upper class. Kilkee's visitors, according to Heuston, reflected the dominant social grouping of the time - the families of gentry or gentlemen farmers, prominent merchants of Limerick and of major towns in Counties Clare, Tipperary and Offaly, and also doctors lawyers, clergymen, bank managers and army officials - the fashionable members of midland and south west Ireland (1993:14-17). Kilkee provided many social activities for such 'dignified' clientele. Not only could visitors bathe for medicinal purposes in the sea waters and the springs provided by local entrepreneurs but they were also offered an urban pattern of socialising in balls, dances, concerts and races (1993:18).

Religion, which has always been deeply significant in Ireland's history, tells its own story about the type of people who frequented Kilkee in the eighteenth

and nineteenth centuries. Heuston states for instance, that the records of the local Church of Ireland parish in the 1880s and 1890s show that the normally small Anglican congregation of about sixty during the off-season steadily grew to ten times that number from April onwards until the end of the season. Also in 1900 a Methodist chapel was built to cater for the summertime visitors; a temporary gospel hall for visiting evangelists was erected at the start of each holiday season and removed for storage when the resort's visitors had departed. And even as late as 1944, a holiday centre was built in the resort as a place where Protestants from the region could come together with a view to meeting prospective marriage partners in the sons and daughters of Protestant farmers, professionals and business people during the Victorian and Edwardian periods (1993:17)

In Britain in the 1830s and 1840s, as we saw, the development of the railways contributed greatly to the growth of the seaside resort. Here, due to the famine and shortage of capital it was almost fifty years before a more comprehensive rail network was established in this country. The coming of the railway to Kilkee in 1892 eventually led, Heuston shows, to a broadening of the social base of visitors to the resort. Although it was still popular with prominent gentry of nearby counties, day excursions by rail allowed middle-class Limerick people in particular an opportunity to visit Kilkee. However, unlike resorts in Britain political and social developments in Ireland ensured that it would be some time yet before there was a democratisation of travel in this country. For one thing, Heuston informs us, the cost of a trip to Kilkee even

for a day would have been expensive, well out of the reach of the lower classes (1993:21). There was still a markable gulf between those who could afford a holiday and those who could not. The absence of paid holiday leave until the mid-1930s and the extremely high levels of poverty throughout the country made it impossible for the masses to even contemplate a holiday at this stage. (However, at this point I think it is important to be aware of the fact that a *true* democratisation of travel is never really possible as there will always be sections of society who cannot afford the luxury of a holiday).

Kilkee's structure as a holiday resort altered however after the first World War. Because of the political situation in the country - the War of Independence and the subsequent Civil War - the Anglo-Irish population of those counties surrounding Kilkee became very scarce and tended to opt for fashionable resorts in England and on the Continent. Kilkee's new visitors, Heuston notes, gradually came from the newly dominant social grouping in the post-Independence Free State, the Catholic commercial, professional and farming classes of the region (1993:22). From the 1920s holidays at seaside resorts became possible for the lower middle classes such as nurses, teachers, gardai, shop assistants, and clerks - especially with the introduction of paid holiday leave in 1930s. Events at Kilkee at this time again reflected social developments in the country. Heuston informs us that the increasing dominance of Catholic social values throughout the country caused controversy in resorts like Kilkee. Fearful of decadent influences from overseas resorts, visitors attending mass in the area were warned of the effects of immodest

behaviour and were constantly reminded of the importance of maintaining high standards of sexual morality. All kinds of activities on beaches and elsewhere were actively discouraged - modern music, dancing, certain books and films and immodest dress. Separate rock pools were even provided for males and females in the resort (1993:23-24).

Ireland's slow process of industrialisation (and which was also on a much smaller scale than Britain's) can be seen in the fact that it was only in the 1960s that a similar democratisation of travel as in Britain occurred. Heuston shows that the setting up of major new industries at Shannon Airport and Limerick City resulted in growing employment and subsequently standards of living throughout the region and its surrounds. Now Kilkee, which had become the preserve of the middle-income visitors, was accessible for a much larger amount of the working classes. The broadened social base of Kilkee's visitors was reflected in a building boom which occurred there in the early 1960s to cater for the mass tourists, the opening up of three caravan sites in the 1960s and the building of two new Catholic churches in 1963 (1993:24).

Thus we see the development of the mass tourist gaze in Ireland and Britain. Sociological analysis of the development of mass tourism has enabled us to chart certain social developments that have occurred in both countries from the late seventeenth century to the early twentieth century. We have seen how industrialisation in Britain in particular has contributed to a democratisation of travel. Also we have seen how the emergence of industrial towns which were

the embodiment of the sphere of regulated work gave rise to new perceptions of those embarking on holiday: the desire and anticipation of intense pleasures, which in turn led to changes in the nature of resorts as providers of pleasure. The notion of resort hierarchies has shown us a new basis on which status attributions are made. John Heuston's study has shown that a much later emergence of the democratisation of travel in this country is indicative of greater levels of poverty here as opposed to Britain; a slower process of industrialisation; and a huge gulf which remained until well into the twentieth century between those who could and could not afford a holiday. Heuston's study also shows the importance of religion in Ireland which was reflected in social practices in seaside resorts, including the change in the type of dominant social elite groups holidaying in the resorts from Anglo-Irish Protestants to Catholic commercial, professional and farming classes.

FALL OF THE SEASIDE RESORT - RISE OF NEW OBJECTS OF THE TOURIST GAZE

The fall in popularity of the seaside resort came about because of the emergence, particularly from the 1960s onwards, of a variety of different and novel objects of the tourist gaze. The seaside resorts in Britain and Ireland initially found themselves in competition with continental resorts. They also had to compete with holiday camps such as Pontins and Butlins. They then had to compete with pleasure parks and funfairs with hightechology rides

providing forms of controlled danger and excitement. In effect then there are more and more attractions for the mass tourist and the individual traveller both at home and abroad. From the 1980s on increasing numbers of citizens in Ireland and in Britain have been taking their holidays abroad. John Heuston shows that coinciding with the so-called democratisation of travel in Ireland came the age of the package holiday on the Continent (1993:25). Again the attraction, for young single workers in particular, was the beach and the seaside resort but, as Urry points out, with the growth in international tourism, the concept emerged of sunbathing rather than seabathing as being the key to producing health and sexual attractiveness (1990:37,38). Again, this in the 1920s was a luxury only afforded by the upper classes but eventually this gaze trickled down through to the lower classes so that in Ireland, by the 1970s, Heuston informs us, over 110,000 people a year were taking holidays abroad, attracted by well-marketed promotional campaigns by Irish tour operators (1993:25). This internationalisation of tourism meant that every tourist site could now be compared with those located abroad.

It is partly as a result then, of this internationalisation of tourism that has given rise to the heritage industry. In order to bring back tourists from home and abroad each country, or different places within a country, must specialise in providing certain kinds of objects to be gazed upon. These have to be distinctive, designed to attract people to what is peculiar to, or extraordinary about, a place - they have to give people a reason to go to a particular place.

A country's heritage has become the tourist industry's selling point, its new commodity. This is not to suggest, however, that it was the tourism or heritage industries which were directly responsible for the new tourist gaze. Rather, a number of factors have caused interest in heritage.

DEINDUSTRIALISATION AND GLOBALISATION OF CULTURE

Just as industrialisation and rapid urbanisation in Britain contributed to the popularity of the seaside resort as an object of the mass tourist gaze, so too rapid deindustrialisation in the 1970s and 1980s in Britain became an important factor in both the decline of the seaside resort as the major attraction for the tourist, and the rise in interest of other objects of the tourist gaze, especially heritage. For one thing, deindustrialisation caused local authorities to turn to tourism in an effort to increase economic development. In the case of Ireland too, local authorities turned to tourism for the purposes of economic regeneration but, unlike Britain, deindustrialisation would not have been a major influencing factor since Ireland was not heavily industrialised. Rather, the emergence of a globalisation in economic and cultural spheres would be a more likely determinant in the promotion of local heritage. Here, David Morley's study on Britain, 'Tradition and Translation: National Culture in its Global Context' (1995), has relevance in an Irish context. In this work, Morley suggests that globalisation is profoundly transforming our apprehension of the world, and that the emergence of heritage cultures is a response to the forces of globalisation (1995:121,124). There are two strands to his argument.

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On the one hand, he suggests that globalisation is about the organisation of production and the exploitation of markets on a world scale so that regional differentiation becomes increasingly organised at an international rather than national level (Smith cited by Morley, 1995:108). This globalisation of economic activity becomes associated with a process of cultural globalisation in which culture aspires to a borderless world and space and time horizones become compressed and collapsed (1995:112). At the same time, Morley argues, it is not possible to transcend or eradicate difference so what emerges then, is an exploitation of local difference and particularity. Thus globalisation comes to be associated with 're-localisation', under which there is a recreation of a sense of place and a revalidation of the local and the particular (1995:116). The local, Morley stresses, must be seen in the global context: different localities enter into competition with each other to attract visitors to their particular patch; local heritage is exploited in the locality itself to enhance distinctive qualities, to attract the 'global' tourist. So that, even in the most disadvantaged regions, heritage can be mobilised to gain competitive advantage in the race between places (1995:119-120). In countries such as our own then, where many regions are underdeveloped or have little growth potential in certain areas - manufacturing or agriculture, for example - local history or heritage is being developed in order to attract overseas visitors, and this is serving as a basis on which competition is carried on in an international or global sense.

Many towns and cities both in Britain and in Ireland developed as centres of

consumption in themselves for both residents and visitors from abroad, attracting people to their local heritage in particular and offering a range of services to meet the needs of the new tourists. It could be said that these developments were also both a cause and effect of wider social developments: work and leisure in industrialised societies, as mentioned, were organised as separate and regulated spheres of social practice whereas, with the emergence of deindustrialised areas, there was not such a clearcut divide between work and leisure. In effect then there was less need to escape to the seaside because it no longer offered such an obvious contrast to the province of work and leisure - pleasurable experiences and distinctive gazes, for example, could now be found in local areas.

Urry notes that because of the universalisation of the tourist gaze, all sorts of places have come to construct themselves as objects of the tourist gaze. In other words, not as centres of production but as sites of pleasure. Once people visit places outside capital cities and other major centres, what they find pleasurable are attractions which seem appropriate to place and which mark that place off from others, accommodating potential tourists who want to gaze upon the distinct or the exotic. Outside the major cities the universalisation of the tourist gaze has made most other places enhance difference through the rediscovery of local heritage (1990:125,126). Major cities too, it should be pointed out, also enhance local difference to mark themselves off from other major cities in their own countries as well as those abroad.

RISE OF THE SERVICE CLASS

Another important factor in the increase in popularity of heritage as an object of the tourist gaze is the emergence of the service class. Urry notes how changes in the structuring of contemporary societies have produced a substantial increase in the size of the service class. The service classes for Urry are made up of those who do not own capital or land to any substantial degree; who are located within a set of interlocking social institutions which collectively service capital; who enjoy superior work and market situations, have well-defined careers and the required educational credentials (1990:88-89). Cultural capital is very important for these classes.

Kevin Walsh takes up this issue by referring to Bourdieu's thesis which showed that people, in order to appreciate and understand certain forms of cultural production, must have experienced certain forms of socialisation - familial upbringing and education, which has endowed them with cultural competence. The consumption of cultural products are considered a form of conspicuous consumption, an activity which acts as a badge of distinction - distinguishing them from certain groups (1992:123-124). The service classes can afford to increase their consumption of leisure services and thus develop a new group identity through increasing their cultural capital. These classes, Urry notes, are able to employ their relatively high levels of cultural capital to proclaim the 'tastlessness' of much of both bourgeois and working-class culture, the former being criticised for 'elitism' and the latter for coarseness (1990:88). Heritage therefore satisfies the cultural demands made by this

group. As Walsh notes, gaining access to the Country House, for example, means the new service classes are allowed part-way into the establishment fold. Thus they are developing their cultural capital through participation. (1992:126). This is, in effect, merely a participation in 'images' of traditional power, as access to capital and land, for example, is still denied to many (Walsh, 1992:126). However, the very act of *choosing* to visit the Country House serves, as mentioned, as a badge of distinction.

Urry also suggests that the service class prioritise culture over a particular construction of nature or natural desires which, for Bourdieu, is that which is "popular", "low", "vulgar", "common" (quoted in Urry, 1990:94). The seaside resort would embody such a construction of nature. Therefore, resorts have become increasingly aware that they do not appeal to those elements in Britain who have become influenced by the tastes of certain sections of the middle or service classes.

RENEWED INTEREST IN THE PAST

Another factor determining the rise of heritage as a desired object of the tourist gaze is a renewed interest in the past. According to David Lowenthal in 'The Past is a Foreign Country' (1985), the richly elaborated past seems more familiar than the geographically remote, in some respects even more than our own nearby present; the here and now lacks the felt density and completeness of what time has filtered and ordered (1985:3). Here Lowenthal is opening up

the idea of the trend towards travel in time rather than in space. Looking at the past as a 'foreign country', Lowenthal shows that there is an increasing desire on the part of tourists to travel back in time, to search for the past both at home and abroad. The past has become a foreign country for potential tourists - a popular destination to be visited. At the heart of this desire is the notion of nostalgia - a fondness for the past. In recent years, Lowenthal points out, nostalgic dreams of slipping back into the past have become almost habitual, if not epidemic. Nostalgia today is the universal catchword for looking back. It fills popular press and serves as advertising bait (1985:4). The tourism industry has harnessed these nostalgic dreams through its promotion of heritage, providing visitors with an opportunity to slip back into the past. And this is carried out successfully because of nostalgia. Most of us remember patches of our lives with especial affection. And, as Lowenthal notes, even horrendous memories can evoke nostalgia. We want to relive those thrilling days of yesteryear but only because we are absolutely assured that those days are out of reach (1985:7). Heritage tourism has enabled us to travel back in time, if only for a short while, away from modernity. If the past is a foreign country, suggests Lowenthal, nostalgia has made it the foreign country with the healthiest tourist trade of all (1985:4).

On a more ideological level, Lowenthal discusses the benefits of the past. These include the familiarity of recognition, the validation of tradition, the guidance of example, the awareness of communal and personal identity, and respite and escape from the pressure of the here and now (1985:40-49).

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Knowing or recognising the past renders the present familiar and lets us make sense of the present - without memory of past experience, no sight or sound would mean anything. Historical knowledge is needed to make sense of all in the present. Also, the ability to recall and identify with our own past gives existence a meaning, purpose and value; awareness of history likewise enhances communal and national identity. The past also offers alternatives to an unacceptable present - a romantically attractive alternative (see Chapter 2, Lowenthal (1985) for further discussion on benefits of the past).

To conclude this section on the fall of the seaside resort and the rise in new objects of the tourist gaze, we have seen some of the influencing factors in the rise of heritage as an object of the tourist gaze. Promotion of local heritage in deindustrialised towns, particularly in Britain and the effects of globalisation on the local region; the influential tastes of the service classes in the consumption of cultural products; and the believed benefits to be gained from travelling back in time have all been harnessed by the tourism industry. The combination of these factors has given rise to the heritage industry. In effect, tourism has exploited the emerging interest in heritage. Under the auspices of the tourism industry, heritage places have assumed economic significance, being promoted and developed as projects generating local employment and wealth. As Herbert notes, for many cities that have lost their manufacturing base, urban tourism is seen as a major palliative (1995:10). Also, provisions are being made for the emerging dominant social group - the service classes -

who "require a wholehearted involvement in a cultural event" (C. Mercer quoted in T. Bennett (ed.), 1983:84). Such experiences must be pleasurable, and pleasure is no longer to be found at the seaside for such groups. As Urry notes, pleasure comes to be anticipated and experienced in different ways from before because of changes in what is ordinary and hence what is taken to be extraordinary, and so people will gain relatively less satisfaction from continuing to do what their family have always done, such as visiting the seaside (1990:102).

Paddy Duffy, in his essay 'Conflicts in Heritage and Tourism' (1994), notes how tourism in Ireland has exploited Irish heritage from the outset in that there has long been an instinctive exploitation of the thatched cottage image in response mainly to American ethnic tourism (Kockel, U (ed):1994:78). That is, Ireland has striven to provide a distinct object of the gaze in answer to the needs of American tourists in particular. Today however, as we will see in Chapter Three, the full might of the tourism industry is coming to bear on heritage. Duffy believes that, in Ireland, the interest in heritage is largely generated by utilitarian motives in response to both the promise of large amounts of outside capital and the potential earning capacity of heritage as an industry. Because of this, certain characteristics peculiar to Ireland are being exploited such as our landscape which is constantly promoted as standing in stark contrast to the industrial landscapes of Europe (1994:79-80). What is happening then, is that heritage is being dictated by the needs of tourism: local histories, heritage attractions such as buildings, parks and monuments are being

adapted in order to attract visitors. As Duffy notes, the ultimate aim of the tourism industry is to match Ireland's heritage and landscape opportunities with Europe's tourist and leisure needs (1994:80).

HERITAGE CENTRES

The object of the gaze which is most desired is, as we have said, the past. Luke Dodd pointed out that museums are society's most tangible link with the past (1991:31). However, because of the influence of the tourism industry new modes of representing the past have emerged which are to be found the heritage centre. Colin Sorenson, writing about the universal preoccupation with the past in his article 'Theme Parks and Time Machines' (1989), notes that this preoccupation is not so much an interest in history but more an urgent wish to achieve an immediate confrontation with a moment in time when, for a brief moment, the realities of a distant 'then' become a present and convincing now (P. Vergo (ed.), 1989:61). The modes of representation employed in the heritage centre offer such a confrontation by their use of new technologies to produce multi-media experiences, using images from the past to create a spectacle rather than, as Kevin Walsh notes, historical or archaeological information (1992:114). In order to attract visitors, there is an increasing employment in the new-style 'museum' of period dress, role-play, working exhibits, real locations and sounds, all of which go towards providing a pleasurable heritage experience.

I will be looking in more detail at new modes of representation in Chapter Four, but for now I think it is important to take a further look at heritage centres, the heritage industry and tourism on a more theoretical level by considering some of the theoretical approaches to tourism done to date and investigate how these can be related to the notion of heritage.

One important theory has been put forward by John Urry in 'The Tourist Gaze' (1990) in which he stipulated two main types of tourist gaze: the 'romantic' gaze and the 'collective' gaze. Inherent in the romantic gaze is an emphasis on solitude, privacy and a personal semi-spiritual relationship with the object of the gaze (1990:45). This gaze coincided with the Romantic Movement in the 1700s in which there was an interest in beautiful and spectacular scenery, and which involved a much more private and passionate experience of both the beautiful and the sublime. It was the gaze, David Herbert notes, preferred by the more elite groups of society (1995:6). This would have been so naturally because such groups would have had the opportunities to gain the cultural capital needed to draw meanings from places, especially in the case where particular physical objects signified literary texts, and where the aura of an object could be appreciated and understood by the sensitive traveller. For Bourdieu, Urry states, it was the intellectuals who most exemplified the romantic gaze (1990:89)

The typical objects of the collective gaze for Urry include places designed as public places: they would look strange if they were empty. It is other people

that make such places. The collective gaze thus necessitates the presence of large numbers of other people, as were found for example in the seaside resorts. Other people give atmosphere to a place indicating that this is the place to be and that one should not be elsewhere. It is the presence of other tourists, people just like oneself, that is actually necessary for the success of such places (Urry, 1990:45-46). This is also the case in major cities, Urry notes, whose uniqueness is their cosmopolitan character. It is the presence of people from all over the world (tourists in other words) which gives capital cities their distinct excitement and glamour. Large numbers do not simply generate congestion. The presence of other tourists provides a market for the sorts of services that most tourists are desperate to purchase - accommodation, meals, drink, travel, entertainment (1990:45-46). According to Herbert the collective gaze belongs to the less discerning majority who are followers of the beaten track of touristic space, and where all experiences are predictable, repetitive and the fact of being on holiday imposes its own simple routines and conventions (1995:6,7).

The seaside resorts, the package tours to resorts on the Continent, the holiday camps, pleasure parks and funfairs which we have looked at, all constitute typical aspects of the collective tourist gaze. The pattern of urban socialising provided for the gentry visiting the seaside in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the 'pleasure beaches', serving the demands of visitors from lower classes in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, each satisfied the needs of those who embraced the collective gaze. Although the numbers

of visitors in the first example were far less than those to be found on the pleasure beaches, the presence of other people was still very necessary. And, most importantly, the other people had to be from their own class.

The objects of the gaze provided by the heritage industry - heritage centres and heritage towns for example, seem to contain elements of both the collective and romantic gazes. Those more discerning visitors to an area often want to learn about (or more about) the area and so they seek out places such as the local heritage centre which will provide them with information. They also often have the cultural capital to draw meanings from places such as local monuments or historic sites, and also from some not so explicit aspects of the information provided in the heritage centre. This desire for learning while travelling stems directly from the time of the grand tour which, as we saw, was a form of travel not only engaged in for pleasure, but also for the purposes of education and a broadening of the mind. However, Urry has noted that this type of romantic tourism has given rise to the development of contemporary tourists who are essentially collectors of places or gazes often experienced on the surface, with less interest in repeat visits to sites already seen (1990:46,64).

The heritage centres are more in keeping with the collective gaze. They are very much designed as public places. While the individual visitor to an heritage centre does not necessarily need the presence of other tourists to enhance his experience, large amounts of visitors are ultimately needed in

order to provide a market for the services and experiences he requires such as the tourist infrastructure surrounding the site - accommodation, restaurants and transport as well as the heritage experience itself within the centre. Also, places surrounding heritage attractions have to adapt to the needs of the collective gaze by catering for large numbers of visitors just as seaside resorts, Kilkee for example, had to provide for the needs of the large influx of visitors there each summer.

Glendalough, in Co Wicklow, is a prime example of an object of both the romantic and collective gaze. An individual visitor can visit the site of the monastic ruins which includes the graveyard, tower and scenic walks, alone, not needing the presence of other visitors and preferring perhaps a more private and solitary appreciation of the site, while also being equipped with the cultural capital needed to draw meaning from the site. On the other hand, Glendalough also caters for the collective gaze in the heritage centre, with its exhibition, video presentation and guided tours, which can provide a more meaningful experience to many people. The collective gaze is also provided for by other services offered by the only hotel in the area, a bar, craft shops, stalls and a public bus service - St Kevin's - which provides the only form of public transport to the site.

In this way then, we can see how Urry's theory on the tourist gaze becomes particularly relevant in the area of heritage. Another important issue in studies of tourism which can be applied to heritage, concerns one of the most

consistent debates in tourism analyses which centres around the notion of authenticity in touristic practices. Daniel Boorstin's investigation of American tourists, suggests that contemporary Americans thrive on what he terms *'pseudo-events'* (cited in Urry 1990:7). Tourism, he believes, is a prime example of the pseudo-event. Boorstin sees tourism as a form of experience packaged to prevent real contact with others, a manufactured, trivial, inauthentic way of being. In this respect, Boorstin stresses the difference between travelling and tourism. Travelling he associates with the notion of work (M. Crick, 1989:308). The sons of the aristocracy in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries on the Grand Tour would have epitomised Boorstin's traveller. As we saw, these people went in search of historical buildings and monuments in Europe for the purposes not purely of pleasure but of education. Thus they were, in effect, "working at something" (Boorstin quoted in D. MacCannell, 1976:105-106). Travelling, for Boorstin, was active and involved the intellect. Tourism, on the other hand, he sees as an experience characterised by passivity rather than activity. The tourist for Boorstin is purely a pleasure-seeker, expecting interesting things to happen to him without actually wanting to have to do, or search for, anything himself (MacCannell, 1976:104).

A typical example of Boorstin's pseudo-event here would be the seaside resort. The tourists who travelled en masse to the Continental seaside resorts, for instance, may have been travelling to a new and different country, with customs different from their own, but under the 'protection' of the package

tour, they could remain isolated from the host environment altogether, mixing mainly with their fellow tourists, dealing with travel agents and couriers. For Boorstin, the mass tourist gullibly enjoys the pseudo-event and disregards the real world outside (Urry, 1990:7). This is regarded by P. Fussell as a far cry from travel which is seen as an exploration to discover the undiscovered: tourism, he believes, is merely about a world discovered, or even created, by entrepreneurs, packaged and then marketed (Crick, 1989:308). The tourist is restricted to the beach and certain objects of the tourist gaze such as recommended restaurants and taverns in which tourists are given a small taste of local traditions, such as music or dancing, say, which, in effect, become forms of entertainment drawn from local customs set up purely for visitors.

It must also be said however, that the whole heritage experience is very much a pseudo-event. The confrontation with the past is certainly a mediated event in which different types of media are used to 'show' the past such as audio-visual displays, photographic images of the past, and so on, and which, as David Lowenthal argues, tends to distance the reality from that which is seen by modern visitors (1985:361-362). (The mediated nature of heritage presentations will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.) Thus, the authentic past which many heritage centres purport to offer to the tourist is questionable but, as Boorstin suggests, authenticity is not what the tourist wants. Certain writers on the subject have suggested that this search for the inauthentic event is characteristic of postmodern society (See Urry, 1990 and Feifer, 1986 for discussions on postmodernism and the post-tourist).

The heritage experience is also very much packaged to prevent real contact with others: the visitor to the heritage centre, like the resort tourist, has little to do with the locals surrounding the site (except, of course, where the use of services necessitates some form of contact). And also, as we have said, the visitor to the heritage site is seeking pleasure of a kind and expects interesting things to happen to him.

According to Erik Cohen, however, this is just one type of tourist. In his work 'Towards a sociology of international tourism' (1972), he sees tourism as a cultural phenomenon in which man develops a generalised interest in things beyond his own world. Contact with, and appreciation and enjoyment of, strangeness and novelty become valued for their own sake. These new values evolved, he believes, as a result in a very basic change in man's attitude to the world beyond the boundaries of his native habitat. Primitive or traditional man only leaves his habitat when forced, whereas modern man is more loosely attached to his environment and is much more willing to adapt, especially temporarily, to new environments. However, Cohen notes that man will not completely immerse himself in an alien environment. In alien surroundings he needs something familiar around him to give him some degree of security. So, depending on individual tastes and preferences, tourism constitutes a certain degree of novelty and strangeness with a certain degree of familiarity and security (1972:166).

Cohen then proceeds to set out four typical tourist roles. The first is what he

terms the 'organised mass tourist' (1972:168). Cohen sees this type as the

least adventurous. Such tourists buy the package tour as if it were just another

commodity. Itineraries are fixed in advance, all stops well prepared and the

tourist remains almost exclusively in the micro-environment of his own

country, making almost no decisions for himself. Here familiarity and security

are at a maximum, novelty and strangeness at a minimum (1972:168-169).

The second type, 'the individual mass tourist', is only slightly more

adventurous, venturing out of his environment bubble only occassionally,

having a certain amount of control over his time and itinerary, and not bound

totally to a group. However, again all major arrangements are done through

a tourist agency such as transport, accommodation and meals, which help this

type to stay within the environment of his own country - even when abroad

(1972:171-172).

Here, again, we have an instance of the collective gaze - the less discerning

majority (who could be categorised within Cohen's two types), predictable

experiences, routines and conventions of being 'on holiday', the tourist

establishment taking complete care of the tourist throughout his trip. These

two types of tourist are seen by Cohen as 'institutionalised tourist roles'

wherein the trip is sold as an experience of novelty so that the tourist is given

the illusion of adventure while all risks and uncertainties are taken out

(1972:169-172). The heritage industry caters perfectly for the institutionalised

tourist role. It offers people a chance to observe, or gaze on, strangeness

without experiencing it. The heritage centre, as we have said, does provide an

experience and participation, but this is merely within the environs of the centre itself - a heritage experience, a participation with exhibits - so that, as Cohen observes, the mass tourist's experience is of vicarious participation in other people's lives (1972:174). Like Boorstin's tourist, the heritage visitor has the world discovered for him, on his behalf. In Cohen's terms - a controlled novelty with the familiarity of standardised and uniform facilities (1972:168).

Cohen's other two tourist roles - the 'Explorer' and the 'Drifter' - would epitomise Urry's tourists schooled in the romantic gaze. The Explorer arranges his trip alone, gets off the beaten track as much as possible and tries to associate with the host society (1972:173-174). However, Cohen suggests that this type does not wholly immerse himself in the unfamiliar as he would favour certain comforts in accommodation and transport, for example. The Drifter ventures further off the beaten track, shuns connection with the tourist establishment and integrates as much as possible with the host environment (1972:175). These types favour the romantic gaze in that they view their surrounds from an aesthetic point of view, seeking to understand people on an intellectual level - privacy and solitude become for the Drifter, or the Explorer in particular, commodities of high value. Most notably, in their shunning of the tourist establishment, these uninstitutionalised tourist types would also tend to reject various aspects of the heritage industry such as the heritage centres and other popular heritage attractions.

Thus we see how various theoretical approaches to the study of tourism can be successfully applied to the whole area of heritage.

CONCLUSION

To conclude this chapter then, we have seen that the true nature of heritage is only to be found by reference to tourism. We have shown that an homogenous relationship exists between tourism and heritage. The essential nature of heritage was arrived at by identifying the link between tourism and heritage. This was done by first tracing the historical emergence of tourism, showing how analysis of tourism enables us to chart social development and change. The notion of 'departure' was a vital tool in gauging the rise and fall of the seaside resort and the emergence of heritage as a much desired object of the tourist gaze. We have seen how elements of tourism have also emerged as central elements in the heritage industry, such as the importance of providing pleasurable experience and offering gazes which are extraordinary, directed to attractions which are distinctive. Theoretical approaches to tourism - Urry's romantic and collective gazes, the notion of authenticity and Cohen's typology of tourist roles - have also proven to be particularly relevant to heritage analysis.

Finally, we have been given a brief insight into new modes of representing the

past which are to be found in the new-style museum or heritage centre. Modes of representation have been altered to the changing needs of society: museums of the nineteenth century, as we saw, strove to fulfil an educative and moral role in relation to the general public; in today's heritage centre, the tourism industry's influence is manifest. A more detailed discussion of new modes of representation will be discussed in Chapter Four. For now though, it is vital to understand that the nature of heritage is only to be found through allusion to tourism practices and developments and by identifying the link between the two. As we saw, this link is seen in the tourism industry's harnessing of various social developments - the renewed interest in the past, the process of deindustrialisation in Britain, the globalisation of culture, the rise of the service class and the internationalisation of tourism - in order to provide objects of distinction, to attract more tourists and ultimately to promote economic development.

CHAPTER THREE

THE TOURISM AND HERITAGE INDUSTRIES

IN IRELAND

In this chapter I wish to give statistical weight to this link between tourism and heritage by engaging in a discussion of the tourism and heritage industries in Ireland. Here I will show how the new wave of tourism discussed in the last chapter is being harnessed by Government policy in the two industries in this country.

THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

1988 - GOVERNMENT TARGETS FOR THE INDUSTRY

Tourism has been widely recognised throughout the country as Ireland's fastest growing industry. The Chairman of Bord Failte, Padraig O hUiginn, recently pointed out that 1988 was the year in which tourism first received substantial recognition that it was a growth industry with strong potential for Ireland (Bord Failte, Annual Report, 1992:4). 1988 has indeed proved crucial in Ireland's tourism industry. This was the year in which the Government set down a five-year plan for tourism in its Programme for National Recovery recognising the essential role it would have to play in the Irish economy. Not only was tourism the biggest growth industry but it also had the potential of being the biggest employer in the country. The importance of tourism for Ireland's development was summed up in a Bord Failte publication, 'New Framework for Development of Irish Tourism' (1989):- As living standards and incomes rise throughout the world, international tourism will continue to grow, and so will always be a major earner of foreign revenue; it will also

continue to be a major employer of people because it is inherently a labour-intensive industry due to the fact that people employed in tourism cannot generally be replaced by technology; it requires a wide range of skills and so can employ people at professional, skilled and operative levels; the nature of the industry means it need import few raw materials and can be widely spread around the country, maintaining people in rural areas; also, it can co-exist with rural activities such as agriculture and mari-culture without damage and can enhance our national advantages without being a threat to the environment (1989:3).

In 1988 then, the Government set ambitious targets which would guide the various agencies involved in Irish tourism towards helping Ireland to realise its potential as a major tourist destination, able to compete with international markets. Bord Failte's booklet, 'Tourism Growth' (1992), stated that in 1987 the industry supported 59,000 full-time jobs, it generated £731 million in foreign revenue and it attracted 2.1 million overseas visitors (1992:3). The five-year plan stipulated that by 1992 there were to be an additional 25,000 new jobs created by the industry, foreign revenue was to be increased by £500 million and the number of overseas visitors was to double to 4.2 million (1992:3).

In an An Taisce report 'Structural Funds and the Environment' (1992), Jeanne Meldon detailed another tourism plan - 'The Operational Programme for Tourism 1989 to 1993'. This, too, was to prepare the tourism sector to

compete successfully in the internal market and certain external markets and to help stimulate economic growth. Here again the emphasis was on an increase in employment, in visitor numbers and in visitor spending in this country (1992:19-20).

TOURISM PRIORITIES FOR THE NINETIES

These targets meant that the Irish tourism industry had to carefully pinpoint its main priorities and objectives for the coming years and to decide which route was the best to take in pursuing these. Some of these priorities then, were highlighted recently by Sean Browne, head of Bord Failte's Development Planning, in his article 'Tourism Priorities for the 1990s' (1994). He pointed out that in order for Ireland to gain competitive advantage over international markets it was vital that the country's key strengths were targeted. These he listed as: superb scenic landscapes; a quiet island with a relaxed pace of life; a distinctive heritage and culture; an absence of mass tourism; a friendly, welcoming, convivial people; an excellent location for outdoor activities and sports; and a green, unspoilt environment (P. Breathnach (ed.), 1994:30). By focusing on an enhancement of these indigenous qualities, Sean Browne noted that with Europe becoming ever more congested and impersonal they will prove an invaluable selling point in the years ahead (1994:30). These key strengths then, are to form the tourist imagery which will be used to represent Ireland to the foreign visitor in particular.

Following on from this, another priority highlighted is that of developing a policy of sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism, which involves the industry's dependence on the environment, has been defined by Meldon as "development that will enhance the quality of life and take a long term view of the environment, not threatening future generations" (P. Breathnach (ed.) 1994:125). If we are to enhance our key strengths then naturally we have to ensure that we protect and preserve them so that they can always be enjoyed and appreciated. This was recognised by the Operational Programme for Tourism 1989-1993 which stated that:

> "the preservation and conservation of our cultural and physical environment are absolutely essential to the unique and competitive advantages which the resultant tourism product will enjoy" (1989:54).

Making the environment a priority was also highlighted in Bord Failte's Annual Report 1992, in which the environment is seen as the cornerstone of Irish tourism. Here it was recognised that visitors are drawn by Ireland's green image and the concept of a land of clean air and pure water - a scenic island unspoilt by heavy industry. Thus it was acknowledged that new management techniques are necessary to spread capacity and avoid damage to amenity areas and to artifacts of national importance. This was to be done by implementing a strategy that would disperse visitors to a wider range of attractions (1992:7-8). Later we will see however, that the Government has been widely criticised precisely because other priorities are being more keenly pursued at the expense of this policy of sustainable tourism.

In the quest to increase foreign revenue another priority stressed by Sean Browne for the tourist industry involves increasing the average amount spent for every tourist in this country. In order to achieve this, higher spending tourists have to be targeted, attracted by better tourist products offering increased value for money (1994:30).

In order to combat the problem of seasonality - a major barrier to tourist development in this country - another objective for the industry is to spread business more evenly throughout the year. Emphasis is to be placed on leisure facilities and cultural projects which are weather-independent (Bord Failte Annual Report 1992:9). 'Link' magazine, produced by Bord Failte, also showed that existing products are to be re-engineered to give them long-season capability. There will be a focus on attracting special interest groups to out of season holiday-taking with the offer of good entertainment and activity such as angling, equestrian activities, cycling, hiking and hill walking. In attracting out of season customers the aim will be to exceed expectations and elevate the focus of the customer, rather than offering the same facilities provided in the summer at reduced prices (Link, June 1993:6).

Also, a framework is to be set down for the tourist industry which should help it to plan the impact of tourism development on the social and physical environment more effectively. This framework consists of four elements highlighted by Browne. The first, 'Tourism Centres' is characterised by an area of 15km with a minimum of 400 approved tourist rooms. In this category

accommodation, dining, transport, shopping, tourist information, are to be closely monitored. The second element in the framework, - 'Rural Tourism Areas' - are located outside the main tourism centres and can specialise in rural tourism holidays - quiet holidays with smaller attractions and warm, welcoming communities. 'Touring Areas', centred around dramatic mountain, lakeshore and coastal scenery and important heritage features with safe roads, good signposting and good information on all points of interest, constitute the third category. Finally, 'Special Interest Centres' in which activities such as golf, cruising, activity holiday villages, health farms and watersports can be improved to compete with international destinations. With this framework it is hoped that the agencies involved in Ireland's tourism sector can plan and develop in a more cohesive manner, enabling individual projects to complement and support each other (1994:31-33).

MARKETING

A more aggressive and focused marketing approach has become another priority in an effort to encourage the industry's growth in the face of competition. In this respect, Desmond Gillmor, in his article 'Recent Trends and Patterns in Irish Tourism' (1994), points to the fact that the Republic of Ireland is losing its share of international tourism: between 1960 and 1986 its percentages of world and European tourist arrivals fell from 1.98 to 0.75 and from 2.74 to 1.17 respectively (P. Breathnach (ed.) 1994:1).

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In 1988 Bord Failte outlined their Market Growth Strategy. Under this strategy their aim was to secure higher levels of repeat business and seek more first time visitors through better and more effective advertising, publicity and promotion. They also planned to expand the demand base by extending the range of holiday options and to open up new market areas and new product-market segments. This was to be achieved by assembling a range of both new and existing products and then packaging and promoting them to suit the needs and opportunities of various markets ('Tourism Growth', 1992:10).

One of Bord Failte's main campaigns, as we have seen, is to target the higher spending visitor market segment. This is being done by promoting those products which tend to attract the more affluent customer such as the 'special interest' holiday. Quality brochures are being produced to advertise such holidays as Golf, Angling, Sailing, Equestrian Sports, Walking, Cycling, Gardens, Historic Houses, Literary Ireland, Genealogy, City Breaks and Cultural Tours. There are also campaigns to advertise in more 'upscale' travel and lifestyle magazines ('Tourism Growth', 1992:10).

Market promotions are also being focused on different areas throughout the world. Strategic decisions have been made to strengthen Ireland's position in Mainland European, British, North American and Australian markets. Populations of Irish origin - of which there are so many in these countries in particular - have also been identified as a market segment with strong potential for Irish tourism.

Other marketing techniques being used by Bord Failte include familiarisation tours for overseas travel agencies and media; joint promotions with tour operators and couriers; development of international conference and incentive tour business; and trade and consumer shows (1992:10-12)

This increased market penetration, the entry into new markets and the policy of greater niche marketing show us the importance placed on the role of marketing in the development of the tourism sector, indicating the industry's major objective of attracting more and more visitors to this country.

Again this objective is a problematic one particularly in relation to the heritage and culture product and, as we will see later in the chapter, has been strongly criticised. However, marketing remains a priority in tourism as the industry strives to leave behind the traditional practice of treating visitors as a homogenous group when in fact the total comprises of several different groups or market segments.

Marketing, along with the other priorities listed in this section, are seen then as the most effective ways of ensuring that Ireland can compete successfully with international destinations and can continue to secure high levels of growth. These objectives, however, could only be achieved if Bord Failte and the tourist industry could bring about an enormous increase in the resources invested in international marketing and in product development. This next section shows us where the industry received the funds needed to meet the

targets set by the Government in the <u>Programme for National Recovery</u>.

INVESTMENT

Deputy Director General of Bord Failte, Matt McNulty, argued in 'Link' (December 1991) that a more favourable investment climate was needed urgently and that it is investors who represent the future growth of employment and foreign earnings (1991:9). Investment certainly has grown - between 1989 and 1993 a figure of approximately £770 million has been invested in the product range according to Bord Failte's '<u>Annual Report</u>' (1992:11).

The main sources of this investment include the Operational Programme for Tourism under which grants are funded by the European Community's European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). These funds are concentrated on five product themes shown by Meldon to include:- active specific interest projects such as angling, sailing, golf, equestrian activities; passive specific interest projects such as genealogy and English language training; cultural, heritage and entertainment projects; leisure fitness and health projects; and business tourism. The funds were concentrated around three subprogrammes: capital development in public sector projects; capital development in private sector projects; and manpower and training support (1992:20).

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'Tourism Growth' reported other sources of investment - the Business Expansion Scheme - which enabled potential investors promoting tourism projects to avail of tax relief on their investment; the International Fund for Ireland which provides funds which are donated by a number of sources including the USA, Canada and the EC; and other projects which concentrate on developing tourism in rural areas such as the Agri-Tourism Grant Scheme funded by the EC Operational Programme for Rural Development, the InterReg Programme for Tourism - an EC-backed scheme funding projects in the Border Counties and in Sligo, and the Leader programme which assists rural communities to develop their own ideas in accordance with their own priorities (1992:7-8).

1992 - ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE INDUSTRY

Bord Failte's 'Tourism Growth' (1992), showed that the targets set in the 1988 five-year plan have been reached. The job creation target had been exceeded by 1991 - 92,000 people were reported to be employed in the tourist industry in 1992 (1992:4). The foreign revenue target was also exceeded in 1992 with £1.310 billion earned through foreign visitor spending. Although the amount of visitors to this country in the five years rose only to 3.0 million (well below the 4.2 million target), the increase in foreign revenue shows that Ireland did attract a greater number of higher spending tourists (1992:4).

The 1992 Annual Report highlights other achievements by the industry which show that tourism's growth rate in the 1988-1992 period was twice that of the economy as a whole; by 1992 the tourist industry accounted for over 60% of all Ireland's entire export of services; the nett balance of payments from tourism (foreign revenue from visitors less expenditure by Irish residents going abroad) increased by 106%; and also, pure holiday makers (those not visiting friends or family or those on business trips) showed an increase of 67% (1992:10-11).

These achievements seem to indicate that the tourist industry has indeed proved an invaluable revenue-earner for the Irish economy - one of the underlying objectives in the Government's Programmes for Tourism.

The other major objective for the Government in developing tourism, as noted, was that of creating employment. James Deegan and Donal Dineen, in their recent study 'Irish Tourism Policy: Targets, Outcomes and Environmental Considerations' (1993), pointed out that a Government White Paper on Tourism in 1985 had placed job creation high on the agenda as the desired outcome of tourism development. Up until then, they argue, the sector was largely neglected as a job generator partly because the quality of jobs in tourism has often been associated with atypical or precarious work forms with heavy concentration of relatively low-paid, temporary, part-time and seasonal workers (O'Connor and Cronin (eds.) 1993:116-117).

However, the industry now insists that tourism is vital for employment creation in Ireland. Proinnsias Breathnach's report on 'Employment Creation in Irish Tourism' (1994), shows that the trend of increasing tourism employment between 1985 and 1990 - 23% increase - has continued into this decade with tourism accounting for one job in twelve in this country in 1992 (Breathnach (ed.) 1994:44)

Tourism has also proved a vital source of employment in less developed regions. This was highlighted in Tansey Webster and Associates' 1991 study, 'Tourism and the Economy', which revealed that areas such as the Northwest and Donegal, the Southwest, the West and Midwest all show an above average share of tourism related employment relative to total employment in the region (1991:57-60).

It could still be argued however, that employment in the industry remains largely of a transient or precarious nature. A recent CERT study, 'The Scope of the Tourism Industry in Ireland' (1987), for example, has shown that the sector which has the highest level of dependence on tourism - accommodation - also has the greatest amount of part-time or seasonal workers (CERT, 1987:18). So, although there are more full-time and permanent positions being created by the industry, employment in tourism is still largely governed by seasonal factors.

To conclude this section of the chapter then, we can see how the tourism

industry is perceived as vital to the economic development of the country. Already there is much evidence to suggest that we do have a very high dependency on the industry thereby increasing the pressure on agencies involved in tourism - and on Bord Failte in particular - to perform to high standards. It may seem that great risks are being taken by ploughing so many resources into one industry, but the Government believes that tourism is the greatest solution to date to much of our financial and unemployment problems. Thus, by targeting our key strengths and highlighting problem areas particular to Irish tourism, the Government plans to exploit various aspects of Irish life, package them as our tourism product and promote them in international markets.

THE HERITAGE INDUSTRY

THE TOURISM/HERITAGE RELATIONSHIP IN IRELAND

The following section is devoted to one of the main product areas in Bord Failte's development plan - that of history and culture. Under the 'Operational Programme for Tourism 1989-1993', 40% of ERDF grant aid was made available specifically for Ireland's heritage and cultural product. Bord Failte recognised the potential of this product. In opening a two-day conference on

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'Heritage and Tourism' (1992), Chairman of Bord Failte, Martin Dully, pointed out that there are people all over the world in search of cultural experiences, eager to enrich their knowledge about other lands, other people's way of life, their traditions and their customs. They want to visit historic buildings, ruins and battlefields, museums and art galleries. They want to experience traditional music and dancing, while others wish to trace their ancestry. Therefore, he stated, that inherent in the Board's strategy for tourism, is the realisation that these and many similar types of need can be satisfied in Ireland and not just for people whose own family roots began here (1992:ii).

It was also pointed out by Sean Browne at the Conference that history and culture are fundamental to the core 'Irish tourism product' as perceived by potential tourists (1992:1-1). This means that international tourists who visit Ireland are essentially motivated by an expectation of a distinctive destination (unless they have come to Ireland on business or to visit friends or relatives). They want to experience the 'real Ireland' - that which makes us different from other destinations. Therefore a distinctive identity must be created for Ireland through our history and our culture (1992:1-1).

Thus we see the importance of heritage to tourism development in this country. For Bord Failte it is only through the enhancement of our heritage attractions that visitors can be given a 'true' sense or understanding of the 'real' Ireland. Therefore, Bord Failte believe that, if an appealing image of our distinctive history and culture product can be projected, then we have gone in some way

towards satisfying the visitors' needs as tourists to this country. In order for the industry to secure repeat visits or gain greater publicity in international markets as a tourist destination, it has to provide a product that is different and distinctly Irish. With this in mind then, we will be looking at this product in more detail concentrating in particular on the way that it is presented. Let us first look, however, at the heritage industry in Ireland.

Like all industries we can only come to an understanding of its nature by becoming familiar with its administrative structure which we will see embraces both the workings of the industry and the ideology upon which it operates. The administrative structure has changed over the years in response to the changing needs of the industry all over the world. The biggest evidence of change in this country can be seen in the last few years which witnessed two major conferences held on heritage attractions in Ireland and a very large scale survey of visitor profiles. These conferences organised by Bord Failte, were, according to Martin Dully, principally aimed at using the recent generous allocation of resources by the European Regional Development Fund to give tourism "a once and for all opportunity to develop in a fitting manner our culture and heritage-based attractions" ('Developing Heritage Attractions' Conference, 1990:2).

Throughout these conferences we can see a reflection of the international heritage scene in which interpretation has evolved into part of the tourist industry. This was summed up at a World Congress on Heritage Presentation

and Interpretation in 1988 at which chairman John Foster explained that

"Interpreters worldwide are now well aware that theirs is no

narrow profession tied only to the special interests of

conservation...[t]hey recognise that interpretation is now

part and parcel of the leisure and tourist scene" (Uzzell (ed.) 1989:xiv).

As we analyse Irish heritage we will see how interpretation itself has become the main focus of the industry. We will see how an overall policy of interpretation is to be formulated under which all heritage sites in the country will be given direction in relation to their own operation.

THE CURRENT STANDING OF THE HERITAGE INDUSTRY IN IRELAND

To date there are 148 heritage-based tourist attractions in Ireland (Tourism Development International survey, 1992:6). These can be divided into five main types of attractions: historic houses and castles; interpretive centres, museums and folk parks; nature and wildlife parks; historic monuments; and heritage gardens. Responsibility for, or ownership of, these attractions is divided amongst six main groupings: Office of Public Works; Shannon Heritage; Public Authorities; Regional Tourism Organisations; Coillte Teoranta; and independent owners (Tourism Development International, 1992:8). The majority of funds for culture and heritage in Ireland shown in

Bord Failte's 'Tourism Growth' has come from the ERDF (through the Operational Programme for Tourism 1989-1993). These funds go towards capital development in both the public and private sectors and manpower and training within the industry. In the public sector, there was a total investment of £74,548 million in culture and heritage and £43,214 million in grant approvals in the sector. These figures were spread amongst a 108 different projects. In the private sector 31 culture and heritage projects received £24,611 million in investment and £8,602 million in grant approvals by November 1992 (1992:6). According to Jeanne Meldon, the largest allocation of the investment funds - £9 million - fell to interpretive centres (1992:53).

VISITORS TO HERITAGE ATTRACTIONS

A survey carried out by Tourism Development International during the summer of 1991 provides us with statistics on one of the most important elements in the heritage industry - the visitors themselves. This survey 'Visitors to Tourist Attractions in Ireland in 1991', which was commissioned by Bord Failte at their 1990 Conference on Developing Heritage Attractions, and which was funded by the ERDF, provided information on the attitudes, behaviour and overall profile of visitors to heritage attractions in Ireland. The survey was carried out on 88 of the 148 attractions in the country. It showed that there were almost 4.6 million visits to fee-paying heritage attractions in the Republic

of Ireland (1992:1). Despite the development of new attractions there was a high degree of concentration of visits to a number of key attractions. The growth in visitor numbers in relation to different types of attraction showed that Interpretive Centres, Museums and Folkparks recorded the greatest increase - 22% - indicating the increasing popularity of these types of attractions with visitors (1992:1,22).

A study of 'seasonality' as part of the survey revealed that 72% of all visits in 1991 were made in the period from June 1st to September 30th - over 3.2 million visitors. Most of these visitors were Irish - 1.1 million from both north and south of the country, with just over half a million visits made from British residents and 410,000 from the United States. Most of the other visitors came from Germany, France or Italy (1992:20,25). With regard to the way in which these visitors became aware of Irish attractions, the survey showed that over one third (34%) cited Guide Books and Tourist Literature as their source of awareness. Word-of-mouth from friends and relations proved the second most common source of awareness (1992:30).

To get an idea of the amount of money being spent by tourists in this country at heritage-based attractions, the survey showed that the average per capita amount spent on entrance tickets was £1.45; expenditure on other items - in shops or restaurants at the site - was recorded as £1.04 average per capita. Thus the total expenditure per visitor at Irish attractions in 1991 was £2.49 per capita, making a figure of £11.45 million spent by 4.6 million visitors in total

during that year (1992:49).

It was clear from the research carried out in the survey that although visitors were generally very satisfied with the tourist attractions product, there was still room for improvement and change. Areas in which concern was expressed included the internal and external infrastructure of heritage sites. Here it was revealed that visitors experienced difficulties in finding the sites and there were also problems with the quality of internal signposting within sites. Some criticism was also made in relation to ancillary facilities such as toilets, craft/book shops or restaurant/snack shops. There were problems too with translation of material for European visitors (1992:46-48).

One of the most important aspects in the heritage industry is the interpretive material used on the sites. The Tourism Development International survey can provide us with an overall indication of the opinions visitors have of the material in Irish heritage sites. Of the three types of interpretive material under review - literature, exhibits/exhibitions and audio-visual - literature was considered to be the most informative medium of transmitting the theme of an attraction to visitors. Exhibitions were considered to be more interesting, better presented and as having a higher educational value. Audio-visual displays, while not perceived as informative as literature, were rated more favourably than literature on all other measurements. As far as entertainment value was concerned, exhibitions and audio-visual displays fared far above literature material (1992:16).

Under the heading of 'overall assessment of experience' there was again minor but significant concern about attractions in terms of value for money, overall rating of visits to sites and satisfaction with conservation measures. 52% considered their visit good value for money; and while only 2% reported that it was poor value, this represents a significant 72,000 customers (1992:54). The question on 'suggested improvements' revealed that more detailed information, improved presentation, increased advertising and promotion and better management of visitor flows were some of the improvements called for (1992:58-61).

This survey then, would provide both Bord Failte and those agencies involved in heritage and culture in Ireland with a comprehensive insight into the visitors that come here each year. This information could then enable the policy makers to decide on the future of the heritage industry giving the tourism sector an opportunity to maximise the potential that exists in the area of heritage and culture in this country.

THE ROLE OF THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC WORKS

One of the most important agencies in the heritage industry in Ireland is the Office of Public Works (OPW). The OPW is the principal state body with responsibility for protecting the nation's built and natural heritage. One of the oldest State bodies in the country, its functions have changed over the years

but it has continued throughout its existence to influence many aspects of life in Ireland.

A 1994 OPW publication, 'Guide to the Archives of the OPW', shows that the OPW was established in 1831 in response to a need for a more structured and unified management of public works throughout the country. Prior to 1831, these public works were the responsibility of many different groups and commissions. An Act of Parliament established the OPW, and made provision for the appointment of three commissioners who formed the Board of Works with a back-up staff which included engineers, surveyors, clerks, and so on. Early activities of the Board included relief projects, Boards of Control for Lunatic Asylums and Lending Agency activities. It had responsibility for inland navigation, royal harbours, fisheries, roads, public buildings and arterial drainage (1994:1)

Throughout the years the OPW has retained many of its original functions but has also developed new roles in response to changing social conditions. During the Famine it set up Labour Schemes to provide much needed employment. Under the schemes many were employed in development programmes for drainage, piers and harbours. It continued with projects to relieve distress in the aftermath of the famine. It provided many of the light railway systems, the first runways and airport buildings at Dublin and Shannon airports, major roads such as the Antrim Coast Road and the Bantry to Kenmare road, and inland waterway systems. Today its responsibilities

include the restoration and preservation of many prestigious state buildings, the acquisition and fitting out of office accommodation for Government Departments, the construction and maintenance of Garda stations and prisons and the coastal erosion programmes (1994:1-2).

Through these services we can see how the OPW has infiltrated many aspects of life in Ireland over the years. One of its principal and most recent functions today also has a great bearing on Irish life - that of protection of Ireland's physical heritage such as buildings, monuments and national parks. In a country with a heritage as rich and varied as our own, decisions taken by the agency most responsible for Ireland's built and natural heritage could have huge repercussions on future generations. Let us therefore now look at the workings and policies of the OPW in relation to heritage in Ireland.

According to Noel Lynch of the OPW in 'The Presentation and Preservation of our National Heritage' (1988), the Heritage Division of the OPW is responsible for conserving and promoting Ireland's natural and manmade heritage through the National Parks and Monuments, Waterway and Wildlife services (1988:27). A 1991 OPW publication, 'Monuments in the Past', informs us that provision for the care of monuments in Ireland began in 1869 with the passing of the Irish Church Act. This Act disestablished the Church of Ireland and handed over churches and graveyards to various bodies. The Act also devised a category of 'National Monuments' which provided protection for the disused structures in graveyards considered too interesting

to be left unprotected (1991:vii). It was the Commissioner of the Public

Works who was given the job of looking after these monuments. Through a

series of National Monuments Acts, up to 1987, more and more physical

structures including non-ecclesiastical monuments were added to the care of

the Commissioners. One of these acts (1930) defined a National Monument

as:

> a monument or the remains of a monument, the preservation
>
> of which is a matter of national importance by reason of
>
> the historical, architectural, traditional, artistic or
>
> archaeological interest attaching thereto" (1991:vii-ix).

Today the OPW has 600 groups of National Monuments under its care. It also

has 73 Nature Reserves and refuges for fauna and 11 parks and gardens

(Lynch, 1988:28).

In its quest to both protect and promote Ireland's heritage the OPW has

emphasised two main priorities - conservation and interpretation. Within the

OPW any worthwhile conservation policy must be based on thorough research.

Scientific research has been done in the Wildlife Service section of the

Heritage Division. With regard to the canals and Shannon Navigation the

OPW is trying to create an integrated inland waterways system where the

waterside habitat for fish and other wildlife is protected. As far as Ireland's

natural heritage is concerned the OPW aims to maintain the existing

populations of wild flora and fauna, together with protecting their habitats,

while complying with national and international obligations in the field of wildlife conservation. There is also an active programme in operation to acquire and conserve large portions of rapidly diminishing areas of raised bogs (Lynch, 1988:28).

Fidelma Mullane, in her article 'Heritage Interpretation, Ideology and Tourism' (1994), points out that while conservation is their primary objective, the OPW operates on the belief that appropriate presentation of our heritage is the most effective way of conserving it. Physical conservation, they believe, is augmented through cultural reinforcement - an educated public. If a true appreciation of our heritage can be instilled in people then the policy of conservation will have a stronger force behind it (Breathnach (ed.), 1994:80). Thus the OPW see that in order to give people this appreciation they must present our heritage in an intelligible fashion - through interpretation.

The OPW have fully embraced Freeman Tilden's 1957 principle which has become the motto of the United States National Parks Service:-

> "Through interpretation, understanding; through
>
> understanding, appreciation; through appreciation,
>
> protection" (quoted in Mullane, 1994:80).

This can be seen in their interpretation policy which, according to Noel Lynch, has three elements: (1) to provide information and orientation so that visitors can make the most enjoyable use of the time they choose to spend in Ireland;

(2) to make available interpretive programmes so that visitors may gain a deeper understanding of the particular heritage attraction properly; and (3) to provide more formal educational programmes in relation to the cultural and natural heritage and to wider environmental issues (1988:30).

The OPW largely emphasises the importance of providing an enjoyable experience rather than overloading visitors with detailed, factual information. As Noel Lynch explains,

> "the interpretive programmme should help the visitor
> to see something new and to have his or her imagination
> stirred by the heritage site" (1988:30).

The interpretive and visitor facilities which have been established by the OPW at their heritage sites include guided tours, publications, audio-visual presentations, interactive exhibitions and re-enactments of events (OPW pamphlet, 'The OPW Cares for your Heritage', 1994). Much of the funding for these facilities, as we have seen, has come from the EC Structural Fund. This approach of providing an enjoyable experience parallels, as we will see, with the ideology of the heritage industry as a whole which emerged in the recent conferences on heritage and culture organised by Bord Failte.

The OPW also stress the need for flexibility in the interpretative programme to cater for both young and old, for people with physical handicaps and for both domestic and foreign visitors. It also helps to increase awareness of our

heritage by organising a special Heritage Day each year in conjunction with many voluntary and other organisations throughout the country (1988:30).

Their pricing policy has been developed to ensure a proper respect for what is being made available without being too expensive and, in 1990, they introduced a Heritage Pass (£10) which entitles the holder to enter any of their properties (1988:31).

This then gives us an insight into the operations of the OPW with regard to the heritage industry. With the greatest number of heritage sites in their care it is clear that the stance adopted by the OPW in relation to Ireland's heritage can have a huge impact on the tourist industry which views the heritage and culture product as Ireland's best and most promising tourism attraction. As the OPW themselves point out, the use of Ireland's greatest heritage and cultural resources in a sensitive and appropriate manner as a major tourist asset is vital to the success of the development of Ireland's tourism industry (OPW training manual, 'Ireland:OPW', 1994:5). As we turn now to the current plans and priorities for the heritage industry, we will see how the main objectives of the OPW are very closely linked with those of the tourist industry.

PRIORITIES FOR THE NINETIES - THE HERITAGE INDUSTRY

Freeman Tilden can again provide us with a clue to the thinking that lies

behind the heritage industry in Ireland. His original definition of interpretation in 1957, as

> "an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and
> relationships through the use of original objects, by first-hand
> experience and by illustrative media rather than simply to
> communicate factual information" (quoted in Mullane, 1994:81),

was widely embraced at the Conference on 'Developing Heritage Attractions' (1990). The motivation determining the type of interpretive policy to be developed, or the modes of representation to be adopted, was also revealed at this conference in Dr Terry Stevens' extension of Tilden's definition to include the fact that interpretation in the heritage industry is aimed at people who are "attending sites in their leisure time" (1990:107). This means, he informed us, that

> "interpretation has to be fun, without being superficial, because
> people are in a leisure setting in a leisure frame of mind, and
> they want to enjoy themselves" (1990:107).

So the aim then is to interpret Ireland's heritage and culture in such a way as to provide the visitor with an enjoyable and entertaining experience. Present interpretation provision which was the subject of a study by Ventures Consultancy Limited, (the results of which were presented and the 'Developing Heritage Attractions' Conference), showed that there seemed to be a basic lack of understanding of the whole process and role of interpretation. Operators

tended to replicate, or copy, individual interpretive components and development ideas from other sites which were often not suited to their own attraction. The study also showed that interpretation in this country lacks imagination and innovation with a limited range of media techniques and an over reliance on leaflets and publications. There seemed to be an absence of hands-on participatory or discovery forms of interpretation, such as interactive devices enabling visitors to enter into direct communication with an exhibition. Personal interpretation, explanations and guided tours to complement exhibitions and audio-visual presentations were also inadequate as was many infrastructural features such as signposting and directional guidance (1990:49-50).

Another important finding of the study was that a large number of existing heritage sites did not have any form of appropriate interpretation provision at all. This fact points to the underlying weakness of the industry to date. To illustrate this, the study drew a distinction between the *'hardware'* and *'software'* aspects of development in visitor attractions. Hardware elements included places, natural environment, buildings (historic and modern), visitor facilities and display showcases. Software included such elements as presentation, staff, display content, information and promotional material, quality of merchandise and interpretation provision. It was pointed out that there seemed to be a strong bias in Ireland in favour of the hardware elements of visitor attraction development - the assumption being that the key way to attract more tourists (and more tourist expenditure) was to develop more

attractions rather than enhance the software elements of existing products (1990:43).

The importance of software elements - interpretation provision in particular - in the move to enhance visitor experience at heritage attractions was stressed. It was also pointed out that the improvement of software at existing sites would cost much less than capital intensive physical developments of equivalent effect and should increase utilisation, visitor capacity and length of stay and, most importantly, would prevent the dilution of visitor numbers which would result from project duplication.

Following on from this then, a strategy for interpretation has been drawn up by the heritage industry.

STRATEGY FOR INTERPRETATION

(This strategy for interpretation was presented at Bord Failte's Conference on 'Developing Heritage Attractions' in 1990 and was refined for presentation at the 'Second Conference on Heritage and Tourism', 1992).

According to Terry Stevens, speaking at the 'Developing Heritage Attractions' Conference, interpretation is the art of telling a story (1990:22). The story to be told by the heritage industry is the story of Ireland's history and culture. At this Conference, Sean Browne pointed out that this is to be done by way of creating a framework within which decisions can be taken on the nature and

content of storylines at each heritage site. Under this framework certain dominant features are to be selected which will have existed through most periods of history, should be familiar to all visitors and which will represent the history and culture of Ireland. The features chosen were: landscape; economic activity; science and technology; religious and social action; political activity; culture and leisure. It is proposed that all storylines are to be clustered around five key themes which reflect these dominant features. These include: Live Landscapes; Making a Living; Saints and Religion; Building a Nation; and the Spirit of Ireland (Browne, 1992:1-3). These themes, being too broad for comprehensive interpretation at one single site, are to provide a focus around which numerous storylines can be developed at different sites throughout the country. Some of these storylines include: Land and Sea; Emigration and Famine; Industry, Transport and Power; Traditional Products; Pagan Ireland; Saints and Scholars; Celts and High Kings; The Anglo-Irish; Literary Ireland; Entertainment; and Irish Games and Sport (1992:1-3).

This framework, it was hoped, would ensure that there would be no copying of the storyline of another attraction, and any area should have a number of possibilities to choose from in reflecting a storyline with local relevance.

An essential part of the new strategy is the networking process. Linkage is to be developed between the various heritage attractions. Visitors are to be referred to other sites which reflect the theme/storyline of the attraction they are currently visiting. This should be done by way of signposting, wayside

panels, interpretation at lay-bys and viewpoints.

A network of about 25 'Heritage Towns' is also proposed. These will be selected on the basis of being in possession of well preserved historic buildings and will feature a visitor orientation centre, signposted walking tours, a wide range of attractions and facilities - all of which will be centred around the dominant historic theme of the town (1992:1-2 to 1-5).

The aim of this interpretation strategy then, is to make heritage attractions in this country more meaningful to visitors. By following the framework approach, each attraction contributes to the interpretation of the overall theme - the story of Ireland's history and culture. The strategy has been likened to the construction of a novel by Ventures Consultancy Ltd, with each storyline representing chapters which together constitute the overall story of Ireland's culture and heritage (1992:60).

So, the priority for the nineties for the heritage industry is to provide tourists with interpretative gateways into our heritage. These gateways, according to Sean Browne, should heighten visitor experience, increase satisfaction levels and help in awareness and appreciation of individual sites. This would result in, amongst other things, the creation of a strong brand image of Ireland as a quality heritage distination, with unique heritage attractions (1992:1-2). The storylines to be used at the various heritage sites then, are seen as the most effective way of relating Ireland's long and troubled history and our culture to

those unfamiliar with it. In doing this, it is hoped they will interpret our Irishness - unfold for the visitor that which sets us apart from other nations.

ENTERTAINMENT

A major priority in this decade, which is to complement and support the interpretation strategy for Ireland's heritage industry, is that of entertaining the visitor - providing the tourist to Ireland with an enjoyable experience. Entertaining the visitor is a very important element in interpretation policy for the tourism industry. Once visitors have been attracted to Ireland, it is vital that they have a satisfactory experience - have enjoyed the experience - because, as we have noted, they are here to enjoy themselves.

The industry recognises the fact that foreign tourists who come to Ireland are in a position to compare Ireland with other international destinations in their presentation of heritage. This comparison is often unfavourable. At the 'Developing Heritage Attractions' Conference the importance of the entertainment factor throughout the world emerged in the examples given by some speakers on techniques and standards in international heritage attractions. Marc Sagan, an interpretive planning consultant from Virginia, gave examples of various spectacular museums and heritage centres with very effective life-size exhibits, sound and light shows. Some of these use the most modern video interactive machinery available which include touch-sensitive video-quiz

screens to amuse visitors as they wait to get into an audio-visual programme. Other video screens put on spectacular shows with multi images available at the press of a button by a visitor. The message coming through Sagan's presentation at the Conference then, is that visitors in US interpretative centres are having fun. While he was unsure as to what they were actually learning during their visit, they were nevertheless enjoying themselves (1990:11-13).

Frans Schouten, a Museum, Exhibition and Heritage Management Consultant, gave a presentation on sites in Continental Europe. He stressed the value of providing 'nice' or 'quality' experiences to visitors. These were experiences they could easily recall. Interpretive planning, he felt, should be geared towards the more 'casual' visitor as opposed to the 'scholarly' or 'interested' visitor. Because, he argued, the casual visitor is not going to recall their experience as nice or enjoyable if he or she has not been able to understand the exhibition (1990:16-17).

In order to contribute to their understanding and hence their enjoyment of a place, Schouten suggested that visitors have to be provided with stories in heritage sites, stories that are structured like a book with contents, pages and chapters. There should be a clearly defined starting point - the building itself - with a title - a striking image that gives a resume of what the exhibition is going to be about. The chapters should provide emphasis, punctuation, direction. There must be strong images to attract visitors and involve them in the story, explaining things, events and objects, along the way. Finally there

must be a proper ending of the exhibition and a way out (1990:17-18).

Schouten also stressed, in keeping with the notion of entertaining the visitor, that texts should only be used as a last resource in conveying a message. He argued that people come to museums and sites for a visual experience; they don't come to read - so there should be a move away from showcases, objects and labels which, he believes, are the cause of 'museum fatigue'. People's emotions also have to be targeted - a heritage site should convey aesthetical experiences as well as knowledge. If all of this is provided then the visitor will leave having had an enjoyable experience, one that can easily be recalled (1990:18-19).

Terry Stevens presented a similar argument at the Conference. He stressed the notion "if you do, you remember and you understand. If you read, you forget" (1990:23). In order to provide a good experience to visitors he stressed the importance of bringing sites to life with actors and animators. In this way then the visitors can be given the 'real experience'. They can see immediately things that occurred years or centuries before (1990:21-24).

It is these ideas from international experts that are being taken on board by the heritage industry in this country. Providing an enjoyable experience - entertaining the visitor - is to be a crucial factor in deciding on the best interpretive policy for this country. Because of this it is agencies such as Bord Failte and the OPW who are to plan the telling of the story of Ireland's history

and culture. The implications of this is that 'experts' such as local historians are to have a diminished role in the way our heritage is to be presented. The aim is to instruct visitors on various aspects of our culture but to do it in such a way that its is intelligible to them and, of course, entertaining. The experts in Irish history then, are to be replaced by experts from the tourist and heritage industries - exhibition consultants and planners, marketing experts, regional tourism officers, town planners, development directors, architects and various officials from Bord Failte, the OPW, Shannon Heritage and local authorities.

Already there is evidence to show the changes taking place in heritage presentation in this country. New interpretive centres are opening up each year. These are largely directed towards the casual visitor. The experience they provide is principally a visual one. There is less and less to read in these centres. Stories are being told through pictures, through audio-visual presentations, through life-size models and exhibits. Visitors are being invited to interact with the presentations, to become more involved. These are all designed to contribute to the visitors's enjoyment of the site.

Thus we have seen the Irish heritage industry's current priorities for this vital product area of Irish tourism. We have seen how the modes of representation being currently pursued by the heritage industry have evolved in response to the prevailing conditions of the industry, in which it is believed there have been missed opportunities to capitalise on one of Ireland's potentially strongest assets.

The industry is now aiming to structure itself around the software elements of visitor attractions, in particular - interpretive provision. It recognises that this is the best way to improve and enhance visitor experience at heritage attractions - an essential aspect of the new ideology.

In the course of the two Conferences, the whole process and role of interpretation has been identified and redefined, with the emphasis now turning to the formation of an overall and unique product. This product is to be perceived as a book containing chapters which relate the story of Ireland's heritage and culture to the foreign or domestic visitor - a framework of themes and storylines around which Ireland's culture and heritage can be developed and interpreted to visitors from home and abroad.

The intense scrutinization of the heritage industry in the Tourism Development International survey has highlighted those site-specific and market-specific factors which strongly effect our culture and heritage and these will have a great bearing on decisions involving interpretation development. The visitors themselves are seen as a vital element and so their opinions, behaviour and attitudes have been closely gauged and will be incorporated into the new process. The aim will be to create a product which will individually appeal to all sources of demand from different markets.

With the problems of the heritage and cultural sector having been clearly laid out then, a solution has been offered. This solution, it is hoped, will serve to

provide visitors with a better understanding of those characteristics of our heritage and culture which make us uniquely and distinctly Irish. Therefore, it should provide visitors to Ireland with the much sought after distinctive gaze.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS

The priorities and objectives discussed in this chapter are needless to say not without problems. Both the tourism and heritage industries in this country have been widely criticised in recent years. Most of this criticism is directed towards a problem that is inherent in the very nature of tourism itself. This problem highlights the irony that lies behind tourism development: the better the tourism product produced and the resulting increase in visitor numbers, the greater the risk to the environment - the key component of Ireland's tourism product. I will now engage in a brief discussion of these and other contested issues.

Environmental Issues

At the forefront of this criticism is the Government agency for the environment - An Taisce. Jeanne Meldon of An Taisce has argued recently in her article

'Sustainable Tourism Development and the EC Structural Funds' (1994), that the environment is the basic resource upon which the future of the tourism industry depends and that even though a 'green' unspoilt environment is constantly put forward as one of the strengths of Irish tourism, marketing strategies and product development frameworks outlined by the industry do not always reflect an underlying philosophy of sustainable development (Breathnach (ed.), 1994:127).

Deegan and Dineen in their critical appraisal of Irish tourism policy, point out that the tourism lobby has traditionally been vocal in outlining the benefits of tourism (employment generator and foreign revenue earner) while it has, until recently, down played the costs - the harm done to the environment. The cost of protecting the environment, they argue, should be treated as a cost of doing business (O'Connor and Cronin (eds.) 1993:132).

As we have seen, however, the Government's Programmes for Tourism over the last few years has emphasised product development, growth in visitor numbers, more effective marketing with little reference being made to conservation issues. It could be argued that Ken Robinson's optimistic forecast given at the Conference on 'Developing Heritage Attractions' (1990) - that the Irish tourism product could be changed permanently by the significant and immediate effect of ERDF funding - could turn out to be an ominous one. If the government proceeds with its current targets in their Tourism

<u>Development Plan 1993-1997</u>, of creating 35,000 new jobs, increasing foreign revenue by 60% and, most significantly, increasing the number of overseas visitors by 50% (Bord Failte, '<u>Tourism Growth</u>', 1992:10), then ERDF funding could well have an adverse effect on the essence of the Irish tourism product. There seems to be a huge contradiction between the imagery being presented of Ireland to visitors, and Government tourism and heritage policy which aims to double tourism numbers.

Deegan and Dineen, in arguing for longer term strategic planning and greater attention to environmental issues in tourism and heritage development policy, even go so far as to question the influence Irish tourism target setting and policy has had on the recent economic 'successes' secured by the industry. They suggest that the influence may have been minimal or even non-existent and is more subject to international fashions and events such as the general move away from sun holidays , the push towards alternative tourism, and the greater awareness of, and interest in, the environment throughout the world. (1993:128).

Already there is much controversy over various projects approved to date. While private sector projects are subject to an environmental checklist under the Environmental Impact Assessment procedure and to planning controls, these procedures are inadequate, according to Meldon ('<u>Structural Funds and the Environment</u>', 1992:56-58). This is most evident in those projects which are exempt from such procedures such as planned golf clubs and leisure

developments. Many of these are planned in heritage landscapes or areas of scientific or scenic interest, and are potentially damaging to the surrounding environment. An example cited by Meldon is that of the proposed hotel and leisure complex by a private corporation at Lough Key Forest Park in Roscommon. The proposed development includes houses for holiday use, an equestrian centre and a sewage treatment plant located in the woodlands, a leisure centre in an arboretum, the conversion of the original stable block into a bar, a restaurant and shops and a new hotel on the site of the former Rockingham House overlooking Lough Key. This development would have many adverse effects including those on the woodland, on the Lough itself and it would also be visually intrusive (1992:52).

Also, as we have seen, special interest activity holidays are a major part of the tourism development plan. According to Arnold Horner, in his essay 'Golf Course Development: Dilemmas of Activity Tourism' (1994), with the help of over £12 million in EC Structural Funds, Bord Failte has supported the private sector development of new golf courses particularly open to tourist-oriented business and with great job creation potential (Breathnach (ed.), 1994:89). He argues, however, that many of the courses are being planned in conflict areas such as bogland, woodland, forests, historic demesnes and archaeological sites, most of which cannot be easily replaced or substituted elsewhere once they have been civilised for golf (1994:97).

The overriding message, then, emanating from these projects and from the

Government's recent plans both in the past and for the future is that - as we have established - the major motivation in tourism development is economic gain through employment creation and through foreign earnings creation. Conservation and protection which should be, according to many, the principle priority in both the tourism and heritage industries, is being shown to be in a secondary position. The irony can be seen in the example of the proposed development at Carton House in Maynooth. The estate including the House itself and the surrounding environment which is noted for its woodland, wetlands, botanical species and various wildlife (which are otherwise a rarity in the locality) is listed in the Operational Programme for Tourism as one of the strengths of the Midlands East Region, as a great house and a natural and historic resource. Meanwhile, approval for a golf and leisure complex which include the construction of access roads and bridges has been sought and granted by Bord Failte! (Meldon, 1992:23).

So, what of the Office of Public Works - the body chiefly responsible for conservation of Ireland's natural and built heritage ? Conservation, we have noted, is its top priority yet, despite this, much criticism has been levelled at the OPW. The fault lies with some of the interpretive centres (three in particular) that have been built by the OPW. These centres at Dunquin in Co Kerry, Mullaghmore in the Burren and at Luggala in Co Wicklow have been very strongly objected to by various bodies for a number of reasons - the main one being the location of the sites. The Dunquin Centre which opened last year is located on an exposed site and greatly interferes with the visual and

scenic amenity of the area. The centre at Luggala is in a largely unspoilt and unbuilt landscape of open moorland; it will be visible over a wide area and will require road widening. The centre at the Burren - renowned internationally as an area of very significant scientific interest - is planned right in the middle of the area.

However, it seems that despite the huge lobby against these centres because of the significant damage potential to the environment, the OPW is proceeding with its plans although alternative locations for the centres have been suggested which would still allow the OPW to continue with its interpretive policies, while fulfilling its conservation obligations. Looking at these risks being taken by the OPW it could be argued that their role is changing: under the auspices of the tourism industry, the emphasis may now be switching from conservation of Ireland's National Heritage to presentation of our National Heritage through interpretation.

Fidelma Mullane of Udaras na Gaeltachta is critical of the OPW's interpretive centres for a different reason. Her argument concerns the way that the natural environment is presented in their centres which use scientific data accumulated through the natural sciences. According to Mullane there is no attempt to highlight the cultural significance of, or attachment to, the natural environment (1994:82). This is very evident in the whole concept of the National Park. When a National Park is established there are certain criteria which must be

adhered to. Those pertinent to Mullane's argument concern the visitors to the park:-

> "visitors are allowed to enter under special conditions, for
>
> inspirational, educative, cultural and recreative purposes"
>
> (quoted in OPW: 'The National Parks and Monuments Service',
>
> 1993).

The special conditions ensure that people are fenced off from various parts of the Park for 'conservation' reasons. This in turn has huge implications for local people in particular who find themselves cut off from their own natural environment by forces external to them. It seems that there is no attempt being made in the heritage centres through interpretive material to connect the locals to their landscape.

The tourist is also fenced off from the natural environment by being specifically invited into the interpretive centre while being discouraged from wandering in the National Park itself. As Mullane points out, only negative consequences can result from such a philosophy which alienates people from the environment (1994:83). It could be argued that the interpretive centre could even prove to have a detrimental effect on Ireland's heritage product. In taking people off the land - removing them from the environment which has attracted them to the country in the first place - and replacing their direct experience of the landscape with an interpretive centre experience, then we are failing to provide the much promised 'real' experience of Ireland.

Interpretation Strategy

The interpretation strategy which we have looked at could also be challenged. The interpretive gateways offered to the tourist through themes and storylines are aimed at relating the story of Ireland's history and culture. The heritage industry is striving towards an exploitation of our distinctiveness - a unique product, as we saw - and yet it seems ironic that they plan to do this by taking on board the ideas and methods of experts from heritage attractions abroad. Farrel Corcoran, in his essay 'Cultural Memory and the Heritage Centre' (1993), sees this as an indication of the workings of globalised modernity in which "local environments are increasingly being affected by distant processes and events" (paper presented to 'Defining a Heritage Policy' Conference, 1993:20).

However, despite the problems with some of the operations of both the tourism and heritage industries we can conclude this chapter with an acknowledgement of the fact that these two industries can indeed play a vital role in the future development of this country. Tourism is a huge growth industry all over the world and Ireland is in the unique position of being in possession of such a strong and varied history and culture that if we can make the best use out of our resources, while remaining sensitive to problem areas, then we should be able to compete effectively with the world's tourism and heritage industries and simultaneously keep a strong hold on that which sets us apart from the rest of the world - our heritage.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PROCESS OF VISUAL REPRESENTATION

So far I have looked at the nature of museums and shown these to be forms of power domination. This, in the nineteenth century, as we have seen, was a novel form of power domination, giving the impression, in their opening the doors to the general public, that the people had some input into its representations of progress, while it denied any attempt at criticism. Thus the people necessarily assented to the museum's own vision of history. This was achieved through the museum's modes of representation which, as I have shown, were its employment of a 'system of objects' in which objects were collected, ordered and given meaning. In order to investigate the new modes of representation which are to be found in heritage centres, I have first attempted to explain the nature of heritage itself which, as we have seen, is only to found by reference to touristic practices and developments. This investigation highlighted the growing trend towards heritage tourism throughout the world.

Following this, I have gone on to show, in the case of Ireland, Bord Failte's harnessing of this global trend to further economic development throughout the country by promoting Ireland as a distinctive destination. This, as I have discussed, is to be done by providing interpretive gateways into our heritage through the creation of a framework, within which each heritage attraction throughout the country will contain a storyline that is to contribute to the overall story of Ireland's heritage and culture. While many heritage attractions are natural, there are also an increasing number of purposely built attractions such as heritage centres. Heritage centres have been discussed briefly in a

previous chapter. Let us now take a more detailed look at these centres which aim to represent the past through new modes of representation (that is, in a different way to those employed in the old style museum), which emerge in response to changing needs in society, and how these needs have been interpreted by the tourist and heritage organisations.

THE VISUALISATION PROCESS IN THE HERITAGE CENTRE

As we have noted in Chapter Two, there seems to be an urgent demand to achieve an immediate confrontation with the past. The tourism and heritage industries throughout the world aim to provide this confrontation through heritage centres. Tourism, as suggested by Fussell, is merely about a world discovered, or even created, by entrepreneurs, packaged and then marketed (cited in Crick, 1989:308). In the area of heritage, these two strands come together through modes of representing the past which involve translating esoteric information into forms that are comprehensible to a wide and popular audience. These new modes can be summarised in the process of visualisation. In this process the living history, according to David Brett, in his essay 'The Construction of Heritage' (1993), is activated by visual witnessing (O'Connor and Cronin (eds.) 1993:200). This is done with the help of advancements in modern technology which render the image central to the heritage centre. The image which may be created through a variety of different media, helps the visitor to visualise life patterns or events. Just as the

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artefact played the central role in the traditional museum, so it is the image which is vital to the functioning of the heritage centre. It is the image, moving or still, which commands the dominant position in the heritage centre's presentation, enabling visitors to witness an event, a place or person from times past through their own eyes, immediately. It allows the visitor to travel in time as well as in space. Tourism, which involved travel in space only, is extended in heritage-based tourism to travel also in time. In our visual age, the image is deemed more effective than mere objects.

In the visualisation process the visual is dominant over the verbal. This process causes visitors to the heritage centre to view the image or real artefact first. This is because the moving or still image - the photograph, audio-visual display or the real object itself - tends to focus the attention of the visitor initially before they go onto read the written captions which usually accompany the visual display. It could be said that the heritage industry employs this mode of representation in answer to changes in society in that we are now part of a visual culture and so we are particularly susceptible to visual media, that is, it attracts us because we understand its form. We live today in a visual age. Television and film increasingly replace the written word.

According to Cyril Farrell, in his article 'A Sense of Image' (1981), what has happened is that we have actually become *again* a visual generation (1981:34). Medieval man, he points out, very much belonged to a visual culture. Here was an age of non-readers, communication was more simple and direct without

the subtlety of words: visual awareness was at a higher level with interpersonal communication through body language, and stained glass windows and cathedral statuary transmitting and recording ideas and concepts through pictures (1981:34). With the advent of printing and books, Farrell Suggests, visual culture changed to a culture of concepts. However, the introduction of film (and later television) has, in a very short space of time, made us once again a visual generation (1981:35). With silent film, we had to learn to see again, and when sound came to the screen in the 1920s, an uneasy alliance gave way to mutual benefit - words, speech and pictures complimenting each other on the big screen. But, to this day, as Farrell points out, it is taken for granted that the visual is the primary most important factor. Today cinema and its off-shoots pervade our lives - in business, education, and advertising, goods are sold, information is departed, attitudes are formed, ideas are created and destroyed by the likes of cinema, television, microfilm, videotape, slides and film strips. As Farrell notes, a sense of image has been created (1981:35).

This however may be an over-simplification of societal developments as the printed word in books and newspapers, for example, are still very influential today, but it cannot be denied that a very strong sense of image pervades, and this is particularly felt in the area of heritage and the representation of the past. To remind ourselves of Urry's statement - being a tourist involves the notion of departure - and the anticipation of such a departure is in part constructed by a multiplicity of media, most importantly film and television. It would seem then in part, as Kevin Walsh notes, that the heritage industry is reacting to this

anticipation through the construction of media which are equivalent to the televisual image, such as moving images on screen and audio-visual technology (1992:118). Thus, in today's heritage centres we have actor-interpreters, sound/light displays for interpreting battlefields, soundtracks playing contemporary accounts of events, technically created and displayed images of artifacts, audio-visual displays and life-size exhibits.

Narration is a vital component of the visualisation process. In its use of visual images, the heritage centre, according to Farrel Corcoran in his essay, 'Cultural Memory and the Heritage Centre' (1993), is attempting to break down the separation of the academic/aesthetic and social spheres in an endeavour to make an immediate impact through awakening a desire for narrative in its visitors (1993:17). The narrative structure involves providing the visitor with a fixed account or interpretation of a certain event in the past. It is a vital element in the heritage centre's quest to make certain processes, particular to a country, comprehensive to the wider audience. The narrative provides explanation and interpretation of what has been witnessed in the visual image. The narrative also, Corcoran argues, along with visualisation, plays a major role in actively encouraging audience participation in its presentations (1993:17).

Kevin Walsh points to a new dimension in narrative which involves simulation - another important aspect of the visualisation process in the heritage centre. This includes 'empathy' or first-person interpretation. Unlike the more

traditional method of using third-person interpretation in which there is no pretence, simulation involves 'actor-interpreters' who are trained to speak in the first-person and in dialects which existed in the particular era or area which is the subject of the exhibition (1992:101).

The Centre strives to enhance simulation in many other ways. Simulation, according to Brett, may be in the form of shop-fronts or a town, in animated dummies or even in the form of taste, smells and soundtracks - recent inclusions in heritage displays which contribute to a most effective simulation of a particular period or event (O'Connor and Cronin (eds.) 1993:199-200). These forms of simulation then, aided by electronic media, render the heritage centre's displays as seemingly natural and real.

Thus we see the mediated nature of heritage displays. Like the traditional museum, the heritage centre must employ a variety of techniques for presenting the past. Objects and places cannot speak for themselves - they have to be mediated in some way. In the traditional museum, objects were given meaning through written captions and the order of their display. In the heritage centre, different media and processes are used to convey the past. The mediated nature of displays then, whether in the museum or heritage centre, is further evidence of the influence of social developments on representations of the past. Thus, it is the visualisation process - the use of images, narration and simulation - which helps the heritage centre to fulfil its function by translating information for a wide and varied audience, and

consequently providing the visitor with a good simulated experience.

Museums and Heritage Centres - A Comparison

At this stage then, I think it is useful to highlight briefly some of the main differences and similarities between the traditional museum and the heritage centre. Boniface and Fowler sum up the differences between the heritage centre today and the museums of the nineteenth century. They see that the crucial element in the heritage experience for the cultural tourist nowadays is that, on his/her journey of historical curiosity, he/she is likely to be presented with a fixed narrative or interpretation - a history story; whereas in times past a comparable historical encounter would be solely with one or more ancient objects and sites (the real thing in positivist terms) (1993:xii). Thus it is the modes of representing the past that are fundamentally different.

However, despite the essential differences in regimes of representation between the heritage centre and the traditional museum, there are similarities between the two institutions. Their methods of representing the past, I believe, have very similar effects. First amongst these is that they both engage in an illusion of adequate representation of the world. This was seen in both processes of selective representation and in the way in which each institution substitutes its own temporality for the real time of history.

There are also similarities in the way in which a sense of trust in the curator or those responsible for the museum or heritage centre is procured from the

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visitor to the exhibit. In Chapter Two we discussed the traditional museum as a 'disembedding mechanism' which removes processes of studying, interpreting and representing the past from the people transferring it instead onto the curator in the museum, resulting in the visitor having to place trust in the knowledge of those in authority. In the heritage centre, this same reliance on the professionals in the tourism and heritage industries for providing representations of the past pervades. Here, a similar effect occurs in both the museum and heritage centre in that the representations, while they may be *for* the people, are very evidently not *by* the people.

Finally, both regimes of representation effect a form of appropriation through viewing - be it the viewing of an artefact or an image of an artefact - which endows, as we saw, the visitor with a sense of identity - a marking off a piece of the world which is not other.

Following on from this then, we may say that the essential difference between the traditional museum and the heritage centre is the use of real objects in the former, and mostly images of artifacts in the latter.

TOWARDS A CRITICISM OF VISUALISATION

According to Gordon Fyfe and John Law in their introduction to 'Picturing Power: Visual Depiction and Social Relations' (1988), a depiction is never just an illustration. It is, they believe, the material representation or product of a

process of work (1988:1). To understand a visualisation then, is to inquire into its provenance and into the social work that it does. It is to note its principle of exclusion and inclusion, to detect the roles that it makes available, to understand the way in which they are distributed and to decode the hierarchies and differences that it naturalises. It is also to analyse the ways in which authorship is constructed or concealed and the way that the sense of audience is realised (1988:1). Because depiction, picturing and seeing are ubiquitous features of the process by which most human beings come to know the world as it really is for them, it thus follows, according to Fyfe and Law, that social change is at once a change in the regime of representation (1988:2). As such, it is vital that both the character of production - those processes that lead to the creation of a depiction, and the audience - the ways in which such depictions are subsequently used - have each to be studied in their own historical specifity (1988:1).

WAYS OF SEEING

The areas of depiction, picturing and seeing which concern us here are naturally those associated with the tourism and heritage industries in general, and with museums and heritage centres in particular. John Urry's work on 'The Tourist Gaze' (1990), showed us that when we seek pleasure in the form of holidays, tourism and travel, that is, away from our normal place of work and residence (and everyday life in general), a part of that experience involves gazing at what we encounter. This gaze, Urry informs us, is a socially organised and systematised phenomenon (1990:1). In this respect he points to

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different ways of seeing such as the seeing of a unique object, "famous for being famous" - the Eiffel Tower in Paris, for example - which still attracts millions of visitors each year despite the fact that it is no longer the biggest building in the world. There is the seeing of particular signs which involves reading the landscape for signifiers of certain pre-established notions or signs derived from various discourses of travel and tourism. There is also the seeing of unfamiliar objects previously thought familiar such as in those in museum displays which show the lives of ordinary people. Here visitors see unfamiliar elements of other people's lives which had been presumed familiar. There is too, the seeing of particular signs which indicate that a certain object is indeed extraordinary, even though it does not seem to be so (Urry, 1990:12). Another way of seeing is highlighted by Svetlana Alpers in her study 'The Museum as a Way of Seeing' (1991). She pointed out that the museums of Europe have a long history of encouraging attention to objects as visible craft. Objects collected in museums are judged to be of visual interest. What is happening here is what Alpers calls the 'museum effect' which turns all objects into works of art, isolating them from their original context (Karp, I and Lavine, S (eds.) 1991:27). In this way then, the museum produces yet another way of seeing.

Each of these ways of seeing point to the presence of something outside the control of the person who is seeing. There is in fact a process at work which produces these ways of seeing. What is happening is that professional experts are helping to construct and develop our gaze as tourists. Although we may

think that we choose to visit a certain place, our reasons for the choice are often the result of certain modes of representation. As impending tourists we set off for unfamiliar places that have been made familiar through photographs, postcards, television and other media. As Urry points out, the gaze is constructed through signs (1990:3). We search for signs that typify ways of life particular to certain places. These signs have been made typical by regimes of representation. In effect it is the professionals in the tourism industry who depict the signs which we seek out as tourists.

As we saw in Chapter Two, because of the universalisation of the tourist gaze, all sorts of places have come to construct themselves as objects of the tourist gaze. Large cities, rural areas and seaside resorts, for example, are pursuing strategies which they hope will attract increased numbers of tourists. Again it is the professionals - tourist boards and personnel involved in various tourism development programmes - who make the important decisions about what visitors want to see. In the last chapter we noted, for example, as part of Ireland's interpretive strategy for promoting heritage, a network of about 25 'heritage towns' was proposed. We also noted that there must be certain pre-conditions in designating an area as an heritage town: they are to be selected on the basis of being in possession of well-preserved historic buildings. Following this, they are to feature a visitor orientation centre, signposted walking tours, a wide range of attractions and facilities - all of which are to be centred around the dominant historic theme of the town. Thus, buildings have to be significant historically and used for activities in some ways

consistent with the tourist gaze - as hotels, museums, shopping areas, heritage centres and so on. As Urry notes, there must therefore be a coherent relationship between the built environment and the presumed atmosphere or character of the place concerned (1990:118). The professionals then, in this case those working in the tourism and heritage industries, are involved in the selection processes. These people are working principally to cater for the tourist gaze, and, through heritage, they are pursuing larger interests such as economic regeneration. From this then, we can see how important the gaze is in tourism. The gaze is not left to chance. These 'heritage cities' are being depicted by various agencies which are naturally selective in what they put 'on show', and the contrived result stems from the fact that they are operating under the auspices of the tourist gaze within which everything must be made visually appealing. With the emphasis on the visual in tourist consumption there has to be something distinct to gaze upon (that is, something different from what we encounter in everyday life), otherwise, as Urry puts it, "a particular experience will not function as a tourist experience." (1990:128).

In the heritage centre or museum the need to investigate forms of depiction becomes urgent. This is because of the fact that, as Urry tells us, heritage history is distorted because of the predominant emphasis on visualisation, on presenting visitors with an array of artifacts, including buildings (either 'real' or 'manufactured'), and then trying to visualise the patterns of life that would have emerged around them. This, he suggests, is 'artefactual' history (1990:113).

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With this emphasis on visualisation in museums and, in a different way, in heritage centres, we must bear in mind the notion that a visualisation is never just an illustration. To take an exhibition, painting or a display of objects in a museum or heritage centre on face value only is to ignore the myriad of processes at work in both its production and its subsequent use. When things are presented to us in visual forms there is always the danger that we will take these as true representations of reality without proper scrutinisation. Images shown to us through photography seem to leave us in no doubt about the authenticity of what is being represented. Objects accompanied by labels or various forms of narration explain things simply to us, and therefore we understand.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photography in particular, since its invention in the early nineteenth century, has given rise to a new way of seeing and, because of its constant use in heritage centres today, it is essential that we look beyond the frame of the photographic image. With this in mind, let us look at some of the central characteristics of photography suggested by various writers on the subject.

P. Albers and W. James, in their essay, 'Travel photography: a methodological approach' (1988), point out that to take a photograph is in some way to appropriate the object being photographed. They see it as a power/knowledge relationship: to have visual knowledge of an object is in part to have power

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over it ('Annals of Tourism Research',1988:151). When we view something in a photograph that has otherwise been thought wild or exotic, we become familiar with it, and it somehow looses its aura and hence its power over us. John Urry sees photography as a democratisation of all forms of human experience: everything can be turned into a photographic image and anybody can take a photograph (1990:139). Unlike art and other forms of 'high culture' then, photography belongs to everyone. Another characteristic suggested by Urry is that it gives shape to travel. It is the very reason for people visiting certain places (1990:139). Spurred on by touristic images and television, the traveller seeks to capture these images for himself in a photograph. It is then the only concrete proof to others that he/she really was at this place.

However Susan Sontag, in her work 'On Photography' (1979), argues that despite the authority attached to the photographic image in relation to its transcription of reality, it is essential that we view photographs as the outcome of an active signifying practice in which those taking the photo select, structure and shape what is to be taken (1979:109).

Like other forms of visual representation the photograph is very much a social construct which should be viewed not simply as a representation of reality, but as a very powerful phenomenon which has changed our perception of how we view the world and, because of this, we have become empowered. We become familiar with the unfamiliar and thus we can control that which we once feared because of its otherness. Its power can also be seen in the fact

that it provides the very basis for travel. As Urry points out, much tourism becomes, in effect, a search for the photogenic (1990:139).

ORIGINS OF VISUAL REPRESENTATION IN IRELAND: THE AESTHETICISATION OF IRISH LANDSCAPE

The use of the photograph, along with other visual images in the heritage centre emerges as a particularly problematic area in the case of Ireland. David Brett, in his paper, 'Representing Cultures' (1993), points out that the representation of cultures through tourism and its associated imagery can only be discussed as a problematic field (presented at 'Conference on Tourism' (Maynooth)1993:1). He sees that the impact of the tourist industry has caused the heritage industry to represent the world, its histories and its cultures, as a spectacle (1993:2). Thus, sightseeing, which is synonymous with tourism, emerges as an important element in the area of heritage. As Brett argues, the heritage centre offers the visitor a sightseeing into our own and other's past (O'Connor and Cronin (eds.) 1993:201). In effect, we become spectators of the past. And it is the visualisation process which has helped (caused) us to become spectators. We have seen how Bord Failte and other relevant organisations are adapting this process in their quest to represent Ireland as a distinctive destination in order to attract more visitors to the country. This is being done not only in the heritage centres throughout the country, but also in tourist brochures and publications in which Ireland is promoted as a land of unspoilt beauty, peopled by friendly, welcoming inhabitants. I would now like

to adopt a critical stance on such visual representation and show that this approach to representing Ireland has emerged from deeply rooted, and hence unconscious, cultural assumptions in regimes of representation. In this I will be taking on board Brett's thesis which he states in his work 'The Construction of Heritage' (1996), that these assumptions are embodied in (amongst other cultural forms) the visual ideologies incorporated in painting and other systems of picture-making, which embrace the picturesque and the sublime, and under which the aestheticiation of history proceeds (1996:38).

William Gilpin defined the picturesque as "that kind of beauty which would look well in a picture." (Brett, 1996:40). For Brett, the picturesque has as its aim the validation of experience by art (1996:40). Ireland has a long history of representations which embrace the picturesque. This, I believe, gives rise to misrepresentations. These representations have come mainly from the original tourists to Ireland - the English travellers - dating back to the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Let us now take a detailed look at these representations, of the Irish landscape in particular, and discuss the implications for the promotion of Ireland today.

When the Irish landscape was viewed through the lens of these visitors, a new cultural phenomenon was constructed and one which differed vastly from that experience by the inhabitants themselves. Theirs was a distorted view of the reality of Irish life and landscape, made so by the predetermined notions with which they came equipped when they first stepped onto Irish shores.

According to John Hutchinson in 'Intrusions and Representations: The Landscape of Wicklow' (1990), the stranger's attitude to the Irish landscape was exclusively aesthetic, their representations of the country flattering but selective ('Irish Arts Review', 1990:92). The travel accounts of nineteenth century English writers such as William Thackeray and William Smith give credence to Hutchinson's statement - their description of Irish landscape being laden with the language of the picturesque, the beautiful and the sublime. Central to these accounts was an everkeen awareness of the 'otherness' of Ireland: the landscape was thing-like to them, they were strangers - outsiders viewing an object. To these visitors the Irish landscape was merely a picture - but one that was framed by a misconceived sense of the reality of Irish life.

William Thackeray's account of his 1842 picturesque tour of Ireland in 'The Irish Sketch Book', epitomised the views of the picturesque traveller. He chose to describe his two-day tour of Wicklow "in romantic and beautiful language", giving picturesque descriptions of Lough Tay, Lough Dan and Glendalough (1842:3). Just like the landscape paintings which hung in the houses of eighteenth century England, Thackeray's tour book enhanced Wicklow's beauty while choosing to ignore many of the harsh facts which would have constituted the social reality of life in Ireland in the nineteenth century. Another picturesque tour was undertaken by William Smith in 1815, which took in the Grand Estates of Co Wicklow - Luggala, Mountkennedy, Duran, Ballycurry House and Avondale along with their surrounding landscape. Each of these were described in the language of the picturesque

in his 'Journal of an Excursion to the County of Wicklow 1815'. Here again is a typical example of visitors to Ireland seeing beauty in the reflection of their own preconceived tastes, selectively representing the Ireland they wished to portray.

What was actually happening, according to Brett, was that these visitors were taking up a privileged position of detachment and disinterest (1996:40) - outsiders viewing an object in terms of the picturesque. And, as Brett notes, it was only those of a certain social class, with a certain standard of education, who could take up such a position (1996:40).

The Irish landscape was also defined according to the ongoing relationship between Ireland and England which, in effect, was one characterised by relations between the colonizer and the colonized. John Hutchinson sees the seventeenth century maps compiled by Sir William Petty of the Irish countryside, as emblems of domination (1990:92). These were part of a long tradition of evidence of the social control held by England over Ireland. The eighteenth century art of landscape painting carried on this tradition and could be seen as a visual expression of picturesque travel writing. Hutchinson saw in many of these paintings an attempt by the wealthy classes to project their own culture onto the Irish landscape, thereby naturalising signs of their own wealth and prestige (1990:92-93). Everything about their culture, their way of life, their proprietary nature, their civilisation, their elegant and refined tastes stands proudly at the forefront of the paintings, while the Irish landscape fades

into the insignificance of background. Such paintings served to show that, through the Irish landscape, the English could maintain power and control over the Irish people. Paintings of the Big Houses throughout the country are a case in point. The Big House was portrayed in the paintings as a natural part of the landscape, as if it was in existence as long as the land itself, and therefore has earned the dominant position which it commands in the painting.

These visual images of Irish landscape had the effect of diminishing the autonomy which the landscape should enjoy, transferring it instead to fit the ideology of English visitors. Thus, in such paintings, the Irish landscape has become a mere backdrop to English cultural construction. Such visual images of Irish landscape are suggestive of notions of control and order, of England's civilisation and cultivation of Ireland.

Also, the mindset of the 'Big House' inhabitants around the Irish countryside helped to shape a new ideology in the form of the art of landscape gardening. Here Brett recognises the maturation of the outsider's perception of our landscape which moves from "passive" to "active" (1996:40). The carefully planned gardens surrounding the Big House helped to reinforce the view that the Grand Estate and its dwellers belonged to the area by virtue of the fact that their presence heralded an improvement to the often sublime surroundings. What emerges then, I believe, is a function performed by these people to 'tame' the wilderness of Ireland - an empire keeping its colonies in check. This was a role they played with relish as nature was forced to pay homage

to these 'outsiders' who had settled themselves on the landscape. This, too, could be interpreted as an attempt by these individuals to create order on a potentially destructive landscape which threatened the social hierarchy - a hierarchy determined and justified by traditional relations between the colonizer and the colonized. In effect, the English visitors were dealing in their own way with the otherness of Ireland.

The essence of the privileged position of selective representation is also seen by Brett as one of irresponsibility. The aesthetic position, he believes, implied in the picturesque, denies its own problems (1996:41). The aesthetic outlook necessarily ignores problems encountered on the landscape because it purposely seeks out only the beautiful and the picturesque. In this respect the picturesque outlook can be interpreted in a more meaningful way for what it leaves out rather than for what it includes. One of the most notable absences is a reference to work or labour of any kind. While this may have had little significance for the readers of travel accounts or the admirers of paintings in the period, it has vital importance for the area of social research.

John Hutchinson points out that Wicklow to the visitor was merely a beautiful wilderness to be looked at and admired. It was seldom portrayed as a place where ordinary lives were lived day-to-day, and where hard labour, disturbance and conflict constituted much of the lives of local inhabitants (1990:95). The Grand Estates, as we saw, were portrayed almost as natural features of the landscape - no reference to the hard toil that went into its construction.

Edward Malins, in his essay, 'The Wicklow Tour and Picturesque Landscape' (1976), shows us how one estate - Rockingham in Co Roscommon - was even constructed in such a way as to make invisible any evidence of the ongoing work in the Estate (1976:183).

Often there is no self-consciousness in the visitor's views, little evidence of any kind of moral dilemma facing the travellers in which they feel they must address Ireland's problems. More political accounts, however, do view Ireland as a problem and hazard explanations for the poverty witnessed on the landscape. Again, as John P. Harrington points out in his introduction to 'The English Traveller in Ireland' (1991), different writers gave their own subjective accounts, and these were usually incomplete, biased and insufficiently researched (Harrington (ed.) 1991:12). One nineteenth century view accepted poverty as a dominant fact in Irish life, but despite this, there was still an air of contempt for the poverty when actually encountered. William Thackeray's account again epitomises this view. This comes across in the anecdotes of his encounters with Irish poverty which punctuate his picturesque descriptions. Like other travellers, he showed little evidence of concern or remorse when he unavoidably came face-to-face with the poverty stricken, admitting himself "not a little callous" to the "beggary" that surrounds him (1842:28).

Thus we can see how, as Brett notes, the picturesque, as a specifically artistic concept, is the origin of several practices that we now take to be typical of tourism. Amongst these, the pursuit of particular kinds of scenes and subjects

in which the idea of national scenery was conceived. As Brett argues, rural life was re-imagined for city dwellers, appropriate persons - representative of country simplicity or honest labour - peopled the landscape; and this landscape, if considered too wild, was improved by a carefully located cottage. Along with this went a demand for certain kinds of compositional and tonal values including the handling of paint, particular balances of foreground, middleground and background, and a number of viewing devices as an aid to identifying and capturing appropriate scenes (1996:41-43).

AESTHETICISATION AND MUSEUMS

The aestheticisation of the landscape could be likened to the treatment of collected objects in the old style museums. In Chapter One, we explored MacPherson's notion of 'possessive individualism' in which the ideal individual surrounds himself with accumulated properties and goods. In so doing, he creates an identity for himself by marking off a subjective domain which is not other. We saw also that the museum of the nineteenth century becomes the new owner of objects, and was able to use its collection of objects to support its own vision of history by emphasising the aura of the object. Such an emphasis, we saw, resulted in the object assuming aesthetic proportions in the museum's environment. The aesthetic consciousness, according to Negrin, allows us to perceive works of art (or objects in a museum) on the basis of their form - appreciating them for their own sake - thereby bridging historical and cultural distance, because it abstracts them from

their original context and function (1993:102). This same aesthetic consciousness was prevalent in the visitor's representations of the Irish landscape. Through their paintings or their travel accounts written in the language of the picturesque, the English visitors were engaging in an aestheticisation of the Irish landscape, drawing attention purely to the beauty of the countryside, thereby denying any attempt at placing what they found in any historical or social context.

VISUAL REPRESENTATION IN IRELAND TODAY

These regimes of representation are carried out today, I believe, in the tourism and heritage industries' promotion of Ireland to the foreign visitor. We saw in the last chapter that the key strengths of Ireland which are to be targeted to form the tourist imagery used to represent Ireland include: scenic landscapes; a quiet island with a relaxed pace of life; an absence of mass tourism; a friendly, welcoming, convivial people; and a green, unspoilt environment. Thus we have the promotion of certain objects of the gaze which in times past were valued for their artistic qualities. The same pictorial representations are being used by the industry today - the same aesthetic, artistic categories are being referred to. This however is not a deliberate act on the part of Bord Failte or other relevant organisations in the tourism and heritage industries. Rather it is an unconscious process whereby regimes of representation have filtered down from - in Brett's terms - "one nexus of command to another" (1996:38). In the nineteenth century it was the English traveller who had the

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authority and the opportunity to depict the Irish landscape in certain terms; and today it is with Bord Failte that the responsibility lies for promoting Ireland in such a way as to attract visitors from abroad. And the reason why they choose to promote Ireland in terms similar to the English visitors in the nineteenth century is because Ireland as a peripheral country has come to see itself as others see us, that is, in picturesque terms. As Brett points out, Ireland has come to internalise the values of the centre (that is, England), and that an imagery created 'for others' has coincided with that created 'for self'(1996:39).

Denis Donoghue (1987) has also argued this point suggesting that Ireland,

"[p]erched on the periphery of Europe, ha[s] long been

accustomed to the sense that our destinies and our very

descriptions are forged by persons of superior power

elsewhere" (quoted in B. O'Connor,1993:70).

Because of this, Barbara O'Connor argues, in her article 'Myths and Mirrors: Tourist Images and National Identity' (1993), touristic images follow on from and link into pre-existing images in Britain and America in particular (O'Connor and Cronin (eds.) 1993:70-71). The link between colonialism and tourism is addressed also by O'Connor. She points out that post-colonial countries tend to be represented as exclusively available as a pleasure paradise for tourists, and that in Ireland in particular, there is a certain construction of work and leisure with various tourist images being used to market Ireland as

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a promise of escape from pressures of industry, as a sort of pre-industrial society where leisure is paramount, landscapes are empty, where there are no time constraints and where the work ethic is a foreign notion (O'Connor and Cronin (eds.) 1993:71-72). All of these then, can be traced back to colonial imperatives - the economic imbalance of tourist/local relationships, the romanticisation of the peasant as a kind and noble savage, and the dehumanisation of the landscape.

At this point, however, I would like to stress that those regimes of representation being employed today are subliminal, and if certain aspects of Irish life are being omitted from tourist promotions of the country, we must bear in mind the fact that it is a primary function of the tourism and heritage industries to attract visitors and not to address Ireland's problems.

I now wish to engage in a discussion of some problems effected by processes of visual representation, namely the problems incurred in representing the world as a spectacle, and the absence of the local voice in such representations.

THE WORLD AS SPECTACLE

Through visualisation, the narrative and simulation, the heritage industry, according to Brett, constitutes the power of the manipulated spectacle over history (O'Connor and Cronin (eds.) 1993:201). In the heritage centre certain

histories, or the past, is promoted in order to entertain, to attract more visitors, to contribute to economic development. Pat Cook recognises this in his article 'The Real Thing - Archaeology and Popular Culture'(1991). Here he refers to a 'conflictual flux' in this media age which views a world in which "appearance is at least the equivalent of fact, and where sometimes appearance is the only fact", with pursuit of knowledge no longer being seen as desirable for any morally uplifting reasons but is "potentially engaging and/or amusing in its pleasurable, diverting effects" ('Circa' no 56,1991:29). Therefore, with the emphasis on the spectacle, which involves entertainment taking priority over education, there is a danger that a nation's history and its cultures, under the auspices of the heritage industry, has come to merely exist for the entertainment and aesthetic satisfaction of the visitor.

So, David Brett points to a need to trace out the differences between history and what he terms the 'recreated then' of heritage (O'Connor and Cronin (eds.) 1993:186). As we have seen, under heritage policy objects are mediated to give them meaning - situated in a narrative and giving the visitor the impression of an immediate confrontation with the past. However, Brett believes that this immediacy is highly structured and gives a very partial, unproblematic picture of the past (O'Connor and Cronin (eds.) 1993:186-187). Like the collection of objects in the traditional museum which, as we have seen, creates an illusion of adequate representation, so too the past, as represented in the heritage centre, is primarily an image of the past and consequently cannot present the past as it really is (or was).

Robert Hewison, in his essay, 'Heritage: An Interpretation" (1989), points out that heritage is gradually effacing history by substituting an image of the past for its reality (David Uzzell (ed.) 1989:21). However, I believe that we should not or cannot compare images of the past with the reality of what actually happened in the past, but a comparison between technologically created images of the past and written history would be a more realistic endeavour. Although much of written history may contain certain biases, it does not necessarily offer, or claim to offer, an immediate confrontation with the past as is the case with the heritage centre's representations. Hewison correctly goes on to argue that our knowledge and understanding of history is weakening at all levels from schools to universities. There seems to be, he suggests, a fading sense of continuity and change which is replaced by a fragmented idea of the past constructed out of costume dramas, re-enactments of civil war battles and misleading celebrations of events (1989:21). Robert Lumley also recognises this suggesting that history is less and less synonymous with the work of professional historians and the realm of books (1988:2).

At this point we must be aware of the relationship which exists between seeing and knowing. This emerges as another problem area and must be addressed when analysing visualisations. Ludmilla Jordonova's work on museums and knowledge, 'Objects of Knowledge: A Historical Perspective on Museums' (1989), highlights the most important assumption under which museums operate: the taken-for-granted link between viewing items in a museum and the acquisition of knowledge (Peter Vergo (ed.) 1989:22). Because we see

something on display in a museum we should not then believe that we have gained sufficient insight into the object to know all about it. As Jordonova points out, it is essential to understand the grip which the illusion that knowledge springs directly from displayed objects has upon us (Vergo (ed.) 1989:40). In today's heritage centres the object is increasingly replaced by images which tend to strengthen this illusion. Although we recognise the artificiality of a display, the visual images which are cleverly presented in such a way as to involve us by bringing us back in time or to another place, result in our losing a grip on reality, accepting what we see as the truth. As Jordonova argues, visitors assent to the claim made by museums - that they provide knowledge - by accepting their historical authenticity, and the reality of what they see (1989:25).

We have already stated that depiction, picturing and seeing are vital features in how we come to know the world and, because of this, social change is at once a change in the regime of representation. The regime of representation in the modern day heritage centre operates on a basis of striving to mimic visual experience rather than merely conveying information. This, Jordonova informs us, is an open lie. Many aspects of life cannot be presented visually in a museum such as work, hunger, disease, war, death, and legal systems, to name a few (Vergo (ed.) 1989:25). Thus, like the heritage cities constructed under the tourist gaze, these exhibitions are necessarily selective because, in a museum or heritage centre, it is only those aspects of life easy to visualise which are included.

Jordonova recognises the fact that much is at stake in representation. In her example of museums of childhood, she highlights the absence of display space for anything that hints at bad or painful childhoods. This is because, she informs us, exhibiting something accords it public recognition and confers upon it a form of legitimacy (Vergo (ed.) 1989:31-32). So, however unconscious to those involved in the selection process, we must not simply take such visual representations on face value only.

The argument here then is that we cannot and should not believe that we have gained knowledge about something simply because we have 'seen' it or 'experienced' it in the museum's environs. The fact is that we are seeing or experiencing what the museum wants us to see or experience. We cannot know or get a sense of the past through visual representation or reconstruction. We can certainly get some idea about certain aspects of history but these are merely visions of one person or a group of people. The writer of a history book provides us with another vision. Television programmes and output from other media with yet another. Photographs, audio-visual displays, models, simulations, vast collections of objects may be a more attractive way of learning but these should each be looked upon as texts requiring interpretation: who creates them, orders them; what is the subject's original context. We must be aware of the selection processes at work in a heritage centre.

ABSENCE OF THE LOCAL VOICE

The problem of representing the world as spectacle is more acute when even the resident population become merely spectators of their own history and culture. Instead of 'heritage' being a basic resource for asserting and further developing a unique and particular cultural identity, it has become instead the cause of an internalisation by the resident population of its own touristic views of history and culture - that is, they have come to see themselves as they are portrayed in the heritage centre. Farrel Corcoran explores the notion that the social and material worlds in which we live embody a relation to the past rooted in communicative practices through which social life is preserved, reproduced and transformed (1993:3). Communicative practices for Corcoran such as language (and by extension the media), along with artifacts from the material world, contribute towards a process of remembering. He points out that different ways of remembering and forgetting are structured in a certain way at certain moments in time (1993:13).

Taking this on board then, we may regard the process of visualisation in the heritage centre as being the new communicative practice to influence or carry cultural memory. This new mode of representing the past is being absorbed by resident populations and consequently forms part of their general cultural memory. The heritage centre's view of history eventually becomes the resident population's memory of history. So, the collective memory of the resident population changes in order to accommodate a certain view of the past

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made credible in the heritage centre. (Although I will not engage in a discussion of cultural memory here, a study of the whole area of heritage and collective memory would be very worthwhile).

This problem with resident populations internalising the heritage centre's view of their own history is a matter of particular concern, because most of the time they have little input into the content of displays in the centre. Here we have a problem intrinsic to the heritage industry which stems from the dichotomous relationships between the so-called professionals of the industry and those on the margin (that is, the local population surrounding a heritage site).

Malcolm Crick has addressed this issue of the absence of the local voice in the heritage industry. He points out that those who provide the raw material for tourism - the locals surrounding a heritage site (the community) - rarely do the interpreting themselves (1989:338). This, however, is not a new phenomenon, as we saw how, in centuries gone by, there was a more obvious and deliberate overlooking or ignoring of local communities by travellers touring a foreign country. The English picturesque tours of Ireland in the eighteenth century necessarily excluded any reference to, or interest in, local communities surrounding the places they visited. In writing up their accounts of these tours the travellers again ignored the community or made only passing reference to the 'natives' - an activity which usually reinforced stereotypes and preconceived notions.

This practice was also very much reflected in museums in the nineteenth century. As Tony Bennett pointed out in his article 'Museums and the People' (1988), although museums were transformed into public institutions 'for' the people they were not actually 'of' the people (Lumley (ed.) 1988:64). They made no attempt to portray the ordinary lives and customs of the working class. Instead they sentimentalised them by presenting them as a regional folk, 'as endlessly cheerful and good-natured as enterprising and industrious' (Lumley (ed.) 1988:64). This practice of sentimentalising the people was in effect portraying them as a people without politics. The mode of representation elicited by the museum's ideology ensures the presentation of, according to Bennett, a harmonious set of relationships between town and country, agriculture and industry and, most significantly, between different classes who, under the convincing apparatus of the museum display, seem to live side-by-side and in harmony with one another, each accepting its allotted place without question or complaint (Lumley (ed.) 1988:68-69). Thus the central message in the museum had become a legitimation and naturalisation of the power of the ruling classes, and any representation of the people remained (like the eighteenth century travel writer's) purely picturesque.

As far as the relationship that exists between the tourist and the inhabitants of the place visited is concerned, Urry points to various impacts which tourism has on the host countries' inhabitants, and the particular social relations which emerge between hosts and guests. Those factors determining the nature of these relations include: the number of tourists visiting a place in relation to the

size of the host population and the scale of the object being gazed upon; whether or not the predominant object of the gaze will be intrusive on the private lives and rituals of the hosts; the organisation of the industry which develops to serve the mass gaze, and which may entail various conflicts such as those accompanying conservation issues, wages to be paid to local employees and the effects on local development and customs; and also, the economic and social differences between the visitors and the hosts (1990:56-58). The absence of the local voice in the museum then, fails to take into account these vital factors.

In the world of heritage however, Brett pointed out that it was the essential role of imagery to sustain diversity and to help local association and historical memory survive ('Representing Cultures', 1993:1). However, as we have seen, the image in the heritage centre is primarily geared towards the tourist, and the spectacle (rather than the authentic past) has come to comprise the role of imagery.

With the heritage centre favouring the visual over written sources, Luke Dodd points out that these new modes of representation are fundamentally inappropriate to the subject presented (such as local communities, their culture and customs) ('Circa' No 59, 1991:29). Quoting Edward Said, Brett points out that the relationship that exists between the tourist and local inhabitants is one based on "uneven exchange" (O'Connor and Cronin (eds.) 1993:183). He recognises a form of tension which is present between the realities experienced

by visitors and those experienced by the natives. Thus in the native himself/herself there arises a split consciousness of self - a 'for-others' and a 'for-self' which culminates in a significant lack of self-understanding. This problem is neither felt or even recognised by the tourist because, as Brett argues, reality for the tourist has become simply a show - a 'sight-seeing' (O'Connor and Cronin (eds.) 1993:201). Thus the local population, in accepting touristic views of history in the heritage centre, is emerging as spectator of its own past.

Also, the interpretation strategy here which, as we saw in the last chapter, is to provide interpretive gateways into our heritage for the visitor, with certain storylines in each heritage centre which together are to constitute the overall story of Ireland's culture and history, I believe, necessarily negates development of the local community controlled heritage centre.

Philip Wright's observations on art museums could be applied to all museums (and heritage centres). He pointed out in his article 'The Quality of Visitors' Experiences in Art Museums' (1989), that the Governing Board of Trustee-system encapsulates that powerful conjunction of The Great and The Good - the public/private sectors drawn from distinguished art historians and collectors - and excludes any voice that may disturb the consensus on what the role of an art museum should be (Vergo (ed.) 1989:120-121).

CONCLUSION

In this chapter then, I have aimed to higlight some crucial elements in the process of visual representation. A critical stance, I believe, must be taken with regard to this process. We must become aware of the mediated nature of displays of the past in the heritage centre, of the construction of the tourist gaze and the aestheticisation of history. We must also be aware of those problems effected by this regime of representation such as representation of the world and its histories as spectacle, the prioritisation of entertainment over education in the heritage centre and the absence of the local voice.

These problems, I believe, result in misrepresentations of the past. As Robert Hewison explains, museums, ancient monuments, artifacts and, of course, heritage centres are recording the achievements and values of the status quo, so that the open story of history has become the closed book of heritage, where the cultural values are predominantly white, male and middle class (Uzzell (ed.) 1989:22). And as Phillippe Hoyau pointed out in his essay 'Heritage and 'the Conserver Society': the French case' (1988), those elements of what we call 'open' history - conflicts, interests, resistance, illusions, specific sequences of events - fade into the unchanging landscape and become fixed in a temporality which is one of repetition. The neutralised past then is divested of its residual burden of uncertainty and is offered up to us to collectively identify with (Lumley (ed.) 1988:30).

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

My main objective in writing this thesis was to explicate the nature of heritage. My reasons for doing this were to draw out implicit aspects of what has become a ubiquitous term both as concept and as policy throughout the world and what, on reflection, is inherently vague. As such, I believe it is essential to create an awareness of heritage, particularly as a burgeoning industry at this time, and to adopt a critical stance in relation to its development and processes.

For a subject as prolific as heritage is today, my approach in answering the questions begged by the heritage concept, has been to engage in a review of the literature concerning the topic. Throughout the study I have considered many of the theories, discussions and contradictions which have emerged in the literature and these have formed the basis of my arguments.

The main topic of consideration recurring throughout this thesis, as I stated in my Introduction, is the link between heritage and tourism. In investigating the essential nature of heritage, I have aimed to show that the link with tourism is inextricable, with tourism manifesting itself in many aspects of heritage. In my extensive inquiry into this link between heritage and tourism, three broad areas of concern have emerged: modes or regimes of representing the past; the importance of the provision of pleasure; and the dichotomous relationships existing between professionals in the heritage and tourism industries and both the visitors and the locals surrounding a heritage site.

John Urry's notion of 'departure' in relation to tourism has placed the subject of this thesis in a sociological context. In the Introduction, I pointed out that the notion of departure would serve as an analytical tool with which normal or routine behaviour, practice and thought could be gauged at various stages in the development of tourism. Heritage then, as a product of tourism, is very much a social construct and, as such, is subject to social forces and patterns.

In the course of this critical analysis of heritage then, I have provided myself with an agenda of issues which must now be brought together in conclusion. To begin, I will engage in a brief summary of the main issues raised in the previous chapters.

Central to the notion of heritage is the act of representing the past. In the first chapter I have delved into the methods of representing the past, in the past, that is, in museums of the nineteenth century. These museums would serve as a yardstick by which to measure changes in regimes of representation, which have proved, in effect, to be products of social change. The nineteenth century museums, I have shown, were indulging in a form of power domination. This in fact was a reflection of change in ideology, in that culture came to be thought of as a resource through which a more effective form of social management - of bringing about changes in acceptable norms of behaviour - could proceed, by exposing the public to a more 'cultured' environment.

The modes of representing the past in the museums were very much a reflection of nineteenth century society. Modernist thinking on advancement and progress towards the ever more modern would was, as I have shown, paralleled in the display of objects in the museum's exhibits, in which objects were ordered and named within frameworks of evolution. As modes of power domination, the museum's 'system of objects' enabled it to endow the artefact with new meaning to support the museum's own vision of history, and replacing its historical and social context with new artistic and aesthetic categories in which the aura of the object was enhanced. The museums of the nineteenth century therefore, were very much potent social metaphors.

Having looked at how the past used to be presented, I then began my investigation into the link between heritage and tourism in order to show that current modes of representing the past are very much determined by touristic practices. In Chapter Two, I began this investigation by tracing the historical emergence of mass tourism. This study enabled me to develop vital insight into social developments over the last two centuries in Britain and Ireland. The rise in popularity of the seaside resort as an increasingly desired object of the tourist gaze, and the social conditions which fostered this development of mass tourism, served as a broad illustration of the structure and organisation of society in Britain and in Ireland between the late seventeenth century and the early twentieth century. The movement of great numbers of tourists towards the seaside resorts, their desires and anticipations as tourists, that is, of intense pleasures, of distinctive objects to gaze upon and desire also of a

union with social peers whilst on holiday, were all indicative of the everyday routines and practices which were left behind or 'escaped from' for a short period every year. In particular, this movement highlighted the clearcut divide between work and leisure which were organised as separate and regulated spheres of social practice in modern, industrialised societies. It showed also the great social changes taking place - the increase in economic welfare of the working classes, the spread of urbanisation, the rationalisation of leisure and working hours and the improvements in transport - all of which effected this movement towards the seaside. Also of great importance, it demonstrated changes in perceptions and attitudes of those embarking on holiday. And, in Ireland in particular, a much later democratisation of travel showed the great levels of poverty throughout the country which resulted in a markable gulf between those who could and could not afford a holiday - a gulf which remained until well into the twentieth century. The social origins of the holiday makers at Irish seaside resorts was also very much reflective of the dominant social groupings throughout the country at various stages - the Anglo-Irish elite giving way to the Catholic professional, farming and middle classes and eventually the predominantly Catholic working classes. In this way then, the investigation into touristic practices revealed in some way various social developments and patterns, as well as the overall structure and organisation of society.

We saw, therefore, the emergence of various factors which we now take to be typical of touristic practice: the search for new and different gazes whilst on

holiday and the desire for intense pleasures. These elements of tourism then would provide a crucial link between tourism and heritage.

This became clear in my investigation into the decline in popularity of the seaside as the most desired object of the mass tourist gaze. Again this change was brought about by various social developments. The internationalisation of tourism, the globalisation of culture, the rise of the service class and the renewed interest in, or desire for, the past, collectively determined the rise in popularity of heritage as an object of the tourist gaze. It was at this stage in the thesis that we witnessed the gradual emergence of heritage as a vital component in tourism. In the first place, as we noted, a country's heritage could be used to counteract the emergence of the internationalisation of tourism by providing foreign, or indeed resident, visitors with a much desired distinctive object to gaze upon. As well as this, heritage began to be perceived as a resource to increase economic development and, especially in the case of Britain, in towns and cities which had lost their manufacturing base in the process of deindustrialisation. More applicable to Ireland was the use of local heritage in the race between regions under the process of globalisation, in which the local sense of place was exploited in order to gain advantage in attracting the global tourist. In the third place, we noted the effects which the emerging 'service class' had on the traditional object of the tourist gaze in that the seaside no longer satisfied certain sections of society who favoured conspicuous consumption of cultural products. And finally, we saw how heritage objects allowed the tourism industry to provide for the needs of nostalgia.

Thus we began to see how the concept of heritage gradually became a crucial component in the tourism industry in that it came to be envisaged as the new desired object of the tourist gaze, and so became the tourism industry's most important product. What was happening then, was that the tourism industry was harnessing global trends. Elements of tourism were emerging as central elements of heritage: the importance of providing pleasurable experiences; and the importance of offering distinctive and extraordinary gazes.

In Chapter Three, I concentrated on the tourism and heritage industries in Ireland in order to stress further the link between heritage and tourism in an Irish context. Focussing first on tourism priorities in this country, I was able to show how various global trends in touristic behaviour was reflected in Ireland, with the industry here pinpointing the needs of tourists worldwide and aiming to maximise Ireland's potential as a provider of the type of experiences which tourists desire. Here we saw how a range of both new and existing products were to be assembled in a coherent manner, packaged and marketed in order to suit the needs and opportunities of various markets. By targeting our key strengths then, the various agencies involved in the tourism industry planned to exploit various aspects of Irish life, package these as our tourist product and promote them in international markets. As this investigation developed we saw how Bord Failte's main product area was Ireland's heritage and in answering the worldwide demand for heritage, Bord Failte recognised that it was only through the enhancement of our heritage attractions that Ireland could satisfy visitor demand for the distinctive and extraordinary gaze

whilst on holiday.

Looking then at the heritage industry in Ireland which emerged to cope with the growing demand for heritage as an object of the tourist gaze, I showed how heritage, as a product of tourism, is dictated mainly by the needs of tourism. Here it emerged that "proper" interpretation of our heritage is a main priority for the industry. The strategy for interpretation again highlighted the great influence which tourism has on heritage. The interpretive gateways in to Ireland's heritage, we saw, aim to heighten visitor experience, increase satisfaction levels and create a strong brand image of Ireland as a quality heritage destination with unique, distinctive attractions - all geared towards attracting more visitors and more visitor spending. The importance of providing pleasurable, entertaining experience was increasingly stressed with the emphasis as much on providing pleasure, as conveying knowledge and information on Ireland's heritage.

Having established the link between heritage and tourism, and shown heritage to be ultimately a product of tourism, I then began to probe regimes of representing the past today. In Chapter Four, I first discussed the modes of representing the past in the new style museums or heritage centres. These modes, I showed, are summarised in the process of visualisation. This process epitomises the nature of heritage as a product of tourism. The predominance of the visual over the verbal in heritage centre displays illustrates how the heritage and tourism industries are striving to meet the needs of tourists. We

saw how there seemed to be an urgent wish to achieve an immediate confrontation with the past on the part of visitors, and this is provided for in the heritage centre's employment of the visual image in its displays, in which new technologies are being used to produce multi-media experiences, using images of the past to create a spectacle. We saw also that the visualisation process enabled the tourism and heritage industries to package aspects of a culture, translating information for a wide and varied audience, while at the same time providing a pleasurable experience.

Following this, my criticism of the concept of visualisation enabled me to create a critical awareness of various crucial elements inherent in the concept. Here I discussed ways of seeing and methods of depicting or picturing the world, and revealed these to be social constructions. The tourist gaze was shown to be a socially organised and phenomenon, with certain attractions being selectively represented under the auspices of the tourist gaze, within which all signs must be made visually appealing. Through selection processes, heritage history was suggested as being distorted because of the emphasis on visualisation. Photography, too, was shown to be a social construct subject to selection processes, and was also implied as an enpowering device which has in some way changed our perception of how we view the world. Through this analysis of visualisation then, the influence of tourism on heritage representations was further emphasised with the tourism industry causing the heritage industry to represent the past as a spectacle.

In order to investigate visual representation in an Irish context, I showed that the approach to representing Ireland according to visual categories came from deeply-rooted, and hence unconscious, cultural assumptions in regimes of representation. Here I drew attention to depictions of the Irish landscape which highlighted Ireland's long history of picturesque representations. These began with English travellers representing Ireland according to their own preconceived notions, the result being a social construction of Irish landscape and an exclusively aesthetic but selective representation of Ireland. These depictions, as I demonstrated, showed an awareness of the otherness of Ireland and illustrated the nature of the ongoing relationship between England and Ireland as one consequent upon relations between the colonizer and the colonized. Aesthetic representations, I showed, enabled the visitors to ignore certain important aspects of Irish life such as poverty and conflict. The pursuit of the picturesque was therefore suggested as an origin of touristic endeavour in which there is a constant pursuit of particularly visually appealing objects to gaze upon.

Such regimes of visual representation then, have emerged as strategies for representing Ireland today. In this respect, I showed that there is an unconscious process by which those organisations involved in heritage representations have come to internalise these depictions of Ireland and, as such, touristic images have tended to link in to pre-existing images of Ireland forged elsewhere.

I then proceeded to discuss some problem elements in representing the world as spectacle: the recreation of the past in order to entertain or increase economic development; the diminishing role of books and historians in conveying the past; the problem of visitors accepting what they witness in heritage displays as fact; and the absence of the local voice in heritage representations.

Thus, in this thesis, I have attempted to explicate the constructed nature of heritage. I have shown that the concept of heritage today is not only intricately bound up with tourism, but has emerged in fact as a product of touristic developments and practices. The crux of this notion of heritage then, I believe, is in the way in which heritage is represented, that is, the modes or regimes of representing the world, its histories and its cultures. Suming up the main differences between museums and heritage centres is perhaps the best way of further illustrating this point. This most obvious difference is that between the underlying function of the two institutions. The traditional museum's collection for scholarly use differs greatly from the heritage centre's emphasis on providing visitors with an immediate confrontation with the past. The modes of representation reflecting these functions are, too, radically different. The methods of representing the past in the traditional museum - the accumulation of rare and priceless artifacts, and the subsequent ordering, displaying and labelling of these - were seen as the most effective way towards the instruction and edification of the general public. In the heritage centre the modes of representing the past strive towards providing the visitor with a good

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experience. The tourism industry's influence here is manifest, the changing needs of society, evident. As Malcolm Crick observed, for most people tourism involves more hedonism and conspicuous consumption than learning or understanding (1989:328). So, while the museums were opening up private collections to the public, great social changes were occurring which would eventually contribute to new ways of representing the past. Throughout this thesis then, I have attempted to create a critical awareness of these modes of representation, and have shown that it is essential to retain a strong sense of critical distance and of historical time when analysing those institutions which purport to represent the past.

The second crucial element of heritage as it emerged as a product of tourism, is the perceived importance of providing pleasure. Pervasive throughout the concept of heritage is, I believe, a pursuit of pleasure. Tourism, as we noted, was ultimately a quest for pleasurable experience, away from regulated and organised work, with the places gazed upon being chosen because they promised intense pleasures. With the growing interest in heritage as an increasingly popular object of the tourist gaze, the desires were the same. Visitors wanted immediate confrontation with the past, immediate pleasures. Thus, what had happened was that pleasure simply came to be anticipated and experienced in different ways than before. Towns and cities, as we saw, began to be constructed as centres of consumption in themselves and, most importantly, as sites of pleasure, once work and leisure were no longer regarded as separate spheres of social existence. In the heritage centre this

need for pleasure was provided for through the creation of images from the past. This allowed for a more entertaining way of looking into, and even participating in, the past - the pursuit of knowledge becomes attractive for its promised pleasurable effects, rather than because of any great interest in the past. The visual experience offered by heritage attractions could bring sites to life with actors and animators, with stories being told through pictures. The modes of representation then, altered according to the changing needs of society and the changing perceptions of those embarking on travel.

Therefore, I believe that the importance of entertaining the visitor, of providing the visitor with an enjoyable and pleasurable experience, are elements in the heritage concept which further illustrate its nature as a product of tourism.

The third main issue recurring throughout this study is the dichotomous relationship which exists between professionals involved in heritage representations and both the visitors and the local populations surrounding the heritage sites. Although this is not an issue which shows heritage as a product of tourism, it is, I believe, perhaps the most important reason for engaging in a critical analysis of heritage.

I think that one of the strongest messages emanating from this study is the great division between those people who are involved in, and responsible for, presenting the past, and the visitors to their exhibitions. This was constantly stressed in the study of museums of the nineteenth century, wherein methods

of representation were adopted which naturally negated criticism or questioning, and which helped maintain the status quo. These museums, although promoted as being for the people, were, as I have stated, most definitely not by the people. As disembedding mechanisms, they kept the general public from any involvement in museum operation or policy. In the new style museums - the heritage centres - this has not changed. Although the modes of representing the past have altered, selection processes still remain implicit. The visitor must continue to place trust in the professional bodies responsible for heritage representations. Because these processes are not made clear, the heritage centre's curator can maintain all control over what is put on show. The tourist gaze, we noted, is not left to chance. Heritage attractions are depicted by professionals. It is the professionals, I have stated, who depict the signs which we seek out as tourists.

The role of professionals in the area of heritage representation is a matter of even greater concern for the local populations surrounding heritage sites. In this case the resident's own local history is being displayed with usually no input from the locals themselves. Those people then, who are most directly affected by the presence of a heritage attraction through the impact of visitor numbers, and most importantly, whose own heritage is being used to attract these visitors, have in effect, the least amount of involvement in representation. The danger of this is that, as I stressed, the resident population may become merely spectators of their own past.

In carrying out this detailed inquiry in to heritage I have realised that there are other aspects of the heritage concept which are beyond the scope of this thesis. I therefore now wish to make some suggestions for further study in the area of heritage. One area requiring further research in an Irish context, I believe, would be an investigation into the creation of the myth of the 'West of Ireland', in its promotion as a tourist destination and as an area rich in heritage. Images presented of the West of Ireland have served to create a myth regarding life in this area of the country. This is not an unusual exercise in itself because, as we have seen, local difference must be established in order for a region to develop as a potential tourist destination, offering a distinctive gaze to visitors. What is important here, I believe however, is the fact that the West of Ireland is not only presented in such a way to foreign visitors, but is also presented to people throughout the rest of the country as being a representative of true Irishness. Because of the implications of this for Irish identity, I suggest that a critical analysis of the way in which the West of Ireland is represented is now needed.

Another area requiring further study in this country would involve theories of reception in which research is carried out on visitors to museums and heritage centres. While there have been studies done in Ireland in recent years on visitor profile, behaviour and attitudes, I believe that a study focusing on visitors' understanding of what has been witnessed in exhibitions, and the knowledge which they have gleaned from their visit, would be very worthwhile in order to gauge exactly what people are taking away with them from their

visit to heritage attractions in this country.

Finally, I believe that the notion of cultural memory should also be considered as an important element in heritage requiring further study. Particularly relevant, I suggest, would be an inquiry into how the visualisation process in the heritage centre helps to construct cultural and collective memory. Along with this, a comparison of different ways of representing the past - through texts and images, for example - and the ways in which these affect memory, would be a useful study.

For now though, I believe that I have offered important insights into the nature of heritage. In my introduction I stated that heritage is loosely defined as that which is inherited from the past. However, in my extensive inquiry into the heritage concept, I believe I have shown it to be a phenomenon involving many complex elements. Most importantly I have proven heritage to be a product of tourism. As a product of tourism then, heritage has been shown to be valued for its potential in attracting more visitors, more visitor spending, and ultimately has emerged as a means of economic regeneration in many areas throughout the world, including Ireland. In carrying out this study then, I believe I have successfully drawn out many of the implicit aspects of heritage, showing it to be of a socially constructed nature.

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