

The limits of commodification in traditional Irish music sessions

ADAM R. KAUL *Augustana College*

This article analyses the economics of paid-for traditional Irish music sessions in Doolin, County Clare in the Republic of Ireland. In part, it takes up Shepherd's recent call for research on the commodification of culture in tourist destinations. It is argued here that 'commodification' should be distinguished from the more general process of 'commercialization'. I suggest that commercialization is simply the build-up of commercial relationships surrounding the production of an activity or an object, while commodification, following Helgasson and Palsson, is the intensive sequestering of that production into the realm of commensurable exchange-values. This clarification has important theoretical and political implications. Theoretically, the distinction bolsters and extends the critique of the notion of 'authenticity' in tourist destinations. In turn, this legitimizes the credibility of commercialized activities if and when productive control remains primarily in the hands of the producers themselves.

One important consequence of 'globalization' – that is, the accelerated interconnectedness of far-flung people, places, and things (Hannerz 1996: 17) – is the fact that more and more aspects of social life have come to be defined in terms of their monetary exchange-value instead of their use-value (Shepherd 2002). In other words, things that were never before commodities have now become commodities: 'objects of economic value' (Appadurai 1996: 3) to be sold and consumed. The notion of commodification has become somewhat fashionable recently. This parallels a fundamental focal shift in anthropology (and not just in 'economic' anthropology) from the production of things to the consumption of things (Carrier & Heyman 1997; Dillely 2004; Miller 1995). Dillely characterizes this in light of the theoretical swing from the Marxism(s) of previous decades towards the ideological domination of 'exchange as the sole generator of value' (2004: 798) more recently. Carrier and Heyman are critical of this shift in thinking, not because the focus on commodification is unproductive; rather, they argue that most models are incomplete because they too often ignore production and the 'practical uses to which [commodities] are put' (1997: 370). Likewise, Dillely reminds us to consider production as well as consumption (2004: 797-9). Miller is critical of this shift too, but for a different reason. He suggests that analyses of consumption must first move beyond 'simple moralizing of commoditization' so that later we may be able to distinguish

between benign forms of consumption and what he calls the 'unequivocally evil' forms (1995: 147). From the beginning, the anthropology of tourism has always been concerned with commodification, and the implications that this has on the sustainability and 'authenticity' of local cultures and customs (cf. Cohen 1988; Graburn 1976; Greenwood 1989 [1977]; MacCannell 1989 [1976], for early discussions).

This heady mix of issues was brought to my attention during the fourteen months that I spent doing fieldwork on the impacts of tourism on performances of traditional Irish music in northwest County Clare in the Republic of Ireland. It is something that various actors there (tourists, musicians, anthropologists, pub-owners, and other stakeholders) thought about, worried about, and talked about in daily conversations as well as in interviews that I conducted with them. During my fieldwork I worked at one of the local pubs, which allowed for countless conversations with tourists (Kaul 2004). Many tourists expressed, if not a philosophical concern with 'authenticity', then at least a curiosity about whether these musical performances were 'the real thing'. Likewise, musicians constantly talk about performances, venues, and audiences, and this discourse is always carried along by the powerful subtextual undercurrent of the notion of 'authenticity'. This article is an attempt to refine existing models that deal with the complex relationship between commodification, commercialization, and 'authenticity' in tourist destinations.

Doolin is known around the world as a place to go to hear traditional Irish music played in the pubs in a musical context called 'the session'. The session is now a worldwide musical phenomenon with local variations in structure and content, but in Doolin it is a musical context that occurs most generally in pubs, but also occasionally in private houses, with three or more musicians who play jigs, reels, hornpipes, slow airs, and other genres of traditional instrumental dance music primarily from the Irish and Scottish traditions. It is said that in the past, traditional Irish 'set-dancing' and traditional Irish music existed in a socially co-dependent symbiosis. It is called 'traditional' music because it is considered a 'public resource' handed down from previous generations of musicians even though certain authors of tunes might be known. This music is now becoming an acceptable genre in concert settings (think, for example, of *Riverdance*) and in the recording studio, but it is by no means a 'classical' music quite yet. And while people take music lessons today, it is often said that one's 'real' education must come from years of careful listening to the music as it is played by the older generations. Often that 'education' occurs in sessions.

The session is different from a concert 'performance' in the sense that it is unstaged. The musicians simply sit around a table in the pub, facing towards each other in a circle, not on a stage elevated above an audience facing linearly outward. Also distinct from staged performances, sessions ideally create a carefully balanced but permeable social boundary between the musicians and the audience. Interaction occurs across this boundary in the form of conversation, jokes, and rounds of drink. This interaction is also musical. Members of the audience often enter the musical circle of the session to 'give a song', and musicians might get up to join in conversation away from the session. Within the circle itself is a multifaceted social environment in which a subtly 'complex system of codes and etiquettes, humiliations and value reinforcements' (McCann 2001: 92) are played out, verbally and musically. Finally, while subtle status hierarchies exist within the session circle, these are of the achieved rather than ascribed variety because the session is an inherently egalitarian context where gifts, in the form of tunes, folk historical knowledge about tunes and musicians, drinks, cigarettes,¹ and conversation

are exchanged under the subtle but strictly enforced rules and obligations of generalized reciprocity. For example, once people found out that my wife and I could sing, we came to realize that 'giving a song' during a session was as much an obligation and a responsibility as it was a privilege. The session, then, is not simply a musical environment; it is what Mauss would call a 'total social phenomenon' (1954 [1924]: 303), or what McCarthy calls 'music as community' (1999: 186, 189). So what often looks to be an incredibly casual affair is in fact incredibly complex.

Before the 1960s, traditional music was not generally popular in Ireland or elsewhere, and in towns and villages just a few miles inland from Doolin I was told that publicans actively discouraged live performances of traditional music. However, Doolin was one of a handful of towns and villages along the west coast of Ireland that maintained a strong musical tradition (alongside strong linguistic, ritual, and oral traditions²). What is more, contrary to popular belief, the session is a relatively recent import to Ireland, not some 'time-honoured ancient' tradition (Kneafsey 2002: 356). Prior to the 1960s, traditional Irish music was most often played in people's kitchens, or to accompany dancing at house parties or in dance halls. It was rarely played in pubs for its own sake like it is today. However, when Irish immigrants moved to places like London and could no longer play music in their flats without disturbing their neighbours, pubs were natural alternate venues. It was not until the after the Second World War that these pub 'sessions' became a common occurrence throughout Ireland itself (Fairbairn 1994: 582; Kneafsey 2003: 23). Historically, traditional Irish music has undergone many similarly dramatic contextual and technical changes during the last hundred years due to pressures like emigration, poverty, and priestly disparagement.³

In the 1960s, another dramatic change occurred. Folk music(s) around the world became (re-)popularized, riding a wave of social change in America, the British Isles, and elsewhere.⁴ This period is commonly referred to as 'the revival'. A sudden and intense interest in traditional Irish music compelled a new, young generation of 'fans' to seek out the source of this music, which had begun to circulate via the popular recordings of a few 'groups' such as the Clancy Brothers and the Furies. Being one of these 'sources', Doolin was flooded with musical 'pilgrims' almost overnight. With open arms, the local people welcomed traditional Irish musicians from other parts of Ireland, interested novice musicians, interested listeners and 'hippie' backpackers searching for the good life. What might have been described as a depressed village in 'decline' (Brody 1973) turned into a decades-long festival site, and as local people are fond of saying, there has been one continuous session in Doolin ever since.

Locals were quick to recognize the economic opportunity that had, quite literally, arrived on their doorstep. The villagers quickly built up a thriving tourist 'industry',⁵ complete with accommodation, restaurants, and gift shops, a decade before most of the rest of Ireland came to appreciate the profitability of tourism. Although there are many tourist attractions in the area, including natural landscapes such as the Cliffs of Moher, the Burren, and the Aran Islands just off the coast, the centrepiece of this local tourist industry was, and continues to be, the traditional Irish music sessions.

During the last decade, the economy of Ireland has expanded at dizzying rates. Spurred on by what is now called the Celtic Tiger, the amount of tourism to Ireland increased rapidly, and the tourist infrastructure (accommodation, transportation, and what the tourist industry calls the 'tourist product') has been built up. Unsurprisingly, during this period the crowds that visit Doolin have changed. By all accounts, proportionally fewer musicians and 'connoisseurs' of this music are in the crowds, and the

'pilgrimage' site feel of the place has dissipated. More 'mass tourists' – tourists with a multiplicity of motivations whose way is made easier and even predictable by a well-developed tourist infrastructure – come now to photograph and 'consume' the sessions. As others have pointed out, mass tourism and a festival atmosphere often feed on each other (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 61). Doolin is often now just one of many 'must-see' stops forming part of a larger holiday. Like many places, tourism is highly seasonal in Doolin. The busiest months are June through September, when the crowds can swell to several thousand per day. By contrast, tourists are rare in Doolin during the winter, and every aspect of social life in the village becomes dictated by this seasonality.

The question that begins to form on the lips of tourists, musicians, and concerned local stakeholders alike is an understandable but loaded one: are these sessions a 'tourist commodity', and if so, are they 'authentic' any longer? I will return to the question of 'authenticity' in more detail later, but first I would suggest that this confusion emerges partly out of our currently conflated understanding of the processes of 'commercialization' and 'commodification'. Greenwood introduced the concept of 'cultural commoditization' to the anthropological literature on tourism in 1977, arguing that as local behaviours and practices are marketed and 'sold' for tourist consumption, they are divested of their original meaning (1989 [1977]: 179). As marketed and consumable 'products' they become meaningless to their producers (Greenwood 1989 [1977]: 179). In other words, they become 'inauthentic'. Cohen puts a finer point on the definition of commodification by describing it as 'a process by which things (and activities) come to be valued primarily in terms of their exchange value, in a context of trade, thereby becoming goods (and services)... stated in terms of prices from [*sic*] a market' (1988: 380). So, commodification entrenches an object or practice in a commensurable definition of 'value', reducing or eliminating its original functional value.⁶

I follow Williams (2002) and Shepherd (2002) in arguing that the 'commodification thesis' has now become so overplayed that it has become an assumed characteristic of a tourist-host interaction without much further scrutiny. A number of questions emerge. How closely related to monetary exchange must the object, behaviour, or an actor be in order to be considered a commodity? If money changes hand via a third party whereby the consumer and producer never engage in monetary exchange, can we consider this commodification? Or, as Williams asks, are there 'monetized exchanges where the profit motive is absent?' (2002: 525). In those cases, can the object or behaviour really be considered a commodity with only an exchange-value?

In order to arrive at some clarity, I propose a distinction between commercialization and commodification. I suggest that commodification is a particular commercializing process whereby a produced thing or activity *itself* is given a consumptive market value. This is a return to Cohen's definition which argues that a commodified product, service, or behaviour is one that has 'come to be valued *primarily* in terms of [its] trade value' (1988: 380, my italics). '[S]uch a manoeuvre', write Helgasson and Palsson, 'requires the replacement of values and meanings that formerly excluded a thing from the sphere of commodity exchange, with the more homogenized field of significance of the market, that has at its core a single standard of commensurability' (1997: 453). I would extend this one step further. The desire to create these commensurable exchange-values is so intense in the process of commodification that it inevitably leads to the loss of productive control, or 'creative freedom'. As I argue below, it is the issue of control rather than the presence of money that is key. Commercialization is more a general process: it is simply the introduction or intensification of monetary exchange

in relation to the production and/or consumption of a thing. If productive control remains in the hands of the producer, then an activity can become commercialized without becoming commodified. So, these two categories are not distinct. All commodities are commercialized, but not all commercial activities are commodified.

A commodified object or behaviour does not need to be exchanged for money, although, as Kopytoff writes, an exchange-value is revealed most clearly when money is involved (1986: 69). Furthermore, things that are off-limits to the process of commodification are given 'a special aura of apartness from the mundane and the common' (Kopytoff 1986: 69). As Kirshenblatt-Gimblett points out, this 'apartness' may be achieved quite literally by placing an object into a museum setting. This may turn an 'everyday object' into one of powerful meaning and value, although that meaning is determined by the museum exhibit itself (1998: 19-23). Also, what might have a use-value in one context may become commodified to have an exchange-value in another context, or vice versa. A family heirloom, for example, might be put on the market to raise funds. This moves the object out of the realm of functional (and personal, sentimental) meaning into a commensurable realm of pure exchange-value as it sits in the auction house. If purchased by a collector, however, it may once again become an object of functional meaning. Likewise, exchange-values and functionality might coexist in a balance in certain instances. For example, if the family heirloom is not sold but rather appraised for insurance purposes, it may have both sentimental and monetary value for the owner. In other words, while profits and monetary values are an obvious place to begin an analysis of commodification, the existence of a profit-motive alone does not distinguish between commodification and commercialization. Instead, the major distinction between the two processes is control. Are the producers themselves (in this case the musicians) free to control the performance? Can they choose what to play, how to play it, and how to represent it? Or are the musicians being controlled by some third party – a publican perhaps? Or the whims of the consumers, in this case the audience?

Jigs for gigs

In Doolin, musicians were always compensated in one form or another for playing, with food, drinks, or a bit of cash. Older musicians explained to me that before the revival, music was categorized as a skill like any other, and musicians were the 'craftsmen' of music. The colloquial term *musicianer* is indicative of this understanding of the musician as a performer of services to others rather than as something one simply *is*.

When the revival hit Doolin and the crowds started pouring into the village, the musical environment began to change. One thing that did not change was the tradition of compensating musicians. One local publican told me about his relationship with the musicians:

I always gave 'em a few 'bob' anyway, before anybody ever asked me for money. They'd get their food, three meals if they were there all day. And if they were going somewhere, then you'd give them a fiver or a tenner ... anything they needed for a few pounds, you gave it to them. You didn't specify what amount, really.

He was reciprocally 'paying' musicians for their skilled craft, although it was never a 'specified amount' and never enough to call a 'wage' of any sort. As time wore on, though, and the crowds swelled, the size of the sessions and the size of the audiences

took their toll on musicians and publicans. 'Dancing became impossible in a jam-packed pub', wrote one early visitor to Doolin, 'though there was never any lack of music – often two or three sessions going simultaneously in different corners' (Coady 1996: 15). Some musicians began to look for quieter pubs to play in, away from the teeming crowds. In contrast, the publicans were growing dependent on the musicians to draw in the crowds of visitors, some of whom had travelled long distances to hear a bit of music. In other words, a consumer 'demand' had been created. The natural thing to do was to pay a few local musicians to show up at a given time to start a session off. In a short amount of time, a new symbiotic relationship developed between publicans, musicians, and visitors while simultaneously the old symbiosis between musicians and dancers weakened significantly. Paying musicians ensured that a session would happen on a regular basis, what some authors have called 'anchoring' (Helbig 2002: 168; Vaysse as cited in McCann 2001: 75) or 'seeding' a session. Eventually, these payments were transformed into a *kind* of wage-like payment, paid out at the end of the night. While a system of paid-for sessions contributes towards a general professionalization of the music (Bohlman 1988: 85-86), these payments should not be mistaken for a formal 'wage'. Nor are paid musicians employees; rather, as Fairbairn has argued, they are given the 'elevated status of desirable clients' (1992: 159).

Today, musicians and publicans have created a system in which three or four musicians agree to show up on a given night each week to host a session. No more than three or four musicians are paid to play, and normally one musician will be 'hired' by a publican to do the 'gig' once a week. That musician then decides who the other two or three musicians will be to join 'his' or 'her' session, and if the session is advertised in one form or another (verbally or in print), the evening will often simply be called 'Mary and friends' or 'Seamus and friends'. When this system was first becoming prominent during the revival, it simply 'seeded' the sessions. Others would inevitably join, and a larger session was ensured. Now however, fewer and fewer travelling musicians come through northwest Clare, and some nights the paid musicians will be the only ones playing.

The recognition of a 'lead' musician (as in 'Mary and friends') might be seen as the emergence of hierarchy, but, importantly, this relationship was extant before. In most Irish sessions anywhere in the world, one or two players are recognized as what some writers have called the 'alpha' musician (Foy 1999: 85). 'This informal "leader"', Cowdery explains, 'must know an enormous number of tunes and must be able to think of them and suggest them on the spot, either by calling out their titles or by authoritatively starting them' (1990: 13). This role is now simply acknowledged by the structural relations of paid sessions.

The emphasis on communality and egalitarianism is still expressed despite the extraneous monetary realities. For example, non-paid musicians are still encouraged to 'lead' a set of tunes at least some time during an evening. It is not only an important way to build the confidence of learning musicians, but it also emphasizes communality. On one level, all of the musicians recognize that some are better players than others, and deference to the 'alpha musician' is certainly required. But no matter how good an 'alpha musician' might be, lesser talents must also be given the floor. Glassie describes the necessity of this mutual deference in the context of a *ceili*,⁷ but the description is apt here as well: 'It is the responsibility of the entertaining man who occupies the *ceili*'s center to pull others into performance, and it is the responsibility of those others, though acknowledged as lesser talents, to take their turn ... diversifying the sport and giving the man who must do most of the work a rest' (1995 [1982]: 99-100).

Importantly, like all other aspects of life in northwest Clare, there is a dramatic seasonal variation in the paid session 'schedules' in Doolin. In the summertime, there is a paid session every night of the week in all three pubs, which are generally amplified so that the music can be heard throughout the large buildings. After the tourist season ends, the publicans start paying for fewer sessions during the weekdays. By November, sessions are paid for only on the weekends, and eventually only two-thirds of the pubs in the village host paid sessions at all. So, as Kneafsey points out, there is a certain degree of musical dependence on tourism, and this means that a kind of 'symbiotic relationship' has emerged between paid-for sessions and tourism (2003: 35).

The triangle of consumption

The system of payments creates what I call a 'triangle of consumption' in Doolin's sessions. Publicans pay musicians to play at given times on given nights of the week. The musicians get economic compensation from publicans for playing. Publicans reap large profits, of course, from the tourist consumption of alcohol and food. Meanwhile, tourists 'consume' the music, gaining an important Irish holiday experience. Especially for those tourists who only have a passing knowledge of this music, sessions are a kind of visual and aural souvenir. Tourists in Doolin often told me that it was one of the things they 'had to see' while they were there. At the height of the summer tourist season, sessions in Doolin are accompanied by arrhythmic flashes from cameras. Tourists sit or stand near the session collectively 'gazing' at the musicians (Urry 2002 [1990]: 43). The visual/aural experience itself is a kind of consumption, and the photographs (and sometimes the recordings that tourists make) can be taken home as a more literal type of souvenir.

Of course, this triangular model is only just a crude sketch. This is not a balanced relationship. Nor are participants' motivations uniform. In terms of economic capital, the publicans are set to gain the most. The disproportionate profits that publicans make in comparison to musicians is sometimes criticized by some observers and participants as 'exploitative'. However, publicans must also be very conscious of the amount of money they pay out to musicians on an annual basis. A retired publican once told me, '[I wouldn't like to be in the business now. You'd want to have a good business to pay three or four musicians [every night]. At the end of the year, if you added it up, that could be most of your profit'. Certainly, the claim that 'most' of a pub's profits go to the musicians is an exaggeration; however, the move towards a more structured system of payments has created a more competitive market, both for publicans and for musicians. As might be expected, tensions do emerge as a result of these paid relationships. Largely, though, everyone recognizes the necessity of this symbiosis, and the relationship between publicans and musicians is amicable if sometimes only business-like. Publicans' motivations for hosting music also vary. Some publicans clearly host traditional music simply because it makes good business sense. Others are devoted connoisseurs of the music. Finally, it is important to note that money never passes between the musicians and the tourists. The publicans act as the brokers of all economic exchanges in the triangle of consumption. In one sense, the musicians are kept free from the 'polluting' effects that direct monetary transactions would have on the perceived 'authenticity' of the music.⁸ Commercial exchanges are often perceived to be 'robbed of all meaning', while 'other types of exchange, particularly gift[s], do have meaning and do provide fulfilment' (Helbig 2002: 226). It is the publican, a role that is often seen as

the very stereotype of the Irish businessman, who purifies the exchange by absorbing its 'polluting' commercial aspects, thereby turning the payments into gifts.

For some musicians, their fee is just supplemental income. For others, it makes up most or all of their annual earnings. In other words, a paid musician can theoretically live off the music, although the income is only barely a 'living wage'. This is relatively uncommon, but it highlights the fact that musicians' motivations for playing can vary a great deal. Someone who depends on the nightly fees might play less out of enjoyment and more out of financial obligation. However, musicians often talked about how important it was to not start thinking that it was some sort of 'job', and, in fact, many cited this as the reason why they kept regular 'day jobs'. In other words, there is a real concern to maintain what Csikszentmihályi has called the 'autotelic experience' (1990: 67), the desire to enjoy the music for its own sake. This symbiotic relationship also provides a consistent venue for the music to be played to a largely appreciative audience. Owing to the positive response from tourist audiences, many musicians told me that they prefer them over locals-only audiences. This is worth pointing out because, for musicians who are concerned about the 'authenticity' of their music, there are larger concerns that underlie tourism and payments for sessions. Many musicians told me that these issues, while related to a loss of control over the session, are 'beside the point'.

Symbolically, the tourists' 'consumption' of what is for many of them an exotic musical context is arguably the most novel experience in the relationship. That consumption comes in the form of the direct experience itself (seeing it, hearing it, and feeling it) and through photographs and the occasional sound recording, which can be re-experienced later. Now more than ever, it is difficult to ascertain just how important the musical experience is to the tourists who visit Doolin. During the revival period which pre-dated well-developed tourism transportation and lodging, tourists endured many discomforts in order to experience a Doolin session,⁹ but today the infrastructure is such that travel is easy and lodging is well appointed. A modern mass tourist in Doolin can afford to have a plethora of motivations, or no clear motivations at all, for being present at a session.

It is also an over-simplification to presume that the distinctions between musicians and tourists are clear. Some tourists are on holiday specifically in order to play in sessions themselves. Similarly, I became friends with a French tourist who eventually became an 'incomer' to the village and a paid musician in the local sessions. Mass tourist crowds are never undifferentiated either, and certain tourists may feel more closely connected to the musical experience than others. Diverse motivations, perspectives, and discursive assessments of the music (and of other tourists) all come into play. Not only is there national, linguistic, and ethnic diversity amongst the tourist population, but there is also epistemological diversity about the locale and the local culture. Some tourists know a great deal, for example, about traditional Irish music and would be able to listen to a session with discerning ears. Others will have absolutely no experience with the music and will have expectations derived from other genres like pop concerts. For these tourists, while they may enjoy it, the fast-tempo and repetitive nature of traditional music leads to a commonly heard complaint: 'It all sounds the same'. These differing levels of knowledge about the session experience will create very different assessments of what it is 'all about' as well as its 'authenticity'. Some tourists with a musical knowledge derived from pop music might find a more highly produced, 'staged' performance of traditional Irish music similar to other musical experiences they may have had, thus concluding that it was more 'authentic'. For the same reason,

they might conclude that the casual social environment of a session seems 'unprofessional' and therefore inauthentic. Conversely, a tourist with extensive experience with the session context might draw the opposite conclusions. However, despite this diversity, there was an almost ubiquitous sense of disappointment amongst the tourists I talked to if they found out that the musicians get paid. I use the word 'if' because unless they asked, no one told them. The assessment of a South African tourist is representative: 'Back in 1983 the musicians gathered spontaneously, the music was authentic, the vibe was less touristy. This time [in 2003] the musicians were obviously paid to be there'. Paid sessions are perceived to be a formal economic relationship that automatically marks them as commodified and therefore 'inauthentic'. What this tourist encountered in Doolin is in contrast to the widely received narrative about sessions from the tourist industry, which is that they are by nature, casual, unstructured, and 'impromptu' (*Let's Go, Ireland* 1996: 70). The romantic assessment of the tourist above (and his subsequent disappointment) is therefore common.

Authenticity and credibility

Lionel Trilling wrote that authenticity 'is one of those words, like love, which are best not talked about if they are to retain any force of meaning' (1972: 120). The academic literature is already heavy with discussions on this word. Some say it is 'overdone' (Bruner 2005: 209). Certainly, 'authenticity' is a clumsy but powerful trope (Bruner 2005: 92-4), and it is not always clear exactly what people mean when they use the term without looking carefully at the context (Bruner 2005: 151). As Helbig has written, it is the 'all-or-nothing nature of "the authentic" in popular discourse' (2002: 200) that is the problem. I would add that it is not just the popular discourse, but also the academic discourse, that is to blame. Bruner suggests 'it may be that ... contemporary intellectuals are the ones looking for authenticity and that they have projected onto tourists their own longings' (2005: 162). At the very least, academics are certainly not immune from the same powerful and romantic narratives about 'pure cultural origins' (and subsequent 'commercial pollution') that often inform tourist narratives. Shepherd in fact points out that there is a powerful subtext in the literature that assumes a straightforward oppositional dichotomy between the consumption of 'commodified' culture and some sort of 'cultural authenticity' (2002: 186).

For sure, a more nuanced understanding of 'authenticity' is beginning to emerge, and there are several basic ways of thinking about the concept. One way to get at the meaning of authenticity is what Wang has called 'the museum approach' (2000: 47, 49). In other words, one might ask, is a thing what it claims to be? This is what Bruner says people mean when they use the word to refer 'to the original, as opposed to a copy' (2005: 150). A determination of this kind of 'authenticity' might arguably be impossible when considering social behaviours and performances in a tourist context. One would necessarily have to prove that they are in no way being produced for any other reason than for the supposedly original function in society. This is problematic from the start because 'original functions' are not likely to exist. Likewise, one would need proof that a behaviour has not been manipulated by 'outside' influence (however one might delineate the 'outside'), that, instead, its form or performance has some sort of pure historic continuity with past forms or performances. In other words, all of the strictures that museologists use to determine the authenticity of a piece of art or an artefact would necessarily be utilized. MacCannell's analysis of authenticity in tourist contexts (1989 [1976]: 148) and Greenwood's (1989 [1977]: 179) *early* work on tourism are

examples of this approach.¹⁰ Various authors have pointed out the simplicity of this conflation of experiences, objects, and traditions (Bruner 2005; Greenwood 1989 [1977]; Kaul 2007; Selwyn 1996; Wang 2000: 48, and in the specific context of 'living histories' see Handler & Saxton 1988: 243).

Bruner describes a second kind of authenticity: one which is 'certified' by an institution or by some sort of 'expert' who has the authority 'vested in them' to deem one thing but not another 'authentic'. One example is the reproduced village of New Salem that Bruner describes, which was certified to be the 'official' 'authentic reproduction' (2005: 150) of the village by the state of Illinois. We might call this 'certifiable authenticity'.

An extreme postmodern perspective argues that any notion of 'authenticity' must be abandoned altogether because there is not, nor was there ever, any 'absolute boundary between the real and the fake' (Wang 2000: 54). I agree with Bruner that the extreme, nihilistic version of postmodernism is 'a narrow and distorted view' (2005: 168). Just because an objective definition of authenticity cannot be used does not mean that all meaning is lost or that every assessment is purely subjective and therefore equivalent. For instance, it would be ridiculous to claim that the assessment of a particular performance of traditional Irish music by a musician is as valuable as the assessment of someone who has never heard the music before. However, the value of a more moderate postmodern stance is that it 'implicitly paves the way for defining an existential authenticity as an alternative authentic experience in tourism' (Wang 2000: 56). This is a third category. An existential approach is particularly useful in performance contexts like in Doolin. Existential authenticity might be defined as an experience in which a person is completely attuned to and embedded in the phenomenological moment, the 'moment of reception' (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998: 11). At the level of individual perceptions, phenomenologically meaningful experiences are authentic for the very reason that they are inchoate and free from the very narratives that would contest them. It is more than reasonable to suggest that an audience member with no prior experience of traditional Irish music performances may have what they consider to be an *existentially* authentic experience even though they might not have the epistemological tools to assess the relative quality or 'historical accuracy' of the performance itself. In an entirely different context, Bruner describes how a group he worked for as a tour guide in Bali enjoyed the less historically accurate dance that was performed in a far more intimate setting than the historically accurate dance that was performed in a hotel amongst several hundred tourists (2005: 206-7). He argues that instead of being concerned 'with issues of authenticity', they simply 'demanded that it be a good performance' (2005: 209). Another way of characterizing this would be to say that they were not concerned as much with issues of objective authenticity, but instead wanted to have an existentially authentic experience.

With this foundation, a constructivist definition of 'authenticity' can be built. Meanings are created, maintained, dismantled, and changed such that what is or is not 'authentic' changes as well. This seems reasonable given that cultures and the behaviours within them follow particular normative customs (Chaney 2002: 203). In that sense they are 'primarily traditional' and at the same time 'continually being redesigned' (Chaney 2002: 203), 'invented' (Hobsbawm & Ranger 1983), or, if one prefers the dramaturgical metaphor over the technological ones, 'performed' and 're-performed'. For instance, the Doolin that exists today is very much a place 'constructed' by its interaction with tourism, and this is not simply metaphorical. There is a very conscious effort to preserve what was originally attractive about the village, including its built

environment, by not overdeveloping it (Danaher 2005). Whether this issue is something to be pessimistic about or not is debatable (cf. the exchange between Bruner 1994 and Handler & Gable 1996). What is certain in Doolin is that, as others have shown in other tourist destinations (cf. Mbaiwa 2004), the impact of tourism is always complex rather than simply 'good' or 'bad'.

If 'authenticity' is culturally constructed and context-dependent, then 'authenticity should be understood as a quality of a process rather than an object' (Chaney 2002: 204). '[W]hen it is invoked people are talking about how something is being done rather than the what it is (that is being done)' (Chaney 2002: 204). Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, discussing the (re)production of Plimoth Plantation for tourist consumption, makes a similar point. 'Authenticity', she writes, 'is located not in the artifacts per se or in the models on which they are based but in the *methods* by which they are made – in a way of doing, which is a way of knowing, in a performance' (1998: 196). This is where we are often led astray by notions like 'authenticity'. It is not a *thing* that we (in the public or in the academy) should be looking for at all, but rather a process or a characteristic.

In fact, although it is beyond the scope of this article to delve into this point too much, I would suggest that when the term 'authenticity' is invoked (especially in the academic literature) in relation to cases like the one under discussion here, very often what is sought after could more accurately be described as 'credibility'. This term takes on board the constructed 'authenticity-as-process' approach while recognizing that some actors simply 'know better' than others how to assess a good-quality performance. These are actors who are closer to the history of the production of an object or performance, or perhaps the producers themselves. Their assessments may not be *entirely* accurate or 'objectively true' given their historical and contextual perspectives, but they are obviously more 'credible' than the assessments of other actors with little or no epistemological knowledge of the performance. The term 'credibility' also does not deny the legitimacy or coexistence of 'existentially authentic' experiences of performances. In other words, I see no reason why an informed actor (e.g. a musician in this case) might not find a particular performance very credible, while at the same time, another actor (e.g. a tourist who has never heard the music before) might find it to be one of the most 'existentially authentic' moments of their holiday. For me, this is simply a more pragmatic and less ideologically loaded way of thinking about the same issues.

The word 'authentic' cannot be disentangled from the issue of control since one of its original meanings was, as Lionel Trilling points out, 'to have full power over' (1972: 131). In a case like Doolin, any discussion of 'authenticity', or what I would prefer to call 'credibility', needs to consider the amount of control the musicians have over the production of their performances. In fact, the distinction I suggest here between commercialization and commodification is important because I would argue that commercial activities can coexist with legitimately credible performances if the producers maintain significant control over what gets performed. This becomes less and less possible as they lose control – in other words, as things become commodified.

Commodification, commercialization, and control

As I stated at the outset, commodification occurs when individuals lose control over the process of determining how to value the activities and things that they produce. Functional values are overridden by commensurable exchange-values. In the present

case, there is no set exchange-value for tunes or sessions. Of course, the musicians are in fact paid by publicans, and, indeed, in the summertime, ostensibly for tourist consumption. But neither tourist audiences nor publicans make a direct payment for the session as a 'product' in and of itself. There is no 'cover charge' for tourists entering the pub, and, as we will see below, the publicans' payments are not so much for the music that is played as much as they are for the *fact* that music is played. Publicans do not control the means of production; they collaborate with the musicians to create a relationship whereby the music can be produced. So, as regards monetary exchange, I would not conclude that the paid-for sessions in Doolin have become commodified.

So how much control do the musicians have over the production of their music in Doolin? The fact that musicians are paid to show up to start a session is clearly a loss of some control, but outside a few rare examples, it is the musicians who have total control over what goes on in the session, not the publicans or the audience.¹¹ It is perfectly acceptable, and indeed expected, that paid musicians will invite local singers or tourists to come up and 'give a song' or play a few tunes. They can let other musicians assume the 'alpha musician' role and take control over the session. In other words, the very base-line responsibility as a paid musician is simply to *start off* the session. Often, few or no unpaid musicians turn up to play, so the paid musicians must carry the night, but if a large number of unpaid musicians show up and are keen to play, the paid musicians are under little obligation to maintain any sort of 'leading' role.

Additionally, musicians can easily quit their weekly scheduled gig if they are annoyed with the publican for any reason. This is in fact much easier to do and more common than a publican 'firing' a musician. Musicians can also get another musician to fill in for them if they have a conflicting obligation. In these instances, the musician need not inform the publican of the substitution. Publicans have become reliant upon musicians to play in the pubs, but musicians often have other income, and more importantly many other pubs that they could play in. In other words, the publican's primary concern is that there is some music at all. In fourteen months, I was only witness to two nights when musicians did not show up to a scheduled gig. In both cases, the publican frantically called around to find someone to fill in at the last minute.

The loss of control is not significant enough to conclude that the traditional Irish music sessions played in Doolin are somehow 'commodified', 'inauthentic', 'false', or 'staged' solely for the benefit of tourists. Indeed, musicians still find playing music meaningful, and few see any problem with the relationships inherent in the triangle of consumption. From the standpoint of most musicians I talked to, the worst threat to any sense of 'authenticity' or credibility comes from the breakdown of the basic egalitarian social rules of the session rather than the commercialism that has grown up around it.

Perhaps the thrust of this argument would be clearer by comparison. There is a theme park in County Clare with various styles of old Irish cottages from the area, complete with farmyards and livestock. The visitor is able to walk into them, poke around the farm machinery, and generally be as investigative as he or she wants to be. In the evenings, 'medieval banquets' are held in a restored medieval castle, and the paying diners are entertained with music and song produced by musicians and singer/actors dressed in medieval period costumes. A musician who currently plays music for these banquets told me about the programme as it exists today:

It's a very *set* programme. It has to run within a given time. So that leaves restrictions as well.

And the type of music they play, *I* feel, is totally cliché. It's down to – for example, they play 'Danny Boy'. But they used to do it in *Irish*, which is beautiful. And the tourists used to ask, 'Why don't you sing "Danny Boy"?' They had to change it back to *English*. And they've chosen songs that everybody can clap or join into.

This medieval banquet is similar to the reproduction of Lincoln's New Salem village that Bruner describes (2005) or Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's case study on Plimoth Plantation (1998). There is an attempt to make the details of the performance (the acting, the costumes, the décor, the music, and the food) historically accurate or 'objectively authentic'. On the other hand, there is a pull to satisfy the tourists' demands by playing and singing *popular*, not necessarily *historic*, songs. The performance here is tightly controlled by the management, consciously produced for a tourist audience, and is a classic example of what Edensor has called a tourist 'enclave' where there is a 'continual maintenance of a clear boundary which demarcates which activities may occur' (2000: 328). Moreover, the representation of the music (by means of advertisements, 'directing' the performances) is almost entirely outside of the control of the musicians. The informant above discusses how '*they*' make decisions about the performances, not the musicians. This is a highly commodified musical product, created not for the producers, but solely for the consumption of paying tourists. While this informant enjoys these staged performances, he told me he feels infinitely freer in other musical contexts like when he is 'busking'. It is interesting to note that when busking, the monetary exchange is closer in proximity to the music than at the theme park, and yet it is perceived by this musician to be more 'authentic'. This highlights my point that control is in fact more important than money.

At the other extreme might be the kind of public performance that occurs at a small old pub in the countryside between Doolin and another village nearby. Once a week for many years now, the local farmers have come out for a few drinks, to socialize and to play a few tunes. The musicians who attend this session are generally older, and a few of them are even quite renowned. However, this is a very causal affair. The music is played simply as part of a good night in quiet company. Here, there is no confused agenda, no hint of commercial motivations, and indeed no reason to play every Thursday night except for the enjoyment of doing so. Moreover, there is no advertising, or, for that matter, any 'representation' of this session in *any* form other than amongst known friends and family.¹²

Traditional Irish music has become commercialized in Doolin in the sense that monetary exchanges surrounding the music have increased. However, Doolin has not become commodified like the musical performances at the theme park nearby. The surface trappings of commercialism have painted the exterior of performances in Doolin, confusing the issue, but musicians largely maintain control over the make-up of the session. No one is telling them what tunes to play, how to play them, or to sing 'Danny Boy' (in English) because the tourists request it.¹³

Conclusion

Globalization has shifted our attention towards processes that bring objects and activities once held to be outside the economic arena into the realm where they can potentially become measured in terms of exchange-values. This attention is warranted, but without careful scrutiny it is too often assumed that all commercial processes

automatically negatively impact locally produced objects, activities, and performances by eroding all functional value and meaning. In this article, I have argued that a distinction needs to be made between the two separate processes in this larger shift because of the varying impact that they have on local people's ability autonomously to control the production of their own cultural artefacts and activities and therefore maintain a sense of functional value. Control is the key factor in the distinction rather than the existence of monetary exchange. In particular, it is argued that commercialization can coexist, if not always comfortably, with an artist's control over the production of their art form. By contrast, commodification is the near-complete loss of control.

The erosion of cultural meaning and legitimacy underlies many discussions of consumption and social interaction in tourist destinations like the one discussed here, and the concept of 'authenticity' is often invoked. Recent critiques of this concept are justified since it is both ideologically loaded and polysemous. A more nuanced understanding is beginning to emerge, and this article is one attempt to extend the analysis. Finally, if Miller is correct that there are both benign and 'unequivocally evil' forms of consumption (1995: 147), then this distinction is not simply a pedantic exercise. It has great political importance for local people as they attempt to do more than simply 'cope' with tourism (Boissevain 1996) by recognizing that they can marry commercial success with a sense of cultural legitimacy.

NOTES

Support for this research was generously provided by an Overseas Research Studentship Award, and by a Radcliffe-Brown Award from the Royal Anthropological Institute. Institutional support was provided by the Anthropology Department at Durham University, the 'Public Cultures in Theory and Practice' and 'Anthropology in Development' Research Groups at Durham University, and also by Medaille College. I would like to thank the *JRAI* reviewers for their very valuable suggestions. I am also particularly indebted to Tamara Kohn, Steve Lyon, Paul Sillitoe, Peter Dixon, Les Jessop, Ethan Paquin, and Jerry Erion for their comments. Special thanks are reserved for the people of Doolin who gave their valuable time, support, and friendship.

¹ The ethnographic data that form the basis for this article was collected up to just a few months prior to the smoking ban, which now applies to all work-places, including pubs.

² The reputation of the 'expressive culture' is so strong here that numerous folklorists, ethnomusicologists, and anthropologists have gone to Doolin over the last hundred years to collect and document it. No doubt, this academic interest has had some influence on the self-preservation of local traditions by local people.

³ This is an example of the pliability of 'living' folk traditions. Indeed, traditions must constantly although conservatively change and adapt in order to survive (Kaul 2007).

⁴ The revival of traditional Irish music is complex and cannot be dealt with here, but for discussions on musical revivals in Ireland and elsewhere, see Allen (1981); Blaustein (1993); Jabbour (1993); Livingston (1999); Munroe (1984); Valley (1999).

⁵ 'Industry' is perhaps too strong a term. Created and run by a fiercely independent people, the development of tourism in Doolin was, and continues to be, very much a *laissez-faire* co-operative collection of individual business concerns.

⁶ More recently, the commodification of culture has received wider attention outside of tourist settings as well (Appadurai 1996; Ateljevic & Doorne 2003; Helgasson & Palsson 1997; Kirtsoglou & Theodosopoulos 2004; Lovering 1998; McCann 2001; Nesper 2003; Schutte 2003; Shepherd 2002; Stevenson 2003; White 2000; Williams 2002).

⁷ This Gaelic term describes an informal gathering of friends and neighbours in a house where music is played and storytelling and gossip occurs.

⁸ For a similar discussion about the 'polluting' effects of money, but in a much different ethnographic context, see Carsten (1993).

⁹ Locals were fond of telling stories about how revival tourists had to hitchhike to get to Doolin, camp in cow pastures, and do their laundry in the river.

¹⁰ Greenwood amends his earlier 'alarmist' approach in the 1989 edition of this same paper.

¹¹ I heard of a few rare instances in which publicans pressured musicians to play particular types of tunes or sing particular types of songs, but the explosive reaction to these incursions only highlight the fact that this is extremely inappropriate behaviour. One musician famously burned his gig money after being told what type of songs to sing.

¹² My wife and I lived very close to this pub for most of a year, but it was only after about six months into the fieldwork that we first heard about this session. It is not a guarded secret or a private affair. It is simply not well known.

¹³ In fact, the commonly heard response to requests for 'standards' such as 'Danny Boy' is something along the lines of 'Sorry I don't know that one. Why don't you sing it for us?'

REFERENCES

- ALLEN, R.R. 1981. Old-time music and the urban folk revival. *New York Folklore* 7, 65-81.
- APPADURAI, A. 1996. *Modernity at large: cultural dimensions of globalization*. London: University of Minnesota Press.
- ATELJEVIC, I. & S. DOORNE 2003. Culture, economy and tourism commodities: social relations of production and consumption. *Tourist Studies* 3: 2, 123-41.
- BLAUSTEIN, R. 1993. Rethinking folk revivalism. In *Transforming tradition: folk music revivals examined* (ed.) Neil V. Rosenberg, 258-74. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- BOHLMAN, P.V. 1988. *The study of folk music in the modern world*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- BOISSEVAIN, J. (ed.) 1996. *Coping with tourists*. Oxford: Berghahn.
- BRODY, H. 1973. *Inishkillane: change and decline in the west of Ireland*. London: Jill Norman and Hobhouse.
- BRUNER, E.M. 1994. Abraham Lincoln as authentic reproduction: a critique of postmodernism. *American Anthropologist* 96, 397-415
- 2005. *Culture on tour: ethnographies of travel*. Chicago: University Press.
- CARRIER, J.G. & J.McC. HEYMAN 1997. Consumption and political economy. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (N.S.) 3, 355-73.
- CARSTEN, J. 1993. Cooking money: gender and the symbolic transformation of means of exchange in a Malay fishing community. In *Money and the morality of exchange* (eds) J. Parry & M. Bloch, 117-41. Cambridge: University Press.
- CHANEY, D. 2002. The power of metaphors in tourism theory. In *Tourism: between place and performance* (eds) S. Coleman & M. Crang, 193-206. London: Berghahn.
- COADY, M. 1996. *The wellspring of water: a memoir of Packie and Micho Russell of Doolin, County Clare*. [Carrick-on-Suir, Co. Tipperary]: Self-published.
- COHEN, E. 1988. Authenticity and commoditization in tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research* 15, 371-86.
- COWDERY, J.R. 1990. *The melodic tradition of Ireland*. Kent: Kent State University Press.
- CSIKSZENTMIHÁLYI, M. 1990. *Flow: the psychology of optimal experience*. New York: Harper & Row.
- DANAHER, D. 2005. Doolin could cannibalise itself through holiday homes. *Clare Champion*. Ennis, Republic of Ireland, 21 January.
- DILLEY, R. 2004. The visibility and invisibility of production among Senegalese craftsmen. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* (N.S.) 10, 797-813.
- EDENSOR, T. 2000. Staging tourism: tourists as performers. *Annals of Tourism Research* 27, 322-44.
- FAIRBAIRN, H. 1992. Group playing in traditional Irish music: interaction and heterophony in the session. PhD. thesis in musicology, Cambridge University.
- 1994. Changing contexts for traditional dance music in Ireland: the rise of group performance practice. *Folk Music Journal* 6, 566-99.
- FOY, B. 1999. *Field guide to the Irish music session: a guide to enjoying Irish traditional music in its natural habitat!* Boulder, Colo.: Roberts Rinehart Publishers.
- GLASSIE, H. 1995 [1982]. *Passing the time in Ballymenone: culture and history of an Ulster community*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- GRABURN, N.H.H. (ed.) 1976. *Ethnic and tourist art: cultural expressions from the Fourth World*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- GREENWOOD, D.J. 1989 [1977]. Culture by the pound: an anthropological perspective on tourism as cultural commoditization. In *Hosts and guests: the anthropology of tourism* (Second edition) (ed.) V.L. Smith, 171-85. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- HANDLER, R. & E. GABLE 1996. After authenticity at an American heritage site. *American Anthropologist* 98, 568-78.

- & W. SAXTON 1988. Dyssimulation: reflexivity, narrative and the quest for authenticity in 'living history'. *Cultural Anthropology* 3, 242-60.
- HANNERZ, U. 1996. *Transnational connections: culture, people, places*. London: Routledge.
- HELBIG, K.P. 2002. Being 'Irish': the market, transnationalism and the experience of ethnicity. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania.
- HELGASSON, A. & G. PALSSON 1997. Contested commodities: the moral landscape of modern regimes. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute (N.S.)* 3, 451-71.
- HOBBSAWM, E. & T. RANGER (eds). 1983. *The invention of tradition*. Cambridge: University Press.
- JABBOUR, A. 1993. Foreword. In *Transforming tradition: folk music revivals examined* (ed.) N.V. Rosenberg, xi-xiii. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- KAUL, A.R. 2004. At work in the field: problems and opportunities associated with employment during fieldwork. *Anthropology Matters* 6: 2 (available on-line: http://www.anthropologymatters.com/journal/2004-2/Kaul_2004_At.pdf).
- 2007. On tradition: between the local and the global in a traditional Irish music scene. *Folklife: The Journal of Ethnological Studies* 45, 49-59.
- KIRSCHENBLATT-GIMBLETT, B. 1998. *Destination culture: tourism, museums and heritage*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- KIRTOSGLOU, E. & D. THEODOSSOPOULOS 2004. 'They are taking our culture away': tourism and culture commodification in the Garifuna community of Roatan. *Critique of Anthropology* 24, 135-57.
- KNEAFSEY, M. 2002. Sessions and gigs: tourism and traditional music in North Mayo, Ireland; extracts from a field diary (a fictional account based on actual events, people and places). *Cultural Geographies* 9, 354-8.
- 2003. 'If it wasn't for the tourists we wouldn't have an audience': the case of tourism and traditional music in North Mayo. In *Irish tourism: image, culture and identity* (eds) M. Cronin & B. O'Connor, 21-41. Clevedon, Oh.: Channel View Publications.
- KOPYTOFF, I. 1986. The cultural biography of things: commoditization as process. In *The social life of things: commodities in cultural perspective* (ed.) A. Appadurai, 64-91. Cambridge: University Press.
- Let's Go: Ireland* 1996 (eds.) M.K. Linask & A. Crapo. London: Macmillan Reference Books.
- LIVINGSTON, T.E. 1999. Music revivals: towards a general theory. *Ethnomusicology* 43, 66-85.
- LOVERING, J. 1998. The global music industry: contradictions in the commodification of the sublime. In *The place of music* (eds) A.D. Leyshon & M.G. Revill, 31-56. New York: Guilford.
- MCCANN, A. 2001. All that is not given is lost: Irish traditional music, copyright, and common property. *Ethnomusicology* 45, 89-101.
- MACCANNELL, D. 1989 [1976]. *The tourist: a new theory of the leisure class*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- MCCARTHY, M. 1999. *Passing it on: the transmission of music in Irish culture*. Cork: University Press.
- MAUSS, M. 1954 [1924]. *The gift: the form and function of exchange in archaic societies*. London: Cohen & West.
- MBAIWA, J.E. 2004. The socio-cultural impacts of tourism development in the Okavango Delta, Botswana. *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change* 2: 3, 163-84.
- MILLER, D. 1995. Consumption and commodities. *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24, 141-61.
- MUNROE, A. 1984. *The folk music revival in Scotland*. London: Kahn & Averill.
- NESPER, L. 2003. Simulating culture: being Indian for tourists in Lac du Flambeau's Wa-Swa-Gon Indian Bowl. *Ethnohistory* 50, 447-72.
- SCHUTTE, G. 2003. Tourists and tribes in the 'new' South Africa. *Ethnohistory* 50, 474-87.
- SELWYN, T. 1996. Introduction. In *The tourist image: myths and myth making in tourism* (ed.) T. Selwyn, 1-32. Chichester: Wiley.
- SHEPHERD, R. 2002. Commodification, culture and tourism. *Tourist Studies* 2, 183-201.
- STEVENSON, L. 2003. Commodification and authenticity in the Traditional Music and Tourism Initiative. Paper presented at the Conference on Developing Cultural Tourism. University of Nottingham, December.
- TRILLING, L. 1972. *Sincerity and authenticity*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- URRY, J. 2002 [1990]. *The tourist gaze: leisure and travel in contemporary society*. London: Sage.
- VALLELY, F. 1999. Revival. In *The companion to Irish traditional music* (ed.) F. Vallely, 318. Cork: University Press.
- WANG, N. 2000. *Tourism and modernity: a sociological analysis*. Oxford: Pergamon.
- WHITE, B. 2000. *Soukouss or sell-out? Congolese popular dance music as cultural commodity*. In *Commodities and globalization: anthropological perspectives* (eds) A. Haugerud, M.P. Stone & P.D. Little, 33-57. Oxford: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers.
- WILLIAMS, C.C. 2002. A critical evaluation of the commodification thesis. *Sociological Review* 50, 525-42.

Les limites de la marchandisation de la musique traditionnelle irlandaise

Résumé

L'auteur analyse l'économie des soirées payantes de musique traditionnelle irlandaise dans les comtés de Doolin et Clare, en république d'Irlande. Il répond en partie à l'appel récent de Sheperd en faveur d'une recherche sur la marchandisation de la culture dans les destinations touristiques. Il avance ici que la « marchandisation » doit être distinguée du processus plus général de « commercialisation » et suggère que la commercialisation est simplement la création de relations commerciales entourant la production d'une activité ou d'un objet, tandis que la marchandisation est, selon Helgasson et Palsson, la séquestration intensive de cette production dans le domaine des valeurs d'échanges commensurables. Cet éclaircissement a d'importantes implications théoriques et politiques. En théorie, cette distinction renforce et élargit les critiques de la notion « d'authenticité » dans les destinations touristiques, légitimant ainsi la crédibilité des activités commercialisées pour autant que le contrôle de la production reste en majeure partie entre les mains des producteurs eux-mêmes.

Adam Kaul is an Assistant Professor of Anthropology at Augustana College, and an Honorary Research Associate with the Department of Anthropology at Durham University, where he also earned his Ph.D. His research focuses on the performance of identities, tradition, globalization, social change, migration, and belonging.

Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work, Augustana College, 639 38th Street, Rock Island, Illinois 61201, USA. adamkaul@augustana.edu