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2020

Recognising the Place of Food Tourism in Ireland: an Autoethnographic Perspective

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**Recognising the place of food tourism in Ireland:
an autoethnographic perspective**

JOHN D. MULCAHY, MSc, MA.

**A THESIS SUBMITTED
FOR THE AWARD OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**TO THE
TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY DUBLIN**

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May 2020

Abstract

This is an autoethnographic account, utilising prior publications, of my role in positioning food as a critical ingredient in Ireland's tourism policy and strategy since 2009. As the architect and instigator of this project, my priorities were threefold: first, working from the ground up identifying local activists across the food tourism landscape to create an active and vibrant network; second, providing thought leadership for food tourism; and third, encouraging and funding others to conduct and disseminate similar research. I have chosen six book chapters, published as a result of my advocacy strategy, for this PhD by prior publication. They are a series of real-time reflections and reactions as food tourism developed in Ireland during the period 2009-2018. The publications demonstrate that there has been a consistency of approach based on a deep knowledge of, and familiarity with, the public service environment in which I was operating. Throughout this overarching critical document, I contend that the value of the publications is that they are a unique long-term case study of the practice and development of Food Tourism in a specific destination by a practitioner bureaucrat over ten years, and that they make a valuable theoretical contribution by tracking the evolution of shifts in perceptions, or 'turns', thus increasing the likelihood of paradigm change. Furthermore, I will show that the publications were very much in step with, and, in relation to the literature on food tourism in Ireland, ahead of, the wider discourse in the tourism literature. I will also show that the literature on food tourism and tourism policy in Ireland appears to be largely silent, and therefore a gap exists. My publications have populated this gap since 2014, by arguing for the importance of food *in* tourism, by showing that the proportion of food tourists is relatively small, by establishing that food is a motivator of satisfaction not of travel, and by demonstrating the importance of policy as relationship building.

The theoretical contribution to knowledge comes not only from the publications, but also from my participant observer context combined with the autoethnographic methodology I have employed. The methodology has facilitated a much broader consideration of the research in my publications by adding context, perspective, insight, and reflection, thus providing new meaning and understanding of food tourism policy development and implementation from a public administration perspective. Specifically, I have found that my research paradigm and autoethnographic methodology demanded a re-evaluation of the knowledge known by me (through practice, experience, reading, networking, etc. over a long period of time), and my opinions, as a result of that experience. I had to reconsider where I fitted in the space between the worlds of food, tourism, and State tourism development. This reconceptualisation of a previously unappreciated space is a key contribution to the advancement of food tourism, not only for academics and researchers as a conceptualisation and theoretical contribution to assist further research, but also as an aid to other practitioners who are working in the field.

Declaration Page

I certify that this thesis which I now submit for examination for the award of Doctor of Philosophy, is entirely my own work and has not been taken from the work of others, save and to the extent that such work has been cited and acknowledged within the text of my work.

This thesis was prepared according to the regulations for graduate study by research of the Technological University Dublin and has not been submitted in whole or in part for another award in any other third level institution.

The work reported on in this thesis conforms to the principles and requirements of Technological University Dublin's guidelines for ethics in research.

Technological University Dublin has permission to keep, lend or copy this thesis in whole or in part, on condition that any such use of the material of the thesis be duly acknowledged.

Signature John D Mulcahy

Date 11 May 2020

Candidate

Acknowledgements

In common with most projects, this work is the result of frequent, unselfish assistance and support of family members, friends, and colleagues. Without their encouragement and support, it would have been very difficult, if not impossible, to persevere and sustain the work associated with an academic undertaking, particularly a PhD by prior publications.

Principally, I wish to acknowledge the support, encouragement and advice of my supervisors, Dr Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire and Dr Eamon Maher of Technological University Dublin, who, since the very beginning of this journey, have been the finest mentors one could hope for.

Particular acknowledgement and deep gratitude are given to my wife, Christine, and my two sons, Declan and Kevin, who have now suffered three of my dissertations. Without them, this simply would not have happened. This should also include my parents, Bill and Mary, although they still wonder where all this academic enthusiasm has come from.

Abbreviations List

CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CERT	Council for Education Recruitment and Training for the Hotel, Catering, and Tourism Industry
DIT	Dublin Institute of Technology
DMO	Destination Management Organisation, or Destination Marketing Organisation
DTTAS	Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport
EGFSN	Expert Group on Future Skills Needs
ETB	Education and Training Board
ETBI	Education and Training Boards Ireland
EU	European Union
FÁS	Training and Employment Authority
FETAC	Further Education and Training Awards Council
FI	Fáilte Ireland
GB	Great Britain
MA	Master's degree in Arts
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NTDA	National Tourism Development Authority
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
QQI	Quality and Qualifications Ireland
SOLAS	The Further Education and Training Authority
THRIC	Tourism and Hospitality Research in Ireland Conference
TRT	Tourism Recovery Taskforce
TU Dublin	Technological University Dublin
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
VEC	Vocational Education Committee
WFTA	World Food Travel Association
WTO	World Tourism Organisation, also UNWTO

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Introduction

I have spent forty years studying, working, observing, and participating in the tourism and hospitality industries¹ in a range of stakeholder roles: as a student, employee, employer, business owner, lecturer, and public servant, largely in Ireland. The latter half of that period has been with State agencies as a senior manager, specialising in hospitality and tourism skills development and in food tourism, where I devised and implemented national strategy, governed by contemporaneous government policy. This is an unusual nexus, in the sense of a nexus being an important connection where disparate components of a system come together or intersect. Furthermore, those components are subject to dynamic international and domestic influences (such as economic booms or recessions), as well as the contemporary reactions of the State, business, and society. Over a period of ten years, I instigated a series of actions to develop food tourism from within the National Tourism Development Authority, known as Fáilte Ireland, and became the architect of the development of food tourism, not only within the public service, but also in the hospitality and tourism industries in Ireland.

Throughout this period, such was my conviction that food *in* tourism (rather than food tourism) is a viable and sustainable resource for Ireland, that I was an active advocate and campaigner. A significant part of my advocacy was to demonstrate, and share, my journey of learning and reflection in relation to raising awareness of the importance of the relationship between food and tourism in a formal, disciplined and academically robust manner. The dissemination medium most readily available to me was through academic conferences, which, in turn, led to invitations to contribute to publications,

¹Note that I am following Leiper (2008) in the use of the term ‘tourism industries’, rather than the usual ‘tourism industry’, as it best represents the reality of the activity, although it is not favoured by many, particularly the NGO’s and the public sector, given the granularity it suggests.

some of which form part of this document. My intention was, that by engaging in such activities, the process would not only inform future development and encourage research by others, but that it would also benefit from the critical analysis of people working in similar areas, particularly in other jurisdictions. In effect, this is peer review, initially outside of academia and then through conferences and publications. For the PhD by prior publication, I have chosen six book chapters published as a result of my advocacy strategy which, although individually published between 2014 and 2019, were each written two years earlier, from 2012 to 2017, thus demonstrating where I was on the journey of learning, reflection and advocacy at the time each publication was written.

In effect, this overarching critical treatise is a summative work which draws the prior publications together, provides context and insight, and demonstrates their coherence. An important aspect of that context is identifying and establishing the philosophical worldview or paradigm that I have brought to this work, and, by implication, to each of the publications (Creswell, 2009; Lincoln *et al.*, 2018). Utilising Lincoln, Lynham and Guba's most recent models (2018, pp.110-131), my research prototype has been one that is an "alternative inquiry paradigm" which is participatory (Heron and Reason, 1997; as cited in Lincoln *et al.*, 2018, p.111). I have employed an autoethnographic methodology in this participatory research where the major research question relates to how and why gastronomy tourism was developed by Fáilte Ireland in Ireland between 2007 and 2018. This is new on several levels: it is not usual to access new knowledge from the perspective of an insider, instigator, and creator, so I am not just the participant observer typically found in ethnographic methodology, and even more so in autoethnography. It is not usual to find new knowledge from within a destination management organisation, particularly a State agency. Nor is it customary to find a perspective that argues for the role of food in tourism, rather than the dominant discourse

which argues for the role of food tourism in multiple contexts. It is also atypical for this field of research to be presented at this academic level and through prior publication.

Consequently, this work provides a new theoretical perspective on Everett's 'cultural turn' (2008; 2012), Dredge and Jamal's 'relational turn' (2015), and Chambers' 'mobilities turn' (2018) by showing the incidence, or more accurately, the evolution, or journey, of these 'turns' at the nexus of food and tourism in Ireland, between 2009 and 2018. Thus, a theoretical contribution is offered that is important and pertinent to academia, as it provides an informed, pragmatic and compelling perspective on the 'turns' that is empirically and epistemologically sound. The theoretical contribution is also important and pertinent to other stakeholders, especially tourism practitioners and policymakers, as it enhances their "conceptual learning" (Dwyer, 2018, p. 37), which is increasingly necessary to facilitate a shift in mindset beyond a tourism paradigm based on narrow business/policy features, to one with holistic, collaborative, and sustainable objectives. For these reasons, the theoretical contribution of this research implicitly endorses the work done on the necessity of a paradigm change in tourism by Rinaldi (2017) and Dwyer (2018). Both the 'turns', and the necessity of paradigm change, have particular significance for the future of tourism in Ireland.

Given these parameters, it is necessary, in the first section of this document, to introduce the reader to the researcher, the participant, the observer, and the instigator, all of whom are embodied in the writer: namely, myself. This background and context are necessary if all of the subsequent material is to have coherence and consistency. Then it is necessary to critically describe the autoethnographic methodology being utilised. This will also be an opportunity to set the published work that follows in the context of existing literature from a range of disciplines that intersect within this work. In the second section, the publications are presented in a linear fashion, from the earliest to the most recent,

along with introductory summary which will place the publication in context and demonstrate how my thinking and approach have developed since then. The section will also establish how the publication addresses specific aspects of the research question. Each publication critically describes a key issue as I perceived it at that stage of the development of food tourism in Ireland. The following show the sub research questions which the relevant publications address:

1. What is the rationale for gastronomy as an economic driver in Ireland? (Mulcahy, 2014);
2. Does gastronomy tourism have a policy dimension? (Mulcahy, 2015b);
3. What was the effect of change in tourism strategy and government policy on the development of gastronomy tourism in Ireland? (Mulcahy, 2016a);
4. What is gastronomy tourism and what role does Ireland's food have in tourism? (Mulcahy, 2017b);
5. How was gastronomy tourism development implemented in Ireland? (Mulcahy, 2019a);
6. How has gastronomy tourism evolved? (Mulcahy, 2019c)

The third section evaluates the contribution that the research in the publications makes to the advancement of both interdisciplinary knowledge (that is, knowledge created in academia that is applicable across disciplines such as tourism and food studies, sociology, and policy) and extradisciplinary knowledge (that is, knowledge derived from problem solving which is context-specific and industry-related) (Tribe, 2010). My objective is to establish that there is a logical development of my approach and a persistent coherence in my contribution to a nascent discourse that transects those taking place elsewhere, not only in the tourism studies discipline, but also many other disciplines. The originality of the research is that, in contrast with the bulk of the existing knowledge, I have created

new meaning and understanding of food tourism strategy development and implementation from a public administration perspective.

My participant observer context

This is an account of my experience as the architect and instigator of defining a recognised role for food in Irish tourism development. The foundation or genesis of my approach to food and tourism lies in a decade of my early working life in the catering, hospitality and hotel industries, followed by another decade in education, specifically skills development with the Council for Education Recruitment and Training for the Hotel, Catering and Tourism Industry (CERT), and in higher education as Head of Academic Operations at the Shannon College of Hotel Management (see Appendix 1 for a full career history, advocacy activities, and publications listing, 1977 to 2017). However, my first opportunity at a national and truly senior level was in 2000, when I returned to CERT to lead the Industry Training and Development division. Within a few years, the functions of CERT and Bord Fáilte (which by then had become Ireland's tourism marketing authority) were merged by government in 2003, which established the National Tourism Development Authority, known as Fáilte Ireland (Kerr, 2003; O'Brien, 2010). Subsequently, I held senior roles in education and skills development, and visitor and trade engagement in Fáilte Ireland (FI). At this point, however, it is worth exploring the dynamic environment I found myself in, especially in terms of Fáilte Ireland's genesis, the evolution of FI's parent government department, and the downstream effects of the modernisation of the Civil Service and associated recent legislation.

Tourism, in terms of an agency of the State reporting to a government department, was first formalised when the 1952 Tourist Traffic Act established An Bord Fáilte as the tourism development agency, funded by the Department of Industry and Commerce (Office of the Attorney General, 1952; Kerr, 2003). As a discrete area of activity, tourism first featured as a Department in 1977 (named Tourism and Transport), and since then there have been seventeen Ministers (some serving multiple times), the name of the

Department has changed nine times, and ‘Tourism’ has changed Departments five times (see Appendix 2 for a detailed listing of Ministers and Departments of Tourism since 1980). Such an observation was useful to me, as it hinted at how the importance of tourism was perceived at a political level in Ireland, and how, from 2003 onwards (when Fáilte Ireland was established), tourism might begin to achieve a higher profile than heretofore. Around the same time, as a result of my more senior role in Fáilte Ireland, I acquired an insight into the relationship between the political and administrative systems of public administration. This relationship had begun to change in 1994 with the government’s Strategic Management Initiative, but the Public Service Management Act of 1997 (Office of the Attorney General, 1997) placed the accountability of a Secretary General (in effect, the Chief Executive Officer of a government department) to his or her minister on a statutory basis for the first time (MacCárthaigh, 2005). Section 4 (b) of the 1997 Act also requires the Secretary General of each department to prepare and submit to their Minister a strategy statement every three years, or within six months of the appointment of a new Minister, setting out the key objectives, outputs and related strategies, including use of resources (Office of the Attorney General, 1997). The same section in the 1997 Act also requires that annual progress reports be provided to the Minister on the implementation of the strategy statement.

In a democratic society, these requirements have obvious benefits in ensuring that appropriate strategies are in place and are current, and that the activities of the administrative system of public administration is in line with the political system, as elected by the people. There are also obvious drawbacks for civil and public servants², of

²In Ireland, civil servants are employed by the State and work in Government Departments. Public servants are employed by State companies and agencies providing a service, like Fáilte Ireland, or the Courts Service.

course. For example, a change of government or Minister, depending on their election manifesto, could require a fundamental change in policies and strategies which the public administration system must implement. As a public servant in food tourism, I realised that this was both an opportunity and a threat. Regular mandatory reviews of tourism strategy offered the potential to contribute to the design and implementation of those strategies, and to create sub strategies which could focus on food tourism while also supporting the overall strategy and be compliant with national policy. However, there was always the threat that the strategic horizon could never be more than three years (as required by the 1997 Act referred to above), and it was often shorter than that, with consequences for most investment planning and implementation in the medium to long term. In addition, each new Minister would, not unreasonably, want to leave their own legacy, some more long-lasting than others. For examples, see Table 1 below which tabulates each Minister's term of office, their Department's compliance with the 1997 Act referred to above, and each Minister's key achievements. It is worth noting the vocabulary used in each case to differentiate the initiatives (highlighted in **bold** in Table 1), such as Taskforce, Review Group, Renewal Group, Leadership Group. This vocabulary also connotes a much more collaborative and inclusive approach to tourism by Ministers, which, in turn, led to all stakeholders being better informed. Hence, the composition of each Group or Taskforce was representative of key stakeholders in Ireland's tourism industries, which included, for example, State government departments and tourism agencies, food and beverage providers, tourism accommodation representative bodies, tour and transport operators (for examples, see Tourism Policy Review Group, 2003b, pp. iv-v; or Tourism Renewal Group, 2009, p. 58).

Name of Department at the time	Minister (Houses of the Oireachtas, 2020)	Term of Office	Ministerial Initiatives and Actions, including Statements of Strategy
Tourism, Sport and Recreation	James McDaid	1997-2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department Statement of Strategy 1998-2001 (Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation, 1998) • Department Statement of Strategy 2001 (Implementation Group, 2002, p. 4) • Implementation Group established January 2002 (Implementation Group, 2002)
Arts, Sports and Tourism	John O'Donoghue	2002-2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Policy Review Group, established January 2003 • Interim Report of the Tourism Policy Review Group, May 2003 (Tourism Policy Review Group, 2003a) • Department Statement of Strategy 2003-2005 • Establishment of Fáilte Ireland, 2003 • New Horizons for Irish Tourism - An Agenda for Action (Tourism Policy Review Group, 2003b) • Department Statement of Strategy 2005-2007 • Tourism Strategy Implementation Group formed, 2006 (Tourism Strategy Implementation Group, 2008)
Arts, Sports and Tourism	Seamus Brennan	2007-2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy Statement 2008-2010 (Fáilte Ireland, 2007a) • Tourism Product Development Strategy 2007-2013 (Fáilte Ireland, 2007b)

Name of Department at the time	Minister (Houses of the Oireachtas, 2020)	Term of Office	Ministerial Initiatives and Actions, including Statements of Strategy
Arts, Sports and Tourism	Martin Cullen	2008-2010	<p><i>2008: recession declared in Ireland</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report to the Minister on targets in New Horizons for Irish Tourism (Tourism Strategy Implementation Group, 2008) • Tourism Renewal Group formed, 2008 (OECD, 2010, p. 183) • Strategy Statement 2010-2012 (Fáilte Ireland, 2009) • New Horizons for Irish Tourism: Mid Term Review. A Strategy for Renewing Irish Tourism, 2009-2013 (Tourism Renewal Group, 2009)
Tourism, Culture and Sport	Mary Hanafin	2010-2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Renewal Implementation Group (Tourism Renewal Implementation Group, 2010; Tourism Renewal Implementation Group, 2011)
Transport, Tourism and Sport	Leo Varadkar	2011-2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department Statement of Strategy 2011-2014 (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2012) • Tourism Recovery Taskforce formed 2011 (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2015a, p. 16) • GB Path to Growth (Tourism Recovery Taskforce, 2012)

Name of Department at the time	Minister (Houses of the Oireachtas, 2020)	Term of Office	Ministerial Initiatives and Actions, including Statements of Strategy
Transport, Tourism and Sport	Paschal Donohoe	2014-2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tourism Leadership Group established 2015 • People, Place and Policy - Growing Tourism to 2025 (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2015a) • Department Statement of Strategy 2015-2017 (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2015b) • Every County to produce a “Tourism Statement of Strategy & Work Plan 2017-2022” (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2015a)
Transport, Tourism and Sport	Shane Ross	2016-2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department Statement of Strategy 2016-2019 (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2016a) • Tourism Development & Innovation – A Strategy For Investment, 2016-2022 (Fáilte Ireland, 2016b) • Tourism Action Plan 2016-2018 (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2016b) • Tourism Action Plan 2019-2021 (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2018) • Tourism Recovery Taskforce formed 20th May 20 (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2020)
Media, Tourism, Arts, Culture, Sport & the Gaeltacht	Catherine Martin	27 th June 2020	

Table 2 List of Ministers, their initiatives and actions, 1997 - 2020

Furthermore, such an approach enabled a more action-oriented mind-set whereby stakeholders were assigned a lead role in carrying out specific actions with a timeline for completion on which regular progress reports had to be made. The “*New Horizons for Irish Tourism*” document set a benchmark in this regard (Tourism Policy Review Group, 2003b, pp. 85-111), along with the subsequent progress reports (for example, Tourism Renewal Group, 2009; Tourism Renewal Implementation Group, 2010; Tourism Renewal Implementation Group, 2011).

In this action-orientated and results-driven environment, I believed an opportunity was emerging for Ireland to position food as a critical ingredient in an overall national tourism strategy. In their initial document, the Tourism Policy Review Group had already identified that food was one of six main subsectors of the tourism industry (2003b, p. 17), that food was an element of the tourism product used by up to 61% of overseas holiday visitors (p. 37), and that food had a value of over €1.1 billion out of a total out-of-state visitor expenditure of €4 billion (p. 34). Clearly, food in tourism could now be considered as important. In 2007, I successfully made a case in Fáilte Ireland for the resources (time and funding) to undertake a programme of part-time study in Gastronomy at Master’s degree level, over two years, culminating in a dissertation titled “Making the Case for a Viable, Sustainable Gastronomic Tourism Industry in Ireland” (Mulcahy, 2009). My research indicated that the global incipient evolution of gastronomy tourism as a significant product of a region’s tourism offer would be integral to the post-recession economic development strategies of Ireland, or, indeed, of any country. I also came to understand that a symbiotic relationship exists, whereby State tourism development must be mindful that food, whether functionally or aesthetically, is a feature of each visitor’s day. Consequently, in order to meet visitor demand and generate revenue, State education

must ensure that the skills required (for example, food or beverage preparation and service skills) are provided for, comparable to Edgell *et al.*'s "Tourism Education Implementation model" (2007, p. 244). In Fáilte Ireland, that intersection had traditionally meant the design, delivery, and funding of practical programmes in professional cookery, food and beverage service, and tourism skills, delivered through ten Institutes of Technology and sixty five FI training centres to 5,700 students per annum, all of which fell within my area of responsibility.

In the same year that I completed my Master's degree, the Tourism Renewal Group had identified in their midterm review that "food tourism/gastronomy" was a market segment where Ireland could gain competitive advantage (2009, p. 44). This was confirmation that stakeholders in Ireland had independently arrived at the same conclusion as I had as a result of research studies for my Master's degree. Having shared the dissertation findings with Fáilte Ireland, the National Food Tourism Implementation Framework 2011-2013 (Fáilte Ireland, 2010a) was published and activated, with my involvement. Between early 2012 and late 2017, I led the newly-created Food Tourism, Hospitality Education, and Tourist Accommodation Standards division in Fáilte Ireland. My priorities were threefold: first, working from the ground up identifying local activists across the food tourism landscape to create an active and vibrant network; second, providing thought leadership for food tourism; and third, encouraging and funding others to conduct and disseminate similar research.

The first priority was realised in the form of the Food Tourism Network Development Programme, which created three groups of 'Food Champions'. Each group benchmarked themselves against similar destinations developing food tourism such as Prince Edward County in Canada (Fáilte Ireland, 2012), the National Driving Routes in Norway (Fáilte Ireland, 2013) and Aarhus in Denmark (Fáilte Ireland, 2016a).

The second priority, thought leadership for food tourism, was achieved by utilising a collaborative approach where I advocated for and promoted food tourism in Ireland primarily through the development and implementation of three national strategies: The National Food Tourism Implementation Framework 2011-2013 (Fáilte Ireland, 2010a), The Food Tourism Activity Plan 2014–2016 (Fáilte Ireland, 2014), and the Food and Drink Development Strategy 2018-2023 (Fáilte Ireland, 2018). I also provided thought leadership by presenting at conferences in Ireland, Canada, Scotland, Peru, Italy and France (for example, Mulcahy, 2010; 2015a; 2015c; 2015d; 2015e; 2016b; 2016c), through invitations to contribute to publications (Mossberg *et al.*, 2014; Mulcahy, 2014; 2015b; 2016a; 2017a; 2017b; 2017c; 2019a; 2019b; 2019c; 2019d), and by sourcing and funding social media influencers to visit Ireland and give their interpretation of Irish food³ to a wider audience. Media influencers also served as a means of demonstrating to Irish tourism operators how others perceived and valued Irish food, such that the operators might adjust their own media campaigns to gain added business.

The third priority, encouragement and support, was realised in several ways. Within third level education in Ireland, it was made possible by FI hosting the Annual Research Forum for Institutes of Technology with Hospitality and Tourism Departments or Schools, as well as through providing funding support for the Dublin Gastronomy Symposium, and the Tourism and Hospitality Research in Ireland Conference (THRIC). I also sought to ensure that Ireland was a part of international research on food tourism by the World Food Travel Association (Stone *et al.*, 2017; Stone *et al.*, 2019), and that it

³<https://www.theperennialplate.com/tag/ireland/> [Accessed 8 April 2020]

had a profile at the annual Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery⁴. In terms of encouraging others, the most important work was by sustaining the Fáilte Ireland Applied Research Scheme. This supported PhD candidates (for example, Healy, 2014; Cashman, 2016; Mahon, 2019), and researchers (for example, Mottiar *et al.*, 2013; Stafford and O’Leary, 2013; O’Leary and Stafford, 2014; Mottiar, 2015; O’Donovan *et al.*, 2015; O’Driscoll *et al.*, 2017; Healy and Mac Con Iomaire, 2019).

Contemporaneously, in the aftermath of the 2008 recession, Ireland was in economic survival mode. In tourism, overseas visitor numbers in 2009 fell by 12% and revenue fell by 19% (Fáilte Ireland, 2010b, p. 9). Given that level of reduction, the Irish State was unable to fully fund activity unless it could be shown to be either a net contributor to national finances or, at the very least, cost neutral. The impact of this in my specific area of responsibility in Fáilte Ireland between 2007 and 2014 can be illustrated by reductions in resources of just under 20% in staff numbers; of -22% in overall government funding to FI (€40 million less); and of over -70% in skills development funding, from €17.4 million to €5 million (based on comparison of Annual Reports, Fáilte Ireland, 2008, pp. 16, 27; Fáilte Ireland, 2015, pp. 28, 34, 35). The reduction of 70% in skills development directly affected the provision of FI programmes in ten Institutes of Technology and 65 FI training centres, although this should be seen as part of a wider structural change taking place in Irish Education (see below). Influenced by the government’s Tourism Policy Statement, “*People, Place and Policy - Growing Tourism to 2025*” (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2015a), new thinking was clearly required to reignite inbound tourism to Ireland in order to increase State revenue and

⁴For example, FI funded an event using artisan products at the 2017 Oxford Symposium <https://www.oxfordsymposium.org.uk/2017-food-landscape/> [Accessed 5 April 2020].

employment. A fundamental review of tourism in Ireland had revealed that the model for Irish tourism was visitor needs-based, rather than visitor motivation-based (Tourism Recovery Taskforce, 2012). On further examination, it became apparent that food in tourism to Ireland was a driver of satisfaction, and not a motivator of travel to Ireland (Fáilte Ireland, 2014). I believed that achieving visitor satisfaction through food is a matter of scale rather than exclusivity or elitism, thus requiring much improved levels of effective collaboration with other State agencies and the wider food and tourism landscape - ranging from primary food producers to a broad range of hospitality and service industries. Increasingly, beverages were included in this landscape, and the phrase ‘food tourism’ came to implicitly include beverages as well (OECD, 2012; Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance, 2015; Stone *et al.*, 2017).

Tourism was not the only sector experiencing significant change. Although not entirely recession-related, Ireland’s education system had also experienced significant structural change which compounded a growing skills deficit in tourism. Education in Ireland is complex for a small country where, in 2016/2017, the post-secondary student population was 188,000, attending over forty higher education institutions with a budget of €9.5 billion (Department of Education and Skills, 2017). Separately, Further Education had a wide variety of providers including thirty three Vocational Education Committees (VECs) who delivered primary, post primary, further and adult education.

The effects of the changes in Ireland’s education system, with consequent implications for tourism, became apparent in 2011 when the Training and Employment Authority (FÁS) was replaced by SOLAS, which funded all Further Education, including national apprenticeships. The training function of FÁS was absorbed into sixteen new Education and Training Boards (ETBs) in 2013, which replaced the VECs. The government also published the “*National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030*” (known

as the Hunt Report), and this signalled a rapid reorientation of higher education to serve economic objectives (Hunt, 2011).

I was able to observe and influence this evolution at close hand. In 2012, legislation established Quality and Qualifications Ireland (QQI) as the statutory agency responsible for promoting quality and accountability in education and training (Department of Education and Skills, 2020). Effectively QQI was created from a merger of five organisations, including the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC). I had been a board member of FETAC since 2009, serving on the Audit Committee and as Chair of the Policies Committee until the merger. Subsequently, in 2014, I was invited by QQI to join the Programmes and Awards Oversight Committee, and to chair a Standards Review Group (Tour Guides). As QQI is one of the few overarching bodies in Irish education and training, this allowed me to understand how the significant tensions created by the level of change taking place affected not only the merged organisations, but also tourism stakeholders.

Elements of the Hunt Report became government policy when the Technological Universities Bill (2014) was published. The Bill provided for the creation of a technological university out of a merger of three Institutes of Technology in Dublin (see <http://www.tu4dublin.ie/>). Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT), with over 20,000 students, was the largest of the three institutes involved in the proposed merger and I was a member of the DIT Governing Body from 2015 to late 2018. Along with two others, I represented the Governing Body on the Joint Governing Bodies Strategy Steering Group, which had oversight of the preparations to merge DIT, with the Institutes of Technology in Tallaght and Blanchardstown into Ireland's first Technological University on January 1st 2019 (Department of Education and Skills, 2018). I was also a member of the Nominations Committee to oversee the selection of the first President of Technological

University Dublin. Such a level of access gave me a unique insight into how and where tourism, education and food are intertwined in higher education.

Concurrently, I had a similar opportunity when a new body, the Apprenticeship Council, launched a call for proposals for apprenticeships in new occupations in 2015 (Higher Education Authority, 2020). I believed that this was a unique chance to address systemic faults caused by the constraints arising from reduced State investment (referred to above) while also putting food *in* tourism on the agenda. Consequently, I initiated an industries-led culinary apprenticeship consortium in response to the call, which is now operational (see Apprenticeship Council, 2020). In my view, a consortium would bring together traditional adversaries, such as education providers, tourism and hospitality employers, and government bodies, to address a common cause – in this case the significant skills shortage of qualified kitchen workers. The evidence of this shortage was established by the publication of a study by the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs (Expert Group on Future Skills Needs, 2015). I was a member of the steering group which produced the study. One of the recommendations of the study was the establishment of a Hospitality Skills Oversight Group, which was implemented in 2016, and I was a member of that group in late 2017 when it published its Interim Report (2017). The Group published its final report the following year (Hospitality Skills Oversight Group, 2018).

By the end of 2017, I recognised that my window of opportunity to advocate for the cause of food in tourism had begun to close both within Fáilte Ireland and in the wider operating environment. I also recognised that perhaps I could be more effective outside State structures as I was aware that, after seventeen years in FI, I had become ‘typecast’ and thus I was unable to consider, or was not considered for, projects and activities in food tourism and related areas outside the public service arena. I therefore left FI to pursue

other projects, to advocate for, to study, and write about food in tourism, and to collaborate with likeminded colleagues.

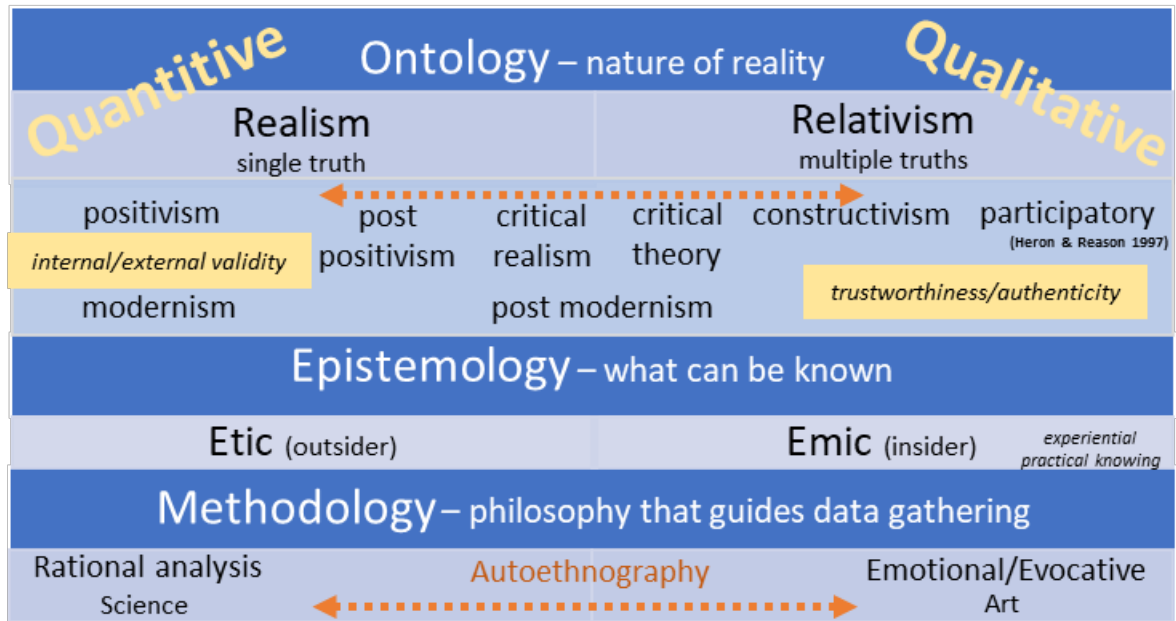
Research methodology - Autoethnography

Logically, the methodology is informed by the philosophical worldview or paradigm that I have brought to this work (Creswell, 2009). Utilising Lincoln, Lynham and Guba's most recent models (2018, pp. 110-131), it is clear to me that I have been applying an "alternative inquiry paradigm" which is participatory (Heron and Reason, 1997; as cited in Lincoln *et al.*, 2018, p. 111). The foundation of the paradigm is a relativist ontology using a participative reality perspective, reflecting my unique positionality⁵: that is, a "subjective-objective reality, co-created by the mind and the surrounding cosmos" (Lincoln *et al.*, 2018, p. 114). This explains the use of an emic approach which Lincoln *et al.* describe as an "extended epistemology of experiential, propositional and practical knowing" (2018, p. 115). Such an approach must focus on a methodology which utilises the opportunity to synthesise new meaning and knowledge as an outcome. Therefore, an autoethnographic methodology appears appropriate as it capitalises on my role as researcher participant, and on my experience as the architect and instigator of food's role in Irish tourism development (see Figure 1, below).

The use of the word 'autoethnography' (as opposed to auto-ethnography or auto/ethnography) is deliberate throughout this work, signalling the "introspective narrative, making the *auto* the main focal point of the study" (italics are my emphasis) as expressed by Doloriert and Sambrook (2012, p. 84). Autoethnography has been described as an approach to research and writing that "seeks to describe and systematically analyze (*graphy*) personal experience (*auto*) in order to understand cultural experience (*ethno*)" (Ellis *et al.*, 2011, p. 1). Social scientists and anthropologists have been performing

⁵Positionality refers to "the stance or positioning of the researcher in relation to the social and political context of the study—the community, the organization or the participant group", as defined by Rowe (2014, p 628).

autoethnography since 1935, but explicit use of the term as an approach to research, and as a methodology for discovery, has only been in use since 1979 (Doloriert and Sambrook, 2009, p. 27). As a field of enquiry, autoethnography has recently made



Adapted from:
 LINCOLN, Y. S., LYNHAM, S. A. & GUBA, E. G. 2018. "Paradigmatic Controversies, Contradictions, and Emerging Confluences, Revisited." In: DENZIN, N. K. & LINCOLN, Y. S. (eds.) *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. 5th ed. Los Angeles, London: SAGE Publications, Inc. pp. 98,110-131

Figure 2 The Research Paradigm Landscape

significant strides as a social sciences and humanities research strategy. For example, on its 40th anniversary, the journal, *Annals of Tourism Research*, noted the growth in methodological sophistication, and, in that context, included autoethnography in the “analytical” subdivision of “Methodology” (Xiao *et al.*, 2013, p. 364). Autoethnography, however, is not without its critics (Doloriert and Sambrook, 2012) and “not without its conceptual controversies and practical difficulties” (Learmonth and Humphreys, 2012, p. 100), usually between practitioners who advocate an inclusive and eclectic approach to autoethnography as opposed to those who favour the traditional ethnographic model and practices. These perspectives highlight the dichotomy between science and art, ethnography and biography, analytical autoethnography and evocative autoethnography.

Consequently, there are now several categories of autoethnography (Organisational; Collaborative; Critical; Evocative; Analytical) in a wide variety of disciplines and fields.⁶

Ellis and Bochner, as advocates for evocative ethnography, recognise that “autoethnographers vary in their emphasis on the research process (*graphy*), on culture (*ethno*), and on self (*auto*)” such that “different exemplars of autoethnography fall at different places along the continuum of each of these three axes” (Ellis and Bochner, 2000, p. 740). Similarly, autoethnography has been regarded by Ellingson as an intellectual journey through the “vast middle spaces” of the continuum between art and science, and between rational analysis and emotional evocation (2011, p. 600). Others argue that autoethnography, as a methodology, is distinctive in three ways: it is qualitative, self-focused and context conscious. Therefore, as a qualitative research method, autoethnography utilises data about “self [*auto*] and its context [*ethno*] to gain an understanding [*graphy*] of the connectivity between self and others within the same context”, (Ngunjiri *et al.*, 2010, p. 2 (italics are mine)). This, of course, depends on circumstance. For example, it has been argued that “doing an autoethnographic PhD within a traditionally positivist business school can be more challenging than doing an autoethnography within disciplines that are more open to and accepting of contemporary ethnography approaches (for example, social sciences, communications, health care, and illness)” (Doloriert and Sambrook, 2011, p. 584). Nonetheless, irrespective of interdisciplinary academic challenges or arguments, autoethnographic research investigating the relationship between researchers, their fields of inquiry and their informants appears apt in my case, particularly given its successful multidisciplinary,

⁶For a more comprehensive overview, see the special issue of the Journal of Organisational Ethnography “Organisational Autoethnography: possibilities, politics and pitfalls” Vol. 7, No. 3 (2018); Also, (Doloriert and Sambrook, 2012, 84-86); and (Coghlan and Filo, 2013, 124).

interdisciplinary and extradisciplinary applications in hospitality, tourism and gastronomy (for examples, see: Noy, 2007; Scarles, 2010; Coghlan and Filo, 2013; Komppula and Gartner, 2013; Ryan, 2015; Szanto, 2015; Tribe, 2018; Cohen, 2019). A particularly interesting, and early, application is highlighted by Tribe: “a set of thirteen auto-ethnographies (Nash, 2007)⁷ by senior academics in the sociology and anthropology of tourism” (2010, p. 9).

However, the interpretation that resonated most with me was Hayler’s explanation that:

Autoethnography has increasingly become the term of choice for a range of methods of research, analysis and writing that employ personal experience as a way of investigating and understanding the sub-cultures and the wider cultures of the societies we live and work within (2012, p.19).

This chimes with how I have engaged with my particular experience, both with colleagues in the course of my work, and with others on the margins or peripheries of my spheres of activity, over a long period of time – at least eleven years. In practice, I realised that this depended on context and setting, on what perspective was being taken, and by whom. For example, as a Fáilte Ireland representative, if I worked on a project with a tourism or hospitality industries representative body, I was clearly not perceived as a member of that industry. Instead, I was perceived as an outsider that was not adequately informed or sufficiently abreast of industry issues, despite having demonstrated a twenty-year track record in the various industries. But the same group would legitimately regard me as being an insider in terms of the public service, the machinery of the State, and State tourism

⁷Although this book is somewhat outside the scope of this work, it is a fascinating account by eminent researchers such as Cohen, Graburn, Jafari, MacCannell, Swain, and others, of their introduction to tourism.

development. Interestingly, in my work within the public service (such as the education sector), the opposite would be the case. I would be regarded as being liminal at best, yet central in terms of tourism and hospitality.

Understanding my multiple perceived identities and personas, and those of others, I found, was critical to getting things done or even achieving progress or buy-in on key aspects of strategy implementation that were important to me. I was quite conscious that my multifaceted activity in tourism was simultaneously not only marginal (in the sense of being at a margin or the edge) or, more accurately, liminal (in the sense of being at the threshold), but also central, that of an insider. This echoes Chris Ryan's thesis that "the concept of 'limits' or marginality is not peripheral to but rather is inherent in tourism, and by definition to be a tourist is to occupy a liminal position" (Ryan, 2004, p. 62).⁸ If that is the case, Ryan continues, then it follows that "tourism as an industry becomes an organizational manifestation that is based on an agglomeration of individuals' experiences of marginal places" (Ryan, 2004, p. 62). As a veteran of the tourism industries, I can testify that this has been my experience in several different roles – as a tourist, an operator, and as a public servant in the design and implementation of tourism policy and strategy. Essentially, this liminal state, and the fact of being "betwixt and between", a concept in anthropology⁹ (Johnsen and Sørensen, 2015, p. 321), is where I considered myself to be at the time, and, on reflection, I remain of that opinion.

This is both beneficial, and a challenge, as I have a detailed knowledge of the subject matter as well as a close familiarity with the characteristic customs and

⁸Ryan explains that this liminal position is due to the tourist's privileged position of being both inside and outside the destination or society visited.

⁹Liminality was originally coined by the French ethnographer Van Gennep in 1909, and Victor Turner re-articulated the concept in 1969 as "betwixt and between" (Johnsen and Sørensen, 2015, p. 321).

conventions of the wider tourism community in Ireland. This community includes relevant government departments and associated State agencies (including my former employer), representative bodies from the various industries, educational providers, operators of a wide range of tourism businesses, various media, as well as tourists, employees, and students. Consequently, as a growing and diverse method of organisational inquiry, autoethnography allows for “insightful and emotionally-rich readings” of organisational life (Sambrook and Herrmann, 2018, p. 224). In particular, this methodology provides a “different kind of knowledge about organisational life in public administration”, which does not appear to be a common feature in the literature (Frandsen, 2015, p. 163). As a result, using autoethnography as a methodology has two advantages - it provides new forms of empirical material (Learmonth and Humphreys, 2012; Frandsen, 2015), and it highlights the benefit of experimenting with untraditional approaches (Learmonth and Humphreys, 2012).

The challenge, of course, is that autoethnographic perspectives are often defined by tensions, contradictions, and hesitations. These must remain to the front of one’s mind and acknowledged, as they often are in autoethnographic studies, as key aspects of the research. There is no attempt to “iron out” the confusions or contradictions which stand, as they do within this approach, as key elements of my experience (Hayler, 2012, p. 19). As the researcher participant, I must also reassure the reader of the accuracy of the research and the integrity of the findings conscious of my values, beliefs, knowledge, and bias (Berger, 2013). Each of my publications achieve these objectives, as evidenced below, and this overarching critical document provides further evidence and context of that. In doing so, I believe I am answering Chambers’ call for tourism researchers to “avoid knowledges which are produced via the easy path of imitation, and instead to

embrace the bitter and noble routes to the creation of tourism knowledges which stem from our own reflections and experiences of being in tourism” (2018, p. 193).

Setting my published work in the context of existing literature

Previously, I referred to Ryan's description of tourism as "an organizational manifestation that is based on an agglomeration of individuals' experiences" (2004, p. 62). Similarly, my published work can legitimately be regarded as a manifestation of my experiences in Fáilte Ireland over seventeen years, which involved an agglomeration of academic disciplines and fields. As a researcher outside of the academy, and as a participant employed full time, I did not have access to the kind of library resources (such as peer reviewed journals, and associated bibliographic databases) which researchers in academia might take for granted – aside from the years 2007-2009 when I completed my MA in Gastronomy, and from early in 2020, as a PhD candidate. With the benefit of hindsight, it is now apparent that this has cut both ways. On the one hand, due to lack of time and accessibility, I was unable to keep abreast of the literature being published in journals, a characteristic of "senior bureaucrats" involved in tourism policy (Joppe, 2018, p. 202). On the other hand, my publications as book chapters were not as visible to other researchers as they might have been if they were published in journals and the associated databases. This is similar to the experience of Dredge and Jamal in their work on defining tourism and planning literature, where they find that a substantial body of work resides not only in the journals, but also in books and in "grey literature (e.g. conference papers, theses, books, research/technical reports, and institutional repositories)" (2015, p. 288). This lack of visibility has been borne out by a recent study, which found that there was a shift in academic emphasis from books to articles "around the 2000s" (de Jong *et al.*, 2018, p. 136).

Acknowledging this, and mindful that my publications were written between 2012-2017 and usually published two years later, I now find that I am retrospectively positioning my work against what was appearing in the journals from 2009 on – a period

of eleven years. In doing so, two things are evident: first, my published work is in step with, or ahead of, what is now a very large body of work in the literature. Arguably, this is because I was relating what was happening in practice at a time when food tourism was very much in its ascendancy, and with an immediacy that shortened the time lag between practice, research, and publication. Second, aside from discovering best practice in a very tangential way at conferences and during benchmarking trips, I was relatively oblivious of the breadth and depth of academic research being published at the time. Essentially, I was relying on my research from my Masters in Gastronomy (completed in late 2009) coupled with whatever was available through open access and digital commons, along with the output generated by the FI Applied Research Scheme, not to mention some very generous researcher colleagues who shared their work with me. Consequently, in retrospect, my publications could possibly be considered academically naïve or unsophisticated. Nonetheless, I contend that the value of the publications is that they are a unique long-term case study of the practice and development of Food Tourism in a specific destination by a practitioner bureaucrat over ten years. Furthermore, the publications were, as will be obvious later in this section, very much in step with, and, in relation to the literature on food tourism in Ireland, ahead of, the wider discourse in the tourism literature.

At this point, I am reminded of the question that Joppe posed for herself when writing an opinion piece on research into tourism policy: “how do you do justice to the large body of work that has contributed in small as well as significant ways to the topic?” (2018, p. 203). Taking that pertinent question and applying it here, I propose to begin by defining the literature that is relevant to the breadth, depth, and timeframe of my published work. As Ryan points out, “...there are other ways of seeing the world apart from the North Atlantic post-positivistic empiricist tradition of research that [...] began

to frequent the academic tourism literature from the early 1990s” (2010, p. 37). I am focusing on the academic literature written in English, which largely originates from the North Atlantic tradition that Ryan refers to, but it also originates from elsewhere. As the primary thrust of my published work has consistently been about food’s place *in* tourism or, more precisely, the areas where food and tourism interact, not just sites of consumption (albeit in Ireland), I must take a quite wide perspective, although not as broad as the view taken up only recently by Hall which included areas like waste, food justice and security (2019). Accordingly, I will set the published work in the context of the existing literature in two stages. First, I will attempt to assess the volume of research on Ireland’s food tourism and policy since 2009. The second stage will demonstrate that the publications are in step with, and ahead of, the wider discourse in the tourism literature.

To begin with, and in order to establish the extent to which Food Tourism in Ireland has been featured in published academic journals since 2009, both systematic reviews and bibliometric analyses of tourism research were necessary. The recent bibliometric analyses were of interest as they significantly increased in number after 2008 (Köseoglu *et al.*, 2016a). One analysis examined the period 2000-2009 for thirty countries but Ireland is not mentioned, and food tourism, along with wine, farm, heritage and cultural tourism, was classified as Special Interest Tourism (Park *et al.*, 2011). Another analysis examined thirty two journals from 2002-2011 where the research spanned 126 countries – Ireland had a frequency of thirty two articles (out of a total of 4,654), which were in only three out of twenty eight types of tourism (Festival, Urban, and Rural) where Ireland was the research focus, but none in Food, which had twelve mentions in nine countries other than Ireland (Shen *et al.*, 2018, p. 191). Likewise, in a study of the most influential papers, authors, institutions, and countries in tourism, leisure, and hospitality research in the World of Science database between 2010-2016, Ireland is the 29th most

productive country with fifty one papers compared to 1,754 for the UK, yet there is no mention of food tourism in the study (Mulet-Forteza *et al.*, 2019, p. 824). Other research reviews examined include analysis on diverse areas such as innovation (Omerzel, 2016), business ethics (Köseoglu *et al.*, 2016b), tourism risk, crisis and disaster management (Ritchie and Jiang, 2019), research published between 2000 and 2014 in the Journal of Tourism and Hospitality Research (Strandberg *et al.*, 2018), and the tourism policies of seventy three countries (Sheppard and Fennell, 2019).

Similarly, systematic reviews and bibliometric analysis of the literature in Food Tourism were examined. A systematic review of food tourism marketing papers was carried out in 2012, and this identified 238 papers in four databases using food tourism, gastronomy tourism, culinary tourism, and cuisine tourism in the keyword list, title, or abstract, but no mention of Ireland (Lee and Scott, 2015). Okumus *et al.* (2018) were the first to examine food and gastronomy research, identifying 462 articles in sixteen tourism and hospitality journals between 1976 and 2016, and found that there was only a limited number which looked at gastronomy and food topics, of which only 28% were on the topic of Food Tourism. A later systematic literature review looking at innovation and local food networks within food tourism found 538 articles on two databases dating between 1985 and 2017, which produced one mention (Everett, 2012) of Ireland (Rachão *et al.*, 2019).

Given that Tourism Policy is a consistent theme in my publications, this subject area was also examined. In their analysis of tourism policy research in the Scopus and ScienceDirect databases (which initially returned over 40,000 documents), Dredge and Jamal note that “only 1,616 publications over the period 1980-2014 had ‘tourism policy’ as a keyword” (2015, p. 288), and that 31% of these were in the Social science subject area, while 21% were in the Business, Management and Accounting subject area (2015,

p. 289). However, they do note that the databases are less comprehensive and reliable prior to 2000, along with the shifting emphasis from books to journal articles, but that even from 2000-2014, the tourism policy keyword cluster only constituted 17% of journal articles.

Only two papers relating to Ireland were found to have been mentioned in the systematic reviews and bibliometric analysis listed above: O'Brien's (2012) paper on Irish tourism policy after the 2008 crisis in a research review of tourism risk, crisis and disaster management (Ritchie and Jiang, 2019); and Everett's (2012) paper on the place making agency of food tourism in a research review of innovation and local food networks (Rachão *et al.*, 2019). There appears to be only one paper on Food Tourism policy, but it is not based on Ireland. Instead, it is a critical discourse using the deep fried Mars bar to highlight what is seen as the marginalisation effects of tourism policy in Scotland (de Jong and Varley, 2017). Therefore, out of the thirteen reviews, spanning a forty year timeframe between 1976-2017, and in a range of tourism fields, the literature on food tourism and tourism policy in Ireland appears to be largely silent, and therefore a gap exists. My publications have populated this gap since 2014.

That gap in the research is intensified when one considers the significant growth in publications overall, and when that growth took place. There seems to be general agreement that published research in tourism, and by implication, food tourism, grew between 2006 and 2012 (Lee and Scott, 2015; Okumus *et al.*, 2018; Balderas-Cejudo *et al.*, 2019; Mulet-Forteza *et al.*, 2019) - the same time that I began writing my publications. One study, conducted in late 2016, found that 60% of articles on gastronomy tourism were published after 2011, although the research was mainly in two subject areas, 1) tourism, leisure, and hospitality management, and 2) geography, planning, and development (de Jong *et al.*, 2018). In a related area, wine tourism, a study found that

60% of papers had been published between 2010-2014 (Sánchez *et al.*, 2017). Nevertheless, while Chambers recognised the abundance of tourism research over the previous fifteen years, particularly critical tourism studies since 2005, she questioned if there was “anything that can be deemed innovative, original or cutting edge” (2018, p. 193). This view was echoed by Ellis *et al.* when they remarked, “it is noticed that food tourism research within the management and marketing discipline showed relatively little advancement in terms of research innovation and methods during the last three decades” (2018, p. 256). Joppe appears to agree in her paper on tourism policy and governance, noting that “there are few practical recommendations coming out of academic research”, and after suggesting that the solution might lie in practitioners taking on the task, she identifies four researchers in tourism (2018, p. 203), two¹⁰ of whom have some insight into how policy is organised as they worked previously at some level in tourism and government, very similar to myself.

As will be seen in a later section, tourism is a highly fragmented area of activity, and this has been reflected in research outputs with the result that any research interest and capacity is taken up trying to cater for the range of topics which arise. Research on Ireland’s food and/or tourism is no different, particularly in the “grey” literature (Dredge and Jamal, 2015) referred to above, but the volume appears to remain very limited in the context of the growth discussed earlier. In an effort to provide exemplars of this, the following is a list of papers around Ireland’s food, tourism and policy (or some combination of the three) that I am aware of through my ongoing research and work in the subject areas, but the selection does not pretend to be a listing of the total research

¹⁰ Judith Estol, Senior Advisor Public Affairs, Government of Catalonia Delegation to the EU (Estol and Font, 2016); Meredith Wray <http://meredithwray.com.au/about/> [accessed 8 April 2020] (Wray, 2015).

output: Ireland's culinary evolution (Sexton, 2005), analysis of the Irish tourism industry between 1987 and 2007 (O'Brien, 2010), collaborative tourism planning in Ireland (Healy *et al.*, 2012), Irish tourism policy after the 2008 crisis (O'Brien, 2012), Galway chefs role in local produce (Duram and Cawley, 2012), a history of public dining in Dublin (Mac Con Iomaire, 2013), an examination of Ireland becoming a 'foodie' nation (Deleuze, 2014), cultural authenticity in food tourism (O'Riordan and Ward, 2014), Ireland as a case study (Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance, 2015), Irish haute cuisine restaurants (Mac Con Iomaire, 2015), two gastronomic tourism case studies in County Cork (Carruthers *et al.*, 2015; Broadway, 2017), national tourism policy as a motivator for social entrepreneurs (Mottiar, 2016), an entry in an encyclopaedia of the Food Cultures of the World (Mac Con Iomaire, 2017), a Dublin case study of collaboration, creativity and entrepreneurship in tourism (Robbins and Devitt, 2017), food as part of Ireland's intangible cultural heritage (Mac Con Iomaire, 2018), how food tourism developed in Ireland 2009-2019 (Quigley *et al.*, 2019), and Brexit's effect on Ireland's tourism planning (Burnett and Johnston, 2020).

The list reflects the fragmentation of tourism (or its diversity, depending on your outlook), but it also raises questions about the volume of output in research on the subject area, mindful of the high level of output internationally. Notwithstanding this sample of the literature, Irish tourism is acknowledged to be under-researched in fields such as job creation, economics and sustainable planning (O'Brien, 2012; O'Leary, 2015; McLoughlin and Hanrahan, 2019). Arguably, therefore, the research gap remains for Irish Tourism in general, but has been lessened in food tourism and associated policy through my published work from 2014 up to 2019 which has been described as follows in a recent paper: "Academic literature on gastronomic tourism in Ireland is dominated by one key

researcher” (Quigley *et al.*, 2019, p. 198). It would be preferable to have some company, if for no other reason than to create a broader discourse on the subject area.

I will now embark on the second stage of setting the published work in the context of the existing literature, by demonstrating that the publications (written between 2012-2017 and usually published two years later) were in step with, or ahead of, the wider discourse. My publications have been based on four tenets: 1.) the importance of food *in* tourism, 2.) that the proportion of food tourists is relatively small, 3.) that food is a motivator of satisfaction not of travel, and 4.) the importance of policy as relationship building.

The importance of food *in* tourism

As an academic area, tourism studies has been a subject of much debate especially in terms of a) how it defines itself and whether it constitutes itself as an academic discipline or merely a multidisciplinary field of study; and b) the dominance of quantitative research approaches and the subsequent ‘cultural turn’, when tourism researchers became more self-critical (Everett, 2008; Everett, 2012; Airey, 2015; Ellis *et al.*, 2018). In an influential article at the time, John Tribe originally rejected the idea of Tourism Studies being a discipline (“a way of studying”), and suggested that it should be conceptualised as two fields (“an object of study”): the business of tourism, and the non-business aspects of tourism (1997, p. 653). That conceptualisation has since been substantially redeveloped into a much more complex “tourism knowledge system” (Tribe and Liburd, 2016, p. 46). In particular, extradisciplinary tourism knowledge has been identified as a key component of Tribe’s system (2010), and later described as “the unique blends of context specific, industry related, open, experiential and indigenous research should pose questions and seek answers that can move in profoundly new and different

directions”, and is “highly participatory” (Tribe and Liburd, 2016, p. 53; for a recent example of an application of this in hospitality education, see Chen *et al.*, 2019). I would assert that my publications have been achieving exactly that since 2014, two years before Tribe and Liburd came to that conclusion.

Notwithstanding the debate within Tourism Studies, it was recognised early on that tourism, as an important area of national economic activity, encompassed a broad variety of interdependent services (Sessa, 1976). However, as tourism scaled up to be a global phenomenon, the view of the singular ‘tourism industry’ was seen as redundant (Leiper, 2008). Tourism began to be considered as “slippery capitalism” (Gibson, 2009, p. 528) because it had coalesced into an important economic entity comprised of a disparate collective of industries, interest groups, and elements of the State, characterised by varying degrees of fragmentation, specialisation and diversification (Gibson, 2009). In an Irish context, Zuelow makes the point that “ultimately tourism is a nexus at which different groups converge” (2009, p. xxv). Some see tourism as “an extraordinarily complex phenomenon” (Merinero-Rodríguez and Pulido-Fernández, 2016), while others see it as a complex research object: “Tourism, through its global interdependencies, the heterogeneity of actors at different organisational levels, its local embeddings, and its specific historicity and development, therefore appears as a scientific object of specific complexity” (Darbellay and Stock, 2012, p. 447). So, tourism is clearly more than just a simple economic activity – at the very least, there are also psychological, social, environmental, political and cultural dimensions (Sessa, 1976; Graburn and Jafari, 1991; Tribe, 1997; Nunkoo *et al.*, 2012; Chambers, 2018). Similar to Tourism Studies, the discourse in the food tourism literature has focused on two primary areas: an economics or marketing approach, and a cultural or sociological approach (Kim and Ellis, 2015; Ellis *et al.*, 2018; Everett, 2019). As a field of tourism research, food tourism saw particular

development and recognition between 2008 – 2015 (Ellis *et al.*, 2018), particularly when there was a shift towards a greater variety of cultural and sociological approaches, recognised by Everett as a “cultural turn” (2012, p. 538), or by Chambers as the critical, postdisciplinary, or mobilities turn (2018).¹¹ Similarly, in a food context, as Laudan has argued, we have been experiencing “an evolving culinary philosophy that shapes cuisines embedded in wider social, political, and economic systems” (2019).

Ireland has been no different. Since 2014 my published work has advocated, in tourism terms, for a form of gastronomic nationalism¹² which would ensure that the culinary philosophy of Ireland is readily available to all, tourists included (Mulcahy, 2014). It appears that I was an early proponent of the gastronomic nationalism concept in tourism, although I focused on beneficial economic, cultural and social outcomes, rather than in terms of food security, food policy, or identity politics, for example, which later writers focused upon (DeSoucey, 2010; Ferguson, 2010; Ranta, 2015; Leer, 2018; Benasso and Stagi, 2019; Ichijo *et al.*, 2019; King, 2019; Ichijo, 2020). The rationale to encourage the national development of food tourism has been clear for some time. As Warde noted in 1997, “to have a distinctive national cuisine has become an important stratagem for the tourist industries and, often with the support of governments, traditional national dishes and even cuisines are either exhumed or invented for the purpose” (1997, p. 38). Over twenty years later, and reflecting the changes in tourism, Hall agrees, arguing that gastronomy and culinary tourism has effectively turned sites of consumption into

¹¹ The mobilities turn, in particular, contends that tourism does not exist in isolation, but is one element of a vast system “of quotidian mobile practices which range from daily commuting to migration” (Chambers, 2018, p. 194).

¹²DeSoucey (2010), in a footnote, clarifies that she uses “Gastronationalism” as coined by a William Swart in 2000, and not as defined pejoratively by *Cassell’s Dictionary of Slang* in 2005. I use it in a similar manner, but with a focus on tourism.

destination attractions, “adding value to place and destination brands” which, of course, “are usually strongly embraced by tourism authorities” (2019, p. 2). From a national identity perspective, specific foods have become much more symbolic with specific connotations, linked to very specific places and countries (Ichijo *et al.*, 2019). This is because food has become a “cultural reference point” for the production, culture and geography of its place of origin (Ellis *et al.*, 2018, p. 257) or, as Sage described it, food is “embedded with information at the point of sale” (2003, pp. 48-49). However, there is a case for caution around what dishes or what aspects of a cuisine are made available to tourists – there are issues of cultural politics and power to be considered (Long, 2018). Avieli provides a good example of this in his paper on the Arab Israeli ‘Hummus Wars’, and notes that “the elastic and dynamic nature of food makes it a perfect vessel for complicated and polysemic ideas” and that “Food is also less prescribed and canonized than most other cultural elements, always featuring great personal, local, and regional variation” (2016, p. 28). This is why food and tourism has seen their partnership strengthen over the past two decades, and why the synergy of the two has been a consistent theme in all my publications.

The proportion of food tourists is relatively small

One of the turning points in the development of food tourism in Ireland was research in 2014 which informed us that only 10% of tourists were ‘food enthusiasts’, while 80% were food positive (Fáilte Ireland, 2014; cited in Mulcahy, 2017b).

By comparison, contemporaneous research confirmed that our findings were reasonably accurate. The World Food Travel Association (2020) found that only 8.1% of food travellers expressed an interest in gourmet experiences as their primary interest in 2010, and that that number had only risen to 18% by 2016, while research by the WTO

indicated that 13.8% of tourists visiting the Basque Country in Spain did so for reasons related to gastronomy (2012, p. 59), despite the fact that it is a significant gastronomic destination, where there are forty restaurants at Michelin star level (Eusk Guide, 2020). Later research in other destinations showed an increase, but, as a proportion of overall tourist volumes, the figures remained under 25%. For example, Andersson *et al.* (2017, p. 1) reports that 20% of Danish tourists have gone “on at least one holiday where food was the reason to go” according to Expedia, the online travel agency. Another study shows that a quarter of the Swedish urban population is highly involved in food, whom the study identified as food enthusiasts (Andersson and Mossberg, 2017). Therefore, it would be reasonable to conclude that, despite the growth of interest in food and tourism, the proportion of tourists for whom food is central to their trip remains at less than 25%. However, this area needs much more research in multiple destinations to accommodate cultural, social and policy differences and to determine if the behaviour is consistent.

Food is a motivator of satisfaction, not of travel

The 2014 research mentioned above also showed that, in Ireland’s case, food motivates satisfaction rather than travel (Fáilte Ireland, 2014; cited in Mulcahy, 2017b). This was consistent with similar studies published around the same time (Björk and Kauppinen-Räsänen, 2017; Stone *et al.*, 2017), which was later substantiated by Stone *et al.* (2019, p. 148), who found that, in a panel of leisure travellers from nine countries, “80.2% agreed that food and drink experiences are important to the overall trip satisfaction”. Bessière and Tibère came to similar conclusions in their study of French tourists: “in the tourist’s mind, there is a clear link between food cultures and the place visited” (2013, p. 3425).

Early on, though, it was clear that some writers did not see food as a valid motivation, even if they did recognise that people had a physiological need to eat (McKercher and Chan, 2005; McKercher *et al.*, 2008). This might have been a function of the time and the place where the research was carried out, in Hong Kong. As the authors pointed out: “Food, at least as far as Hong Kong is concerned, is such a ubiquitous part of the product mix that it is not even valued explicitly by certain groups, though its influence is implicit” (McKercher *et al.*, 2008, p. 146). More recently, a feature of the literature is that substantial research has been carried out on travel motivation in food tourism. However, a paucity of research, both “on travel motivation toward visiting a food tourism destination” (Su *et al.*, 2020, p. 573), and on “gastronomic tourism from a traveller's perspective” (Balderas-Cejudo *et al.*, 2019, p. 3), has led to a lack of a comprehensive understanding in this subject area. This has resulted in travel motivation research that has concentrated on food related activities as part of a visit rather than the principal driver of the trip. As Singh has pointed out, “tourists do not travel in ‘modes’ and should not be thought of in either/or behavioural/cognitive terms” (Singh, 2016, p. 20).

Such analysis and debate are useful but ignore the thrust of my argument. In my publications I have been quite clear in making the distinction between tourists whose motivation to travel is food, as distinct from those who for whom food is a motivator of satisfaction. Especially at the early stages of food tourism development in a destination, the latter are important for building viability and growth, while the locals are critical in providing business to food producers and operators all year so that they survive (Andersson *et al.*, 2017). Essentially, a destination must ensure that any tourist has easy access to the type of food and beverage they came for or need, gourmet or not. If the destination’s food offer is only constructed for food tourists (whose motivation for travel

to that destination is primarily food) then there will be a disconnect, resulting in loss of business and more expense in marketing to attract replacement tourists. In this respect an interesting case study comes from an unexpected source to illustrate the point. A study of the Michelin guide in Paris, “the historical founder and capital of elitist gastronomy”, over sixty years (1950-2012) shows that there was a significant turning point at the end of the 20th century (Barrère *et al.*, 2014, p. 1409). The authors demonstrated that restaurants who have been awarded a Michelin Bib Gourmand in Paris (which signifies that they offer a good quality menu at a good value price) are now a significant segment of the market – so much so that chefs are moving from elitist, high cost and expensive offerings to a bib gourmand level of operations, presumably where the consumer demand is. For a business, such as a restaurant, not all customers are tourists - not all industries or businesses are interested in making a distinction between tourists or locals (Leiper, 2008). Correspondingly, all tourists are food tourists occasionally, but very few are food tourists all of the time – their relationship with food is dynamic and varies constantly (Getz *et al.*, 2014; Andersson *et al.*, 2017).

Indeed, Ryan has shown that “any attempt to present definitive explanations of the ‘tourist experience’ are fraught with difficulties” (2010, p. 41). This perspective includes an appreciation of how (and why) tourists interact with food, the experiences that arise as a result, and the infrastructure that facilitates all that activity. This has been problematic as the discourse in food, tourism, and the various categories (for example: gastronomy tourism, culinary tourism, food tourism, etc.) has been out of context, fragmented and even parochial (Ellis *et al.*, 2018), and some research has found that there is a need to revise the definitions of these terms (Lee *et al.*, 2014). As Hall succinctly pointed out only last year, “Gastronomic, culinary and food tourism are not the same thing as discussing food and tourism” (2019, p. 2), something I have been advocating since

2012. To date the discourse appears to use the terms without clearly understanding what they mean or imply. It remains rare to find others making this distinction in the literature, and where they do, they highlight the confusion and attempt to resolve the dissonance (Hall, 2012, pp. 50-53; World Tourism Organization, 2012, pp. 6-8; Petrak and Beckmann, 2015, pp. 5-6; Balderas-Cejudo *et al.*, 2019). This forced me to utilise these terms (gastronomy tourism, culinary tourism, food tourism) interchangeably throughout the published work as a means of demonstrating and advocating a need to dispassionately focus on core issues. For consistency, I have continued to use these terms interchangeably in this work as well.

Policy as relationship building

Here, I have concentrated on tourism policy (as distinct from food tourism policy) as there is little by way of literature on food tourism policy. In relation to tourism policy in Ireland, research appears to be even less. However, there is one author who has been critical of how little tourism policy research has been carried out and points out that only slight academic attention has been given to it (O'Brien, 2010; O'Brien, 2012).

Tourism policy (and strategy) is largely used by governments as a means to an end and by DMOs¹³ to achieve marketing objectives. They value the economic contributions the orthodox tourism paradigm makes, particularly in terms of increased revenues and job creation while aspiring to minimise the difficulties it causes for society, locals, the environment, and business. However, it is highly political (especially when governments change, along with election commitments, as demonstrated earlier), very

¹³A DMO is a Destination Management Organisation, or a Destination Marketing Organisation. Frequently they are the same organisation, as in Ireland. In this case the management is carried out by Fáilte Ireland, while marketing is carried out by Tourism Ireland. I am referring to Fáilte Ireland here.

complex, raises issues of power and the extent to which stakeholders other than business and industry are involved (Wray, 2015; Estol and Font, 2016; Joppe, 2018; Sheppard and Fennell, 2019). There are also those who believe that public policy making is a shared activity involving interaction, negotiation and collaboration between many people and many organisations (Stevenson *et al.*, 2008). Essentially this is a top down approach and usually led by DMOs, although that approach might become less relevant (Dredge, 2016; Hall and Veer, 2016) as the DMOs selectively both ignore and capitalise on a range of technological, social, structural and political changes. While all but one (Mulcahy, 2015b) of my publications do not overtly discuss policy making, they demonstrate that the approach should be bottom up, rather than top down, producing, in other words, a shift in the tourism paradigm.

It appears that tourism policy is not a straight forward concept, “because the term ‘policy’ is very fuzzy and tourism is a social construct that refers to a specific behaviour” and “that’s where the trouble starts, because really, the appropriate development of tourism is highly dependent on decision-makers who have little regard for, or knowledge of, tourism” (Joppe, 2018, p. 201). Others characterise policy makers as being “dominated by the views of predominantly middleclass, ethnically homogenous public officials” and that “public bureaucrats were the experts and gatekeepers of authoritative knowledge” (Dredge and Jamal, 2015, p. 290). As the participant researcher in this work, I find the stereotyping somewhat overdone, although my experience is limited to an Irish DMO and therefore possibly atypical by comparison with other jurisdictions. Nonetheless, my published work has attempted to highlight how food tourism policy was created and implemented in a manner that recognised a fundamental feature for its success – it had to overlap with a multiplicity of sectors (Everett and Slocum, 2012), and it required participation and collaboration (Everett and Slocum, 2013), all of which “reflect a broader

understanding of the political, societal and human context of public sector-led decision making” (Stevenson *et al.*, 2008, p. 733). That broader understanding includes an intimate knowledge of the public sector, where responsibilities are diffused across the government administration system (Rinaldi, 2017). In Ireland, for example, local food is managed within agriculture; sites of consumption, such as restaurants, are managed by planning agencies, local authorities and health authorities; signage by local government; and heritage sites by the Office of Public Works. Cultural factors also have to be taken into account (Sessa, 1976), but the intangible mechanisms of policy are the more important elements, such as the ability to manage constant change and to communicate consistently and informally. These are core to successful acceptance and acknowledgment of policy making and its implementation (Stevenson *et al.*, 2008), and are a consistent theme through the publications, particularly in the development of the Food Tourism Network, and in the development and implementation of the various policies over the time frame of the publications.

During this period, Dredge and Jamal (2015, p. 291) had identified the “relational turn, which focused on managing collaborative relationships and relational politics”. While relationships in tourism are not fully understood, it is clear that relationships and networks are progressively seen as key to effective planning and policy, and for understanding not only what was important to some very different stakeholders, but also understanding tourism itself (Dredge and Jamal, 2015; Wray, 2015; Merinero-Rodríguez and Pulido-Fernández, 2016; Mottiar, 2016; Mei *et al.*, 2017). In practice, traditional stakeholders have discovered how critical genuine relationships are. For example, McLoughlin and Hanrahan have found the continued failure, over ten years, of Local Authorities in Ireland to plan for tourism: “The familiar economic benefits associated with tourism has in recent years not become the primary goal for local communities when

attaining their support for tourism development” who preferred, instead, to minimise undesirable effects (2019, p. 329). However, in contrast, it appears that the bottom up approach outlined in my publications anticipated the focus in the literature on relationships and the necessity of broad-based networks. Not only that, but the publications implicitly point to two other important aspects of tourism policy and the possibility of a shift in the tourism paradigm – trust, and the informal activity arising from networks and relationships.

Trust has been a critical element because, from a consumer standpoint, “tourism reconfigured trust” in that consumers bought something unseen and distant when purchasing their trips, unlike their usual purchases (Gibson, 2009, p. 527). More importantly perhaps, political trust in the context of tourism development and relationships is critical but research “has remained virtually silent in the literature” (Nunkoo *et al.*, 2012, p. 1540). There is potential to create a virtuous circle (or a vicious one, if one is careless) by developing policies which creates engagement within the wider tourism community. This creates “general interpersonal trust in the society”, which in turn builds “public trust in tourism institutions”, which influences political support for tourism beyond the usual economic metrics (Nunkoo *et al.*, 2012, p. 1557). Therefore, tourism should pay attention to creating that trust if tourism is to remain in the political agenda, locally and nationally.

The informal activity arising from networks and relationships is the key to building that trust. As Stevenson *et al.* (2008, p. 746) have shown, “the importance of the ambiguous and less tangible aspects” or “backstage activity” such as the interactions and “the power and politics of policy making” are what is valued, rather than the tangible manifestations of policy such as policy and strategy documents. From the beginning, my published work recognised the success of engaging with stakeholders across what I

termed the ‘food tourism landscape’ (Mulcahy, 2017b), particularly the food tourism network development which commenced in 2012, the details of which were published in 2016 and 2019 (Mulcahy, 2016a; Mulcahy, 2019a). Although not entrepreneurial, networks were created and formed through benchmarking visits to similar groups in Norway, Denmark and Canada, which have since been the subject of some research (Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance, 2015; Mei *et al.*, 2017). This highlighted the importance of creating and maintaining networks (Mottiar *et al.*, 2018). Yet, around the same time, both Airey (2015) and Joppe (2018) highlighted the disconnect of academics in tourism with those outside tourism, in contrast with other disciplines, such that there are silos of activity (conferences, for example) where government, tourism industries and academia rarely share a platform to any substantive degree. While that argument might have been largely valid elsewhere, my publications demonstrate a different phenomenon taking place in Ireland. My bottom-up approach in food tourism research and practice was effectively recognising the activities and the people in localities who, by identifying their role and voice, are now regarded as authentic social entrepreneurs – that is, they were not community leaders, business entities, or those “who do not necessarily have commercial interests, or are not part of local government or destination management organizations” (Mottiar, 2016, p. 1139). This does not always need an external or public administration of course, as can be seen in the relationship between quality agriculture and food tourism on the Italian Apennines in 2004-2007 (Montanari and Staniscia, 2009).

My six prior publications

For the PhD based on prior publication, I have chosen six book chapters (see below) published as a result of my advocacy strategy which, although individually published between 2014 and 2019, as noted earlier, were each written two years earlier, between 2012 to 2017, thus reflecting where I was on the journey of learning, reflection and advocacy at the time each individual publication was written. Four of the publications were as a result of invitations from established senior academics to contribute material to their books. Arguably, this demonstrates that they considered that I had something worthwhile or atypical to contribute to the literature as a practitioner and participant. The other two (the first and the fourth) were as a result of giving a paper at an academic association meeting or a symposium, and then being selected to develop the paper into a book chapter.

All of the publications make a theoretical contribution by implicitly endorsing the work done on the necessity of bringing about a paradigm change in tourism by Rinaldi (2017) and Dwyer (2018). As a collective, and individually, they also provide a new theoretical perspective on Everett's 'cultural turn' (2008; 2012), Dredge and Jamal's 'relational turn' (2015), and Chambers' 'mobilities turn' (2018), as they demonstrate the evolution, or journey, of these 'turns' at the nexus of food and tourism in Ireland over an extended period of time. It is only now, on reflection, and as a result of an intensive literature review, that I realise that my publications not only mirror the contemporary development of theoretical approaches to changes in tourism generally, but they also provide a new perspective on the potential of food in tourism in particular. Certainly, the theoretical contribution in the publications is implicit, but my autoethnographic approach has provided the means to critically analyse both my publications and the work of others, along with the opportunity to explicitly recognise their contribution retrospectively. It is

also clear to me, as result of reflecting on ten years of practice, that both the ‘turns’, and paradigm change, have had particular significance for tourism in Ireland, an area where such change was achieved iteratively during that time. Thus, a theoretical contribution is offered that is important and pertinent to academia, as it provides an informed, pragmatic and compelling perspective on the ‘turns’ that is empirically and epistemologically sound. The theoretical contribution is also important and pertinent to other stakeholders, especially tourism practitioners and policymakers, as it enhances their conceptual learning (Dwyer, 2018), which is increasingly necessary to maintain a shift in mindset beyond a tourism paradigm based on narrow business/policy features, to one with more holistic, collaborative, and sustainable objectives.

On reading each publication, it should be noted that each one is contemporaneous, but not written with the benefit of hindsight. As a group of publications, they are a series of real-time reflections and reactions as food tourism developed in Ireland during the period. They are an attempt to understand and react to moments of change, such as new government Ministers, different policy groups, and the development and implementation of various national strategies. Consequently, they are insightful where they explain a particular situation and describe the actions that were taken to respond to or address the implications of those changes. The publications are sequential, and were written carefully as a public servant not wishing to expose the ecosystem in which I operated to possible criticism, as this would hinder the achievement of my objective to build consensus for food in tourism.

It is important to point out that the publications were not originally written with the intention of eventually being part of a PhD dissertation. Rather, each publication was an attempt to formally record or present my work by positioning gastronomy tourism as a credible policy and strategy - some from an overall perspective, while others outline my

response to policy or strategic change in the wider operating environment. As originally written, each one had to fit the editors' theme with the result some elements of the publications are repetitive, which, I realised, was necessary to effect change. It was only after I realised that I had produced a body of work in a specialised area (which, as outlined earlier, is both interdisciplinary and extradisciplinary) where there is little similar work being done, that the potential and possibility of adding to the body of knowledge became apparent. The publications demonstrate that there has been a consistency of approach based on a deep knowledge of, and familiarity with, the public service environment in which I was operating. Not only do they demonstrate the systematic application of a substantial interdisciplinary body of knowledge, each one provides new knowledge, new theoretical perspectives and original research.

Prior publication No. 1

“Transforming Ireland through Gastronomic Nationalism Promoted and Practiced by Government, Business, and Civil Society”

In *“Tickling the Palate”: Gastronomy in Irish Literature and Culture*, edited by Máirtín Mac Con Iomaire and Eamon Maher. Bern/New York/Oxford: Peter Lang, 2014. pp. 159-74.

Research sub question: What is the rationale for gastronomy as an economic driver in Ireland?

The genesis of this chapter was as a paper for the Dublin Gastronomy Symposium in June 2012, a time of significant change in terms of policy, strategy, structure and thinking in Irish Tourism.

As a result of a new government, a new Minister for Tourism and a new Department for Tourism were put in place in 2011 (see Appendix 2). An early action was to establish the Tourism Recovery Taskforce (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2015a, p. 16). Required to conduct an urgent major review of tourism in Ireland, the Taskforce published their report in 2012, creating the conditions and impetus for fundamental change given the new focus and perspective which the report revealed. Contemporaneously, in addition to responding to a new Minister, preparing for the implications of the Taskforce report, and operating with significantly less resources¹⁴, Fáilte Ireland was integrating the Dublin Tourism organisation (Department of Transport,

¹⁴ See page 24 of the ‘My participant observer context’ section above.

Tourism and Sport, 2015a, p. 80)¹⁵, and planning for ‘The Gathering, 2013’¹⁶, all of which required a Fáilte Ireland management restructure in February 2012. As part of that restructure, I was given new responsibilities as Head of Division for Food, Hospitality and Standards (see Appendix 1). Specifically, in terms of food, I was assigned “the strategic development of food/cuisine within the overall tourism product offering”¹⁷, as described in the internal memorandum from the Chief Executive Officer at the time.

Significantly, this was the first time that food had featured in such an explicit and prominent way in an Irish tourism State agency context. Accordingly, it appeared to me to be an ideal opportunity to capitalise on these operating conditions. However, these conditions were also fragile, as there were many ideas and initiatives competing for approval, resources, and/or support, both within Fáilte Ireland and externally in tourism and government. Similar to the academic literature, most agendas and initiatives were largely silent on food in tourism, as many stakeholders subscribed to the dominant tourist paradigm which was focused on narrow business and economic objectives usually expressed, for example, in terms of marketing plans, State funding supports, and visitor volume metrics.

Having gained a valuable insight from the approach utilised in the development of the National Food Tourism Implementation Framework 2011-2013 (Fáilte Ireland, 2010a), I believed that any atypical agenda setting by me for food’s role in tourism could

¹⁵ There was been major reform of Irish tourism structures since the establishment of Tourism Ireland in 2000 and Fáilte Ireland in 2003. The present number of tourism agencies is two, compared with nine in 2005. Five regional tourism authorities were dissolved in 2006, Dublin Tourism was dissolved in 2012, along with Shannon Development’s tourism activities in 2013, and all the related staff and assets were transferred to Fáilte Ireland (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2015a, p. 80).

¹⁶A tourism focused initiative during the economic recession to encourage and mobilise the Irish diaspora to visit Ireland during 2013 to be part of themed gatherings and events organised by local communities and interest groups.

¹⁷ Personal correspondence, February 2012.

not compete in this environment, particularly in the context of my wider brief as Head of Division (see Appendix 1) which would have been seen as higher priority by many. Influenced by my MA studies in gastronomy between 2008–2010, and driven by the optimism and enthusiasm such study creates, presenting a paper at the Dublin Gastronomy Symposium (on which this publication is based) provided a suitable platform to advocate for food in tourism in a manner that was neutral and unthreatening to a range of stakeholders but had indisputable academic credibility and heft. Effectively, the subsequent publication was a type of manifesto for the future development of gastronomy tourism in Ireland led by a public service organisation but in collaboration with business and society. It emphasised the significant economic benefits that could be gained by recognising food's role in tourism, at a time when the country was going through a significant recession. It also argued that a gastronomy-driven economy is realistic, viable and sustainable, as gastronomy offers a scalable, cost effective means of local and regional development, with the potential to strengthen identity, enhance appreciation of the environment, and encourage the regeneration of local heritage and the local economy. I believed that this was essential in terms of opening up a discourse about food in tourism, thus laying a foundation for future strategies and activities.

Perhaps naively, the publication was an attempt to facilitate a shift in the mindset of a number of stakeholders in Ireland by enhancing their conceptual learning, although not in an overt way. In retrospect, I now recognise that the publication is a manifestation of not only Everett's 'cultural turn' (2008; 2012), but also Dredge and Jamal's 'relational turn' (2015), and Chambers' 'mobilities turn' (2018). In this respect, the publication implicitly advocated for paradigm change by highlighting the wider societal, environmental, cultural and cross-sectoral advantages to raising awareness across the various sectors where the potential of food in tourism was not fully valued. This, of

course, assumed that the publication would reach the intended audience, and it failed in that respect, although I did not appreciate that for some time. However, from my perspective, the primary benefit of the work was that it provided me with a structural and theoretical framework which I could build on and adjust as I developed my approach to future national strategies in what was to be a quite challenging operating environment.

JOHN MULCAHY

Transforming Ireland through Gastronomic Nationalism

In 2005, the UN general assembly heard that 'the very best solutions come when business, governments and civil society work together' (Blanke and Chiesa 2008, p. 98). Ireland is a country in need of solutions, and gastronomy is one that could be profitably exploited. Ireland can be reinvigorated and redefined through each person's need to eat several times a day. Gastronomy has significance for all at some level, and it can transform Irish life – each citizen and organisation doing their part, so that, collectively, the nation benefits. This national activism will not be found in elitist or high profile restaurants, but in the authentic gastronomy of Irish domestic and workplace kitchens, grown by, purchased from, prepared and eaten by, Irish residents, supported and promoted by both a proactive business community and an engaged public service. This intuitively reflects Irish history, geography, culture, landscape, and all the other components that uniquely make Ireland what it is, thereby providing compelling reasons to engage, to visit, to do business here.

Ireland is not the first country to embark on this path, despite the globalisation of food, facilitated by transportation and technological innovation, and international tourism. Food, cuisine and gastronomy are tied to place. *À la France* (the archetypical culinary nation), culinary distinction is utilised as a marker of identity in places such as Norway, Singapore, New Zealand and Scotland in order to promote both tourism and exports. So this is about creating, in Ireland, an imagined community of gastronomy that accommodates and balances innovation and tradition, individual creativity and time-honoured conventions, the singular and the collective.

Against that backdrop, this chapter argues that a gastronomy-driven economy is realistic, viable and sustainable, as gastronomy offers a scalable,

cost effective means of local and regional development, with the potential to strengthen identity, enhance appreciation of the environment, and encourage the regeneration of local heritage and the local economy. Ireland has a significant opportunity to capitalise on gastronomic nationalism worth approximately €2–€3 billion annually from tourism alone, which provides a powerful momentum. Such a commerce-focused business case is likely to attract the attention of policy makers and enterprises unaware of the centrality of gastronomy to Ireland's economic strategy and indigenous profitable enterprises, and creates the necessary awareness and buy-in for success at national and local levels.

The evidence for this approach is assembled in two stages. Firstly, by a focus on how gastronomy reflects the interaction of food, the environment and society at multiple levels, often in unexpected ways, but with economic development as the output. Secondly, by looking at some existing examples of success that confirm how collaboration at multiple levels results in a significant return on investment not just of economic capital, but also of social, cultural and symbolic capital (Swartz 1997, p. 80).

Gastronomy in society

As a philosophy in the broadest sense, gastronomy can be traced back to Archestratus (fourth century BC) who perceived it as 'the pleasure of taste pursued according to a gastronomic code or set of rules' and wrote what might be considered the world's first eating guide called 'Gastronomia' – literally, rules for the stomach (Santich 1996, p. 176). In 1825, Jean-Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, the modern champion of gastronomy, defined it as the 'reasoned knowledge of everything pertaining to man, insofar as he nourishes himself' (cited in Flandrin, Montanari, and Sonnenfeld 1999, p. 432). A contemporary observation from Barbara Santich is that 'gastronomy is the reasoned understanding of everything that concerns us insofar as we sustain ourselves' (Scarpato 2002, p. 54). Signalling how germane food and

its consumption is to human existence, the philosopher Terry Eagleton has observed: 'Genuine eating combines pleasure, utility, and sociality, and so differs from a take-away in much the same way that Proust differs from a bus ticket' (Eagleton 1997). No longer a survival necessity (in some developed economies, anyhow), food is, at a philosophical level, 'the thesaurus of all moods and all sensations' (Ellmann 1993, p. 112), and it is not only an important signifier within culture and the symbolic order, but it also plays a vital role in our sense of self. People's food preferences and their ability to discriminate aesthetically is deeply ingrained and socially embedded so that it seems natural, even though it is learned rather than innate (Mennell 2005, p. 469). Regardless of the variety of food presented to them, people (locals or tourists) consistently make food choices in keeping with their class identity, which in turn reproduces socioeconomic hierarchies of power and control (Everett 2009, p. 28). Thus, the relationship between people and their food is quite distinctive. Consequently, the selection of food by a person and how it is consumed becomes a marker of identity and difference (Richards 2002, p. 5). These perspectives suggest, at a human level, that food is not only fuel for the body, but, also a gastronomic foil for philosophy, socialising, and a means of simultaneously enriching experiences, expressing personal identities, and adding to quality of life.

However, at a national or regional level, food heavily influences (and is influenced by) the farming landscape and other environments through its production (Sage 2005). These are elements of every destination, providing it with its own unique character and authenticity (Yeoman, Brass and McMahon-Beattie 2007, p. 1135). Consequently, there are national and continental differences in relation to food, its production and its consumption that, although not obvious, have implications for the provision and consumption of gastronomic experiences. Within Europe, there appear to be significant differences in the agriculture systems; industrial level efficiency is the foundation of food production in Northern Europe, while 'terroir' and tradition dominate in Southern Europe (Parrott, Wilson, and Murdoch 2002, p. 242). There is a similar polarisation in France, Italy and the Mediterranean countries where eating out patterns are predominantly based on traditional food and regional cuisines, while the UK and the US are leaning towards creolisation and internationalisation through

the proliferation of exotic and ethnic cuisines (Miele and Murdoch 2002, p. 314). Similarly, Paul Rozin has observed that: 'The food-pleasure attitude of the French, in comparison to the food-poison attitude of Americans presumably leads to the popularity of all types of foods modified to be "healthier" (low fat, low salt, no additives) in the United States' (Rozin 1999, p. 20). Clearly, food seems to have quite a functional role in Northern Europe, the UK and the USA, with related consequences for areas of economic activity. This reflects what has been a dominant narrative – in modern societies, food has always been considered as inconsequential (Scarpato 2002, p. 55). Not only is food invisible, but the issues that affect it have become invisible also (Symons 1998, pp. ix–xi).

Happily, various case studies demonstrate how food can combat parochialism and offer commercial benefits. Indigenous cattle breeds in Italy have been shown to have additional social and cultural value as custodians of local traditions (Gandini and Villa 2003). The 'adopt a sheep' project in Italy's Abruzzo National Park both demonstrate food's wider role in tourism, business and the economy (Holloway et al. 2006). In Sweden, the historical and rural context of local food was reinterpreted to achieve not only commercial business goals for rural food businesses, but also to serve a tourist agenda (Tellstrom, Gustafsson, and Mossberg 2005). The French concept of '*Cuisine de Terroir*' demonstrates how food preparation and consumption must be grounded locally, how the gastronomic relationship goes beyond eating out, and how a shorter supply chain creates a fundamentally different type of relationship between larger numbers of producers and consumers (Chossat and Gergaud 2003). Essentially, food reaches the consumer 'embedded with information at the point of sale' so that the consumer can make connections (an economy of regard) with the place of production, the methods employed and the values of the people involved (Sage 2003, pp. 48–49). This, in turn, both creates and reinforces the affiliation that consumers seek with their environment, inevitably increasing their gastronomic expenditure. These and other initiatives have had a multiplier effect resulting in several types of economic returns from food, particularly in terms of rural development by protecting and creating employment, resulting in social and environmental benefits to communities (Boyne, Hall, and Williams 2003). Food, therefore, is not

only an instrument of regional development, but also of general economic development (Henderson 2009, p. 321).

Gastronomy creates capital

Bourdieu's (1984) study of class in French society showed how a person's preference for food is a demonstration of cultural capital, as prestige and success are functions of gaining access to this capital, which is highly valued by society. Some argue that simply buying organic food at a market is an expression of cultural capital (Watts, Ilbery and Maye 2005, p. 30). Such a purchase entails a high quality personal interaction with an alternative form of value (the economy of regard) where there is a significant moral content to transactions beyond the exchange of products for cash. Cultural capital is also evident in the wide variety of ethnic cuisines consumed by middle to high-class consumers who are economically and socially confident enough to be able to order it – and have probably experienced it as tourists as well. Such experience, accumulated along with other travel experiences, is used to exhibit cultural capital when relating those experiences to others. The outcome is that gastronomy is one of the 'new' forms of independent and sustainable activities that enable each person to enhance their cultural capital.

Scotland has already identified the need for cultural capital in their visitor profiles. Scenario planning has demonstrated that Scottish gastronomic tourism can gain cultural capital and social cachet as tourists (and locals) trade up, and that food creates its own cultural capital, along with commercial opportunities (Yeoman, Brass and McMahon-Beattie 2007). Swedish enterprises have already commercialised the cultural capital of local rural food through narrative in order to create competitive advantage for their businesses (Tellstrom, Gustafsson and Mossberg 2005). A 'gastronomic centre of higher cultural capital' has even been proposed, underpinned by the idea that one should consume less, and consume better,

to support the view that products from small-scale high quality producers yield more satisfaction per unit consumed, so that consuming better in terms of quality may actually lead to consuming less in terms of quantity (Askegaard and Kjeldgaard 2007).

Therefore, enterprises can 'out local' global competition by leveraging on and sustaining, maintaining, developing/constructing local cultural capital. This perspective should inspire public administrators, policy makers, research institutions, and businesses to collaboratively focus on cultivating local cultural capital and resources rather than alternative systems of belief in global economics.

Gastronomy at work – examples of success in tourism

These case studies show that gastronomic tourism, at several levels, has the capacity to create interdependencies that influence the development and acceptability of both a destination and its gastronomy to a visitor. From a business perspective, it should also be evident that gastronomic tourism's primary advantage lies in its ability to adapt to and react to the effects of phenomena such as globalisation, localisation, or creolisation, mostly because the adjacent living culture changes (Richards 2002, p. 16). Inevitably, this results in greater economic activity and returns.

Ireland – the success of the Fuchsia Brand in West Cork

The Fuchsia Brand in West Cork is an initiative of the West Cork LEADER Co-operative Society (Dempsey 2008). A review in 2007 demonstrated a strong local economy driven by food as a high value product. While the geographic size of the area was small, the review showed that, of the total direct value of output (€106.97 million), 54 per cent was associated with the food and beverages sector, and 33 per cent with the accommodation

and catering sector (O'Reilly 2001). Critical to these figures is not only a highly integrated indigenous food industry in the region, but also the fact that the local gastronomy forms an important component of the touristic experience (Sage 2003). The tourists associated high quality local food with a natural environment in the region, and this was discussed when they returned home. Both the region and food products benefited, which facilitated the growth of wider economic benefits in the context of food exports to the tourist's place of origin, while also keeping imports in West Cork to a minimum, thus having a significantly positive spending multiplier effect. In Fuchsia's case, of the €106 million output, €69 million remained in the region and supported 1,131 jobs by contributing €88 million to the West Cork economy.

In that context, consider that tourists spent €2 billion on food and beverages in Ireland in 2009 (Fáilte Ireland). Food and drink represents the largest component of visitor expenditure in Ireland and exceeds the average spent on 'bed and board'. This should be a powerful motivator for both government and enterprise – the economic linkages are very obvious between the hospitality sector, agriculture providers, value-added providers and distributors. Given the Fuchsia example, revenues of this magnitude can provide a considerable opportunity for development and growth, and all that this entails (maximised return on investment, regional spread, increased employment in agriculture and services, and contribution to economic, social and environmental sustainability).

It is worth noting that the Irish percentages (of visitor expenditure on food) stand up well in comparison with international experience. An estimated 36 per cent of visitor expenditure is on food and drink outside of accommodation (Fáilte Ireland). In comparison, tourists in Canada spent, on average, one third of their travel expenses on food (Hashimoto and Telfer 2006, p. 37), while the proportion drops lower in South Africa and Australia where the amount spent by tourists on food ranged between 8 per cent to 26 per cent (Hall and Sharples 2003, p. 3).

Austria – integrating agriculture and gastronomic tourism

Austria considers itself to have the reputation of being 'Europe's Deli Shop' based on its 18,500 eco-farms and the fact that cattle farming contributes 30 per cent of agricultural value-added business (Austrian National Tourist Office). Of the 137,000 farms in Austria, almost 33 per cent were engaged in 'economic activity other than agriculture', over 8 per cent were involved in tourism, and over 11 per cent were processing farm products (Loverseed 2007, p. 25). Government policy seeks to ensure that these small farming communities are provided with relevant support in order to make a living. Marketing and selling local produce is seen as a central feature of that policy, and the vast majority of hotels in ski and hiking resorts work closely with local farmers and use their products. The emergence of several Michelin and Gault-Millau rated restaurants in the Salzburg province is evidence of the popularity and quality of the local ingredients available (Loverseed 2004, p. 17). Recognising that tourists expect to find rural landscapes of communities farming local breeds producing local products and local culture, some Austrian villages and businesses subsidise farmers to ensure that these desired features do not decline, thereby attributing a market value to local breeds (Loverseed 2007, p. 11).

Norway – 'scary food' as an economic driver

Voss is a small farming community of 13,500 on the West coast of Norway, where farming traditions are based on milk and meat production from sheep and cattle. It has established a niche in the market mainly by relying on nature based and extreme sports as part of its image. A traditional Norwegian meal, *Smalahove*, has become part of that destination brand. Described as a 'relic of Nordic gastronomy' a salted, smoked, and cooked sheep's head is split into two halves for service. In essence, a national traditional food, dating from 1300, has become a lifestyle commodity – admittedly for a specific tourist market segment. The main features of the product are as follows (Gyimóthy and Mykletun 2009):

- A unique, quality certified, industrial unit which processes 60,000 sheep's heads a year (120,000 meals). Approximately 90 per cent are sold to supermarket chains and catering companies, while the other 10% services retail customers locally and abroad.
- The sheep's head meal has evolved into a special occasion.
- Developed specifically around the meal, a microbrewery beer and an aquavit have replaced the traditional accompaniment of sour milk. Other product augmentation featuring sheep's heads include jewellery (e.g. tie pins, earrings, and cufflinks), cutlery, tableware, glasses and books featuring sheep's head songs, cartoons, or, for strangers and those attending the meal for the first time, codes of conduct. An internet portal maintains a virtual community with songs, pictures, and stories (www.smalahove.no).
- A farm restaurant serves over 6,000 sheep's head meals a year. The meal includes storytelling, a guided tour of the farm and the unique production facility, a home brew, and a specially grown Voss potato.
- A Voss hotel has been offering the meal since the 1960s with an emphasis on exclusivity achieved by limited availability, a dress code, and various rituals or ceremony during the evening. These include entitlement to a symbolic membership of an unusual gourmet community on receipt of your sheep's head jawbone, which has been cleaned, and your name burned into it.
- In 1998, Voss launched a two-day 'Sheep's Head Release' festival similar to the Beaujolais Nouveau event in France. Based on a traditional sheep auction and exhibition, it celebrates local food and tradition. It includes a 'lambs run' for children, wool shearing contests, a sheep's head eating contest (requiring style and aptitude as well as speed), a food fair primarily showing local food producers, and the climax is a community feast for 850 at long tables in a festival tent.
- Voss, also known for its Extreme Sports Festival every June, includes a 'try it' package where the sheep's head meal is one of ten 'extreme activities' which visitors can undertake (<<http://www.ekstrem-sportveko.com>>).

In spite of its arguably bizarre nature, the evolution of this traditional dish into a modern consumer product has greatly contributed to the image of Voss as a tourism destination. The meal, with its invented ceremonies, accessories, and merchandise, manages to perform several gastronomic and tourism roles at once – as a traditional harvest-type festival, a staged atmosphere such as the rural farm, as a community feast, a trophy event, an extreme adventurous experience, or a commercial food product with scale. The dish illustrates the ways that aspects of gastronomy such as food tradition, food adventures, culinary arts, and entrepreneurial activities interact when creating business successes.

The sheep's head meal renaissance is a creation achieved by individual entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial networks, which has contributed to growth and distinctiveness of the area and its branding as a destination. Moreover, the meal has inspired other entrepreneurs within farming and elsewhere to supply other products and services.

A possible framework for gastronomic nationalism in Ireland

Ireland already has a significant presence through high quality foods or ingredients, or the products derived from them, which are exported in vast amounts (e.g. milk powder, cheese, meat, Kerrygold butter, Bailey's Irish Cream, Jameson whiskey) and this export market shapes Ireland's image internationally. In the face of the industrialisation of food that such exports require, the consequence is that Ireland is failing to take advantage of some of its prime food ingredients domestically. It risks permanently losing assets associated with food – examples include the Kerry cow, Iveragh lamb (some recent initiatives exist, but compare it with the success of Shetland lamb) and varieties of fruit and grains, the loss of which impacts – at the very least – local, regional and national cultures, economies, landscapes, and environments.

Generating integrated solutions to such problems across economic sectors and geographical regions is complex, not least because most citizens,

policy makers, politicians, or enterprise owners tend to look at food, eating, gastronomy (i.e. some sort of food experience), through their own 'lens'. They may not even have any personal interest in food as anything other than fuel, so food may not be taken seriously or understood, as it has no obvious commercial or cultural value to this audience. In contrast, the 'lens' should be food itself, if a range of desirable outcomes is to be achieved, particularly when policy, strategy, economics, habits, and perceptions are to be influenced effectively. If so, an important means of enthusing key influencers is to demonstrate food's capacity to add value by driving demand, increase business profitability, and achieve a return on investment for those that commit to food opportunities in addition to significantly enhancing activity in the Irish economy.

A possible framework to achieve this must include three groupings, the government, the public, and the business community.

The government

The government can exert influence in various ways:

- Integrated policy across all government departments
 - Agricultural policy acting locally. Policy that facilitates *both* exports and domestic production would be desirable.
 - The development of public health policy that facilitates local food production, distribution and sale, rather than hinders it.
 - Food must be a core feature of the education system and in tourism development.
- Procurement policies, within EU legislation, which are biased towards the award of local and small contracts by large State institutions, and by insisting on a verifiable Irish provenance on all foods;
 - The State operates some of the largest food purchasing budgets through, for example, the defence forces, health institutions, educational facilities, justice facilities such as the prison service and a range of semi-state bodies. Their change in food emphasis would have an immediate effect on food provision,

although the effect would be so great, a gradual roll out would be necessary to allow various sectors to catch up in terms of production capacity.

- As the largest employer in the State, the civil and public service has the opportunity to directly influence, in a positive manner, the socialisation of gastronomy.
- A proactive approach to protect the intellectual property embedded in Irish food culture in order to maintain competitive advantage and the distinctiveness of products in the face of increasing competition from other countries. For example, producers of food and tourism products could be encouraged to take an interest in gastronomic heritage and intellectual property rights. This might include the preservation of indigenous food types and varieties (such as breeds of cattle or varieties of apples), recipes, food combinations, and local life and traditions related to eating and drinking (opening hours, working days, festivals, fêtes), all of which knit together to become a unique local, regional or national gastronomic culture. A key resource would be a gastronomic inventory of all the features that make up an area's identity – it would help to profile, contrast, distinguish, and emphasise its uniqueness. This implies concentrating on building local capacity – i.e. strengthen the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of local people for establishing and sustaining gastronomic awareness within an area.

The public

The public, as consumers, would need to be convinced, through a public advocacy campaign, of the importance of their role in finding, purchasing, preparing and enjoying Irish food, and how that would contribute to the common cause. The key message would not be the commodities or the food, but how being loyal to Irish gastronomy through modern Irish cuisine would generate jobs in a wide range of sectors, such as agriculture, milling, dairy production, distribution, retail, catering, tourism and so on.

Business

Business, as a result of the demand created by the government and the public would need to identify the range of local opportunities emerging from a food nationalism campaign. Ideally, these should not be national or international sized businesses, but small and medium sized enterprises attuned to the needs of their locality and who source their raw materials locally, so that all concerned stand to gain. The implementation of the framework would have to be dovetailed with the refocusing of the government targets so that demand and business provision scales up at the same time.

Conclusion

There is a substantial economic, social, and developmental rationale to argue for the viability and sustainability of gastronomic nationalism in Ireland. Gastronomy's primary advantage lies in its ability to adapt to and react to the effects of phenomena such as globalisation, localisation, or creolisation. This occurs because food is close to changes in local culture, especially in cuisines where culinary vitality depends on adaptability and flexibility, and has been shown to be a highly sensitive marker for much broader social, political, and economic changes in society. It therefore becomes a very effective argument in policymaking, as it is a cost effective, profitable option. Enterprises can 'out local' global competition by leveraging on, and maintaining/sustaining, or developing/constructing local cultural capital through gastronomy. This perspective should inspire public administrators, policy makers, research institutions, and businesses to collaboratively focus on cultivating local food capital and resources, thus avoiding sectors and regions acting independently. It should also encourage a predisposition to the holistic nature of gastronomy. Such collaborative community action led by those who can demonstrate social and cultural capital has been critical to success both in Ireland and abroad. While these

champions of food might have economic capital, they seem to be instinctively aware that some in the community will think differently, and that for any one project to work, it must benefit the entire community in multiple ways through sharing, communication, openness, and good management. This approach also identifies and protects local food assets and exploits them appropriately.

From a business case perspective, the most compelling and logical argument is that Irish gastronomy is a people business – both in terms of those who provide and consume the experience. The possession of economic capital allows and facilitates investment in cultural capital through allowing the investment of time. Yet built into that transaction, and because of it, are other transactions of cultural capital (on the part of the citizen acquiring and displaying it) and social capital (on the part of the service provider in assembling and providing the experience), all of which generates further capital, especially economic capital, thus creating a virtuous circle for all. Gastronomic nationalism is therefore a credible driver of the wider economy.

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Prior publication No. 2

“Future Consumption: Gastronomy and Public Policy”

In *The Future of Food Tourism: Foodies, Experiences, Exclusivity, Visions and Political Capital*, edited by Ian Yeoman, Una McMahon-Beattie, Kevin Fields, Julia Albrecht and Kevin Meethan, UK: Channel View Publications, 2015. pp. 75-86.

Research sub question: Does gastronomy tourism have a policy dimension?

Written in 2013, a year after the previous publication, this chapter was on foot of an invitation from the editors and provided the opportunity to advocate that, in the future, gastronomy had a sustainable role in the public policy forum while not endangering current policies and positions. This was timely, as I now had a better understanding of the options available to me in advocating for food in tourism due to changes in my operating environment. The new insights provided by the Tourism Recovery Taskforce report (2012) had led to destination development focused on concepts and propositions, rather than regional geographies and activities such as golf or angling, packaged as products¹⁸. The impact of the recession had driven an expectation in Ireland’s tourism industries (indeed, almost a forced acceptance by some more traditional stakeholders) of innovative change from the Irish State and its agencies in relation to tourism. The most prominent example of this was the creation and development by Fáilte Ireland, over two years, of the Wild Atlantic Way¹⁹ proposition, launched early in 2014. Within food tourism, the first group of food champions to join my Food Tourism Network Development Programme were in place after their benchmarking trip to Canada in 2012 (Fáilte Ireland, 2012), and the second group, focused on the Wild Atlantic Way, were preparing for their

¹⁸This is discussed in detail in my next publication, number 3.

¹⁹The Wild Atlantic Way is the world’s longest (2,500 km) defined coastal touring route along the west coast of Ireland from County Donegal to County Cork. <https://www.wildatlanticway.com/home>

benchmarking trip to see driving routes in Norway in September, 2013 (Fáilte Ireland, 2013). At the same time, the development work and associated bottom up consultation process (of which the Food Champions were a critical component) for the Food Tourism Activity Plan 2014–2016 was taking place (Fáilte Ireland, 2014).

This environment provided me with the insight that the public sector could influence and initiate innovative change faster by leading by example, creating exemplars, and by promoting collaborative practices, thus broadening the perceived benefits of food in tourism. Critically, both my industry background and my collaboration with the Food Champions informed my thinking as I gained a more accurate and contemporary understanding of what the motivators and the factors of success were for practitioners. But I also understood what the new influencing factors were for policy makers and this publication was an attempt to recognise both, although the emphasis was on policy makers. In particular, the publication demonstrates what Dredge and Jamal (2015) later termed the ‘relational turn’, a theoretical approach to perceiving change in planning and policy through collaborative relationships and relational politics. In the publication, I was purposely focusing on the characteristics that were attractive to those who subscribed to the traditional tourism paradigm by prominently presenting the economic benefits, while also highlighting the other benefits that a new paradigm, through food in tourism, could bring to society, its culture, and its environment. As such, the publication is a theoretical contribution to what Dredge and Jamal later described as the emerging discourses focusing on re-valuing tourism as a means of achieving a wider range of objectives (such as political, social, cultural, environmental outcomes) rather than just being a means of economic development (2015, p. 295).

Accordingly, the emphasis in this publication was on developing the food tourism discourse in Ireland further by placing it in a policy context, primarily as a means of

demonstrating to politicians, government, and State agencies that food and tourism combined provided several opportunities at national, regional and local levels. However, similar to the previous publication, I had to be sensitive to wider agendas and tourism politics if I was to build a sustainable coalition of support, so this publication was a means of examining the possible by exploring the future. My approach utilised an ontological typology of future studies suggested by Bergman *et al.* (2010), in which the forecasts could be considered to be a prognosis – where empirical trends were being extrapolated into the future. While acknowledging that tourism businesses focus on gaining competitive advantage to maintain market share, the chapter argues that such activity can also create experiences that are capable of benefiting both consumers and the wider community. Similarly, it argues that gastronomy will be increasingly utilised by governments seeking to increase revenues, employment and political capital, in order to benefit not only the tourism industries and the visitor, but also economic, social and environmental aspects of a destination. This is because the symbiosis of gastronomy and tourism provides an ideal competitive advantage that is not easily replicated when specific to both a location and a culture. However, it is noted that public/private collaboration is important if it is to truly reflect local and regional food, particularly in rural tourism where scale and volume are success factors. Then, by evaluating five broadly similar jurisdictions, (Austria, Ireland, Norway, New Zealand, Scotland), a public policy framework for gastronomy in the future emerges. The chapter concludes by suggesting that the framework provides a robust rationale to ensure gastronomic tourism has a place in national policy because it is cost effective and revenue enhancing for government, is profitable and adds value (which attracts a premium price) for business, and has social and sustainable benefits for civil society.

6 Future Consumption: Gastronomy and Public Policy

John D. Mulcahy

Highlights

- Jointly, gastronomy and tourism create competitive advantage which is difficult to imitate.
- Case studies demonstrate possibilities and benefits that accrue from gastronomy.
- Gastronomy will benefit economic, social and environmental aspects of destinations.
- Gastronomy will be a very effective argument in policy-making as it adds value.
- Deep collaboration between government, business and civil society is desirable.

Introduction

Increasingly, a ubiquitous aspect of human life, gastronomy, will be leveraged by government, utilising existing structures, to benefit not only the tourism industry and the visitor, but also economic, social and environmental aspects of a destination. Why? When combined with tourism, gastronomy has natural competitive advantage, not easily replicated when specific to both a location and a culture. Public/private collaboration will be important if gastronomy is to truly reflect local and regional food, particularly in rural tourism where scale and volume are success factors.

The evidence for this is assembled by looking at the symbiotic nature of tourism and gastronomy, as gastronomy can be utilised to boost tourism, while tourism depends on the quality of its gastronomic offering to maintain business. Then, by evaluating five broadly similar jurisdictions, a future framework for gastronomy from a public policy perspective emerges. This approach

utilises an ontological typology of future studies suggested by Bergman *et al.* (2010) in which the forecasts here could be considered to be a prognosis, where empirical trends are being extrapolated into the future. The implication for the future is that gastronomy has a sustainable role in the public policy forum.

The Symbiosis of Tourism and Gastronomy

Global tourism is a significant economic sector experiencing increasing competition. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2008) estimated that in 1950 the top 15 destinations received 98% of all international arrivals and in 2007 this fell to 57%, reflecting the emergence of new destinations, mostly in developing countries. Looking to the future, the UNWTO forecasts that annual international tourism visits, currently growing at 4% per annum, will reach 1.6 billion by 2020 (from 903 million in 2007) even allowing for unexpected crises. Given this scenario, Nunes and Spelman (2008) anticipate that tourism-related prices will escalate as demand outstrips supply in the face of that demand level and that governments will seek to control demand on high-intensity sites and cities.

That future demand, according to Chambers (2009: 354), will be driven by tourists from emerging economies, in addition to the increasing numbers of the retired in developing countries. Furthermore, analysis of the UNWTO figures by Aramberri (2009) suggests that 80% of international tourism is domestic, 20% is within the same continent, and only 5% is long-haul business travel, thus reducing cultural dissonance (e.g. language and food) between travellers and locals. Think of Asian tourism in Western countries, where Asian tourists are more dependent (than Western tourists in a similar situation) on establishments providing their own national cuisines. Cohen and Avieli (2004: 775) show that it is entirely possible that Asian tourists will not visit a given destination in volume unless it features outlets serving their national cuisine.

However, perspective is important. Heldke (2003: xx–xxiv) refers to culinary tourists as ‘food adventurers’, but defines them as ‘Euro-American, Christian, white, middleclass, well educated people’ for her purposes, and suggests that such food adventurers unwittingly participate in a cultural colonialism through the pursuit of exotic experiences in authenticity. Still, she does clarify that any culture or nation can be culinary tourists. This observation is important as it highlights and helps to explain the fundamental flaws in a singular, parochial interpretation of tourism and the inherent danger of a sort of intellectual fascism. The mistake would be to assume that the experience is the same thing for each culture, nation or person; it cannot be, as the reference points are so diverse. At this point, it is worth noting that, as Andersson (2007) observes, each individual tourist experience is a distinct moment, connecting production and consumption, unlike other types of consumer transactions when production and consumption are likely to have occurred at different

times and places. It is the tourist who organises their time and skills, and acquires goods and services to create the experiences that satisfy their own basic, social and intellectual needs, and these vary over time, according to Tikkanen (2007). Furthermore, Urry (2002) observes that these needs also vary between individuals, so anticipating and meeting those needs are a challenge for any tourist enterprise. Yet, the perceived value of the experience to the tourist depends on the individual's mix of those needs at that moment in time.

Not only that, but a person's food preferences and their ability to discriminate aesthetically is deeply ingrained and socially embedded, according to Mennell (2005), hence it seems natural, although it has been learned rather than being innate. As a result, Mennell explains, gastronomy, its discourse and its evolution act as a highly sensitive marker for much broader social, political and economic changes in society. Gastronomy therefore becomes a very effective argument in policy-making, and the multi-disciplinarity of gastronomy suggests that not only is gastronomy related to reflectively sourcing, preparing, cooking and eating, it is also a broad-based discipline that incorporates everything that food is a part of, including tourism.

From a business perspective, gastronomic tourism's primary advantage, according to Richards (2002), is its ability to adapt to and react to the effects of phenomena such as globalisation, localisation or creolisation, mostly because the adjacent living culture changes. Currently, destinations are responding to dramatic economic change by investing in food tourism, motivated by the fact that food and beverages command one-third of tourism revenue which is substantial enough to interest both enterprise and government. However, this could be considered low (Boyne *et al.*, 2002; Hashimoto & Telfer, 2006). As a tourism product which expresses identity and culture, Hall and Sharples (2003) argue that food can encourage people to travel and experience it, and it is therefore a critical component of cultural and heritage tourism (Bessi ere, 1998). They point out that if food tourism is considered as special interest tourism, where food is the motivation for travel, then the level of engagement or interest matters, ranging from no interest (eating for fuel) through the interested (rural/urban tourism), the curious (culinary tourism), to high interest (cuisine, gastronomic or gourmet tourism). In their view, Hall and Sharples (2003) see the 'spatial fixity' of the food tourism product as being a critical factor as the tourists must arrive at the production site to consume the food (both physically and metaphorically) and become food tourists. Therefore, they contend, food tourism is the consumption of the local, and the consumption and production of place. If this is true, food issues caused by globalisation, such as homogenisation and the effects on regional cuisines, become less acute. Arguably, globalisation has increased a focus on, and interest in, regional identities and cultural roots, so that regional foods rather than international versions of ethnic cuisines will be emphasised.

Gastronomic tourism, at several levels, has the capacity to create interdependencies that influence the development and acceptability of both a

destination and its gastronomy to a visitor. In struggling destinations or those without the benefit of sun, sea and sand, gastronomy has been shown by Scarpato (2002) to be a cost-effective, profitable option, and is usually associated with quality tourism by adding value to the tourist experience (e.g. short breaks and wine tourism), which attracts a premium. Thus gastronomy is a viable tourist product, as it is an enduring part of a holiday experience due to the symbiotic relationship between gastronomy and a tourist destination (Kivela & Crotts, 2009).

From a policymaker's or a commercial perspective, gastronomic tourism offers a means of enhancing and extending the tourist spend without compromising the environmental, social or cultural fabric of a region. It also has a role in securing the 'triple bottom line' of economic, social and environmental sustainability, but in order to do so, notes Everett and Aitchison (2008: 150), 'a better understanding of the "food tourist" in relation to typologies of tourist motivation, characteristics and behaviour, should enable the development of more informed policymaking'.

Public Policy Role in Gastronomic Tourism – Case Studies

The case studies are drawn from countries which are broadly similar in terms of size, population and tourism industry structure, and they are intended to plainly demonstrate the diversity of what is possible and the range of benefits that can accrue from gastronomic tourism.

Austria

Government policy seeks to ensure that small farming communities are provided with relevant support in order to make a living. Marketing and selling local produce is seen as a central feature of that policy, and the vast majority of hotels in ski and hiking resorts work closely with local farmers and use their products. The emergence of several Michelin and Gault-Millau rated restaurants in the Salzburg province is evidence provided by Loverseed (2004: 11) of the popularity and quality of the local ingredients available.

Gastronomic trails and routes

Described as networks of regional attractions, Austria's first was opened in 1955, and over 70 themed trails now exist. Usually established in economically weak areas, most have evolved from producer and marketing associations, and two-thirds are based on farm products of the region in which the trail is located. Originally intended to improve access for the farmers, the trails also improved accessibility for tourists.

An example of a trail is the regional development initiative brand 'Via Iulia Augusta', a Roman trade route coming north from Italy into Austria,

offering several experiences involving typical foods. There are also examples of interactions between trails such as the complimentary match between the Bregenzerwald cheese walking trail and a wine road in Lower Austria where the products are offered together in both regions. According to Meyer-Cech (2005), this project comprises a 200-member network including 30 different cheeses, 24 municipalities, 50 restaurants and 50 alpine dairies, as well as supermarkets and handicraft enterprises. Its existence ensures continued farming of alpine pastures in addition to the added value of tourism, transport, increased economic confidence and regional pride.

The trails are good examples of cooperation between agriculture and tourism at sectoral, local, regional and national levels, of collaborative agreements with service providers such as accommodation, hospitality and artisan producers, and for direct marketing and quality assurance mechanisms. Meyer-Cech (2003) notes that the level of member cooperation is sometimes graded; there might be a core team, supported by an extended network, and buttressed by a group of associated partners, but the level of cooperation can be impressive. Led by the tourist board, one exceptional consortium of eight wine regions and their ten sub-organisations, involving 1200 businesses and 150 municipalities, developed its own criteria for each member category in a concerted effort to harmonise and professionalise the offer of the trails to visitors.

Success seems to depend more on an effective management structure to capitalise on a range of strong personal friendships and business relationships rather than on raw resources. It is clear from Meyer-Cech's work that distinct social and emotional benefits are important along with tangible outputs, well-structured meetings, effective communication, active cooperation, a sense of community in a globalised world and contributions to a common goal.

Rural tourism

A sectoral organisation, the Austrian Farm Holidays Association (AFHA), offers tourists, writes Loverseed (2007: 26), a 'natural, authentic and reasonably priced' holiday through its network of 3400 members, which between them have 44,800 beds, mostly located in the mountain regions. Association membership criteria require that at least five agricultural products (usually food and made on the premises) be offered to guests. Recognising that tourists expect to find rural landscapes of communities farming local breeds producing local products and local culture, some Austrian villages and businesses subsidise farmers to ensure that these desired features do not decline, thereby attributing a market value to local breeds.

Norway

Norway has primarily been concentrating its policies on restructuring of agricultural production and rural development, and the establishment of a local food system, with the intention of linking that work to tourism later on.

Norway is party to 'New Nordic Food', a programme of the Nordic Council of Ministers and one of a number of cooperation programmes initiated by Nordic governments such as Iceland, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden in 2006. The initiative combines Nordic food culture with the strengths and developments in the fields of gastronomy, business, raw materials, tourism and regional partnership.

Norway seems to be able to maintain food traditions without a commercial prop to ensure the survival of those traditions. This may be explained by food relocalisation, characterised by the persistence of strong local food cultures and small farms. For example, Fonte (2008) describes how making half-fermented trout has been a food tradition in Valdres since the 16th century or earlier. Its establishment as a local brand has motivated local authorities to set up initiatives in favour of family farms that would not have ordinarily been included in development efforts at local and national levels.

In their examination of 'scary food' (a sheep's head meal), Mykletun and Gyimóthy (2009: 11) make some apt and relevant observations; 'the sheep's head meal renaissance is a creation achieved by individual entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial networks which has contributed to growth and distinctiveness of the area and its branding as a tourist destination. Moreover, they have inspired and accelerated other entrepreneurs within farming and the supply of other products and services.'

This is echoed by Fonte (2008: 219), who shows how working among peers in the regions is important, that is, local stakeholders working as equals to rebuild local knowledge through networking, shared experiences, discussions and observation, while avoiding the risk of valuable local knowledge being hijacked by external or non-local consultants.

New Zealand

New Zealand has demonstrated some leadership in the gastronomy tourism niche, and is seen by Kivela and Crotts (2006: 373) as being particularly innovative in creating wine and food tourism networks through champions and individual innovators who have created local interest and involvement. Termed 'lifestyle entrepreneurship' by Hall *et al.* (2003: 57), it is seen as a major factor in the development of new food and tourism-related developments. A neighbourhood in Auckland is emblematic of what many outsiders see as New Zealand's approach to hospitality and tourism. As described by Bell (2007: 14), the hospitality entrepreneurs took a crucial role in defining the 'feel' of the neighbourhood, and in consciously shaping their businesses to promote a distinctive conviviality and informality attractive to locals and tourists alike.

Hawke's Bay Wine and Food Group

Formed in 2000, the Hawke's Bay Wine and Food Group developed a food and wine trail, brochures, effective signage, a joint promotion strategy

and a regional brand through its website. As part of that strategy, the region hosted the second New Zealand Wine and Food Tourism Conference in 2001. Hall (2005) notes that, due to the success of the initiative, especially the national conference, local government felt that it had to respond through increased involvement. Hall also notes how critical 'knowledge brokers' were at the initial public meetings to set up the initiative. These brokers were perceived as independent and helped to establish a climate of trust between potential members of the cluster group, while also allowing the work of the champions to be seen as wider than self-interest in the creation of the cluster. Hall (2005) found that the regular stakeholder meetings, usually over a long period of time, were most significant in the development of a group by creating new forms of social capital through webs of relationships where none existed previously. Hall (2005) also describes how the social capital of the brokers/champions was converted into the social and economic capital of others by virtue of multilevel networks of local firms. These networks extended beyond tourism to include a broader range of sectoral linkages between businesses that had previously seen themselves as having little in common to form clusters. Therefore, he argues, a cluster champion to initiate those meetings is also critical, providing that the champion has a long-term commitment to cluster and network development, so that the benefits of increased intellectual capital, innovation capacity and economic growth would be realised.

Scotland

Traditionally, Scotland has successfully established its food credentials with whisky, haggis, shortbread and salmon, principally as standalone products (Jones & Jenkins, 2002). More recently, Yeoman *et al.* (2009: 393) demonstrate how the authenticity of Scotland's regional food and whisky is being used to reposition Scotland using the 'Taste of Scotland' initiative, which constructed a food heritage for Scotland as a means of engaging with local communities and then used it as a marketing tool.

In November of 2006, VisitScotland published a briefing paper by Yeoman and Greenwood (2006) that examined the potential roles for food tourism in Scotland and how food tourism could contribute to Scotland's ambition to grow tourism revenue by 50% by 2015. The issues were addressed by discussing what is driving the role of food and beverage in society, by examining the concept of food tourism and forecasting the future of the eating-out market in Scotland. Finally, informed by the discussion, and using two food tourism scenarios, prospects for food tourism in the future were examined. The trading-up scenario shows that, as tourists trade up, food tourism gains 'cultural capital and social cachet', while in the food commodity scenario, food tourism loses differentiation and profit margins become unstable. The conclusions point out that while food is not the main driver for

visiting Scotland, over 50% of visitors have an interest in food, highlighting how food tourism is becoming an important aspect of an overall tourism experience, especially where culinary heritage is not obvious. Their key point is that food tourism must be a first-class experience at all levels, from fast food to pubs to slow food, and that food tourism can contribute to the ambition of the 'Tourism Framework for Change' strategy of the Scottish Executive (2006) as tourists trade up.

The Orkney Islands

The Orkney Islands are identified by Williams and Copus (2005: 314) as being innovative and as having strong networks and linkages. In 1999, the local community created an Orkney brand, which is leveraged by Orkney Quality Food and Drink, a membership organisation responsible for bringing mutual benefits to the Orkney food and drink industry. The range of products is impressive and not entirely what one would expect: they include Orkney herring, cheeses, fudge, chocolates, wine, whiskey, ale, beef and lamb. Visitors are encouraged to nominate their favourite restaurant or coffee shop, product or shop for the Taste of Orkney Food Awards, in order to reward the businesses that have excelled in quality and customer service, thus creating a symbiotic relationship between production and providers.

Opportunities for Policymakers from the Case Studies

A common theme throughout has been the leadership role of local, regional or national government either by way of collaborative marketing across sectors (New Zealand), setting a specific target after utilising scenario planning (Scotland), or by facilitating and recognising innovation by responding favourably when local initiatives have early success (Norway). In the majority of cases, though, collaborative community action, with or without state assistance, led by those who can demonstrate social and cultural capital, is critical to success. While these champions of gastronomy might have economic capital as well, instinctively they are aware that others in the community will think differently, and that for any one project to work, it must benefit the entire community in multiple ways through sharing, communication, openness and good management. This approach also identifies and protects local food assets and exploits them appropriately (Norway's 'Scary Food', and Orkney's lamb). Such is the level of enthusiasm currently evident for gastronomic tourism experiences, the capacity to handle demand from visitors is implicit in all examples. If gastronomic tourism is to truly reflect local and regional food, collaboration is a vital theme (chiefly between agriculture and tourism), particularly in the gastronomy and economics of rural tourism where scale and volume are factors of success.

Concluding Remarks: The Implications for the Future of Food Tourism

The implications for the future of food tourism are that there is a substantial economic, social and developmental rationale to argue for the viability and sustainability of gastronomic tourism in the public policy forum. From a business perspective, gastronomic tourism's primary advantage is its ability to adapt and react to the effects of phenomena such as globalisation, localisation or creolisation. This because gastronomy is close to changes in local culture, especially cuisines where culinary vitality depends on adaptability and flexibility, and has been shown to be a highly sensitive marker for much broader social, political and economic changes in society. It therefore becomes a very effective argument in policy-making as it is a cost-effective, profitable option for all stakeholders. Similarly a symbiotic relationship exists between gastronomy and a tourist destination as gastronomic tourism has the capacity to create interdependencies that influence the development and acceptability of both a destination and its gastronomy to a visitor. Importantly, 'spatial fixity' is a critical factor, as tourists on location initiate a range of other opportunities. Food in tourism, therefore, is not only an instrument of destination development, but also general economic development. Spatial fixity has also created one of the 'new' forms of independent and sustainable tourism that enables tourists to enhance their cultural capital while providers increase their social and economic capital. Enterprises can 'out local' global competition by leveraging and sustaining, maintaining, developing/constructing that local cultural capital. The evidently supple nature of capital and its crucial role in gastronomic tourism suggests greater potential for that role to be developed. This perspective should inspire public administrators, policymakers, research institutions and businesses to collaboratively focus on cultivating local cultural capital and resources.

Collaborative community action led by those who can demonstrate social and cultural capital has been critical to success in multiple locations. While these champions of gastronomy might have economic capital as well, they seem to be instinctively aware that some in the community will think differently, and that for any one project to work, it must benefit the entire community in multiple ways through sharing, communication, openness and good management.

Policymakers could learn from Scotland's scenario planning experience by assessing the effects of the process and its applicability to their locality. Clearly, the role of a state tourism agency will be as a proactive, holistic, element of a local innovation system, cluster or network, primarily working alongside local businesses, but also their suppliers, customers, government and other agencies. Key support features will include the provision of information (technical, marketing, product, etc.), frequent systematic contact,

coordinating and leading the interrelationships between agencies. As the UN general assembly heard in 2005, 'the very best solutions come when business, governments and civil society work together' (Blanke & Chiesa, 2008: 98).

Policymakers must find ways to protect the intellectual property embedded in gastronomic culture in order to maintain competitive advantage and the distinctiveness of products in the face of increasing competition from other destinations. For example, producers of food and tourism products could be stimulated to take an interest in gastronomic heritage and intellectual property rights as suggested by Ravenscroft and van Westering (2002). Assets could be identified elsewhere in the economy with the potential to create new tourist market segments, and to collaborate with the various actors in that sphere for mutual advantage. This could include the preservation of indigenous food types and varieties (such as breeds of cattle or varieties of apples), recipes, food combinations and local life and traditions related to eating and drinking (opening hours, working days, festivals, fetes), all of which knit together to become a unique local, regional or national gastronomic culture. An additional desirable outcome would be an inventory of all the features that make up that area's identity and it would help to profile, contrast, distinguish and emphasise its uniqueness. This implies concentrating on local capacity building, i.e. strengthen the knowledge, skills and attitudes of local people for establishing and sustaining food tourism within an area.

Some tourism destinations have been shown to be particularly well placed to provide an authentic experience and are ripe for this type of capacity building. The gastronomic tourism business case could do much to convince these sectors of the benefits of tourists to a business and, consequently, the surrounding area. Food diminishes the cultural gap between the visitor and a local resident as it forms a nexus of common ground to share experience – a relation of regard, which gastronomic tourism can exploit. Gastronomic tourism is a potent intermediary between visitor and resident, as gastronomy has been shown to be highly personal, individualistic and made more complex. Each individual tourist experience is key as it is the element connecting production and consumption, visitor and resident, needs and gratification.

From a business case perspective, the most compelling and logical argument is this. Gastronomic tourism is a people business – both in terms of those who provide and consume the experience. The possession of economic capital allows and facilitates the investment in cultural capital through allowing the investment of time needed to accumulate cultural capital. A transaction can take place. Yet built into that transaction and because of it are other transactions of cultural capital (on the part of the tourist, acquiring and displaying it) and social capital (on the part of the service provider in assembling and providing the experience), all of which generate further capital, especially economic capital, thus creating a virtuous circle for all. Gastronomy's existential tourist experience is therefore a credible driver of tourism and, by implication, the wider economy.

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Prior publication No. 3

“Does Regionality Matter? The Experience in Ireland”

In *Food Tourism and Regional Development*, edited by C. Michael Hall and Stefan Gössling, London: Routledge, 2016. pp. 215-226.

Research sub question: What was the effect of change in tourism strategy and government policy on the development of gastronomy tourism in Ireland?

Again on invitation from the editors, this entry was written in 2015, two years after the previous publication. In the interim, my operating environment remained dynamic and variable. There was both a new Chairman of Fáilte Ireland, and a new Minister of Tourism, in place from 2014. Considering that tourism had stabilised as the recession receded, the new Minister quickly mapped out a long term vision for tourism in the document “*People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025*”, which was based on a submissions and consultative process initiated in 2013 (Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2015a). A key action point was the establishment of the Tourism Leadership Group in 2015 to implement the policy goals set out in the policy. Interestingly, in a break from prior practice, the Group was to be comprised of representatives from “key public sector bodies and from those with a strong track record of achievement in the *wider* tourism sector”²⁰, along with “a periodic reporting process to record progress towards the identified actions, and a *corrective process where progress does not meet expectations*” (2015a, p. 87, italics my emphasis). Despite this stronger governance and oversight (which may have been an effort to capitalise on successful initiatives²¹), combined with only one reference in the policy document to food tourism

²⁰ Previous practice relied on representation from representative bodies of tourism industries such as hotels, vintners, and tour operators.

²¹ A general election was required by 9th March 2016, but actually took place on February 26th.

(p.43) and no improvement in resourcing levels in Fáilte Ireland, I deduced that the role of food in tourism had to be highly adaptable and informed through my understanding of what the priorities of national tourism policy were. Therefore it was clear that the role had to change if food was to remain germane to tourism, and this required a shift from being action-orientated to a more enabling and facilitative role in engaging with and supporting tourism industries, a strategy laid out in the Food Tourism Activity Plan (Fáilte Ireland, 2014).

Given this background, the publication relates how the tourism policy and strategy environment was changing rapidly in response to market changes, and how my approach to gastronomy tourism development had to respond to these changes. The emphasis in the publication is on how perceptions can affect policy and strategy, the notion of regionality, and how to recalibrate food tourism's role in regional development. In 2014, research by Fáilte Ireland discovered that our biggest market (Great Britain) saw Ireland as a domestic destination rather than an international destination, as had been originally thought. Meanwhile, in Ireland, we have a strong county/provincial culture. This meant that, on a relatively small island on the edge of Europe, regionality mattered to locals, but not to visitors. The task for tourism strategy, therefore, was to address the 'promotion is global, experience is local' challenge. What was clear was that, for an island destination like Ireland, whose primary markets are external, regionality can only be sustainably utilised as a commercial brand to attract visitors. Three brand propositions were created, replacing seven existing regions, to inspire visitors while also providing opportunities in every parish. The opportunity in terms of gastronomy remained considerable, particularly in the role that food can play as a factor of satisfaction for the tourist, as a generator of employment, revenue and growth for the economy, and as a sustainable means of preserving and maintaining cultural, social and environmental assets in the community.

Critically, though, a thorough understanding was now required of the difference between food in tourism and food tourism, how to capitalise on each one, and how the tourist perceives both.

In the publication, I have argued that the concept of regions and regionality, in a tourism context, had seen a paradigm shift exemplified by the ‘mobilities turn’ as later outlined by Chambers (2018), where tourism is no longer a singular, independent, competition-oriented economic activity, but, as I’ve also shown in the literature review, is increasingly seen as a somewhat disparate group of industries having psychological, social, environmental, political and cultural dimensions as a wider, integrated network of practices and mobilities. Everett’s ‘cultural turn’ (2008; 2012) is also very evident in the publication in terms of how the tourism development strategy proposed to deal with the demand for cultural difference by reconstructing local culture as commercial and cultural brands. More specifically, it shows how food in tourism is a significant component of, and drives, those ‘turns’ which clearly signify the continued emergence of a paradigm shift in tourism, however slight, given the focus on food.

14 Does regionality matter?

The experience in Ireland

John Mulcahy

Introduction

Historically Ireland has had a difficult relationship with food driven by its history of colonisation, the painful famine and stoic Catholicism, and is only just on the cusp of realising its own food culture and identity, which is still evolving and emerging. However, Irish food culture has undergone a significant and exciting transformation in the last decade and particularly in the last five years, with the advent of an emerging, ingredient-driven Irish cuisine. Interestingly, Ireland's current recession since 2008 has focussed the population on the importance of supporting Irish products and producers, resulting in changing food purchasing habits and generating a new appreciation of how good Irish food can be. Understandably, consumers believe it is now more important than ever to buy guaranteed Irish goods and services and that it is important to them that restaurants serve local ingredients. The growing interest in food on the part of the Irish consumer is reflected in many aspects of Irish life and behaviour. This is clearly reflected in the increased presence of food features in the media, the expansion in the number of artisanal food producers and farmers' markets, the growth in demonstrations and cooking schools, and the range of restaurants and pubs now proudly and confidently sourcing, serving and shouting about using Irish ingredients. Despite the recent growth in food-related experiences and activities, and the championing of local ingredients and produce by a cohort of chefs and restaurateurs, there is still a disconnect between produce and cuisine, and the relationship between these and the visitor experience. Much has been achieved in a short space of time, but developing a food tourism culture in Ireland, from both a domestic market and an industry practitioner perspective, is an ongoing process.

In 2010, food tourism was becoming a growing market segment internationally, and many destinations, including those in Ireland's competitive set, were beginning to develop this sector as a means to gaining competitive advantage. A seismic shift occurred, where Fáilte Ireland, the national tourism development authority, moved from a traditionally very action-orientated role in food tourism to that of a more enabling and facilitative role in their capacity of supporting the industry (Mossberg et al. 2014).

It has been recognised that the linkages between food and tourism can provide a platform for local economic development (Richards 2002), and food experiences

help to brand and market destinations (Sims 2009) while also contributing towards the competitiveness of a destination (du Rand & Heath 2006). From a regional development perspective, the critical question becomes how does food and tourism fit into the bigger picture and the overall tourism development strategies of a region or country – in this case, specifically Ireland? This chapter examines how perceptions can affect policy and strategy, vary the notion of regionality, and recalibrate food tourism's role in regional development. In doing so, it will contextualise the genesis of Ireland's approach to food tourism and subsequent strategic journey on the road towards developing potential as a food tourism destination. Within the wider tourism industry in Ireland, food tourism may not yet be a mainstream product in itself, but food *in* tourism is something that is integral across all sectors, markets and populations.

'Regional' – through whose lens?

The island of Ireland is situated on the north-western edge of Europe, in the North Atlantic Ocean at a similar latitude to Alaska in the United States and Hamburg in Germany. There are two national jurisdictions on the island, one of which, the Republic of Ireland, comprises five-sixths of the island of Ireland. The other, in the north-eastern part of the island, is Northern Ireland, and this is part of the United Kingdom. As an independent country, Ireland has a population of 4.6 million (0.9 per cent of the total EU population) and covers just under 70,000 km². For the purposes of this discussion, it is important to appreciate this, as, by comparison, Ireland's key source markets of tourists (UK, US, France, Germany) (over 50 per cent; see Fáilte Ireland 2015c) are considerably larger in order of importance to tourism in terms of population and geographical size (European Union 2015).

Ireland, therefore, in terms of the perspective of a majority of its visitors, is comparatively quite a small place, accessible largely by air (but also by sea), relatively sparsely populated for a West European country or even a city, and of a scale that is unlikely to provide cultural, touristic or entertaining diversity. This is both a blessing and a curse, of course, in common with many regions or destinations. A blessing, as the reality can prove to be very different from the perception, leading to serendipitous experiences in a variety of landscapes, environments and contexts, the outcome of which arguably converts visitors into passionate advocates for what they have discovered when they return home or when they engage with their friends, followers and colleagues on social media. A curse, as the potential tourists in these key markets are unlikely to make a purchasing decision to visit Ireland in the absence of either standout destination propositions in the marketplace, or in the face of an information deficit about Ireland or any of the possible or potential experiences within it. Instead, they are likely to actively consider a plethora of specifically regional choices both within their own country along with a wide menu of proven, established destinations elsewhere.

In the eyes of the indigenous population, of course, the emphasis is rather different. Each river valley, parish, coastal area, townland, suburb, county, city,

province – or whatever form a community takes – believes that it can differentiate itself sufficiently to entice the international tourist (primarily) and then also the domestic tourist and their locality (see Bell & Valentine 1997 for a deeper examination of this). Understandably, this can lead to difficulties, such as competition for exchequer funding both at local and national levels, duplication of effort and resources (such as market research, promotion and labour), reduced opportunities for economies of scale and a likely lack of focus in a national tourist proposition due to the existing fragmentation. For the international visitor to Ireland, their lack of local knowledge is compounded when faced with marketing messages and various calls to action for their business from, for example, places called “Shannonside”, “The Lakelands” or “Ireland East”. Despite the parochialism that can take place on the ground, there is evidence that Ireland is considered to be too small to present itself to visitors as a destination with multiple regions offering broadly similar packages. Ireland recognised this problem in the first years of the twenty-first century when the eight regional tourism organisations or authorities in place in Ireland (Dublin, Ireland East, South East, South West, Shannonside, West, North West, Midlands) since the 1980s were merged with the National Tourism Development Authority after its establishment in 2003 as part of a wider restructuring of the tourism framework by the government (Fáilte Ireland 2015b).

Despite the local competition for international and domestic visitors, it is worth noting that indigenous consumer understanding of the links between regions and purchase of quality products, such as food, appears to be good. This awareness of local products, driven perhaps by local loyalties, can be important to establish a reputation, and, if this translates into exposure in bigger markets, then the benefits may not just be limited to the product and the local economy, but could also bring other benefits in terms of establishing, or improving, cultural identity (Parrott, Wilson & Murdoch 2002). In addition, good food is strongly associated with spaces that are sites of transaction, where food transfers from the producer to the person likely to consume it, creating relations of mutual regard (Sage 2003). Yet there is also evidence that many Irish consumers identify with Ireland as a single region and this signals a low level of awareness and understanding of Irish regional food labels (Henchion & McIntyre 2000). Unlike consumers in France and Spain, but in common with those in the UK and Greece, the understanding of “regional” meant country of origin (Parrott et al. 2002). An obvious implication is that if Irish consumers had difficulty in distinguishing regionality in Ireland, then international visitors would, given the size of Ireland and the visitor’s lack of local knowledge, experience similar difficulties, perhaps on a larger scale. Possible exceptions might include areas that are already components of the international Irish image, such as Connemara, the Ring of Kerry, or the Cliffs of Moher, although visitor and consumer research would be required to substantiate this view. The use of Ireland’s regional imagery by organisations highlights how image is not just that communicated by a tourism promotion but through a wide variety of other activities such as literature, media, commercial advertising, the sector-specific promotional work of state agencies and personal experience (Henchion & McIntyre 2000). Examples of commercial advertising that impact the Irish image internationally are easily

found; Guinness, Jameson whiskey, and Kerrygold butter are obvious candidates. In the United States, American products such as Lucky Charms breakfast cereal and Irish Spring soap have specifically utilised themes of Irishness to sanitise or romanticise their commodities, and the advertisements for Irish tourism are perceived to translate the traditional American consumption of Ireland into a touristic concept (Negra 2001).

This perspective has proven to be important when considering the future development and marketing of tourism in Ireland and food tourism's role in that development.

“Regional” – now mediated as a visitor proposition

In its Review of the National Tourism Policy of Ireland, the Tourism Committee of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD) noted:

Tourism has become an important instrument of regional development, notably through the development of a vibrant and largely Irish-owned tourism industry, with enterprises and jobs dispersed throughout the island. Some of the key tourism areas are ones which have little or no industrial employment. (OECD 2004: 1)

Given the context in the previous section, it is clear that the notion of regional has a range of meanings depending on perspective and desired outcomes and that tourism has an active role in regional development, but what constitutes “regional development”? This, of course, depends on how the phrase is defined. Historically, it has been dominated by economic concerns such as growth, income and employment, but that perspective has widened to include social, ecological, political and cultural concerns (see Pike, Rodríguez-Pose & Tomaney 2007 for a more detailed discussion on this; also Hadjimichalis & Hudson 2013; Tomaney 2010). By 2009, the OECD identified how regional policy had evolved, citing evidence of recent reforms of regional policy in a number of member countries demonstrating a paradigm shift in relation to city and regional development (OECD 2009b). The objective of the new regional approach appears to be to boost national output by encouraging each individual region to achieve its growth potential based on actions in that region, on the principle that opportunities for growth exist across all types of regions (OECD 2009a).

How, then, is a region defined? The question appears to be topical enough to have a Wikipedia entry and, under ‘Tourism region’, it offers this view:

regions are often named after a geographical, former, or current administrative region or may have a name created for tourism purposes. The names often evoke certain positive qualities of the area and suggest a coherent tourism experience to visitors. Countries, states, provinces, and other administrative regions are often carved up into tourism regions to facilitate attracting visitors. (Wikipedia 2015)

However, this appears to be overly simplistic, as contemporary regions cannot be only understood as neatly delimited administrative territories. They are inherently multidimensional, encompassing social relations that range from the parochial to the global. For example, Bell and Valentine include region in their outline of the continuum of places of consumption: body, home, community, city, region, nation, global (Bell & Valentine 1997). Within their consideration of “region”, they elaborate on what they describe as “regional rhetorics” and how the notion or concept can be utilised as an imagined, producing or invented region. This means that regions are no longer only geographical or administrative, but conceptual, depending on the indigenous assets, as defined by the actors in the region: ‘an essentialised notion of what constitutes the region – its selling point’ (Bell & Valentine 1997: 161). This is not a new concept, where something distinctive, other than or perhaps in addition to a location, is the selling point.

There is the example of Bologna, Italy, where a local food product, Mortadella (a large pork sausage, which now has Protected Geographical Indication status under European Union law), became a symbolic catalyst in exporting the image of a destination or region – and this in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Montanari 2012). In this case, Bologna, as a university city, had regular contacts and trade with Germany, France and Eastern Europe. Arguably, it is reasonable to regard this as a very early example of globalisation where a region can have not only geographical characteristics but also economic, social and cultural structures that differentiate it against other regions. Montanari makes the point, however, that the selling point alone does not guarantee success as a region – two other elements are required. First, there must be something distinctive; but that distinctiveness must also communicate an associated sense of quality which adds to its unique nature. Second, some sort of exchange is necessary to communicate the selling point, and in terms of the Bologna example, Montanari makes the point that: ‘Identity does not exist without exchange. Identity is defined and constructed as a function of an exchange that is simultaneously economic and cultural, the market and the skill, the merchandise and the experience’ (Montanari 2012: 163–164).

In the case of Ireland, then, the question has been how to construct a sustainable tourism identity around selling points which deliver economic, social, cultural and environmental benefits at local and national levels, while also attracting valuable business. The solution has emerged out of the challenging economic environment created by the international economic crisis that began in 2007 and 2008. In common with many other countries, Ireland found itself in a testing economic environment from 2008 onwards. This clearly had major negative consequences for the Irish economy in general (Lewis 2011) and for Irish tourism in particular. One positive outcome from the downturn was that it led to a fundamental review of the Irish tourism industry by the state and a redefinition of strategic priorities, target markets and segments.

In particular, the Irish tourism industry was in survival mode due to reduced tourism numbers allied with significantly reduced spending by consumers and visitors alike. This decline was evident in 2009 when overseas visitor numbers fell by 12 per cent and revenue by 19 per cent (Fáilte Ireland 2010: 9). The primary

objective of the National Tourism Development Authority in Ireland, a government organisation known as Fáilte Ireland, was to help the Irish tourism industry to cope and respond to the unprecedented challenges presenting themselves. Although Fáilte Ireland had severely constrained resources, in common with all other state agencies in Ireland, its strategy for the period 2010 to 2012 focussed on supporting sustainable tourism enterprises, stimulating demand, and improving the wider tourism experience (Fáilte Ireland 2009), reflecting government policy on tourism (Department of Transport Tourism and Sport 2012). Given the circumstances, it is understandable why food in tourism, or food tourism, was neither a policy nor a strategic feature at this time, notwithstanding a regular commentary by established writers highlighting interest and activity on the ground (Goldstein & Merkle 2005; Andrews 2007; White 2008; Doorley 2009; Campbell 2010).

As economic conditions improve, both domestically and internationally, Fáilte Ireland is now focussing on generating growth and employment. Fáilte Ireland's vision for 2014–2016 is defined as:

To promote and facilitate sustainable growth in Irish tourism by supporting competitive tourism enterprises to develop, sell and deliver valued, authentically Irish tourism experiences to new and repeat visitors.

(Fáilte Ireland 2014: 27)

Realistically, this vision must be realised against a relatively new resource paradigm of frugality, prudence and considerable restraint by government. Consequently, the approach to development had to change by concentrating on areas where the greatest value could be added, rather than the traditional broad-based remit which public agencies usually adopt. Accordingly, one of the organisational goals for the 2014–2016 plan indicated a move from a “product” model to an “experience” model by implementing an experience development framework driven by market insight.

The first evidence of this as a particular outcome of the strategy was the establishment of the Tourism Recovery Taskforce (TRT). Established in 2011, this was a partnership between the tourism industry and state tourism agencies to address current and future challenges in restoring growth in international tourism to Ireland. The TRT commissioned research which involved a robust sample of 10,000 residents of Great Britain who had taken holidays in Great Britain and the island of Ireland at least once in the past three years. The researchers asked the residents to rate destinations on the basis of 30 motivational statements, and the results showed that they perceive the island of Ireland primarily as a short-break destination that competes mostly against domestic British destinations (TRT 2012). Furthermore, regional destinations such as Scotland, the Lake District, Wales and Devon/Cornwall were identified as the island of Ireland's primary competitors for short-break holidays. Clearly, Ireland itself is seen as a discrete region by this market, competing with other domestic regions as distinct from other international destinations. Subsequent studies in France and Germany came to similar conclusions. As a result of the extensive research undertaken by the TRT, radical changes were

initiated in the development and marketing of Irish tourism. These changes centred on the primary ideas around the brand that is Ireland, that is, its propositions to the target audiences, and these had to be strong, genuine and meaningful if they were to resonate with those target audiences. Consequently, Irish tourism has concentrated on developing and marketing three primary propositions

Ireland's Ancient East. This is supported by four distinct thematic pillars based on the following themes within Irish history: Ancient Ireland, Early Christian Ireland, Medieval Ireland and Anglo Ireland.

The Wild Atlantic Way. Ireland's first long-distance touring route, stretching 2,500 kilometres along the Atlantic coast from Donegal in the north to West Cork in the south.

Dublin. Distinguishing itself and its hinterland as a stand-alone city destination and an aspirational European short-break destination.

to three key demographic segments:

Social Energisers (young, fun-loving urban adventurers)

Culturally Curious (over 45s who want to broaden their minds)

Great Escapers (younger couples who want to get away from it all)

in four key markets (Great Britain, the United States, France and Germany).

This is similar to work done in Denmark, where carefully crafted place brands that respect distinctive cultural legacy can provide a rejuvenation in opposition to the wider global consumer culture in local markets (Askegaard & Kjeldgaard 2007). Effectively, Ireland is leveraging the demand for cultural difference by reconstructing local culture as commercial and cultural brands. Clearly, in this tourism development strategy, regionality is not a factor – with good reason, as has been seen with the insights gained from the research. Rather, propositions are regions. The propositions which have been developed actually constitute a new form of region based not on orthodox parameters such as administrative boundaries or geographic features like a valley or a city but on a concept likely to appeal to a specific demographic in a target market. As such, the propositions can deliver a considerable opportunity for development and growth and all that this entails, that is, maximised return on investment, regional spread, increased agricultural and services employment, and Everett and Aitchison's (2008) triple bottom line of economic, social and environmental sustainability.

Food tourism, or food *in* tourism?

In common with the overall approach to tourism development in Ireland, the genesis of Ireland's approach to food tourism also lies in the wider context of the global and domestic recession from 2008 onwards, described above. During this time, as has already been pointed out, food in tourism, or food tourism, was neither a policy nor a strategic feature in national tourism plans.

This changed in 2010, when Fáilte Ireland led the development and introduction of a *National Food Tourism Implementation Framework 2011–2013* (Fáilte Ireland 2010), a stakeholder-driven and consumer-focussed initiative which was designed to improve the range, value, quality and availability of food tourism products, events and activities. Essentially, this was about food *in* tourism, rather than food tourism. Such changes were intended to impact on how food experiences are enhanced over time and are therefore worth serious consideration. There was also a need to be cognisant of how individuals from other cultures and geographies experience Irish gastronomy, and for Ireland to take care that food was not being presented in a way which signposts exclusivity, as that would be in conflict with the well-known inclusivity of Irish hospitality. A working group of key industry stakeholders was established to assist in the development of the plan and support its execution. This approach was validated in an OECD (2012) study which succinctly captures the contribution that food makes to tourism development and in achieving broader economic objectives. In that study, Ireland was already recognised through its brand as being green and clean, which resonated in its food (OECD 2012). Domestically, however, commentators at the time worried about how realistic the Framework was going to be, given the highly fragmented structure of the tourism and hospitality industry in Ireland (Corr 2011) and the scale of the problem (White & Wynne Jones 2008). Conversely, there was evidence that recession focussed the Irish population on the importance of supporting Irish products and producers, resulting in changing food purchasing habits and generating a new appreciation of how good Irish food can be (Mossberg et al. 2014).

While there was significant ‘on the ground’ activity with regard to business supports, research, promotional activity, online business tools, and driving food quality and value, there was also a need to establish creative collaboration in communities if the implementation framework was to be relevant and effective. Historically, locals in their community constitute a powerful asset as evangelists of their region, as identified in the late twentieth century (Warde 1997), and appear to continue to do so. Locals are the emissaries of culture, and as Laudan (2012: 210) points out, ‘what makes a food or a cuisine local is culture, not geography or agriculture or the “rich bounty” of the region’.

The challenge was how to harness the power of these locals, the people that call their locality their home. Consequently, in 2012, Fáilte Ireland embarked on a journey of discovery and engagement to find and work with those locals. A social media campaign was launched to identify, through peer selection in their communities, local emerging food “ambassadors”. The peers were asked to nominate those in their locality who had a resounding passion and belief in Irish food, together with the commitment and drive to actively influence and shape the future of food in tourism and Irish cuisine in their region. Fourteen ambassadors were selected and taken on a benchmarking trip to Ontario, Canada, to see best practice first hand and meet to the individuals involved (for a summary of their approach, see Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance 2015). This exposed them to new ideas and ways of doing things that they could implement in Ireland. The exercise was repeated in 2013 and the new group visited Norway driving routes, which tied

in with Fáilte Ireland's objectives of establishing quality food experiences along the Wild Atlantic Way. Currently, there are now 22 food ambassadors (see Fáilte Ireland 2015a) who act as change agents, actively influencing food experience development in their areas so that it supports the appropriate proposition for their area, while also exchanging information with those operating at national level in Fáilte Ireland.

Given the fundamental competitive changes, the Food Ambassadors' relationship, the greater emphasis being placed on key propositions, and the growing significance of food in tourism, the *National Food Tourism Implementation Framework* required review. An important element of the review was the insights gained from research, particularly in terms of changing perceptions about the role of food in tourism. Heretofore, food tourism was frequently viewed in somewhat narrow terms as applying predominantly to visitors whose main travel motivation was food. In the context of visitors to Ireland, the research showed that 80 per cent of tourists are 'food positive' in that food motivates satisfaction, while only 10 per cent were 'food enthusiasts' in that food motivates travel (Fáilte Ireland 2014: 26). The remaining 10 per cent were identified as 'general tourists', with low levels of interest in food. This insight is important in that it signals that food is an element of a visit to Ireland, but is not yet the primary reason to come. This is not necessarily bad news, but tourists must be on location to consume the food experience, and if it drives overall satisfaction for 80 per cent of tourists to Ireland, then food is important in the wider context. By simply arriving, the tourist initiates a range of other opportunities for tourism providers and the wider economy. Food in tourism, therefore, is not only an instrument of destination development, but also general economic development (Mulcahy 2015).

The outcome of the Framework review was the *Food Tourism Activity Plan 2014–2016*, which proposes a more facilitative, rather than hands on, approach (Fáilte Ireland 2014). Specifically, the objective of the plan is the continued development of a ground-up approach to developing Irish food tourism credentials based on robust insights and a strong belief that most innovation comes from local community-driven networks and collaboration. Thus, as a starting point, food in tourism is being integrated as a part of the overall proposition of coming to Ireland, leading to gains in social, cultural and economic capital. There is already evidence that a significant contribution by food in tourism is realistic, viable and sustainable (Mulcahy 2014). Currently, food in tourism offers a scalable, cost-effective means of local and regional development, with the potential to strengthen identity, enhance appreciation of the environment and encourage the regeneration of local heritage and the local economy. In such a scenario, as the provision of food in tourism matures, the plan provides for the prospect that Ireland could become a food tourism destination. This can be achieved through thought leadership, enhancing and championing food experiences, and capacity building, thereby driving incremental development opportunities in every county of Ireland (Fáilte Ireland 2014).

In conclusion, it appears that the notion of regional development is being redefined and contextualised in a world where promotion is global and experience

consumption is local, but remaining critical to local and national economies, nonetheless. For an island destination like Ireland, whose primary markets are external, regionality can only be sustainably utilised as a commercial brand to attract visitors. However, the benefits in terms of development remain considerable, particularly in the role that food can play as a factor of satisfaction for the tourist; as a generator of employment, revenue and growth for the economy; and as a sustainable means of preserving and maintaining cultural, social and environmental assets in the community. The key, however, is a thorough understanding of the difference between food in tourism and food tourism, how to capitalise on each one and how the tourist perceives both.

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Prior publication No. 4

“Food (in) Tourism Is Important, or Is It?”

In *Voyages between France and Ireland: Culture, Tourism, and Sport.*, edited by Frank Healy and Brigitte Bastiat. Studies in Franco-Irish Relations. Bern/New York/Oxford: Peter Lang, 2017. pp. 179-195.

Research sub question: What is gastronomy tourism and what role does Ireland’s food have in tourism?

The previous publication concluded by making the distinction between ‘Food Tourism’ and food *in* tourism. Based on my own experience as an industry practitioner, and with the benefit of my regular interactions and consultations with the Food Champions, now well established, I had begun to understand that few stakeholders, whether in the tourism industries, academia, or in public administration, were making the distinction between food tourism and food *in* tourism, and that they were frequently conflating the two. As a practitioner and public servant, I had found this puzzling. I concluded that continuing to enhance stakeholder’s conceptual learning was consistently necessary, instead of occasional, if a shift in mindset beyond the traditional tourism paradigm of economic gain was to gain traction and become established.

Written shortly afterwards, in early 2016, following a general election and the subsequent appointment of a new Minister for Tourism (the fourth in six years), this contribution attempted to address that dichotomy by first examining whether an agreed typology of ‘food tourism’ was in place, and by conducting a brief critical analysis of the term. Doing so revealed that there is a need to differentiate between tourists who consume food as a part of the travel experience (food *in* tourism) and those tourists whose activities, behaviours and even destination selection is influenced by an interest in food (food tourism). Clearly, if the delivery does not match the promise in each case, then there are

costly consequences ahead for the destination as visitor numbers fall away. If food is one of the primary motivators of satisfaction for a tourist in Ireland, then the authenticity and sustainability of food in Irish tourism is critical in contributing to that satisfaction. The authenticity and sustainability of the food found in Ireland by tourists, therefore, depends not only on sectors that may not perceive tourism to be important or relevant to them, but also on the indigenous population itself. An example might be the range of businesses, and the food chain behind them, which largely depend on meeting demand from locals for 'international' food while also trying to meet visitor demand for local authentic food. I conceptualised this as a food landscape with several features, and on examination, it demonstrates a considerable depth and breadth. As a holistic entity, this food landscape intuitively reflects Irish history, geography, culture, landscape, and all the other components that uniquely make Ireland what it is, thereby providing compelling reasons to engage, to visit, to do business. As a result, gastronomy *in* tourism is important, but perhaps not in the way that we thought.

My conceptualisation of the food landscape as a means of changing existing mindsets (and therefore paradigms) was as seminal to me as the Food Champion programme (detailed in the next publication, number 5), as it demonstrated, in this publication, very clearly and simply, the depth and breadth of the symbiosis of food and tourism. It also clearly outlined how food, as culture and as a mobile practice, serviced by an agglomeration of service providers, producers, retailers, collaborative and creative experiences, neatly encompasses and integrates many, if not all, of the characteristics of Everett's 'cultural turn' (2008; 2012), Dredge and Jamal's 'relational turn' (2015), and Chambers' 'mobilities turn' (2018) for the first time. As such, the publication is a valuable theoretical contribution, particularly from a retrospective and reflective standpoint.

JOHN MULCAHY

10 Food (in) Tourism Is Important, Or Is It?

ABSTRACT

Tourism is relatively modern, both in the literature (largely from a sociological perspective), and as a concept. Contemporary tourism researchers tend to see tourism as a 'state of mind' and, rather than classify it as a singular experience, consider tourism as a series of experiences (food being a noticeable medium) in which some type of 'otherness' is explored. From another perspective, anthropologists such as Claude Lévi-Strauss¹ have emphasised that eating is not only a basic physical need, but also, and perhaps primarily, a marker of social and cultural belonging.

Ireland is very well known and recognised for the quality of its ingredients and produce. Potentially, the dishes available to the tourist have unmistakably positive connotations as being pure, natural and good. Yet, if food is to be the primary reason for travel, Ireland does not feature in the minds of consumers.

Having outlined these perspectives and context, this chapter will attempt to demonstrate that, instead, gastronomy positively augments the majority of tourist experiences in Ireland. Not only that, the authenticity and sustainability of gastronomy in Irish tourism will be shown to depend on sectors that may not perceive tourism as important, as well as the indigenous population itself. Its importance, therefore, is far-reaching.

Throughout history, practical economic needs have repeatedly motivated people of all classes to improve culinary technology, thereby achieving gastronomic progress.² This appears logical, as food, its sourcing, preparation and consumption, has always been fundamental to civilisation and daily life, so much so that modern society has integrated all food activities so comprehensively that they have become disconnected and almost invisible.³ It is easy to forget that travel and food have always been conjoined throughout history – for reasons additional to the daily need

1 Claude Lévi-Strauss, *L'origine des manières de tables* (Paris : Plon, 1968).

2 G. Rebola, *Culture of the fork: a brief history of food in Europe* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), p. x.

3 M. Symons, *The pudding that took a thousand cooks: the story of cooking in civilisation and daily life* (Victoria, Australia: Viking, Penguin Books Australia, 1998), p. 190.

for sustenance. Travellers may have taken their food with them; depended on the food available during the journey or at their destination; sought to establish what the local food might be; in many cases, the reason for travel was food itself, searching for tradable foods, such as spices, which had great economic value in Europe.⁴ Anthropologists such as Claude Lévi-Strauss have emphasised that eating is not only a basic physical need, but also, and perhaps primarily, a marker of social and cultural belonging.⁵ Indeed, there is an increasing body of work which sees the consumption and experience of food 'on site' as being core, although not mainstreamed as yet:

In short, foodways and cuisine are a more important part of the tourism system than simply food and food services; they are imbued with cultural meaning, experience and permanence.⁶

These perspectives about food are not new. There is considerable evidence that, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, food was the primary means by which travellers gauged difference between themselves and the people they were meeting on their travels – and they wrote about it in terms of cultural meaning and social markers.⁷ In addition, similar to what is expected now, there was a contemporary literature available to prospective travellers offering advice on what, and how, to observe on their journey, with food a prominent element of the recommendations. For example, in 1548, one commentator, Ortensio Lando, perhaps one of the earliest forerunners of food tourism, suggested in his literature a tour

4 S. H. Katz and W. W. Weaver (eds), *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture, Volume 3: Obesity to Zoroastrianism, Index* (New York: Scribner, 2003), p. 416.

5 Claude Lévi-Strauss, *L'origine des manières de tables* (Paris: Plon, 1968).

6 D. J. Timothy and A. S. Ron, 'Understanding heritage cuisines and tourism: identity, image, authenticity, and change', *Journal of Heritage Tourism* (2013), pp. 99–104, p. 99.

7 E. R. Dursteler, 'Bad Bread and the "Outrageous Drunkenness of the Turks": Food and Identity in the Accounts of Early Modern European Travelers to the Ottoman Empire', *Journal of World History* (2014), pp. 25, 203–228.

for a hypothetical visitor from Sicily north to the Alps, recommending where to stop and eat local food specialities.⁸

It was only in the latter part of the nineteenth century that travel, facilitated by economic and technological improvement, evolved into tourism, both in the literature (largely from a sociological perspective) and as a concept.⁹ Contemporary tourism researchers tend to see tourism as a 'state of mind' and, rather than classify it as a singular experience, consider tourism as a series of experiences in which some type of 'otherness' is explored.¹⁰ The difficulty is that there is no single theory for being a tourist and no single practice can define tourism, thus implying a great degree of diversity. It is a matter of perception, which Leiper demonstrates so well in his discussion on tourism by using a poem by John Saxe.¹¹ The poem illustrates how different blind men encounter various parts of an elephant and relate what each believes the whole to be. One held the trunk and thought the whole to be a snake; a second concluded a tusk to be a spear; while another held a leg, assuming it to be a tree. The elephant is none of those observations, nor is it the sum of them. Similarly, in Leiper's view, observers need to understand what they see when they perceive the tourism industry, or a part of it. Given that perspective, tourism now continues to evolve as part of the contemporary experience economy, and food is increasingly a more obvious and considerable component of that.¹²

With the advent of the digital age, tourism has become even more complex in its production. Each tourist now has more control over the 'what', 'when' and 'how' of their tourism experiences through social media, peer-review sites, and a multiplicity of websites providing the means to self-organise, in real time. Thus, each individual tourist experience is a series

- 8 M. Montanari, *The Culture of Food* (Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1996), p. 160. M. Montanari, *Let the meatballs rest, and other stories about food and culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2012).
- 9 N. H. H. Graburn and D. Barthel-Bouchier, 'Relocating the Tourist', *International Sociology* (2001), pp. 16, 147.
- 10 Katz and Weaver, *Encyclopedia of Food and Culture*, p. 407.
- 11 N. Leiper, *Tourism management*, Frenchs Forest (N. S. W.: Pearson Education, 2004).
- 12 G. Richards, 'An overview of food and tourism trends and policies', *Food and the Tourism Experience: The OECD-Korea Workshop* (OECD Publishing, 2012).

of distinct moments, connecting service provider/producer and tourist/consumer, influenced on both sides by need, mood and context.¹³ This complexity in the individual compares to the structural complexity and granularity of the tourism and hospitality industry in terms of its ability to service each distinct moment of consumption, whether that is having a meal, getting on a bus, going to an event or visiting an attraction.

So, whether in travel accounts from the early modern period, in contemporary developed economies, or perceived by affluent tourists, while food may well be perceived only as 'fuel' or a survival necessity, it is also perceived as a means of enriching experiences, expressing personal identities, adding to a quality of life. Globalisation has increased interest in, and focus on, the regional identities and roots of our culture. Food habits are fundamentally related to 'national character' and how they reflect people's social and cultural values. Examples of this would include: Jewish or Muslim countries not eating pork, or Catholics not eating meat on Fridays; the Moroccan habit of eating sweet pastries with soup; Italians and pasta; Spaniards and tapas; Ireland and potatoes. Not only that, food arguably occupies a meaningful place in people's consciousness, as evidenced by its huge attraction as a topic of modern public commentary, usually in social media.

So, What Is Food Tourism?

There are an increasing number of examples of destinations embracing food tourism, and there is much academic work theorising about food tourism, but there does not seem to be an agreed taxonomy, or a critical analysis of the subject. It is not entirely clear that there is a common understanding of, or agreement on, what constitutes 'food tourism'. It has been pointed out that, in defining food tourism, there is a real need to differentiate between tourists who consume food as a part of the travel experience and

13 J. D. Mulcahy, 'Future Consumption: Gastronomy and Public Policy', in I. Yeoman, U. McMahon-Beattie, K. Fields, J. Albrecht and K. Meethan (eds), *The Future of Food Tourism: Foodies, Experiences, Exclusivity, Visions and Political Capital* (Clevedon, UK: Channel View Publications, 2015).

those tourists whose activities, behaviours and even destination selection is influenced by an interest in food.¹⁴

Indeed, the phrase itself appears to have become flexible enough (or perhaps sufficiently misunderstood) to be considered to mean, more or less, the same as culinary tourism,¹⁵ gastronomy tourism,¹⁶ gourmet tourism, cuisine tourism and tasting tourism¹⁷ (Figure 10.1).

Gastronomic Tourism	'A means by which visitors can begin to learn about and appreciate a different culture' ¹⁸
	'Gastronomic tourism applies to tourists and visitors who plan their trips partially or totally in order to taste the cuisine of the place or to carry out activities related to gastronomy.' ¹⁹
Food Tourism	'Travel for the specific purpose of enjoying food experiences' ²⁰
	'As a necessity when travelling' ²¹
Culinary Tourism	'the intentional, exploratory participation in the foodway of an Other ... considered as belonging to a culinary system not one's own' ²²

Figure 10.1: Definitions of gastronomic, food and culinary tourism.

- 14 C. M. Hall and L. Sharples, 'The consumption of experiences or the experience of consumption? An introduction to the tourism of taste', in C. M. Hall, L. Sharples, R. Mitchell, N. Macionis and B. Cambourne (eds), *Food Tourism Around the World: Development, management and markets* (Oxford and Boston, MA: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003). OECD, 'Food and the Tourism Experience: The OECD-Korea Workshop' (OECD Studies on Tourism, 2012), p. 52.
- 15 L. M. Long, 'Culinary tourism: a folkloristic perspective on eating and otherness', *Southern Folklore* 55: 3 (1998), pp. 181–204.
- 16 A.-M. Hjalager and G. Richards (eds), *Tourism and gastronomy* (London: Routledge 2002).
- 17 J. C. Henderson, 'Food tourism reviewed', *British Food Journal* (2009), pp. 111, 317–326.
- 18 B. Santich, 'Gastronomy and gastronomic tourism', *First Malaysian Gastronomic Tourism Conference* (Kuala Lumpur, 2008), p. 1.
- 19 United Nations World Tourism Organisation, 'Global Report on Food Tourism', in P. Jordan (ed.), *AM Reports* (Madrid: World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), 2012), p. 7.
- 20 D. Getz, R. Robinson, T. Andersson and S. Vujicic, *Foodies & Food Tourism* (Oxford: Goodfellow Publishers, 2014), p. 6.
- 21 E. Wolf, *Culinary tourism: the hidden harvest* (Iowa: Kendall/Hunt, 2006), p. 5.
- 22 Long, 'Culinary tourism'.

Food Tourism

Drawing on Lucy Long's work,²³ Molz observes that eating and tourism are closely linked as people 'travel to eat' and 'eat to travel' and that the intersection between food and travel, exploratory eating, is identified as culinary tourism.²⁴ In her review of Lucy Long's book *Culinary Tourism*, Lockwood takes issue with Long's perspective that culinary tourism does not have to include travel. Rather, one can be a culinary tourist when visiting a local ethnic restaurant or supermarket, or when cooking a dish from another culture. So culinary tourism, according to Long, can be any experience, direct or vicarious, with the food of others. For Lockwood, 'armchair tourism' is divorced from context; experience of both food and its culture has to be the essential criterion for culinary tourism.²⁵

There is even further confusion on what an expert or enthusiast in the area should be called, starting in 1820 with 'connoisseur' and 'gourmet', through to 'foodie' in 1980, and the American preference for 'culinarian' in 2011.²⁶ This is complicated by the reality that all these terms have different connotations in different languages, cultures and socioeconomic groups.

A casual review of promotional material, print and digital media would demonstrate that the current discourse uses all these terms interchangeably and, more recently, has invoked the current trend of 'food as experience', for example.²⁷ In the promotional material for a new German publication, the publisher asserts that '[e]ating is more than a pastime, it's a party; food is more than nourishment, it's a social experience', and describes it as 'new food culture' in the title of the book.²⁸

23 L. M. Long, *Culinary tourism* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2004).

24 J. Germann Molz, 'Eating Difference: The Cosmopolitan Mobilities of Culinary Tourism', *Space and Culture* (2007), pp. 10, 77–93.

25 Y. R. Lockwood, 'Culinary tourism', *Journal of American Folklore* (2008), pp. 121, 362–363.

26 D. Goldstein, 'Whats in a name?', *Gastronomica: The Journal of Critical Food Studies* (2011), pp. 11, iii.

27 G. Richards, 'Food experience as integrated destination marketing strategy', *World Food Tourism Summit* (Estoril, Portugal, 2015).

28 G. Pines, R. Klanten and S. Ehmann (eds), *The Delicious: A Companion to New Food Culture* (Berlin: Gestalten, 2015).

The result is much commentary which, in my view, is flawed as the underlying foundation is based on an imperfect or superficial understanding of the concept. This understanding assumes that since everyone eats, food tourism has mass market potential. However, not all eaters view food as an experiential event, and are more likely to perceive it as a necessary fact and cost of daily living – touring, in the case of tourism. As a result, food tourism can easily acquire an elitist tone, with the result that it becomes, according to one writer, a Western, colonial, white, food adventure by those who are on a constant search for novelty in their eating experiences.²⁹ In addition, the discourse appears to have limited perspective, being market-driven with an emphasis on branding, marketing, regional development, and a range of commercial and business imperatives.

On a more prosaic level and from a less academic perspective, what level of familiarity, then, does the ordinary tourist, hotel operator or travel agent have when ‘food tourism’ is pitched as an option for a holiday? More appropriately, what are competing destinations to do when part of the ‘offer’ is food tourism, and how can that be marketed, promoted or delivered in a way that contributes to the success of a tourist visit? Clearly, if the delivery does not match the promise, then there are costly consequences ahead as visitor numbers fall away. If gastronomy plays a major role in the way tourists experience the destination,³⁰ then how can it be included? Perhaps it has more to do with making the distinction between ‘Food Tourism’ and food *in* tourism, and acting accordingly, as Ireland has done over the past number of years.

29 L. M. Heldke, *Exotic appetites: ruminations of a food adventurer* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

30 A. Correia, M. Moital, C. F. Da Costa and R. Peres, ‘The determinants of gastronomic tourists’ satisfaction: a second-order factor analysis’, *Journal of Foodservice* (2008), pp. 19, 164–176; K. Fields, ‘Demand for the gastronomy tourism product: motivational factors’, in A. Hjalager and G. Richards (eds), *Tourism and gastronomy* (London: Routledge, 2002); J. Kivela and J. C. Crotts, ‘Tourism and Gastronomy: Gastronomy’s Influence on How Tourists Experience a Destination’, *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research* (2006), pp. 30, 354–377.

Tourism in Ireland: 2012, A Changed Direction

During the aftermath of the recession in 2008, Ireland was in survival mode. This decline was evident in 2009 when overseas visitor numbers fell by 12 per cent and revenue by 19 per cent.³¹ This was evidence that new thinking was needed to reignite inbound tourism to Ireland in terms of strategic priorities, target markets and segments, and a strategy was put in place. The new strategic direction³² led to work being done by the Tourism Recovery Taskforce.³³ In particular, the taskforce looked at the primary source market for tourists to Ireland, Great Britain, which had dropped from 55 per cent to 43 per cent of total overseas visitors in the period 2004 to 2012 irrespective of whether there was growth or not in visitor numbers (Figure 10.2).

Year	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total overseas visitors (000s)	6,384	6,763	7,417	7,739	7,435	6,578	5,945	6,240	6,286	6,686	7,124
Annual growth (+/- %)		6	10	4	-4	-12	-10	5	1	6	7
GB visitors (000s)	3,526	3,640	3,821	3,776	3,579	3,034	2,759	2,799	2,722	2,870	3,018
GB share of total (%)	55	54	52	49	48	46	46	45	43	43	42

Figure 10.2: Performance of GB market, 2004–2014.³⁴

- 31 Fáilte Ireland, 'National Food Tourism Implementation Framework 2011–2013' (Dublin: Fáilte Ireland, 2010), p. 9.
- 32 Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 'Statement of Strategy 2011–2014' (Ireland: Irish Government, 2012).
- 33 Tourism Recovery Taskforce, 'GB Path to Growth' (Dublin: Fáilte Ireland, 2012).
- 34 Fáilte Ireland, 'Tourism Facts 2014: Preliminary' (Ireland: Fáilte Ireland, 2015); Fáilte Ireland, 'Tourism Facts, 2008' (Dublin: 2009).

The Tourism Recovery Taskforce commissioned research which involved a robust sample of 10,000 residents of Great Britain who had taken holidays in GB and the island of Ireland at least once in the past three years. The results showed that the island of Ireland was perceived primarily as a short-break destination that competes mostly against domestic British destinations, and that the interest in visiting Ireland was limited to particular, but significant, demographic segments.³⁵ Studies utilising similar methodology conducted in the USA, France and Germany came to similar conclusions. Given that the four key source markets (Great Britain, USA, France and Germany) constituted 70 per cent of total overseas visitors to Ireland in 2011, this was significant.³⁶ As a result, radical changes were initiated in the development and marketing of Irish tourism.³⁷ In particular, Irish tourism has focused on these four key markets where three demographic segments were identified in the research as being most interested in Ireland.³⁸ These segments, and their relative importance to Ireland in terms of market size, can be characterised as displayed in Figure 10.3.

Demographic Segment (common to all four source markets)	Market Size (% of GB market 'warm' to Ireland)
Social Energisers: (young, fun-loving urban adventurers)	17
Culturally Curious: (over-45s who want to broaden their minds)	22
Great Escapers (younger couples who want to get away from it all)	15

Figure 10.3: Demographic segments and their size.³⁹

35 Tourism Recovery Taskforce, p. 15.

36 Fáilte Ireland, 'Tourism Facts', 2014.

37 J. D. Mulcahy, 'Does regionality matter? The experience in Ireland', in C. M. Hall and S. Gössling (eds), *Food Tourism and Regional Development* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 215–226.

38 Fáilte Ireland, *Global Segmentation* (2015): <<http://www.failteireland.ie/International-sales/International-sales.aspx>> [Accessed 10 October 2015].

39 Tourism Recovery Taskforce, p. 15.

New Target Market Segments, But Where's the Food Tourism?

Total food and beverage spending by overseas tourists in Ireland, whatever the activity, is currently estimated to amount to an annual value of €1.2 billion (if domestic tourism figures are included, this would rise to approximately €2 billion). This is based on the proportion of the revenue from tourists' expenditure on food, estimated at over 34 per cent in 2014,⁴⁰ which is in line with other destinations such as Canada, and better than destinations like South Africa, estimated at 8 per cent, and Australia, estimated at 26 per cent.⁴¹ This difference between Ireland and other jurisdictions may reflect the overall development of the tourist product, the level of direct and indirect taxation or, more likely, relative prices of food and beverage products in each country.

Notwithstanding these differences, the fact remains that food and beverage spending by visitors to Ireland constitutes a significant marketplace, offering growth opportunities for a wide range of businesses, not only in tourism, but also in the wider economy. In order to capitalise on these opportunities, however, all stakeholders must understand the motivations and drivers of satisfaction of the overseas visitor to Ireland. To date, the working assumption seems to be that this type of spend by visitors is classed as 'food tourism'. However, as has been highlighted earlier, the notion of 'food tourism' can have many meanings and uses, depending on context and commentator. A common view appears to be that all visitors are some sort of food tourist as they are likely to eat at least once a day, if not three times, that is, breakfast, lunch and dinner.⁴² This raises the question, though, of just how important food is to each visitor in terms of their visit – was

40 Fáilte Ireland, *Global Segmentation*.

41 J. D. Mulcahy, 'Transforming Ireland through gastronomic nationalism promoted and practiced by government, business, and civil society', in M. Mac Con Iomaire and E. Maher (eds), *Tickling the Palate: Gastronomy in Irish Literature and Culture* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2014), p. 165.

42 D. Getz, R. Robinson, T. Andersson and S. Vujicic, *Foodies & Food Tourism* (2014).

food the reason for the visit, or was it something else, such as an event, a specific area of interest such as architecture, equestrian activity or simple leisure, for example?

Whilst food is an important aspect, research undertaken as part of the National Food Tourism Implementation Framework in Ireland highlighted the wider appeal of food for tourists. This work revealed three distinct categories based on the impact food had on their motivation to visit, or their evaluation of the experience once at a destination. Interestingly, 80 per cent of tourists to Ireland consider themselves to be ‘food positive’, to the extent that food motivates their satisfaction and that food is a part of their larger tourism plans on a visit (Figure 10.4).

Food Enthusiast (10%)	Food Positive Tourist (80%)	General Tourist (10%)
Food motivates travel	Food motivates satisfaction	‘Accidental culinary tourists’ who show low levels of participation in most food-related activities.
Seeks authenticity of place through food	Includes food experience in larger tourism plans	
Concerned about origin of products	Enjoys regional specialities	
Gastronomy as a means of socialising, sharing life with others	Interested in origin of product	

Figure 10.4: Tourists to Ireland: A typology.⁴³

More importantly, only 10 per cent, the ‘Food Enthusiasts’, are motivated to travel by food, but their opinions and satisfaction levels are important due to their role as influencers, early adaptors and leaders. This typology, as outlined in Figure 10.4, while not as detailed, follows the seminal tourist typology (the bias to pay for local food) of Cohen in 1979,⁴⁴ the academic food tourist typology (market size) of Mitchell and Hall in

43 Fáilte Ireland, ‘Enhancing Irish Food Experiences – the way forward’, *Food Tourism Activity Plan 2014–2016* (Dublin, 2014), p. 26.

44 E. Cohen, ‘Rethinking the Sociology of Tourism’, *Annals of Tourism Research* 6/1 (1979), p. 1835.

2003⁴⁵ and the UK work (food-related activity) by Enteleca Research in 2001.⁴⁶ All of these were constructed into a simple framework and the correlations between the typologies are evident.⁴⁷ More recently, this research outcome was confirmed by the UNWTO, which found that tourists would classify themselves in a similar manner, particularly those that consider themselves to be travelling principally for gastronomy.⁴⁸ In contrast to the direction taken by Ireland, Peru, as an emerging global destination, has identified food as a primary strategic lever. Not only can Peru attract those who travel for food (75,000 food tourists visit Lima every year solely to enjoy its food), but it has also grown GDP (restaurants comprise 3 per cent of Gross Domestic Product in Peru), and it has utilised gastronomy as an export industry through franchised Peruvian restaurants.⁴⁹

Clearly, for many tourists to Ireland, food is not a high priority in determining where to visit, but food is an important element of the visit.

- 45 C. M. Hall and R. Mitchell, 'Consuming tourists: food tourism consumer behaviour', in C. M. Hall, L. Sharples, R. Mitchell, N. Macionis and B. Cambourne (eds), *Food Tourism Around the World: Development, management and markets* (Oxford and Boston, MA: Butterworth-Heinemann, 2003).
- 46 A. Tregear and M. Ness, Enteleca Research, UK, November 2001 <<http://www.origin-food.org/pdf/wp4/wp4-uk.pdf>> [Accessed 16 May 2015].
- 47 S. Everett and C. Aitchison, 'The Role of Food Tourism in Sustaining Regional Identity: A Case Study of Cornwall, South West England', *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* (2008), pp. 16, 150–167.
- 48 United Nations World Tourism Organisation, *Conclusions* (San Sebastián, Spain, 2015): <http://dtxqtq4w6oxqpw.cloudfront.net/sites/all/files/pdf/conclusions_english.pdf>. Also on <<http://www.culinary-tourism.com/en/site/summary>> [Accessed 16 May 2015]. United Nations World Tourism Organisation, *Global Report on Food Tourism*, in P. Jordan (ed.), *AM Reports* (Madrid: World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), 2012).
- 49 The Economist, 'Cooking up a business cluster: The Peruvian gastronomic revolution, continued', *The Economist* (2014) <<http://www.economist.com/news/americas/21596956-peruvian-gastronomic-revolution-continued-cooking-up-business-cluster>> [Accessed 22 February 2014].

This is echoed by recent commentators,⁵⁰ leading, hopefully, to a better understanding of the broader role of food in the visitor experience and how, as with any experience, factors such as quality, uniqueness, presentation and service are all as important as the underlying product itself. Further confirmation of this can be found in the demographic segments chosen by *Fáilte Ireland* referred to earlier (Figure 10.5).

Demographic Segment (common to all four source markets)	What makes a great food and drink experience for them?
Social Energisers: (young, fun-loving urban adventurers)	Great atmosphere A table in the centre of the action Trendiest restaurant in town Good wholesome foods that are local & tell a story Trendy cocktail list Artisan coffee and quality tea and coffee shops Brunch because 'I like to party late'
Culturally Curious: (over-45s who want to broaden their minds)	Get the best table and be well looked after Peace and quiet with good wine and food Classic Irish menu with a twist Good quality food – 'I'm looking after my health' Personalised service where people call me 'Mr' Mid-morning breakfast, 'so I can sleep in ...'
Great Escapers (younger couples who want to get away from it all)	An authentic experience in a local hotel or pub Great quality local food at a value price A good-quality children's menu A high-energy breakfast The option of bringing a picnic lunch An Irish cheese board by the fire at night

Figure 10.5: Attitude to food of demographic segments.⁵¹

50 OECD, 'Food and the Tourism Experience: The OECD-Korea Workshop', *OECD Studies on Tourism* (2012). G. Richards, 'The role of gastronomy in tourism development', *Fourth International Congress on Noble Houses: A Heritage for the Future* (Arcos de Valdevez, Portugal, 2014).

51 Fáilte Ireland, *Global Segmentation*.

Arguably, for these segments, experiencing local food and beverages, in a range of environments, which express the identity of a destination through culture and heritage, is a sought after component of the travel experience for visitors to Ireland. Clearly, there is no substantial body of evidence that shows food is the motivating reason for the visit in the first place, but it's clear that food is one of the primary motivators of satisfaction. Interestingly, these segments do not specify what it is that they want to eat when they come to Ireland. Instead, the inference is that the food available to them should be an active component of the visitor experience, of good quality, of the place they are visiting, and authentic.

Sources of Authenticity and Sustainability

If food is one of the primary motivators of satisfaction for a tourist in Ireland, then the authenticity and sustainability of food in Irish tourism is critical in contributing to that satisfaction. Raymond Sokolov observed that authenticity is 'as slippery a notion as happiness. Everyone (or almost everyone) is for it, but it is hard to get people to agree on what it is.'⁵² Authenticity has become ambiguous from varied usages and contexts. The discourse focuses on three kinds of authenticity: 'objective', seen as the recognition of objects;⁵³ 'constructivist', where authenticity is the result of the tourist's own construction;⁵⁴ 'existential', a state of Being activated by

52 R. A. Sokolov, *Why we eat what we eat: how the encounter between the New World and the Old changed the way everyone on the planet eats* (New York: Summit Books, 1991), p. 219.

53 D. J. Boorstin, *The image: a guide to pseudo-events in America* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964).

54 D. Maccannell, 'Staged Authenticity: on arrangements of social space in tourist settings', *The American Journal of Sociology* (1973), pp. 79, 589–603; D. Maccannell, 'Why it Never Really was About Authenticity', *Society* (2008), pp. 45, 334–337.

tourist activities.⁵⁵ Regardless of this lack of clarity and ongoing debate in academia on what authenticity might be, local UK food producers were found to be using all three kinds of authenticity, thereby demonstrating how different understandings of authenticity can coexist within gastronomic tourism.⁵⁶ How, then, does one explain the search by tourists for authenticity, for heritage, for 'old' foods and tastes, and the experience of being back at home again (a sense of place, perhaps?), even if the old times were not as comfortable as now? Conceivably the consumer feels safe in the known past, as the future is uncertain.⁵⁷ On the other hand, tourists like the thought of an authentic eating experience, but only if it follows a 'culinary imaginary', incorporating some features, rejecting others.⁵⁸ For example, a tourist might eat peasant food to ingest simplicity, honesty and rustic health while conveniently neglecting the manual labour, the food shortages and the lack of public health care that a peasant experiences.

Education has been identified as a key driver of authenticity as the educated consumer is more discriminating, prosperous and refined in the choices they make.⁵⁹ Therefore, how authenticity is positioned, sold and perceived has emerged as a selection criterion for a tourist.⁶⁰ In the context of food, authenticity in tourism is about 'food that is simple, rooted in the region, natural, ethical, beautiful and human – all of the making for a food tourism destination'⁶¹ – and this also makes it sustainable. Food is also

- 55 N. Wang, 'Rethinking authenticity in tourism experience', *Annals of Tourism Research* (1999), pp. 26, 349–370.
- 56 R. Sims, 'Food, place and authenticity: local food and the sustainable tourism experience', *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* (2009), pp. 17, 321–336.
- 57 C. Taylor, *The ethics of authenticity* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).
- 58 J. Duruz, 'Adventuring and Belonging: An Appetite for Markets', *Space and Culture* (2004), pp. 7, 433.
- 59 I. Yeoman, *Tomorrow's Tourist: Scenarios & Trends* (Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann, 2008).
- 60 I. Yeoman, D. Brass and U. McMahon-Beattie, 'Current issue in tourism: The authentic tourist', *Tourism Management* (2007), pp. 28, 1128–1138.
- 61 I. Yeoman and C. Greenwood, 'From Fast Food to Slow Food: The Prospects for Scotland's Cuisine to 2015', *Tomorrows World: Consumer and Tourist* (Edinburgh: Visit Scotland, 2006), p. 8.

integral to cultural heritage and heavily influences (and is influenced by) the farming landscape and other environments through its production.⁶² These are elements of every destination, providing it with its own unique character and authenticity.⁶³

The authenticity and sustainability of the food found in Ireland by tourists, therefore, depends not only on sectors that may not perceive tourism to be important or relevant to them, but also on the indigenous population itself. An example might be the range of businesses, and the food chain behind them, which largely depend on meeting demand from locals for 'international' food while also trying to meet visitor demand for local authentic food.⁶⁴ This population might be considered a food landscape, comprised of:

- Primary food producers, such as farmers and fishermen;
- Secondary food producers such as artisans and larger producers;
- Food distributors such as wholesalers, exporters, retailers and farmers' markets;
- Food experiences such as tourist accommodation (hotels, B&Bs), food outlets (restaurants, pubs and coffee shops), transport operators (rail, airlines and ferries), food trucks, pop-ups and supper clubs;
- Food attractions and events such as food fairs and festivals, cookery schools and classes, microbreweries and distilleries, food trails and tours, visitor attractions with food components, and producer visits.

62 C. Sage, 'Food for Thought', *The Irish Times*, 28 June 2005.

63 R. Tellstrom, I.-B. Gustafsson and L. Mossberg, 'Local Food Cultures in the Swedish Rural Economy', *Sociologia Ruralis* (2005), pp. 45, 346–359; R. Tellstrom, I.-B. Gustafsson and L. Mossberg, 'Consuming heritage: The use of local food culture in branding', *Place Branding* (2006), pp. 2, 130–143; I. Yeoman, D. Brass and U. McMahon-Beattie, 'Current issue in tourism'.

64 P. Boucher-Hayes and S. Campbell, *Basket Case: What's Happening to Ireland's Food?* (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2009).

This landscape also features, on one side,

- non-governmental industry bodies such as representative bodies and interest groups, and education providers at all levels from primary school to third level,

and on the other side,

- media (TV, radio, print); influencers (social media, critics, guides, celebrity chefs); and indigenous people in the role of consumers.

As discussed earlier, food and beverage spending by visitors to Ireland constitutes a significant marketplace, offering growth opportunities for a wide range of businesses, not only in tourism itself, but also in this food landscape which, in effect, becomes a food tourism landscape as a symbiotic relationship can, or should, exist. If this is true, tourists to Ireland can easily, and sustainably, access the authentic gastronomy of Irish domestic and workplace kitchens, grown by, purchased from, prepared and eaten by Irish residents. As a holistic entity, this food landscape intuitively reflects Irish history, geography, culture, landscape and all the other components that uniquely make Ireland what it is, thereby providing compelling reasons to engage, to visit, to do business.

At this point, Ireland is not a food tourism destination, although it could well be one within years if contemporary developments continue. But Ireland's food has a significant role in tourism, and through that, as a curator of Irish culture, geography, economic growth and as a promoter to the world, through our visitors, of a contemporary vision of the Ireland of today.

Prior publication No. 5

“Building a Tourism Destination Using Gastronomy through Creative Collaboration”

In *The Routledge Handbook of Gastronomic Tourism*, edited by Saurabh Kumar Dixit.

London: Routledge, 2019. pp. 47-54.

Research sub question: How was gastronomy tourism development implemented in Ireland?

Written in 2017, a number of changes were occurring which caused me to carefully consider the future. The CEO, who had been in place since the establishment of Fáilte Ireland in 2003, similar to myself, retired in December 2016. For the first time, I realised my work had benefited from having the same leadership in place for almost twenty years. I had taken for granted an unappreciated asset which, on reflection, provided a bedrock of consistency for the development of food and tourism advocacy during times of considerable change and development not only in the organisation, but also in tourism and Ireland. Indeed, this was compounded by the realisation much later on that, while I had concentrated on building strong relationships and collaborations outside of Fáilte Ireland, I had ignored the degree of change internally with the result that I had failed to consolidate support and build alliances with colleagues where food in tourism was concerned. When the new CEO was appointed in early 2017, the corporate agenda changed in line with the objectives of the new CEO, as one would expect, as did the power dynamics of the organisation. I regarded this as a setback for any continuing shift in the tourism paradigm as the new appointment was a career marketer and, in my view, constituted a regeneration of the traditional tourism paradigm within Fáilte Ireland, and, by implication, for tourism development in Ireland.

Meanwhile, the Food Tourism Activity Plan 2014–2016 (Fáilte Ireland, 2014) was due to expire. During 2016 we had been working on the development of a third strategy,

utilising a collaborative approach with the Food Champions and others, but with the appointment of the new CEO, the strategy had to be recalibrated to reflect the new agenda. In this context it is instructive to note the change in terminology in the title of the new strategy (compared to the previous one) when it was published: the Food and Drink Development Strategy 2018-2023 (Fáilte Ireland, 2018). Understandably, the emphasis in the document was that food tourism experiences as a component of saleable tourism products would support all marketing and sales campaigns. By the end of 2017, I recognised that my window of opportunity as an advocate for the cause of food in tourism had begun to close within Fáilte Ireland. Given these fundamental changes in the operating environment, I was concerned about the future of the Food Tourism Network Development Programme, which had created the ‘Food Champions’, who had benchmarked themselves against similar destinations developing food tourism and had proved valuable contributors and collaborators. This network programme was consistently the subject of enquiry from other destinations and regions at home and abroad (Scotland and Jamaica, for example), including the venues for the benchmarking trips themselves, where the benchmarking became two way as our hosts learned about what we were doing, and why. Moreover, I have always considered that the most sustainable and impactful aspect of my advocacy has been the Food Champions Network as it relies not on any State funding or support, but on the relationships within the network itself, forged through common interests and disparate backgrounds. As it seemed likely that the network would not have an active and reliable partner in Fáilte Ireland in the future, I resolved to document and chart the genesis and impact of the network for others.

Serendipitously, this chapter, which I was invited to write, provided the opportunity to write about the network by outlining the importance of such collaboration in two ways. First, a review of the academic discourse shows the importance of the role

of not only the State, but also of communities and individuals acting independently. The challenge between 2012 and 2016 was how to harness the power of locals as evangelists of their region, the people that call their locality their home. This took the form of the Food Tourism Network Development Programme, which created three groups of 'Food Champions', with each group benchmarking themselves against similar destinations developing food tourism. The Food Champions were exemplars of what I had been advocating for since the start in 2009 – namely, individuals with a strong local base, willing to collaborate with a State agency to achieve common goals while acting as curators of food in tourism locally. Secondly, utilising the Food Champions as a case study, I showed how it is possible to harness the power of locals by leveraging social, civic, and business networks through collaboration and cooperation, not only in tourism itself, but also in other parts of the wider gastronomic landscape, which I had conceptualised in an earlier publication (number 4, above).

In the publication, the Food Champions' network demonstrates a theoretical contribution by outlining how paradigm change can be generated at individual, community (whether social, imagined, or practice based) or activity level, as distinct from national or macro levels. Furthermore, I would argue that the publication suggests a new interpretation and meaning of the 'mobilities turn' (Chambers, 2018) which is exemplified by the membership of the network (farmers and producers, chefs and bloggers), and it ratifies the 'relational turn' (Dredge and Jamal, 2015) by giving attention to indigenous and local community figures and their interaction with planning and policy.

5

BUILDING A TOURISM DESTINATION USING GASTRONOMY THROUGH CREATIVE COLLABORATION

John D. Mulcahy

Introduction

In tourism, gastronomy is a growing market segment internationally, and many destinations are developing this as a means of gaining competitive advantage. At 34 per cent of overall tourist receipts, food and beverage spending by visitors constitutes a significant marketplace, offering opportunities and growth for a wide range of businesses, not only in tourism itself, but also in the wider economic community (Hashimoto and Telfer 2006; Fáilte Ireland 2015c; Mulcahy 2014). However, creative collaboration is critical if the tourism and food relationship is to benefit economic, social, and environmental aspects of the community. Historically, locals in their community constitute a powerful asset as evangelists of their region, as identified in the late twentieth century (Warde 1997:67), and appear to continue to do so. Locals are the emissaries of culture, and as Rachel Laudan points out, “What makes a food or a cuisine local is culture, not geography or agriculture or the ‘rich bounty’ of the region” (Laudan 2012:210). The challenge for food and tourism is how to harness the power of these locals, the people that call their locality their home.

This chapter will outline how creative collaboration has been manifested in Ireland between 2012 and 2017 by identifying those who had a resounding passion and belief in Irish food, together with the commitment and drive to actively influence and shape the future of food in tourism and Irish cuisine in their region. Over three years, groups of these food ‘champions’ or ‘ambassadors’ were taken on benchmarking and teambuilding trips to Canada, Norway, and Denmark to see best food tourism practice first hand and to meet the individuals involved. This exposed the groups to new ideas and ways of doing things, while also boosting confidence in their own perspectives. Currently, there are now twenty-two food champions who act as change agents, actively influencing food tourism development in their areas, while also exchanging information with those operating at national level (Mulcahy 2016). They also seek to educate, develop, and to connect the dots, thus ensuring that what is promised to the visitor is what is delivered, and that they are an essential local connection to what is happening on the ground. As a result, Ireland has improved

its capability to offer a unique food experience to visitors; one that is honest and authentic and that is as much about the people as it is about the product and the recipes.

Recent discourse: collaboration, cooperation and models of State involvement

In the contemporary 'experience economy' (Bell and Valentine 1997), sophisticated experiences are emerging that combine elements of education, entertainment, aesthetics, and escapism to engage the consumer. As experiences become more complex and consumers become more knowledgeable and demanding, leisure and tourism markets have become more competitive, forcing suppliers to innovate and develop new service concepts (Sidali, Kastenholz, and Bianchi 2015). Gastronomy (that is, in this chapter, consumption of both food and drinks) has a particularly important role in the experience economy, particularly in the development of tourism services. When combined with tourism, a natural competitive advantage is created, as others cannot easily replicate an authentic gastronomic tourism experience when it is specific to both a location and a culture. Gastronomic tourism is about the range of 'food and/or drinks experiences' available for visitors which forms a vital part of the value network linking local food producers, communities, and cultural and tourism entrepreneurs (Mulcahy 2014). For public and private enterprise, gastronomic tourism offers a means of enhancing and extending the tourist spend without compromising the environmental, social, or cultural fabric of a destination. Gastronomic tourism experiences can also stimulate local development, because it is high yield tourism, it can extend the tourist season, and it can diversify rural economies. Those experiences are also proven to be labor-intensive, creating jobs, while also creating backward linkages that stimulate agriculture and a range of service sectors, but do not necessarily require major new investment (Mulcahy 2017a).

As a tourism product which expresses identity and culture, gastronomy encourages people to travel and experience it, and it is therefore a critical component of tourism. In fact, the 'spatial fixity' of an indigenous gastronomy tourism product is a critical differentiation factor, as tourists must be present in the region to consume the product (both physically and metaphorically) to become gastronomy tourists (Hall and Sharples 2003:10). The way a dish is prepared, the method used to combine ingredients to create a certain taste, the manner in which food and drinks are offered and received, all convey the very substance of their roots and their particular culture. In this way, gastronomic tourism is the production and consumption of local culture, heritage and identity.

Such is the level of enthusiasm for gastronomic tourism experiences that a capacity to handle demand from visitors is implicit. If gastronomic tourism is to truly reflect local and regional food, the collaboration between the agricultural and tourism sectors is critical, particularly in the gastronomy and economics of rural tourism where scale and volume are factors of success (Mulcahy 2015). This collaboration became evident in a series of initiatives and exemplars in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Academic discourse has recognized this, and a review of the literature describing these initiatives and exemplars shows the importance of the role of local, regional, or national government, the pre-eminent examples being:

- collaborative tourism marketing across sectors in New Zealand (Hall et al. 2003)
- leveraging scenario planning to set explicit tourism performance targets in Scotland (Yeoman, Greenwood, and McMahon-Beattie 2009)

- identifying and assisting innovation by responding favorably when local social or commercial initiatives have early success in Norway (Mykletun and Gyimóthy 2010; Kvam 2006)

But there was something else – evidence that communities and individuals were acting independently, without significant support from government. In New Zealand, the gastronomy tourism sector was being particularly innovative in creating wine and food tourism networks, given the absence of targeted local, state, or national supports, apart from cooperative marketing and branding schemes. Termed ‘lifestyle entrepreneurship’, it was seen as a major factor in the emergence of new food and tourism-related developments (Hall, Mitchell, and Sharples 2003:57). First in Auckland, and later in Hawks Bay, hospitality entrepreneurs took a central role by defining the ‘feel’ of the neighborhood, and in consciously shaping their businesses to promote a distinctive conviviality and informality attractive to locals and tourists alike. It was described it as the social capital of the champions being converted into the social and economic capital of others by virtue of multilevel networks of local firms. This was confirmed as the network extended beyond tourism to include broader range of sectoral linkages between businesses that had previously seen themselves as having little in common to form clusters (Hall 2005). This independence, self-helping, and working among peers in a locality is important. That is, local stakeholders working as equals to rebuild local knowledge through networking, shared experiences, discussions, and observation, while avoiding the risk of valuable local knowledge being hijacked by external or non-local consultants (Fonte 2008). This approach also identified and protected local food assets and exploited them more appropriately, as in the case of Shetland’s lamb (Morgan, Morley, and Sherwin 2007).

The common denominator appeared to be that creative collaboration in the community, led by those who can demonstrate social and cultural capital, had been critical to success. While these ‘lifestyle entrepreneurs’, or champions of gastronomy, might have economic capital as well, they seemed to be instinctively aware that others in the community will think differently, and that for any one project to work, it must benefit the entire community in multiple ways through sharing, communication, openness, and good management. If this is true, and in order to be sustainable, a destination’s objective should be to develop an integrated, holistic approach to policy development and implementation, driven by a focus;

- in the medium term, on developing new and existing food tourism networks and relationships within local businesses and organizations as well as with other regional and national stakeholders
- in the longer term, on the development of intellectual and social capital in order to enhance the regional knowledge base and to develop engaging food experiences

The following case study outlines how a destination, Ireland, has put some of these ideas into practice since 2010 (during an economic recession), and demonstrates how creative collaboration in gastronomic tourism, at minimal cost, can sustainably build a destination.

Case study 5.1: Ireland's proactive approach to gastronomic tourism through creative collaboration

The island of Ireland is situated on the north western edge of Europe, in the North Atlantic Ocean, at similar latitudes to Alaska (USA) and Hamburg (Germany). There are two national jurisdictions on the island, one of which, the Republic of Ireland, comprises approximately 80% of the island of Ireland. The other, in the north-eastern part of the island, is Northern Ireland, part of the U.K. An independent country, the Republic of Ireland has a GDP of €265 billion, a population of 4.7 million (0.9% of the total EU population), and covers just under 70,000 km² (European Union 2016). The hospitality sector (an important services sector which includes tourism) contributes €3 billion gross value added to the economy. It directly employs 158,000 people (8% of employment) within 16,000 enterprises in the hospitality-related accommodation and food services sector (Expert Group on Future Skills Needs 2015). In 2015, total tourism spend was estimated at €6 billion and overseas visitors to Ireland at 8 million (Fáilte Ireland 2016a). This represents a significant improvement from the beginning of the recession in Ireland, when overseas visitor numbers in 2009 fell by 12% to 6.6 million, and revenue fell by 19% to €3.9 billion (Fáilte Ireland 2010:9).

In 2010, a representative working group formed and led by Fáilte Ireland (the National Tourism Development Authority), and comprised of industry stakeholders and government agencies, developed a National Food Tourism Implementation Framework where the overall vision for food tourism was:

that Ireland be recognised by visitors for the availability, quality and value of our local and regional food experiences which evokes a unique sense of place, culture and hospitality.

(Fáilte Ireland 2010:16)

The intention was that not only would the framework have a positive impact on the consumer's overall food experience, but successful implementation offered the potential for new business and employment opportunities for suppliers, producers, and providers across the food tourism value chain. If this was achieved, the consequence would be that previous fragmentation of effort would be largely eliminated.

This meant encouraging and facilitating a ground-up approach by advocating a strategic road map to capitalize on the local potential – this was the National Food Tourism Implementation Framework, 2011–2013. This strategic approach centered on a number of key areas, including identifying food champions, conducting international benchmarking, and disseminating best practice (Fáilte Ireland 2010:21). The objectives were:

- To build Ireland's food tourism reputation and encourage visitors to stop, spend and stay longer
- To develop networks and relationships within local business organizations and regional stakeholders
- To enhance the regional knowledge base and develop engaging food experiences
- To utilize food tourism as an economic development strategy

Implementation commenced in August of 2012, when Fáilte Ireland initiated a process to identify 'food champions' – not the big established names of the Irish food scene, but the emerging 'players' having an impact in their locality. A social media campaign asked members of the

tourism, food and hospitality industry all across Ireland to nominate people on the ground with proven ability to champion Irish food, influence Irish cuisine, promote and develop Irish food tourism; individuals recognized locally as doers, networkers, connectors (Fáilte Ireland 2012b). Remarkably, the campaign attracted over 160 nominations in less than a week, particularly in light of the absence of any financial reward, and the requirement for nominees to contribute €750 each, if selected, towards the expenses of a benchmarking tour. Other costs were subsidized by Fáilte Ireland. The selection criteria were:

- A demonstrable commitment to implement change
- A food tourism agenda
- A food business operation in business a minimum of two years
- Capacity to lead and/or make decisions
- Membership of food/tourism organization/s
- Accolades/awards received
- A proven track record of collaboration

By October 2012, 14 people (food producers, hoteliers, restaurateurs, retailers and event organisers) were selected for the Food Tourism Network Development program as Food Champions. They immediately went on a food tourism benchmarking journey to Prince Edward County in Canada where they experienced a bespoke itinerary developed by the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance. Canada's Prince Edward County was picked as a model because it had faced similar challenges to Ireland and had a range of successfully integrated food tourism products and activities (Fáilte Ireland 2012a). The key insights from the journey, as expressed by the new food champions, were collaboration, cooperation and being 'visitor ready'. (Fáilte Ireland 2012a:2).

In 2013, the process was repeated. The focus on this occasion was to seek out similar individuals who were located along the Wild Atlantic Way – Ireland's first long-distance touring route (2,500 km), stretching along the west and southern coast from Donegal to Cork. This time the objectives were refined, based on the experience gained in 2012, so that the food champions would, as before, experience an exemplary food tourism destination, and witness, first-hand, how to affect change in their business and locality. In doing so, they would learn how to develop networks and relationships with food-focused individuals, and how to build a network of like-minded people in Ireland that they could work with. The expectation was, on their return home, that they would immediately begin to apply those new skills. Eight new food champions, (artisan producers, a culinary lecturer, a blogger, chef restaurateurs, a food festival organizer), joined the network development program (Fáilte Ireland 2013a). Their benchmarking trip to Norway was an ideal opportunity not only because of the emergence of Nordic food, but also because Norway had well-established tourist driving routes. The linkage between a driving route and food tourism was apt, as any insights could be immediately assessed for use on the Wild Atlantic Way. Again, the key insights, as expressed by the participants, centered on collaboration, and being 'visitor ready', along with the confidence that came from how their own businesses benchmarked well with those in Norway (Fáilte Ireland 2013b).

Integrating the food tourism strategy with the development of the new Wild Atlantic Way proposition proved successful, such that Fáilte Ireland set a new Food Tourism Activity Plan in place for 2014–2016 in collaboration with the food champions and others (Fáilte Ireland 2014), and developed two new propositions: 'Ireland's Ancient East', and 'Dublin, a Breath of Fresh Air'. This was an

opportunity to review and refresh the Network Development Programme. As part of that review, 16 of the 22 existing food champions chose to become 'Food Ambassadors' by continuing to help to spread the vision and values of Irish food tourism among visitors, media, food tourism businesses, and other stakeholders (Fáilte Ireland 2015b). The remaining six chose to remain as 'Food Champions', thus providing an opportunity to find new food champions who would be aligned to the new propositions and enter a new three-year cycle of activity. In April 2016, a recruitment process commenced, similar to that used in 2012 and 2013, resulting in a response of over 400 nominations (Fáilte Ireland 2016c). In June 2016, 16 new emerging food champions were selected, so that there were now a total of 22 Food Champions and 16 Food Ambassadors in the network (Fáilte Ireland 2015a). The new group of Food Champions visited the cities of Copenhagen and Aarhus in November 2016 to discover how Denmark has achieved its high status in the international food tourism landscape. As before, the key insights included confidence, collaboration, and collective vision (Fáilte Ireland 2016b). These insights, and future plans for Food Champion initiatives were shared at the annual meeting of the network in May 2017 (Fáilte Ireland 2017b). An example of one of those initiatives that had immediate impact was the 'Ireland's Ancient East' Banquet at the Oxford Symposium of Food & Cookery in July 2017 (Fáilte Ireland 2017a).

Implications and critical success factors for tourism destinations

The implications for any gastronomic tourism destination and the sustainability of what is on offer are clear. This writer contends that sustainability and visitor satisfaction is not best served through extensive state funding of activity on the ground (with the exception of destination marketing, which drives business to the operators). In such cases, activity becomes overly dependent on the state funding which acts as a constraint rather than facilitating innovation. When funding has to be withdrawn, as it inevitably does (in a recession, for example), the invariable consequence is that activity ceases and there are no local exemplars available to either maintain activity or to encourage independent action to reinvigorate tourism. Clearly, as demonstrated in this chapter, it is possible to harness the power of locals by leveraging social, civic, and business networks through collaboration and cooperation, not only in tourism itself, but also in other parts of the wider gastronomic landscape (Mulcahy 2017b:43). When that power is harnessed positively and creatively, the potential for greater sustainable impact increases exponentially in terms of social, cultural and economic capital, with multiple identifiable benefits in terms of jobs, tax and enterprise revenues, return visitors, positive peer reviews on social media, and much more.

In summary, and drawing on the evidence, the critical success factors for gastronomic tourism experiences clearly are:

- Start from the basics (quality, authenticity, locality)
- Build coalitions (public-private partnership)
- Spread the message together (build the brand, communicate clearly)
- Develop and promote a holistic approach (gastronomic tourism should be seen as one aspect of the entire food value network)
- Ensure a solid base of local food culture
- Develop a network abroad that helps to profile national and/or regional cuisine.

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Prior publication No. 6

“Historical Evolution of Gastronomic Tourism” (Mulcahy, 2019c).

In *The Routledge Handbook of Gastronomic Tourism*, edited by Saurabh Kumar Dixit. London: Routledge, 2019. pp. 24-31.

Research sub question: How has gastronomy tourism evolved?

While my previous publications have focused on how the public service can leverage gastronomy assets for the good of the Irish economy at any particular point of development, I had not considered gastronomy tourism from a wider perspective, in terms of its evolution and what factors influenced that evolution. I realised that, by understanding that evolution, it would inform and enrich my practice as a public servant specialising in gastronomy tourism. This chapter, again by invitation and written at the same time as the previous publication, demonstrates that the evolution of gastronomic tourism has four elements. First, the genesis of the evolution lay in forces capable of penetrating cultural barriers and internationalising food, such as war, disaster, famine, imperialism, colonisation, migration or exile. Second, gastronomy was used to assess difference, and travellers wrote about it in terms of cultural meaning and social markers to address the problem of asymmetric information until the advent of mass communication. Third, it has only been in the late 19th century that mass travel, facilitated by economic, social, and technological improvement, evolved into tourism generally, although gastronomic tourism did not become an identifiable tourist activity until the late 20th century. Fourth, continued evolution requires research and dissemination, which has only begun to flourish. In this regard, gastronomic tourism is still in its infancy, as without it, it is very difficult to establish whether destinations can meet the needs of gastronomic tourists.

This examination of the evolution of gastronomy tourism arguably informs and supports Chambers' 'mobilities turn' by illustrating that tourism mobilities have multiple historic dimensions and thus provides a theoretical contribution by means of an alternative perspective.

2

HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF GASTRONOMIC TOURISM

John D. Mulcahy

The genesis of gastronomic tourism

Throughout history, people have prepared food which was sourced from, and influenced by, their immediate surroundings and circumstances, and its consumption has always been fundamental to civilization and daily life. Practical economic needs have repeatedly motivated people of all classes to improve culinary technology, thereby achieving gastronomic progress (Rebora 2001:x). Essentially, though, that progress tended to have a parochial nature, as frequent travel, and at scale, was just not possible, but as modes of travel improved, a natural curiosity about the 'other' was aroused so that travel outside of normal surroundings became attractive. Historically, little is known about travelers' food. They may have taken some of their own food with them (and the people that prepared it), but the supplies were unlikely to last more than a few days, so they relied on the hospitality of others either during the journey or at their destination. Some rulers encouraged this – over 4000 years ago the caravan routes in Sumeria (now Southern Iraq) had networks of inns for travelers (Symons 1998:302). So, contrary to popular perception, gastronomic tourism as a behavior is not a twentieth-century phenomenon. In many cases, the reason for travel was food itself, searching for new and tradable foods, such as spices, which had great economic value in Europe (Katz and Weaver 2003:416). A happy by-product of this led to the realization that food is one of the most effective ways to communicate with, and begin to understand, the 'other' and his or her culture. In effect, this breaks down the barriers that exist between cultures, different ethnicities, and geographies.

However, the evolution and development of gastronomic tourism arguably has a more substantial genesis in forces capable of penetrating cultural barriers and internationalizing food. These forces include war (invading forces seeking familiar foods, but also returning soldiers familiar with a wider range of foods than before); disaster or famine (where a people accept a food which they might otherwise reject); imperialism and colonization (such as Islamic influence in Spain in the middle ages, Spain and Portugal in the Americas, the Ottoman Empire in southeast Europe); migration and exile (both forced, such as slavery, and economic diasporas) (Fernández-Armesto 2002: for substantial discussion on this, see Chapter 6: The Edible Horizon; Laudan 2015; Katz and Weaver 2003:416). Both Fernández-Armesto (2002) and Laudan (2015) also cite 'cultural magnetism' as a more intangible force where communities emulate the foodways of cultures of superior prestige. The global hegemony of French gastronomy is an obvious

historical example, while a more contemporary example is the emergence of 'New Nordic Food' in 2005 (Nordic Council of Ministers 2006). Over time, gastronomic counter-colonization has also occurred where both returnees and migrants from the colonies have added to the gastronomy of the colonizer in the post-colonial era. Obvious examples include Indian and Pakistani food in England, Vietnamese food in France, and Indonesian food in Holland.

Using gastronomy to assess social difference

There is considerable evidence that, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, food was the principal benchmark which travelers used to assess the difference between themselves and the people they were meeting on their travels, and they wrote about it in terms of cultural meaning and social markers (Dursteler 2014). Similar to what is expected now, contemporaries created a literature aimed at future and prospective travelers offering advice on what, and how, to observe on their journey, with food a prominent element of the recommendations. For example, in 1548, one commentator (Ortensio Lando), perhaps one of the earliest forerunners of gastronomic tourism, suggested in his literature a tour of Italy travelling north from Sicily to the Alps for a hypothetical visitor, recommending where to stop and eat local food specialties (Montanari 2012:53; Montanari 1996:160). Similarly, in France, the French naturalist Jean Florimond Boudon de Saint-Amants wrote of the foods he encountered during his travels in the Pyrénées in 1789 – and this was just one of the 157 accounts of travels in France at this time (Csergo 1999:502). Even Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the USA in 1801, upon encountering a request for travel advice from two wealthy Americans, mentions the wines of France in addition to providing information about the sights worth seeing (Levenstein 1998:3). Aristocratic young Englishmen and women on 'grand tours' of the European Continent in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries regularly described the foods that they ate, and their opinions of it, in their letters home (Black 2003).

So, whether in travel accounts from the early modern period or in contemporary developed economies, while food may well be perceived only as 'fuel' or a survival necessity, gastronomic tourism is also perceived as a means of enriching experiences, expressing personal identities, or adding to a quality of life. Globalization has increased interest in, and focus on, the regional identities and roots of our culture. Gastronomy is fundamentally related to some sort of ethnic, national or religious 'character' and how it reflects people's social and cultural values. Examples of this would include: Jewish or Muslim communities not eating pork, or Catholics not eating fish on Fridays; the Moroccan habit of eating sweet pastries with soup; Italians and pasta; Spaniards and tapas; Ireland and potatoes. Not only that, gastronomy arguably occupies an increasingly meaningful place in people's consciousness, as evidenced by its huge attraction as a topic of modern public commentary, usually on social media.

Clearly, there is evidence that tourists have increasingly wished to share their gastronomic tourism experience with whoever might be interested, but why? Anthropologists such as Claude Lévi-Strauss (1978) have emphasized that eating is not only a basic physical need, but also, and perhaps primarily, a marker of social and cultural belonging. Indeed, there is an increasing body of work which sees the consumption and experience of food 'on site' as being core, but not mainstreamed as yet:

In short, foodways and cuisine are a more important part of the tourism system than simply food and food services; they are imbued with cultural meaning, experience and permanence.

(Timothy and Ron 2013:99)

Both now, and in the past, the manner in which travelers or tourists dealt with the daily physical requirement of nourishment, and their relationship with food during the visit was, and is, limited by two extremes. At one extreme, the motivation for the visit is the gastronomy itself or a specific element of it, and, at the other extreme, food is simply fuel and there is no desire or interest to change from habitual consumption. In between, of course, is a wide range of opportunities to embrace and practice gastronomic tourism. Happily, for tourism, gastronomy cannot travel successfully, even now; yes, a dish can be reproduced elsewhere assuming the availability of its ingredients, but the authentic gastronomy of a dish is tied to tangible and intangible elements, such as a sense of place, context, manners, material culture, and social customs, that are difficult to replicate away from its native surroundings (Ramos Abascal 2016). This illustrates how the gastronomy/tourism relationship goes beyond eating and creates a fundamentally different type of relationship between producers and tourists. Essentially, the tourist experiences gastronomy “embedded with information at the point of sale” so that the tourist can make connections (an economy of regard) with the place of production, the methods employed, and the values of the people involved (Sage 2003:49). Montanari (2012) arrives at a similar point of view:

Identity does not exist without exchange. Identity is defined and constructed *as a function* (author’s emphasis) of an exchange that is simultaneously economic and cultural, the market and the skill, the merchandise and the experience.

(Montanari 2012:163–164)

This, in turn, both creates and reinforces the affiliation that tourists seek with their environment, inevitably increasing social and cultural capital. Consequently, authenticity and forms of economic, social, cultural, and culinary capital are germane to this discussion about gastronomic tourism (Naccarato and LeBesco 2012; Buscemi 2014). While these concepts are not specific to gastronomic tourism, they inform and deepen an understanding of the dynamics and evolution of contemporary gastronomic tourism. In effect, people have always wanted to either tell others about their experiences, particularly about their gastronomic travel experiences, in order to demonstrate their social and cultural capital, or to hear from others relating ‘insider’ information on what to do or eat, thus acquiring social and cultural capital in advance of their trip. This behavior implies that, up to the mid-twentieth century at least, gastronomic tourism information tended to be asymmetric; that is, one party to an economic transaction (usually the seller, because their store of information is based on numerous sales over a period of time), possesses greater material knowledge than the other party (usually a buyer, whose information is based on the experience of only a few purchases).

Gastronomic tourism comes of age

In this context, one of the more significant twentieth century developments in gastronomic tourism is credited to Maurice-Edmond Sailland (1872–1956) who described himself as the ‘Prince of Gastronomes’ and used the pseudonym of Curnonsky (Kay 2017). Curnonsky and others linked gastronomy and tourism, by using their gastronomic publications to capitalize on two ‘novelties’. As quoted by Mennell, Curnonsky wrote:

This pioneering work benefitted from two novelties: the ‘democratised’ motor-car and the taste for good fare which ... developed in France from 1919 onwards.

The motor-car allowed the French to discover the cuisine of each province, and created the breed of what I have called 'gastro-nomads'.

(Mennell 2016:245)

This, of course, was a particular advantage not only to car hire companies, particularly Michelin, but also to others, as it encouraged gastronomic tourism and popularized regional foods by addressing the availability of information which could be trusted. The Michelin Guide and its star system was the first of many consumer guides to emerge in the early twentieth century. It is also the oldest, and the most widely perceived as an authority (particularly by chefs, which legitimized it in the eyes of the gastronomic tourist) especially as the guide moved from France to other European countries (Lane 2014).

Most consumers prefer to have a variety of views to choose from, online or offline, and this explains the gastronomy discourse explosion in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The plethora of modern food criticism has been characterized as "The Judge" (known personalities, food critics such as Ruth Reichl in the USA or Nicholas Lander in the UK); "The Tribunal" (obviously Michelin, where annual judgements are given without publishing the grounds for reaching them); and "The Plebiscite" (essentially, democracy in action where diners report their experiences, such as TripAdvisor or Zagat) (Parkhurst Ferguson 2008). As an example of the plebiscite, Zagat (now owned by Google since 2011) exemplified the American democratic way – any restaurant customer sends in their opinions – but it also highlights weaknesses. There was no objectiveness guarantee, no documentation required (receipts, for example), and the volume of comment required severe editing to arrive at an average opinion, which could be misleading (Shaw 2000). Even with all these opinions available, gastronomic tourists have preferred to rely on word of mouth, and still do, although that has now evolved from one tourist/consumer/customer telling another on a personal level to being curators of their own information through a variety of platforms, mostly online (Bussell and Roberts 2014). With the advent of the digital age, gastronomic tourism has become even more complex in its production. Each tourist now has more control over the 'what', 'when', and 'how' of their tourism experiences through social media, peer review sites, and a multiplicity of websites providing the means to self-organize, in real time. Thus, each individual tourist experience is a series of distinct moments, connecting service provider/producer and tourist/consumer, influenced on both sides by need, mood, and context (Mulcahy 2015). This complexity in the individual compares to the structural complexity and granularity of the tourism and hospitality industry in terms of its ability to service each distinct moment of consumption, whether that is having a meal, getting on a train, going to an event, or visiting an attraction.

It has only been in the later part of the nineteenth century that mass travel, facilitated by economic, social, and technological improvement, evolved into tourism generally, although gastronomic tourism did not become an identifiably distinct industry until the late 1990s or later. Key drivers of this evolution were improved communications and transport systems, particularly the growth of railway and airline networks and the reduction in costs as mass market tourism emerged. Forms of mass communication, initially through print media, and then the introduction of broadcast media (television, radio, and cinema), particularly after the Second World War, spread new culinary ideas and recipes. In the 1960s, women went to work outside the home, while labor-saving technology (fridges, washing machines, and vacuums, for example) lessened the burden of the tasks that still needed to be done at home (Short 2006). The emergence and growth of supermarkets ensured an abundance of global products which encouraged the 'cultural magnetism' referred to above. Essentially, consumers were increasingly eating out of preference, not just physical need, given wider choices through

more information and travel options. More recently, globalization has made a range of foods familiar, indeed, almost mundane (e.g. Japanese sushi, Mexican tacos, Korean kimchi, Arab pita bread, and Turkish doner kebab) beyond their geographic origins, so that they have a much reduced gastronomic or touristic attraction. As gastronomic tourists have become more familiar with the exotic or unfamiliar, they seek more new opportunities to experience gastronomic activities (Katz and Weaver 2003:407). This is a characteristic of gastronomic tourism which ensures continued development and evolution, irrespective of the origin or destination of the tourist.

At the later end of the twentieth century, interest was growing in local heritage at an international level, arguably led by France. In 1996, France's gastronomic heritage inventory program was extended, with the assistance of the European Union, to the whole of Europe (Poulain 2005). Given sustained growth in international travel over sixty years, which has increased from 25 million travelers globally in 1950 to 1,186 million in 2015 (United Nations World Tourism Organization 2016), the tourism industry now utilizes gastronomic tourism as a heritage asset and revenue driver where tourists attach value to tradition, native cooking, and authenticity. In doing so, tourists are reassured in their unease not only about the increasing industrialization of food and its production, but also about how globalization may be diluting local or regional identities (Poulain 2005). Given that perspective, tourism now continues to evolve as part of the contemporary experience economy, and food is increasingly a more obvious and considerable component of that (Richards 2012). The significance of gastronomic tourism was exemplified by the 1st UNWTO World Forum on Food Tourism organized by the UNWTO in 2015, and located in a center of gastronomic tourism – San Sebastian in Spain. Such was the interest level, that it was organized again in 2016 and called the 2nd UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism (note the change in the title from Food Tourism to Gastronomy Tourism), this time in Peru. The 3rd Forum returned to San Sebastian in 2017, and, interestingly, the 4th was held in Bangkok, Thailand in 2018, and 5th forum is scheduled in San Sebastian (Spain) in 2019, thus recognizing the global nature of gastronomic tourism as countries seek to establish credibility in the space.

Current evolution depends on research and its dissemination

It has already been demonstrated here that gastronomic tourism has existed in an informal manner for some time. As gastronomic tourism has progressed, continued successful development and evolution of the activity requires study and research which must then be disseminated accordingly if it is to have any beneficial effect. The research would ordinarily seek to establish the size and characteristics of the market, discover who the gastronomic tourist is, what are the motivators for that tourist to travel, and what are the motivators of satisfaction during the trip. In this regard, gastronomic tourism is still in its infancy, as without this information, it is very difficult to establish whether existing gastronomic tourism infrastructure in destinations can meet the needs of gastronomic tourists. An early indication of the significance of gastronomic tourism was in 2001 when Erik Wolf, President of the International Culinary Tourism Association (now the World Food Travel Association or WFTA), presented a white paper about culinary tourism to his organization. The paper evolved into a book that documented the growing interest in food and wine tourism, and how requests for culinary tours could drive local businesses and restaurateurs to meet the growing demand (Wolf 2006). Around the same time, commissioned studies of significance were undertaken by the Canadian Tourism Commission (Lang Research 2001 and 2007), the Cooperative Research Centre in Australia (2005), and the WFTA in America (Travel Industry Association of America 2007),

although not all are in the public domain (Getz, Robinson, and Vujicic 2014). The UNWTO also published a report at their 3rd Forum (United Nations World Tourism Organization 2017). The WFTA has since conducted research in 2010, 2013, and again in 2016. The 2016 research was much more international in scope by conducting analysis of outbound travelers from eleven countries: Australia, China, France, Germany, Ireland, India, Italy, Mexico, Spain, United Kingdom, and the United States.

Contemporary academic researchers of tourism tend to see tourism as a “state of mind” and, rather than classify it as a singular experience, consider tourism as a series of experiences in which some type of ‘Otherness’ is explored (Katz and Weaver 2003:407). The challenge for gastronomic tourism has been that there is no single theory for being a tourist and no single practice can define gastronomic tourism, thus implying a great degree of diversity. According to Getz, Robinson, and Vujicic (2014), academic research literature in food or gastronomic tourism only began to flourish since 2005, with the largest academic study conducted in Hong Kong by Kivela and Crofts (2006). This may be due to the fact that, to date, it is not entirely clear that there is a common understanding of, or agreement on, what constitutes ‘gastronomic tourism’. Tourism based on food has generated several descriptors, reflecting the different sectors of the tourism industry. The folklorist Lucy Long holds that the term gastronomic tourism was first used in 1985 by Wilbur Zelinsky in an analysis of ethnicities prevalent in US restaurants (Long 2014). In the meantime, other terms emerged, such as culinary tourism (Long 1998), gourmet tourism, cuisine tourism, or tasting tourism (Henderson 2009). “Gastronomic tourism” was presented in 2002 by Anne-Mette Hjalager and Greg Richards as an emerging discipline recognizing both gastronomy and tourism as dynamic cultural constructions reflecting specific histories and contemporary interests (Hjalager and Richards 2002). Thus there is a real need to differentiate between tourists who consume food as a part of the travel experience, and those tourists whose activities, behaviors, and even destination selection are influenced by an interest in food (Hall and Sharples 2003; OECD 2012:52).

The journey has only just begun.

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The contribution that the research makes to the advancement of the discipline area

Essentially, this autoethnographic work has been a ten year case study on food tourism development in Ireland, employing network development, advocating for widespread product on the ground, pursuing integration with other tourism policy and national policy, seeking a long term approach beyond electoral and economic cycles, identifying the shifts that could challenge the economic mindset of the tourism paradigm, and adopting a flexible approach to handle changes of people in key influential positions (CEO's, Ministers, Chairmen, etc). I have endeavoured to change the traditional consideration of food or culinary tourism operations from the simplistic binary of the relationship between meal producer/tourist consumer, to a more nuanced understanding of the wider, and more complex, food/tourism, producer/consumer/destination systems (Andersson *et al.*, 2017; Everett, 2019). At face value, these are the core contributions that the research in the publications has made to the discipline area, but which discipline?

In setting the publications in the context of the existing literature, it became evident that a range of disciplines and fields contribute to any consideration of tourism, and that each of them approaches tourism differently. Darbellay and Stock make it very clear that tourism is a complex interdisciplinary research object, especially in terms of academic disciplines:

The different disciplines do not construct tourism identically. For instance, tourism is seen as a spatial problem[...]for geography, as a social problem[...]for sociology, as a problem of governance, policies and politics for political science, and for economics as pricing and allocation of financial resources as well as monetary effects (2012, p. 451).

I would argue that this is compounded when food partners with tourism as this must necessarily include cultural, environmental, and sustainability disciplines as well. I would

also argue that a theoretical contribution comes not only from the publications, but also from the autoethnographic methodology I have employed. The methodology has facilitated a much broader consideration of the research in the publications by adding context, perspective, insight, and reflection, thus providing new meaning and understanding of food tourism policy development and implementation from a public administration perspective. I would contend that new knowledge has been created in two ways as a result of my insight, derived from being an emic participant researcher.

First, as a coherent whole, the publications can now be considered afresh by a reader in light of the participant researcher context provided above, so that the body of work, that is, the practice and the publications, has “dismantled existing knowledge frontiers and has fostered fundamental change in the way we think about, understand, and practice tourism” (Chambers, 2018, p. 194). They have augmented the ontological understanding of what food tourism might be, and what its effects could be across the tourism and national landscape. From a holistic perspective, the theoretical contribution highlights the benefits of an extradisciplinary approach, such that the various disciplines are regarded as a cache of resources with which to address research problems, new tourist activity typology, new subject areas in tourism, and practical issues in the various tourism industries. On a practical level, the issue has always been to find ways that ensures both food tourism and food *in* tourism are on the wider tourism agenda, and the research provides ideas, conceptualisations and theoretical approaches to assist tourism policy makers to achieve that aim, and to learn in the process. They make available a critical analysis of the challenges to developing and implementing gastronomy tourism strategies in a volatile economic and public service environment. The publications will encourage dialogue and a focus across disparate disciplines and subject areas, as well as bringing a new critical and theoretical application, particularly in an Irish context where the

discourse is sparse, at best. Hopefully, this will challenge the orthodoxy and encourage more critical enquiry both in the field of learning and among stakeholders in Irish tourism. The published work has necessarily recognised the need for economic and financial outputs, given my role in a State tourism agency, but from the first publication in 2014 and onwards, the publications frequently echoed Everett and Aitchison's finding that "food tourism has a role in securing the triple bottom line of economic, social and environmental sustainability" (2008, p. 150). Interestingly, the originator of the triple bottom line concept, John Elkington, has recently revisited the concept on its 25th anniversary, worrying that the concept was not designed to be just an accounting tool. Rather, "the original idea was wider still, encouraging businesses to track and manage economic (not just financial), social, and environmental value added — or destroyed" (2018). This echoes Dredge and Jamal's call (2015, p. 295) to revalue tourism as a "means of achieving a range of social, political, environmental objectives (and not simply as a tool for economic development)" and has particular relevance for food tourism. This is apposite in the context of climate change and how it will affect food and tourism. I believe that the publications make a valuable theoretical contribution to the discourse around the necessity of a paradigm change in tourism in order to ensure sustainability of tourism, specifically in Ireland (Rinaldi, 2017; Dwyer, 2018), and especially given the new theoretical perspectives on Everett's 'cultural turn' (2008; 2012), Dredge and Jamal's 'relational turn' (2015), and Chambers' 'mobilities turn' (2018) that the publications provide. However, it is clear there is a danger that if there continues to be no critical discourse in food tourism, then its relevance and its potential "to enhance the social, cultural, environmental, and economic dimensions of place risks becoming unmeaning, and potentially over time, discounted" (de Jong *et al.*, 2018, p. 145).

Second, I have found that my research paradigm and autoethnographic methodology demands a re-evaluation of the knowledge known by me (through practice, experience, reading, networking, etc. over a long period of time), and my opinions, formed by that experience (similar to Joppe, 2018, p. 203). That re-evaluation of my food tourism philosophy occurred when it was contrasted with the knowledge created by others and shared in the literature. This in turn led to the new knowledge created by this process, expressed here as both a theoretical contribution and a contribution to the academy. Of particular interest, I believe, is my reconceptualisation of my positionality, informed by the research paradigm that I have used. My original conceptualisation, outlined earlier in this work, was characterised by my liminal state and the sense of being ‘betwixt and between’ as I went about my work in Fáilte Ireland and beyond (in the section describing my research methodology). Later on, in reading the literature and retrospectively positioning my publications against what was appearing in the journals from 2009 on, I began to realise that I had to find where the nexus of food and tourism (and by implication, my work), fitted. Clearly, the reality appears to be that the ‘fit’ is not only complex, given the multidisciplinary characteristics of the nexus, but also untidy and messy as orthodox meanings of ‘marginal’, ‘peripheral’ or ‘liminal’ appear less pertinent or precise in this instance. This is possibly because sociologists are less concerned with physical-spatial characteristics and have mostly directed their core focus to social differences. In their perception of the world, “marginality” describes social groups on the fringes of a society (Kühn, 2015, p.371), peripheries are associated with poverty, and the terms centre and periphery are defined only vaguely (Pelc, 2017). Clearly, the nexus of food and tourism is neither at the margin or the centre in a sociocultural sense (Kühn, 2015). Similarly, from a political science perspective, processes of peripheralisation and marginalisation

are to do with power in the decision-making process and control over agenda setting (Kühn, 2015).

Therefore, in terms of seeking a better expression of 'fit', it appears reasonable to consider the more precise concepts discussed earlier, which include Turner's "betwixt and between" (Johnsen and Sørensen, 2015, p. 215) and Ellingson's "vast middle spaces" of the continuum between art and science, (albeit this was in reference to autoethnography) (Ellingson, 2011, p. 600). Similarly, the idea of "the space between", meaning that no one is fully inside or outside, is proposed by Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p. 60) as cited by Suarez Delucchi (2018, p. 200), while others looked at how social media allowed producers to "transcend the 'inbetweenness' of core and the peripheral" (Duignan *et al.*, 2018, p. 876). Indeed, closer to the home that is food tourism, Everett has suggested that "food tourism research offers an illuminating conceptual vehicle" to explore several ideas, including liminality and in-betweenness (2019, p. 3). But perhaps the most precise conceptualisation, and also one of the most original, is the notion of 'chora', "Plato's space between being and becoming or the 'space in which place is made possible' " (Wearing and Wearing, 1996, p. 233). These ideas arguably suggest that a third space exists which accommodates not only the focus of this work (the nexus) and its methodology, but also my practice and first-hand experience (Everett, 2019). As Kneafsey and Cox describe it: "The idea of third space dislodges many kinds of binary notion, such as migrant/settler, insider/outsider, home/away" (2002, p. 7), and, "rather than a linear journey from 'outside' to 'inside' ", instead they are "spaces 'between' worlds" (2002, p.10). As would be expected, the boundaries are not necessarily well defined and, instead, are resolved by processes of "fuzzy negotiation" (Ryan, 2004, p. 65), and new forms of work requiring "affiliation-disaffiliation skills" (Ryan, 2004, p. 63). Indeed, I would contend that I have occupied the same 'chora', as my experiences

demonstrate multiple positionalities (Rowe, 2014) and complex relationship dynamics, while continuously changing in relation to where I was, and the people with whom I interacted (Suarez Delucchi, 2018). More specifically, the ‘chora’ reflects my positionalities in a modern national tourism development agency where the organisation structure and culture constantly evolve in response to its national and international operating environment; where interacting, networking, and lobbying with a wide range of stakeholders such as other government agencies, government departments, all kinds of corporations, representative bodies from all sectors of the tourism industries, community representatives and organisations, local and national politicians was part and parcel of the work to be done - this goes beyond the idea of temporary or permanent liminality as described by Johnsen and Sørensen (2015).

Thus, the nexus occupies a ‘chora’, a space between the worlds of food and tourism, which quite aptly expresses how it, and I, ‘fit’ in Ireland’s development strategies. This, I believe, is a key contribution to the advancement of food tourism, not only for academics and researchers as a conceptualisation to assist further research, but also as an aid to practitioners similar to myself who are working in the field. I should, of course, point out that this assessment is just a snapshot, at a particular point in time, of the nexus of food and tourism as it pertains to Ireland. The ‘chora’ or third space where I have placed the nexus will inevitably respond to fluctuations in the multidisciplinary variables which created it, similar to changes in the environment which influence the economic development strategies of Ireland.

In conclusion, the theoretical contribution that I have made to the study of tourism in various disciplines through my publications is that it changes the way the subject areas of food tourism, tourism policy development, tourist activity typologies, destination management, tourism networks and relationships, gastronomicalism, and classification of

food/gastronomy/culinary tourism are understood and conceptualised, particularly in Ireland, although I believe the knowledge is applicable anywhere. For collaborators and colleagues in practice, this work has highlighted the challenges and advantages of addressing misunderstood concepts and activity, along with the critical importance of networking and advocating for innovation and change. Finally, a particularly desirable outcome would be that this work might encourage others in practice to add their voice to the body of knowledge and to the discourse around food tourism.

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Appendix 1: Career history, advocacy activities, and publications listing 1977 to 2017

2003 – 2017 Fáilte Ireland, (National Tourism Development Authority),
88 – 95 Amiens St., Dublin 1, <http://www.failteireland.ie/>.

2012 – 2017, Head of Hospitality (Food Tourism, Hospitality Education, and Tourist Accommodation Standards)

Principal tasks were:

- Provide thought leadership for food tourism in Ireland, and, through a collaborative approach, advocate for and promote food tourism in Ireland. I led the development and implementation of three Food Tourism Plans:
 - National Food Tourism Implementation Framework 2011-2013
 - Food Tourism Activity Plan 2014–2016
 - Food and Drink Development Strategy 2018-2023
- Maintain existing relationships with ten Institutes of Technology to provide a suite of tourism skills programmes to over 2,000 students funded by Fáilte Ireland (FI).
- Develop deeper relationships between the Irish education system and the Irish tourism industry with the objective of a focused, relevant, applied research agenda.
- Ensure compliance with FI's statutory responsibility for tourism product standards, particularly the registration, classification, and categorisation of accommodation.
- Specific registrar role under the Tourism Traffic Acts, 1939 (as amended) utilising delegated powers from the Authority (i.e. the board of directors). Direct reporting to the Authority through the Registration Committee.

Achievements, in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders and colleagues, were:

- Review FI investment in Education
- Led and developed a new culinary apprenticeship 2015 - 2017
- Led and chaired a review of the National Tour Guide programmes under QQI 2015 - 2016
- I developed, designed, and introduced new regulations and a new classification system for hotels under the Tourism Traffic Acts, in consultation with industry representative bodies.
- I changed focus in food tourism strategy through 1) a stakeholder working group, 2) using animation to communicate food stories to visitors, 3) benchmarking with Canada, Norway, and Denmark.
- Initiated and led the design of a new tourism accommodation standard (the FI Welcome Standard) for atypical properties.
- Maintained the national quality assurance framework in 18 tourism sectors (80,000 beds) by managing two service providers. Subsequently initiated and guided a complex procurement process to introduce a technology-based solution provided by one service provider, resulting in significant efficiencies.
- I influenced and informed the development, launch and implementation of the new Irish Standard, “Universal Design for Customer Engagement in Tourism services” as an invited member of the NSAI/NDA development committee.
- Secured Authority approval to review and future proof FI's statutory responsibility for tourism product standards in order to address dated legislation and to introduce new technology in the field. This has resulted in a tender for new service providers and a significant research project to identify solutions to the legislative problem.
- Identified four applied research projects at PhD level and gained funding approval over two years.

2009 –2012, Head, Visitor and Trade Engagement Division Responsibilities encompassed two primary activities:

- Visitor Engagement entails the operation of 57 tourist information offices (TIO).
- Trade Engagement has two elements:
 - a. The organisation of over 1200 familiarisation trips to Ireland for journalists and tourism operators from key overseas markets. The objective is to gain media coverage at a value that is a multiple of what the equivalent coverage would cost to buy.
 - b. Organising promotional representation for Irish trade and consumers at over 50 events annually.

Achievements, in collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders and colleagues, were:

- Refocused Tourist Information Office (TIO) network on information provision and away from retail sales through a change programme which introduced the following.
 - a) An event ticketing system for the TIO's
 - b) A call management system for the TIO's
 - c) The provision of information touch screens and the development of a new concept 'totem' tourist information kiosk to capitalise on new technology.
 - d) A new suite of visitor centric maps (over 1.5 million copies p.a.)
 - e) A new suite of pocket guidebooks (over 400,000 copies p.a.)
 All these initiatives were informed, and measured, by annual research on visitor feedback.
- Contributed to the design and provision of the Dublin Castle press centre for 2 state visits (Queen Elizabeth and President Obama) in 2011.
- Created a three-year inter-agency agreement with Ordnance Survey Ireland to capitalise on their cartography capacity and our tourist information.
- Played a key role in the staffing element of the integration of Dublin Tourism into FI in January 2012.

2003 –2009, Head, Education and Skills Development Division

Key roles included:

- The operation of a range of regional vocational training facilities in 70 locations designed to address skill deficits in the Irish tourism industry. This entailed three elements: 1) programme design and accreditation, 2) student recruitment, retention, and placement, 3) sourcing of suitable venues and negotiation with owners.
- Working with ten Institutes of Technology to provide a suite of tourism skills programmes at FETAC level 5 and 6 to over 2,000 students recruited and funded by FI. Latterly, changes in government resource levels in 2007 led to a change of policy, and the successful renegotiation of that relationship.

Achievements include:

- Responsible for developing education policies resulting in programmes delivered through ten Institutes of Technology (2,500 students p.a.), 4 FI Training Centres in Cork, Limerick, Waterford, and Dublin, (1,200 students p.a.), and other temporary centres (2,000 students p.a.)
- Creating and maintaining a highly flexible model of training delivery which brought training to the trainee rather than the opposite. This resulted in greater uptake, improved retention rates, and increased employment, especially for women returning to work.
- Fostering a strong relationship with the third level education sector (includes Institutes, HETAC, FETAC, HEA, FÁS, IOTI, Dept of Education, CEDEFOP, Leonardo) to achieve policy objectives in a challenging environment of reducing resources and increasing demand.
- Making fundamental changes to the education budget and the funding distribution model.
- Successfully developed strong, productive relationships with the French Culinary Institute in New York, l'Ecole Grégoire Ferrandi in Paris, and the Banfi Foundation in Tuscany in order to provide benchmarked lecturer and course development.
- Negotiating a framework through which students could access FI programmes in the education system directly (CAO/CAS), rather than through FI itself.
- Chairman of the Human Resources Development Strategy review group in 2009. The objective was to examine the type of HRD development model that might be more appropriate to an industry facing

recession. This group was comprised of representatives from Fáilte Ireland, DAST, IHF, RAI, VFI, SIPTU, and the education sector.

- Leading the hospitality procedures review and providing household staff training and development in Áras an Uachtaráin at the request of the OPW in 2007/2008.
- Business Continuity planning and implementation project team member 2006 to 2011.
- Played a key role in the integration of the staff of seven organisations (Bord Fáilte, CERT, and five Regional Tourism Organisations) into one (FI) over 3 years.
- Responsible for the successful migration of all FI and CERT legacy awards to FETAC's Common Awards system.
- Initiated, developed, and published a series of 4 CD-ROMs, in 14 languages, to assist skills training of staff in the Irish hospitality industry in 2005.

**2000 –2003, Head, Industry Training and Development Division,
CERT (Council for Education and Recruitment in Tourism), Dublin.**

Key roles included

- Improving standards in the Irish tourism industry through the provision of a regional and specialist training and advisory service. This required a change management programme to redirect the focus of the division towards commercialisation and revenue growth.
- Implementing Government policy with regard to commercialisation and the need to increase revenue from services, which heretofore operated on a fully subsidised basis.

Achievements centre on managing and strengthening CERT's relationship with the tourism and hospitality industry, primarily through industry stakeholders, the Department, and the International Fund for Ireland.

**1996 –2000, Head of Academic Operations,
Shannon College of Hotel Management, Shannon Airport Shannon, Co Clare.**

Member of senior management group. Primarily academic and operations management. In addition, international placement of fifty students with hotel organisations in six countries. Also lecturing in food and beverage cost control, in hotel administration, and vocational and craft training.

**1989 –1996, Head, Industry Training and Development Division,
CERT (Council for Education and Recruitment in Tourism), Dublin.**

Oct. 1989 - Oct. 1996	Various positions (see below)	CERT, Amiens St., Dublin 1.
	Training Advisor	(College Services Section).
	Training Advisor	(Temporary Hotel Schools).

Responsibilities

- The quality operation of three temporary (October to Easter each year), residential (five day) hotel schools, in 3 different locations, in order to provide craft education and training at national certification level. This includes the assessment of tenders and potential sites, the recruitment of thirty lecturers and twelve support personnel, the development of policy and procedures for all operations, and the creation of teaching timetables.
- Liaison with two third level colleges, to ensure the satisfactory delivery of craft training, advanced craft, supervisory and adult education courses at national certification level to approximately 600 students.
- The placement and monitoring in industry of 300 to 400 craft students on paid work experience for periods of up to six months, with the co-operation of employers, their line supervisors, and college tutors.
- Act as a liaison officer between the tourism industry and CERT in a defined geographical area, with due regard for political, economic, and other sensitivities.
- Act as lecturer/mentor for the Trainee Management Development programme, a three-year, distance education package covering 60 students in my region.

1988 - 1989	Restaurant Manager.	The Alphorn Restaurant, Pittsburgh, PA, USA.
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Prestigious, fine dining Swiss restaurant for 60. (Sales \$1 m. p.a.)

1984 - 1988	Various positions (see below) Campbell Catering Group, Swords, Co. Dublin.	
Jan. 1987 - Sept. 1987		Contract Manager , Dublin Institute of Technology, Dublin. Opened and operated a new facility catering for a daily population of 8,000 students, staff, and visitors.
July 1986 - Jan. 1987		Deputising Manager , University of Limerick, Co. Limerick. Catering for 3,800 students, staff, and visitors in seven outlets.
March 1986 - July 1986		Onboard Services Manager , B and I Ferry Co. Dublin, Ireland. Responsibility for all on-board services including accommodation, catering, and retail duty-free.
March 1984 - July 1986		Offshore Supervisor , Marathon Oil Company, Cork, Ireland. Full hotel service supplied on two gas platforms offshore Ireland.
June 1981 - Mar. 1984	Manager/Director	Bar / Restaurant, Kinsale, Co. Cork.
Sept. 1980 - Mar. 1981	Night Manager.	Berkeley Court Hotel, Dublin 4.
Sept. 1979 - May 1980	Assistant Manager.	Richmond Arms Hotel, England.
Aug. 1978 - Aug. 1979	Mess Manager.	U. N. Emergency Force, Egypt.
Apr. 1978 - Aug. 1978	Cashier/receptionist.	Dukes Hotel, London SW1.
June 1977 - Feb. 1978	Junior Assistant Manager.	Ashford Castle, Cong, Co. Mayo.

Academic Achievements

2010	University of Adelaide, Australia	Le Cordon Bleu Master of Arts (Gastronomy)
June 2001	Hotel General Manager's Programme	Cornell University
1996 – 1998	Diploma in Wine and Spirits	Institute of Wine and Spirits
1994	Oxford Brookes University, England	Master of Science (Hotel & Catering Management)
1977	Dublin Institute of Technology	National Diploma (Hotel Management)

Advocacy activities

2019	Guest Lecturer on the MA Gastronomy programme, TU Dublin, Cathal Brugha Street February 21 st , 2 nd International Gastronomy Tourism Conference at the 14 th International Tourism Fair in Navarre, Spain. 19 th March, Tay Cities Regional Tourism Conference, Dundee Rep Theatre. <i>“Ireland, A perspective on Food Tourism”</i> November 2 nd , World Food Travel Association FoodTreX London. Speaker
2018	Guest Lecturer on the MA Gastronomy programme, DIT, Cathal Brugha Street Member of the Communications Committee (Jan-Dec) and the Nominations Committee (May- Dec) of the Joint Governing Bodies Strategy Steering Group to oversee the selection of a President of TU Dublin. Appointed External Examiner for the Advanced Diploma in Hospitality Management at the Seychelles Tourism Academy by the Academic Standing Committee of National University of Ireland Galway (to August 2022). 27 th September, Paper delivered at the International Gastronomy Workshop <i>“Food tourism: A piece of cake”</i> in Ramada Plaza Thraki Hotel and Spa, Alexandroupoulos, Thrace, Greece. <i>“Definition and history of Gastronomy tourism in Europe and other continents”</i>
2017	7 th November, paper delivered at the World Food Travel Association session, World Travel Market, ExCel convention centre, London. <i>“Getting Food Tourism Right”</i> . 17 th – 19 th November, Paper delivered at the Food and Society Conference, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. <i>Where Food, Tourism and State Agencies Meet: An Auto Ethnographic Perspective from Ireland</i>

- 2016 Member of the Joint Governing Bodies Strategy Steering Group, representing D.I.T. on the journey to create a new Technological University in Dublin from a merger of DIT, IOT Tallaght and IOT Blanchardstown. (to Dec 2018, TU Dublin established Jan 2019)
Appointed to SOLAS Hospitality Skills Oversight Group (to October 2017)
External Examiner for Master's Thesis, Tralee Institute of Technology
Nov 1st: touRRroir: A www.goodfoodireland.ie/ forum on food tourism and culture. Croke Park, Dublin. Panel member.
August, Bord Bia TASTE Council Food Summer School, Co Wicklow. Panel member.
June 2nd, Restaurant Association of Ireland Symposium, Shelbourne Hotel, Dublin. Symposium theme: *'Nurturing Talent, Exploring Trends'*. Paper delivered: *Culinary Apprenticeships*
April 27th – 29th, 2nd UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism, Lima, Peru. Member of "Training and Skills in Gastronomy Tourism" Panel, and workshop leader.
- 2015 Member of the Expert Group on Future Skills Needs steering group for the Assessment of Future Skills Requirements in the Hospitality sector in Ireland, 2015-2020. Report published November 2015
Nominated by City of Dublin Education and Training Board to the Governing Body of the Dublin Institute of Technology (to Dec 2018).
Chair, QQI Standards Review Group: Tour Guide Awards (to July 2016)
December 11th, Bergamo University Congress on Food Tourism. Title of Presentation: *Ireland: A Perspective on Food Tourism*.
September 10th, 25th Economic Forum, Krynica, Poland. Guest speaker on Food Tourism at the session "Creative Cities and Regions – How Will Creative Industries Affect Tourism?"
August 24th, Bord Bia TASTE Council Food Summer School, Co Wicklow. Keynote speaker, *Our Future is Food: the food tourist and the artisan*
One of three national Judges for the European Commission EDEN (European Destinations of Excellence) Award, Tourism and Local Gastronomy category. The winner was The Burren Food Trail.
June 24th, Korea-OECD Conference, "Hansik (Korean cuisine) Promoting Food, Culture and Tourism" during EXPO Milan 2015. Guest speaker
May 22nd, 11th Conference of the Association of Franco-Irish Studies, University of La Rochelle, France. "Travel in France and Ireland: Tourism, Sport and Culture". *Gastronomy in Tourism is important, but perhaps not in the way that we thought*.
March 24th, Restaurant Association of Ireland Symposium at the Aviva Stadium, Dublin. Guest speaker on hospitality and tourism.
- 2014 Founding member of Culinary Apprenticeship Consortium (to October 2017)
External Examiner to Tralee Institute of Technology for Tourism Programmatic Review
- 2012 Member of the NSAI committee to develop a new Irish Standard, "Universal Design for Customer Engagement in Tourism services".
May 29th, Paper delivered at the Dublin Gastronomy Symposium, D.I.T. *Gastronomic tourism as an economic driver in Ireland, promoted and practiced by government, business, and civil society*.
- 2011 August, Bord Bia TASTE Council Food Summer School, Co Wicklow. "The Future is Food: The Artisan and Brand Ireland": Panel member.
- 2010 September 18th to 23rd, Culinary Tourism Thought Leadership World Summit, Nova Scotia, Canada. Guest speaker: *Enriching the culinary traveller value proposition*.
- 2009 Appointed by Minister of Education as Council member of the Further Education and Training Awards Council. Subsequently assigned to the Audit Committee and appointed Chair of the Policies Committee of the Council. FETAC amalgamated into QQI in 2012.

Publications

2019 (a) "Gastro Tourism"

In: Lucey, B., Maher, E. & O'Brien, E. (eds) Recalling the Celtic Tiger. Oxford: Peter Lang

2019 (b) "Historical Evolution of Gastronomic Tourism" (Chapter 2)

- In: Dixit, S. K. (ed.) The Routledge Handbook of Gastronomic Tourism. London: Routledge.*
- 2019 (c) "Building a tourism destination using gastronomy through creative collaboration" (Chapter 5)
In: Dixit, S. K. (ed.) The Routledge Handbook of Gastronomic Tourism. London: Routledge.
- 2019 (d) "Where Food, Tourism and State Agencies Meet: An Auto Ethnographic Perspective from Ireland" (Section 3, Chapter 6) *In: Olmedo & Kay (eds) Proceedings of the 2017 Food & Society Conference in Kuala Lumpur: Taste, Culture, Education. The National University of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: UKM Press (the National University of Malaysia's Press).*
- 2017(a) Case Study: Gastronomy & Tourism in Ireland, in Chapter 2 - Product development and experiences in gastronomy tourism. *UNWTO Global Report in Gastronomy Tourism. Spain: UNWTO.*
- 2017 (b) "Food (in) Tourism is important, or is it?" *In: Healey, F. & Bastiat, B. (eds.) Voyages between France and Ireland: Tourism, Sport and Culture. Oxford: Peter Lang.*
- 2017 (c) "Irlanda: una Panoramica sul Turismo Enogastronomico" ("Ireland: A Perspective on Food Tourism"). *In: Garibaldi, R. (ed.) In viaggio per cibo e vino Esperienze creative a confronto (Travelling for food and wine. Creative experiences in comparison). Volume II Italy: University of Bergamo. Rome, Italy: Aracne Editrice*
- 2016 "Does regionality matter? The experience in Ireland". *In: Hall, C. M. & Gössling, S. (eds.) Food Tourism and Regional Development. London: Routledge.*
- 2015 "Future Consumption: Gastronomy and Public Policy." *In: Yeoman, I., McMahon-Beattie, U., Fields, K., Albrecht, J. & Meethan, K. (eds.) The Future of Food Tourism: Foodies, Experiences, Exclusivity, Visions and Political Capital. UK: Channel View Publications.*
- 2014(a) "Transforming Ireland through gastronomic nationalism promoted and practiced by government, business, and civil society." *In: Mac Con Iomaire, M. & Maher, E. (eds.) 'Tickling the Palate': Gastronomy in Irish Literature and Culture. Bern; New York: Peter Lang.*
- 2014(b) Mossberg, L., Mulcahy, J., Shah, N. M. & Svensson, I. 2014. "Best Practices in destination Food Tourism Branding." *In: Bussell, J., Campbell, C., McAree, K. & Lange-Faria, W. (eds.) Have Fork Will Travel: A Practical Handbook for Food & Drink Tourism Professionals. Portland, Oregon, USA: World Food Travel Association.*
- 2010 *Making the Case for a Viable, Sustainable Gastronomic Tourism Industry in Ireland. Le Cordon Bleu Master of Arts (Gastronomy). Dissertation, University of Adelaide.*
- 1999 Vocational work experience in the hospitality industry: characteristics and strategies. *Education + Training, Vol. 41:4 pp. 164 - 174.*
- 1998 Vocational work experience in the hospitality industry: characteristics and strategies *Journal of European Industrial Training, 22, 128-137.*
- 1994 'A study of the facilitation of effective, craft related work experience in the Irish Hotel, Catering and Tourism Industry', research dissertation for Master of Science, Oxford Brookes University (UK)
- 1991 'The "missions locales" in France', CEDEFOP Travel Notes, December, page 91.

Appendix 2: Ministers of Tourism and name of the Department at the time, in chronological order, 1980 - 2020

Name	Date	Name of Department at the time
Catherine Martin	27 th June, 2020	Minister for Media, Tourism, Arts, Culture, Sport and the Gaeltacht (Department of the Taoiseach, 2020)
Shane Ross	2016-2020	Transport, Tourism and Sport (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
Paschal Donohoe	2014-2016	Transport, Tourism and Sport (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
	1 April 2011	Transfer of Tourism and Sport to the Department of Transport (Office of the Attorney General, 2011)
Leo Varadkar	2011-2014	Transport, Tourism and Sport (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
Mary Hanafin	2010 - 2011	Tourism, Culture and Sport (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
	2 May 2010	Renamed as the Department of Tourism, Culture and Sport (Office of the Attorney General, 2010)
Martin Cullen	2008-2010	Arts, Sports and Tourism (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
Seamus Brennan	2007-2008	Arts, Sports and Tourism (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
John O'Donoghue	2002-2207	Arts, Sport and Tourism (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
	19 June 2002	Renamed as the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism (Office of the Attorney General, 2002)
James McDaid	1997-2002	Tourism, Sport and Recreation (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
	12 July 1997	Renamed as the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation (Office of the Attorney General, 1997)

Name	Date	Name of Department at the time
Enda Kenny	1994-1997	Tourism and Trade (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
Charlie McCreevy	1993-1994	Tourism and Trade (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
	20 January 1993	Department of Energy renamed as the Department of Tourism and Trade (Office of the Attorney General, 1993b) Transfer of Tourism from the Department of Tourism, Transport and Communications (Office of the Attorney General, 1993a)
Charlie McCreevy	1993	Tourism, Transport and Communications (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
Maire Geoghegan-Quinn	1992-1993	Tourism, Transport and Communications (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
Seamus Brennan	1991-1992	Tourism, Transport and Communications (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
	6 February 1991	Renamed as the Department of Tourism, Transport and Communications (Office of the Attorney General, 1991)
Seamus Brennan	1989-1991	Tourism and Transport (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
John P Wilson	1987-1989	Tourism and Transport (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
	31 March 1987	Transfer of Tourism from the Department of Marine to the Department of Transport (Office of the Attorney General, 1987b)
	19 March 1987	Renamed as the Department of the Marine (Office of the Attorney General, 1987a)
Liam Kavanagh	1986-1987	Tourism, Fisheries and Forestry (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
	18 February 1986	Transfer of Tourism from the Department of Industry, Trade, Commerce and Tourism to the Department of Fisheries and Forestry (Office of the Attorney General, 1986)

Name	Date	Name of Department at the time
John Bruton	1983-1986	Industry, Trade, Commerce and Tourism (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
	17 December 1983	Renamed the Department of Industry, Trade, Commerce and Tourism (Office of the Attorney General, 1983)
John Bruton	1983	Trade, Commerce and Tourism (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
Desmond J O'Malley	1982	Trade, Commerce and Tourism (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
	21 August 1981	Renamed as the Department of Trade, Commerce and Tourism (Office of the Attorney General, 1981)
Desmond J O'Malley	1980-1981	Industry, Commerce and Tourism (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
	24 January 1980	Transfer of Tourism from the Department of Tourism and Transport to the Department of Industry, Commerce and Tourism (Office of the Attorney General, 1980)
George Colley	December 1979 - January 1980	Tourism and Transport (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
Pádraig Faulkner	1977-1979	Tourism and Transport (Houses of the Oireachtais, 2020)
	23 September 1977	Renamed as the Department of Tourism and Transport (Office of the Attorney General, 1977)
	31 October 1961	Responsibility for Tourism given to Department of Transport and Power (Office of the Attorney General, 1952)
	Tourist Traffic Act, 1952	An Bord Fáilte established, responsible to, and funded by, the Department of Industry and Commerce