

THE CONTAINMENT OF HERITAGE:  
SETTING LIMITS TO THE GROWTH  
OF HERITAGE IN IRELAND

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# THE CONTAINMENT OF HERITAGE: SETTING LIMITS TO THE GROWTH OF HERITAGE IN IRELAND

Pat Cooke

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# Contents

LIST OF FIGURES AND TABLES	viii	
ABBREVIATIONS	viii	
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	ix	
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	xi	
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.1 Goals and methods	1
	1.2 Structure	1
2	DEFINING HERITAGE, MAPPING ITS GROWTH	4
	2.1 What is heritage?	4
	2.2 The production of heritage: international context	6
	2.3 The production of heritage: the Irish experience	7
	2.4 'Heritage Dissonance'	8
	2.5 The growth of heritage in Ireland: key factors	11
	2.5.1 Legislative developments	11
	2.5.2 The Operational Programmes for Tourism: a survey of heritage attractions in Ireland	13
	2.6 Conclusion	18
3	THE ECONOMY OF HERITAGE	19
	3.1 Heritage and market failure	19
	3.2 Contingent Valuation	20
	3.2.1 Contingent Valuation and Irish heritage policy	22
	3.3 Tourism and heritage	26
	3.3.1 The growth of heritage tourism	26
	3.3.2 Sustainable tourism?	29
	3.4 Conclusion	31

4	THE ADMINISTRATION OF HERITAGE	33
	4.1 Levels of government and 'fiscal illusion'	33
	4.2 Heritage and subsidiarity	35
	4.3 The role of experts in regulation	37
	4.3.1 Expertise and 'asymmetrical information'	38
	4.4 The voluntary sector	39
	4.5 Conclusion	42
5	HERITAGE, LANDSCAPE AND THE AUDIT CULTURE	44
	5.1 Landscape and the heritage gaze	44
	5.2 The audit culture	45
	5.2.1 Balancing conservation and innovation	48
	5.3 Information versus choice	49
	5.4 Conclusion	49
6	THE ROLE OF CLASSIFICATION	51
	6.1 The uses and abuses of classification	51
	6.2 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage: international, national, regional and local, record only	53
	6.3 Properties in state care and 'national' significance	57
	6.4 Conclusion	60
7	MOVABLE HERITAGE: COLLECTION POLICIES AND DE-ACCESSIONING	63
	7.1 De-accessioning in context: the need for collections policies	63
	7.2 The National Museum of Ireland	64
	7.3 The statutory burden	65
	7.4 Re-balancing priorities: archaeology and the National Museum	66
	7.5 The case for a National Archaeological Repository	68
	7.6 De-accessioning	70
	7.7 The practice of de-accessioning	73
	7.8 The limits of archaeology	75
	7.9 Conclusion	77

8	POLICY FRAMEWORK: A SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS	78
8.1	The overall challenge	78
8.2	Conceptual elements	78
8.3	Economic elements	79
8.4	Administrative elements	80
8.5	The socio-political challenge	81
	APPENDIX 1: Criteria for statistical table on state sector expenditure on heritage	83
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	90

## List of figures and tables

Figure 2.1	Foundation dates of existing Irish heritage attractions, 1700-2000	15
Figure 2.2	The commissioning of heritage attractions, 1700-1988 and 1989-1999 (percentage of total commissioned 1700-1999)	16
Figure 2.3	The foundation of museums, 1700-1988 and 1989-1999 (percentage of total founded 1700-1999)	17
Figure 2.4	The commissioning of visitor attractions, 1700-1999 (percentage of total commissioned 1700-1999)	17
Table 3.1	Gross estimates of state sector expenditure on heritage, 1998-2000	24
Table A.1:	Explicit state sector expenditure on heritage, 1998-2000	86

## Abbreviations

CSO	Central Statistics Office
CV	Contingent Valuation
EU	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
MPP	Monument Protection Programme (UK)
NIAH	National Inventory of Architectural Heritage
NIMBY	“Not in my backyard”
NRA	National Roads Authority
OPW	Office of Public Works
REPS	Rural Environment Protection Scheme
RPS	Record of Protected Structures
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
TDI	Tourism Development International
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation



## Executive summary

This paper examines the expansionary pressures at work within the field of heritage, exposing governments and public bodies to inexorably increasing funding commitments. The purpose of the study is to give some insight into the causes and nature of heritage expansion and to suggest ways in which the state can adjust heritage policy to find a more realistic balance between conservational aspirations and limited financial and management resources.

A primary goal of the study is to bring the issue of the containable management of heritage onto the policy agenda as a strategic issue. Hitherto, the response to the ever-widening burden of heritage has been to devise strategies of co-ordination and partnership to manage more heritage better. However, this strategy does not address the question of whether the aggregate growth in all the facets of heritage outstrips the capacity of all players, no matter how well co-ordinated or integrated.

It is suggested that the definitional elusiveness and subjectivity of the idea itself lie at the root of most heritage management problems. To deal with this, it is proposed that the evolving nature of heritage as a cultural construct be subjected to much more critical analysis than at present.

The burgeoning literature on the economics of heritage is examined. Economists lay particular stress on the need to establish a broader democratic basis for determining heritage values, involving willingness-to-pay and cost benefit analysis. They challenge in particular the role of experts in determining the scope of the conservational remit and in devising the regulatory environment governing it.

The role of tourism, particularly as mediated through the two EU Operational Programmes for tourism that ran between 1989-99, is examined. The new-found commitment by tourism agencies to the notion of sustainability is questioned: tourism still seems to be largely driven by growth targets rather than realistic sustainability indicators, and the need to strengthen the latter is recommended as one means of ensuring that tourism does not continue to be one of the main vectors of inexorable heritage expansion.

In an analysis of the administrative arrangements for heritage management, a central contention is that the absence of effective forms of subsidiarity compounds unrealistic perceptions of heritage costs. The division between financial control, retained largely by central government, and devolved powers of designation exercised by local authorities, is questioned as contributing to a cost-free perception of heritage among citizens ('fiscal illusion'). The absence of local taxation or rating systems is identified as a particular weakness in this context.

Environmentalist, or holistic, perceptions of heritage are challenged as a potentially major contributor to heritage growth. Such perceptions of heritage give rise to ambitious inventory and audit processes that have significant costs associated with them, and over which it is difficult to determine limits or achieve finality. Against this trend, it is contended that heritage policies need to refocus on processes of choice, selection and representative sampling. It is also suggested that the potentially fossilising power of the 'heritage gaze' needs to be tempered by the values of creativity and innovation, particularly in terms of the role of modern architecture in heritage contexts.

Classification processes are examined as one of the practical means of ensuring that heritage definition is subject to active choice and selection. Weaknesses in one of the principal classifications governing the built heritage (international, national, regional, local) are examined as a way of emphasising the need for more rigorous classificatory procedures.

In the final section, some changes to collection management policies are advocated as a means of controlling the rate of expansion in museum collections and the movable heritage. Active de-accessioning policies are advocated. In the case of the National Museum, it is suggested that the overall mission of the Museum is potentially distorted by its archaeological burden, exacerbated by recent legislative innovations. It is recommended that the management of Irish archaeology be rationalised through the setting up of a 'National Archaeological Repository'. The presuppositions governing Irish archaeological practice are challenged, and the need to strengthen theoretical frameworks with a view to refining research questions and the better management of archiving processes is recommended.

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Pat Cooke



# Introduction

## 1.1 Goals and methods

Given the many forms heritage takes in the contemporary world, this paper sets out to examine its expansionary tendencies from a number of perspectives: how it is defined, economic factors, administrative arrangements, inventorisation and classification processes, and collections management. In all cases, the purpose will be to identify whether or which policy adjustments would serve to contain the expansionary pressures at work, limiting in turn the pressure on public funds.

The method of enquiry is to look at the challenge of containment as both a generic issue that transcends national boundaries and one that takes specific forms within Ireland. Heritage exists simultaneously at global, national, and local levels. We have World Heritage sites, heritage within countries deemed to be of both international and national importance, and other forms of local heritage particular to community identity. Looking comparatively at international experience in dealing with aspects of heritage growth, therefore, may contribute usefully to the shaping of policy for Irish heritage. This comparative approach is central to the method of this paper.

In this context, it is important to stress at the outset that the paper does not advocate zero or negative growth in the built, movable or natural dimensions of heritage. It simply notes that current rates of growth are prone to exponential rates of expansion. Ways have to be found of setting boundaries or limits to the meaning and application of heritage, in a way that gives substance to that often glibly used word, sustainability. For clearly, if there are no practical limits to what is meant by heritage, if it amounts to a blank cheque drawn on present and future generations, we are facing a burden that is ultimately unsustainable.

## 1.2 Structure

The analysis begins in Chapter 2 by looking at the definition and production of heritage, with particular attention given to the ways

in which the definitional elusiveness of the phenomenon contribute to its growth, producing an ever-increasing range of things now designated as heritage, requiring direct or indirect subsidisation from public funds to support it. This is followed by an account of the nature and rate of expansion in heritage in Ireland over recent years. The broad cultural and economic forces shaping that expansion are described, and the findings of a telephone survey on Irish heritage attractions are presented as an empirical indicator of the expansionary trend in a key facet of the heritage phenomenon. Chapter 2 also places Irish heritage within a broader context of growth internationally, showing how the Irish experience is not at all unique. The chapter concludes by highlighting how emerging international concerns about the capacity to cope with heritage growth can inform Irish attempts to deal with it.

Chapter 3 examines the economic factors at play in the expansion of heritage. The discussion here is set in the context of a growing international debate amongst economists about the resource implications of heritage expansion. Particular attention is paid to the opportunity costs of heritage in terms of other public services and whether it is possible to make policy adjustments that bring measurement of the public interest in heritage more realistically into line with expert valuations of it. In the latter part of the chapter, tourism is identified as having had a major economic impact on heritage in Ireland by forging a connection between economic development and heritage infrastructure. The recent shift in tourism planning towards sustainability goals is also examined to see whether the strategy is contributing effectively to sustainable growth in the heritage field.

Chapter 4 develops some of the implications of the economic analysis in terms of heritage administration. In particular, the concept of 'fiscal illusion' is shown to be rooted in an overly centralised approach to heritage administration and a corresponding absence of effective forms of subsidiarity. This leads on to an analysis of the role of expert valuations of heritage and the voluntary sector's potential to contribute more effectively to the management of heritage on a partnership basis with the public sector.

Chapter 5 examines the recent tendency to perceive or define heritage in terms of landscape, and how this has resulted in unprecedented schemes to inventorise or audit heritage on a massive scale. It is suggested that there is a confusion here between ecological

and heritage values, resulting in too broad a perception of the heritage content of landscape. It is argued that there is a need to shift the emphasis from comprehensive inventorisation towards strategies of selection and choice if the heritage resource is to be kept within manageable proportions.

Chapter 6 looks more practically at how choice and selection can be further enabled through the more rigorous classification processes. In particular, the stratification of heritage into international, national, regional and local dimensions is examined for overlap, duplication and redundancy.

Chapter 7 discusses a range of issues revolving around collections management policies and the moveable heritage. The need to develop more proactive de-accessioning policies is advocated. In the case of the National Museum of Ireland, the burden of maintaining archaeological collections is identified as presenting particularly acute management problems, and proposals are made as to how the management of the archaeological heritage could be put on a more rational basis.

Finally, Chapter 8 draws together ideas explored throughout the paper into a summary set of proposals for an outline policy framework for the containable management of heritage.

## Defining heritage, mapping its growth

### 2.1 What is heritage?

If there were an easy or adequate answer to this question there would probably have been no need for this paper. For the challenge of containing heritage begins with the elusive nature of the thing itself. The word 'heritage' represents not so much a precise concept as a vaguely apprehended sentiment. Its meaning is often taken to be self-evident, but it is not. Russell (1997:72) describes heritage as a term 'better understood for its "psychological resonance" than precise meaning'.

Perhaps the widest definition of the word has been offered by Lord Charteris, speaking in 1985 as Chairman of the British National Heritage Memorial Fund. Heritage, he said, was 'anything you want'. It is a definition which at least has the virtue of candour, and the value of drawing attention to the subjective nature of the concept. Consistent with the logic of this approach, the National Heritage Memorial Fund stated in its first report for 1980-81 that it would let heritage define itself; 'we awaited requests for assistance from those who believed they had a part of the national heritage worth saving', the report explained, and funds were disbursed accordingly (Hewison, 1989:15).

Pearce (1998:1) in her definition of 'cultural heritage' insists more systematically on its subjective nature. The notion of cultural heritage she defines as embracing 'any and every aspect of life which individuals, in their variously scaled social groups consider explicitly or implicitly to be part of their self-definition'. Klammer (1997:74) shows more practically in the context of Dutch experience how, when facing a windmill, 'one Dutchman will see an obstacle to progress that can be removed at all expense and another a heritage of Dutch culture that has to be saved at all expense'; the value of cultural heritage, he concludes, 'is in the eye of the beholder'. Those who insist on the subjectivity of heritage emphasise how it involves choices. Goodey (1998:198) defines heritage as 'the material and non-material aspects of a culture which someone chooses to select from



past experience to be identified, contained and conserved for present or future use'.

But however valid the emphasis on subjectivity might be theoretically, it was never likely to be sufficient in the context of legislative provisions to regulate and control heritage, where at least the semblance of 'objective' definition is required. Here, the formula most usually followed is to bypass the insurmountable vagueness of the word itself by attempting to catalogue its putatively more tangible constituent elements. Thus the word is provided with qualifiers to narrow the scope of its meaning, with 'national', 'built', 'natural' or (as with Pearce above) 'cultural' serving as the most common adjectival props.

The UN Convention on the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage (1972) is frequently used as a reference for such exercises. Articles 1 and 2 of the Convention divide heritage into its 'built' and 'natural' components. The built heritage is further sub-defined into monuments, groups of buildings, and sites. However, Article 3 goes on to declare that 'it is for each State party to this Convention to identify and delineate the different properties situated on its territory mentioned in articles 1 and 2 above', which appears to unravel the effort of definition into something approaching the Charteris notion of heritage as 'anything you want'.

Ireland's Heritage Act (1995) broadly follows this formula by defining the 'national heritage' as 'including monuments, archaeological objects, heritage objects, architectural heritage, flora, fauna, wildlife habitats, landscapes, seascapes, wrecks, geology, heritage gardens and parks, inland waterways'. The list, while containing specific items, is capable of alteration and expansion ('including'); clearly contains some features that are wider than the category itself (there is more to landscapes and seascapes than their heritage content), as well as an element of tautology (heritage objects and architectural heritage), and omits reference to intangible heritage (folklore, music, language).

These examples show how difficult it is to arrive at definitions of heritage stable enough to provide a secure platform for regulatory functions. The categories are subject to refinement and expansion, but rarely to contraction. Benhamou (1998:75) has described the French experience as one where 'the concept of heritage is becoming more and more extended ... and the increase in the number of protected monuments or artefacts is dramatic'. She warns finally

that 'heritage policies promote their own destruction by widening the definition of heritage'.

Clearly, some working definition of the concept is needed to provide a platform for legislative and administrative practice. However, the expansionary tendencies of heritage cannot be adequately explained by concentrating exclusively on how it is defined. To understand more fully this expansionary tendency, it is necessary to look at heritage in its historical dimensions, and at the social and cultural factors that influence how it is produced.

## **2.2 The production of heritage: international context**

The rapid growth of heritage is not unique to Ireland, but a global phenomenon. To take just one indicator, 95 per cent of the world's museums post-date the Second World War. The exponential nature of this explosion has generated an ever-increasing tension between aspirations and resources. Lowenthal (1997) sees the effects of heritage as virtually global in their reach. He warns that 'crusades to save endangered heritage take little heed of custodial resources'. The dilemma posed by the resulting 'heritage glut' he describes in the following dramatic terms:

Only in our time ... has the glut become suffocatingly unmanageable. Yet heritage is such a sacred cow that few will heed a call to halt its growth. For example, Italy is so stuffed with heritage that only a fraction of it is catalogued, let alone cared for, least of all open to the public. Everyone knows this, yet no steward dares publicly affirm the unpalatable facts ... (Lowenthal, 1997:12).

So how did we arrive at this pass? If the construct of heritage is to be understood as a contemporary phenomenon, it is worth tracing how a word that started out with a relatively narrow range of reference (inheritance and the legal rights and conditions attaching thereto) underwent a process of category expansion which, in the most pervasive contemporary interpretation, embraces the total environment in its built and natural dimensions (discussed below in Chapter 5).

Stanziola (1998) has traced the growth of heritage in the American context. He shows how, until the 1940s, the rationale for preservation remained limited to patriotism (George Washington's home at Mount Vernon was one of the first historic buildings to be

protected and presented to the public) and aesthetic inspiration (landscapes protected by the National Parks system were chosen primarily for their sublime and picturesque qualities). But it was nationalism that provided the principal framing device for heritage throughout the nineteenth and well into the twentieth century. Then, beginning in the 1950s, the governmental focus on heritage broadened out to include the contribution of heritage to the historic environment and its role in maintaining the fabric of community at local as well as national levels. Under this rationale, in which aesthetic, educational, economic and communitarian values were merged, the meaning of heritage widened dramatically in a very short time. Heritage no longer covered just the narrow ground of nationalist iconography and elitist collections of high art, but embraced the wide expanse of popular culture and its sub-cultures. As Lowenthal (1997:67) puts it, 'patrimony everywhere ceases to be exclusive to elites' and now mainly denotes 'what belongs to and certifies us as communal members'.

Goodey (1998) traces an analogous growth in the British context. Until the 1960s, heritage was 'a modest compilation of large structures' (and mostly aristocratic ones at that). Post-1960, a number of new factors led to a rapid expansion in the perceived range of heritage. Among these, perhaps the most significant are what he describes as 'democratisation of culture' (in the sense just outlined) and 'geographical equality'. Geographical equality is closely linked to the embracing of popular culture, and grew out of the decline of heavy industries in the 1970s, for long the source of regional and local self-confidence throughout Great Britain. Confronted with the challenge of revitalising communities undergoing economic collapse or stagnation, local authorities and regional tourism and development boards turned increasingly to 'designers of a new geography' that relied on nostalgia and historic association to fill the void.

### **2.3 The production of heritage: the Irish experience**

Many of these features can be traced in the Irish context, but within a somewhat later timeframe. In Ireland, the perception of heritage remained until very recently overwhelmingly centred on the iconography of national identity. From its origins in 1877 until well into the post-1922 period of independence, the National Museum of Ireland remained the dominant, and virtually the singular, repository

of Irish nationalist iconography in material form. Ireland's first regional museum, Cork Public Museum, opened only in 1945. By 1974 there were still only three local authority museums in the state (Cork, Dublin Civic and Monaghan County). Even then, the collection categories of these museums mirrored those of the National Museum (archaeology, art and industry, folk life, the fight for national independence from the local perspective), revealing them to be more provincial than local in their mentality.

But in Ireland it was tourism above all that contributed to the evolution of a 'new geography' in which heritage was projected as an agent of economic development and the variegated richness of Irish culture. With the turbo-charging effect of EU development funding in the eighties and nineties, came, for the first time, real dispute over exactly *which* and *whose* values were being articulated through the construction of heritage.

If ever there had been an innocent consensus about a national heritage, and popular deference towards the state's cultural agencies as the articulators of it, it was decisively shattered by the visitor centre controversies of the nineties. When the Office of Public Works initiated construction work on two new visitor centre facilities to serve as gateways to nascent national parks at Mullaghmore in County Clare and at Luggala in County Wicklow, they were met with vigorous opposition from local community and environmental groups objecting to the centres on aesthetic and environmental grounds. These groups proved dramatically successful in their goals. The state was eventually obliged to abandon both projects when judicial decisions went against it, despite the considerable investment that had already been made in them. Superficially, the episode might have appeared a triumphant exercise in putting a halt to the growth of heritage. However the opposition groups in both cases made it clear that they were objecting not to visitor centres as such, only to the chosen locations, and insisted that the allocated monies should be spent on relocated facilities.

#### 2.4 'Heritage Dissonance'

The visitor centre controversies involved the shedding of innocence regarding the nature of heritage, hitherto assumed to be a cultural force that operated overwhelmingly to forge convergence and consensus around the project of national identity. However, the overwhelmingly up-beat rhetoric which surrounds heritage, laying

stress on its celebratory tone and role as a unifying cultural force ('unity in diversity') masks the extent to which it is just as often about articulating difference and dissonance. Thus, even the nationalist project itself could be seen as a form of group consensus opposed to and often in conflict with other nationalities, a phenomenon that finds a sharp contemporary illustration in the crumbling of Yugoslavia – and indeed in the case of the two traditions that define and divide Northern Ireland.

Regrettably, one man's myth becomes all-too readily another's poison. The very same impulses that shape heritage into a vehicle of *identity* can equally serve to mark out *difference* and division. Spurred perhaps by the darker lessons in heritage provided by Yugoslavia, the study of heritage dissonance has become a major focus of recent theoretical work on the subject. The most substantial contribution in this respect has been Tunbridge and Ashworth's (1996) *Dissonant Heritage: The Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict*. The critical aspect of their analysis for present purposes is how the authors demonstrate a link between the dissonant nature of heritage and its inherently expansionary nature.

At the core of how heritage is produced lies the question of whose heritage for whom – the issue of representation. As the power of nation states becomes diluted under the external influence of globalisation and multi-culturalism, heritage is subjected to simultaneous internal pressure from competing forms of localised, group and ethnic identity. Conflicting, or dissonant, perceptions of heritage arise from these competing perspectives.

As a result, the issue of representativeness has become more multi-layered and complex. Not so long ago, it was sufficient for a heritage resource to be declared 'nationally significant' for it to be seen as heritage at all. This is no longer so. There is an increasing tendency for the local, regional or national planes of heritage significance to be disputed between groups and interests operating at these various levels. Such competition leads to *more* heritage rather than less, as the range of heritage resources multiplies and diversifies to accommodate demands for the adequate recognition of multi-layered cultural diversity. The ironic conclusion here is that the more we tend to disagree about heritage, the more of it we are likely to produce.

The resource base from which heritage is selected consists of a wide variety of physical relics and places, of folk memories,

mythologies, and biographical associations – that is, of tangible and intangible elements. Nevertheless, the fact that so much of heritage is bound up with material objects and places appears to set an ‘objective’ limit to its production. But this is deceptive: the expansionary nature of heritage is due to the deeply subjective nature of the concept itself. Heritage exists in the *interpretation*, not the things interpreted. Tunbridge and Ashworth’s conclusion – that there is ‘no fixed resource endowment’ – is worth quoting at length:

The idea that there exists a fixed quantity of a conservable past that is recognisable through objective, universal and measurable sets of intrinsic criteria, underpinned the urban conservation movement through most of its history of development. Inventories were constructed and protective legislation framed on just such assumptions of an ultimately listable, agreed, fixed quantity. The revelation gradually dawned that such assumptions were untenable as heritage did not exist in a fixed and once-for-ever endowed quantity that could theoretically be included in a comprehensive inventory, but was infinitely creatable in response to demands and expectations and management skills at exploiting these, rather than the availability of materials (Tunbridge and Ashworth, 1996:9).

This contention has fundamental importance for the present analysis. It challenges in particular the assumption underlying inventory processes that posit the quantification of the resource base as the prerequisite and enabler of management strategies. But if Tunbridge and Ashworth are correct, we will never know accurately what is out there; heritage lists have an inherent capacity to grow indefinitely, to elude closure, with negative cost and containment implications (more fully discussed in Chapter 6).

No more than with healthcare or the arts, the amount of heritage that exists in a society is not quantitatively or conclusively determinable. This means that unless a conscious effort is made to set limits to the growth of the heritage stock and its demands on public finances, it will continue to accrue in a piecemeal fashion until the defined (and willy-nilly the protected) resource considerably exceeds the financial capacity to conserve it.

## 2.5 The growth of heritage in Ireland: key factors

In the course of a report in 1998 by Coopers and Lybrand into the heritage services of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and Islands, the authors noted that 'the demand profile for heritage services is both difficult to quantify in any measurable way and is subject to much subjective interpretation by many different parties'. The resulting danger is that 'the State's role in relation to heritage could constitute an almost bottomless pit in terms of its potential to consume State resources in conserving, protecting and presenting the national heritage in its widest interpretation'. They found 'little strategic focus inside or outside the department on where the boundaries or limits of demand for services by the state in the heritage arena lie'. The authors finally admit to exasperation in trying to reconcile the role of a government department that 'finds itself responding to a seemingly limitless externally-driven demand profile, while in other respects, it is itself the originator and the determiner of the demand profile' (Coopers and Lybrand, 1998: para 103).

The context for these observations is a dramatic increase in the extent of the state's exposure and commitment to conserving heritage over recent years. Two main factors have contributed to this growth in Ireland:

- the growth in the volume of regulatory legislation in recent years, much of it involving the ratification of UN protocols and EU provisions relating to heritage and environmental protection, but much of it also the result of purely Irish legislative initiatives
- the more specific impact of capital funding for heritage projects provided through the EU Operational Programmes for Tourism 1989-93 and 1994-99.

### 2.5.1 Legislative developments

Schuster (1997) insists that there are basically only five tools that government can use to manage heritage policy. These are: ownership, regulation, incentives, adjustment of property rights and information. In Ireland, the tendency has been to rely overwhelmingly on one of these tools, regulation. During the 1980s and 1990s, through a combination of endorsing international protocols and domestic legislative initiatives, there have been significant extensions to the range of sites and objects covered by heritage legislation.

Among recent initiatives deriving from international protocols are: amendments to the Planning Act (1999 and 2000) requiring local authorities to list buildings of heritage significance, rooted in Ireland's ratification of a 1985 Council of Europe agreement on architectural heritage (the Granada Convention); the setting of the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage on a statutory basis in 1999 (in response also to the Granada Convention); the current project under the aegis of Dúchas, the Heritage Service, to designate about 14 per cent of the Irish landmass as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), following Ireland's ratification of European Union directives during the 1990s. Specifically Irish governmental initiatives include: successive amendments to the original National Monuments Act of 1930 (amended in 1954, 1987 and 1994, with further amendments in prospect), considerably widening the range of structures that may be afforded protection; the Planning and Development Act (2000) requiring much more extensive intervention by archaeologists in investigating building and road construction sites; and the widening of the terms of reference under which tax exemptions for heritage properties may be claimed under Section 482 of the Finance Act.

Such legislative initiatives have led to substantial increases in the range and volume of heritage phenomena requiring protection. Over the years 1988-99, an additional 977 national monuments were registered for care, and preservation orders were issued on 65. A total of 386 properties successfully applied for tax relief under Section 482 of the Finance Act between 1983-2000.<sup>1</sup> These developments involve a substantially widened exposure to claims on the public purse in terms of grant-aid: compensation costs to owners whose properties are listed as architecturally significant structures, and to farmers when their lands are designated as SACs; research, storage and conservation costs (of archaeological finds unearthed under the planning regulations); or taxes forgone (the relief afforded under Section 482 of the Finance Act).

But it might be asked why should any of this matter, when government, perfectly legitimately, has the freedom to expand or cut budgetary allocations for heritage as wider economic circumstances dictate? The answer is that financial discretion operates independently of the expanding heritage burden, which is driven primarily by the willingness continually to widen the

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics are provided by Dúchas, the Heritage Service, Spring 2001.



heritage remit through legislation. Cuts in heritage budgets serve only to highlight the ever-widening gap between protective aspirations – or pretensions – and resources. Netzer (1998:139) has expressed this concern forcefully in terms of GDP; ‘it is almost certain’, he says, ‘that if the costs of the full protection of all of the heritage are equal to a high fraction of GDP even in a rich country, such protection will not be forthcoming and the supply of heritage services will diminish over time, as heritage elements decay and eventually disappear from the stock’. The ability to express heritage expenditure as a percentage of GDP can provide a useful strategic guide to the potential gap between conservation goals and resources. Netzer has broadly calculated that the total value of the heritage stock of the US amounts to no more than 0.05 per cent of GDP. By contrast he estimates that for Italy, with a GDP only 15 per cent that of the US but a heritage stock at least a hundred times greater, it works out (conservatively) at 35 per cent of GDP. The issue for a country like Italy, he says, is not trivial: ‘the net consumption of cultural capital is considerable, and the costs that would have to be borne in order to maintain the capital stock are far greater than the country could afford’ (Netzer:1998:140).

But all of this depends on the fundamental seriousness of the protective intent. We can continue *in principle* to legislate for as much heritage protection as we like – but if we are serious about the *actual* costs of protection we should try to keep the protected stock within manageable proportions, whether measured as a proportion of GDP or otherwise.

### 2.5.2 *The Operational Programmes for Tourism: a survey of heritage attractions in Ireland*

The other major factor in the growth of heritage in Ireland in recent years has been the two Operational Programmes for Tourism that ran over two five-year periods, 1989-94 and 1995-1999. Designed exclusively as capital funding mechanisms for tourism infrastructure, the EU Programmes identified heritage infrastructure, and particularly heritage attractions, as a major area of development. The Programmes had a significant impact, therefore, in forging a direct connection between heritage resources, tourism infrastructure and economic development.

As part of the research for this paper, a telephone survey was carried out during January to March 2001 to profile historically the

rate of growth of heritage attractions in Ireland. The purpose of the exercise was (a) to provide an empirical indicator of the growth of Irish heritage over a wide timescale (some existing Irish heritage attractions can be dated to the eighteenth century) and (b) to determine the more specific impact of the EU Programmes on the provision of heritage amenities, given that the majority of the heritage funding provided under these schemes was invested in heritage attractions.

A 'heritage attraction' is defined for present purposes as any place the public is invited to experience primarily in terms of its historical, archaeological or natural heritage significance. Heritage attractions range from national parks and historic gardens, to museums, historic houses, and heritage centres. Another defining feature is that they offer an interpretative service of some kind, whether in the form of informational panels, guided tours or exhibitions.<sup>2</sup>

Some properties only become heritage attractions at a certain point in their history. Kilmainham Gaol may be taken as an example. Opened in 1796, the building functioned solely and exclusively as a prison until its closure in 1924. In 1960 a Voluntary Restoration Society decided to restore the Gaol as a monument to Ireland's struggle for national freedom, and almost immediately began to conduct tours of the building to highlight this symbolism. Kilmainham Gaol's existence as a heritage attraction, therefore, dates from 1960. The same criterion has been used for most historic gardens, houses and places of worship.

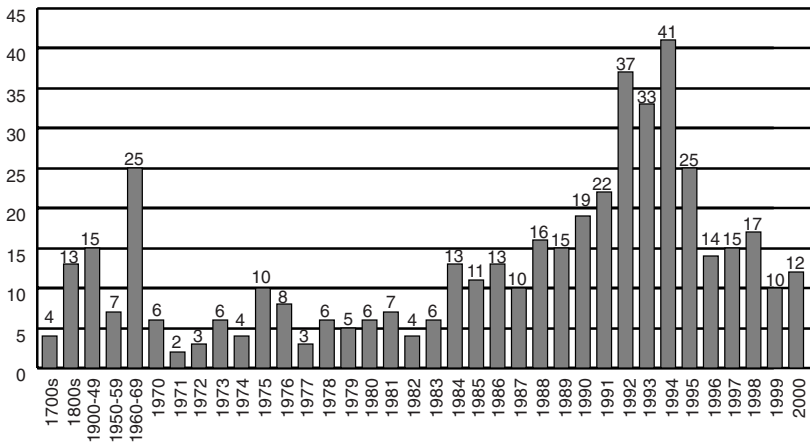
A list of heritage attractions in the Republic fulfilling these criteria was compiled using data provided by the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, the Irish Museums Association and Bord Fáilte, giving a total of 486 sites to be contacted. During the telephone survey, nine sites proved uncontactable, and nineteen were found to have closed. This left a total of 458 sites for which foundation dates were established. Respondents were asked only

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<sup>2</sup> For this reason, the 386 private homes that have achieved tax relief under Section 482 of the Finance Act between 1983-2000 are not included in the present definition. Though obliged as a condition of the relief afforded to open to the public for sixty days a year, they are excluded from the present definition because they are the product of a specific and historically recent taxation instrument. However, these properties do need to be taken into account in assembling the fuller picture of heritage expansion in Ireland in recent years.

one question: to state the year in which the place first opened or became a heritage attraction in the terms just described. While the resulting analysis presented in the following figures is by no means representative of the full range of heritage growth in all its complexity, it does, nevertheless, provide for the first time a useful profile of the rate of growth in one of the more cost-intensive aspects of heritage.

Figure 2.1: Foundation dates of existing Irish heritage attractions, 1700-2000



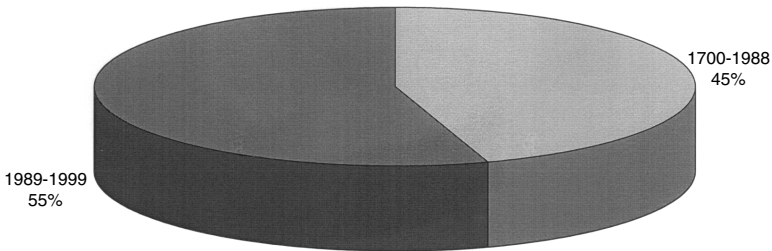
Source: Data supplied by Bord Fáilte, Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, and the Irish Museums Association.

The growth pattern should cause no surprise (Figure 2.1). It reveals the Operational Programmes for Tourism as major factors in heritage growth in Ireland in recent years. In the period of the two Programmes (1989-94 and 1995-1999), 55 per cent of all existing heritage attractions with visitor services were commissioned (Figure 2.2). Over the same period, 44 per cent of all existing museums were founded (Figure 2.3).<sup>3</sup> Seventy-three per cent of all

<sup>3</sup> It should be stressed that while the majority of attractions comprising the data received EU funding, a number of smaller museums and attractions resulted solely from independent or private initiatives.

visitor attractions have been commissioned in the twenty years to 1999 (Figure 2.4). Direct support was provided to 143 attractions under the Programmes – over 31 per cent of all existing attractions (Cooke; 2000). Though other factors also contributed to the expansion, the momentum generated by the volume of prestige projects delivered under the Programmes encouraged a raft of small-scale private initiatives to open up over the same period on the assumption that heritage and tourism were a winning commercial combination.

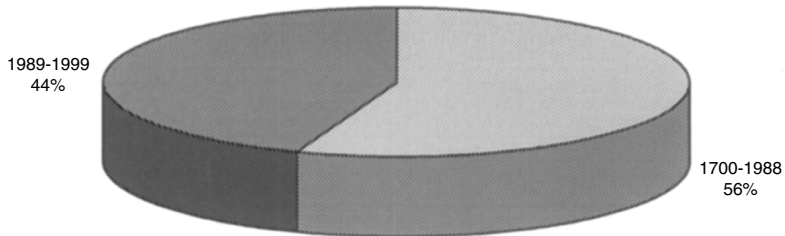
*Figure 2.2: The commissioning of heritage attractions, 1700-1988 and 1989-1999 (percentage of total commissioned 1700-1999)*



*Source:* Data supplied by Bord Fáilte, Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, and the Irish Museum Association.

With the scaling down of EU development programmes generally over the coming years, and a reduced provision under such schemes for heritage projects, it is unlikely that these rates of growth will be sustained. However, the capital and recurrent costs of maintaining and refurbishing existing facilities, and the commissioning costs of new heritage resources, will henceforth have to be met overwhelmingly or wholly from national or local sources of funding. The question of how much we are willing to pay for our heritage, therefore, is likely to become much more real over the coming years, as the opportunity cost of heritage, in terms of hard choices between alternative forms of expenditure (on health, social welfare, arts and sports, for example) are argued out in the context of state and local authority budgets.

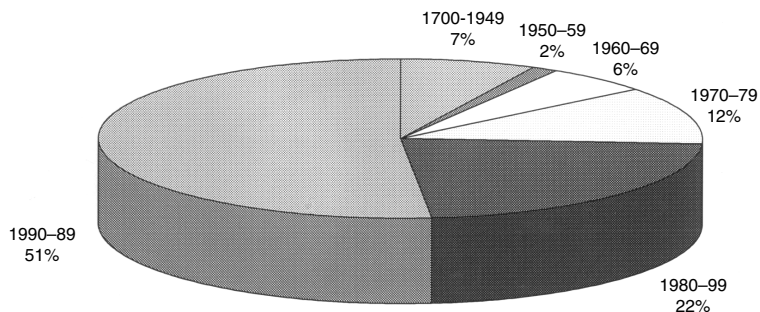
Figure 2.3: *The foundation of museums, 1700-1988 and 1989-1999 (percentage of total founded 1700-1999)*



Source: Data supplied by Bord Fáilte, Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, and the Irish Museums Association.

There can be little doubt, therefore, that expansion in the definition (largely through legislative processes) and historically dramatic levels of growth in the range of heritage resources (substantially aided by capital development funding under EU- sponsored tourism projects) have been a significant feature of Ireland's cultural and economic development over recent years.

Figure 2.4: *The commissioning of visitor attractions, 1700-1999 (percentage of total commissioned 1700-1999)*



Source: Data supplied by Bord Fáilte, Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, and the Irish Museums Association.

## 2.6 Conclusion

This chapter set out to demonstrate three expansionary aspects of heritage. Firstly, that expansion is facilitated by the inherently elusive and subjective nature of the concept itself. Heritage truly has the potential to be whatever you want it to be – and what you want it to be can very easily conflict with someone else's version of it. Secondly, that perceptions of heritage have expanded from relatively narrow nationalist and aesthetic valuations in the nineteenth century to the more multi-layered phenomenon of today, in which national, regional and communitarian notions of it compete and overlap to produce an ever-widening resource to be protected. Thirdly, that the growth of heritage in Ireland is consistent with these broader historical and international trends, but within a later and more recent timeframe. This expansion has been particularly dramatic over the past decade or so, as reflected in a significant widening of protective legislation and as indicated by the impact of the Operational Programmes for Tourism on the growth of heritage attractions.

From all of this it is clear that heritage is produced not by singular reference to how it is defined, but through a matrix of factors, conceptual, economic, administrative and socio-political. Devising a framework for managing the expansion of the heritage burden, therefore, will involve taking a more comprehensive look at all of the factors in its production – not only how it is defined, but how this connects with inventory processes, the role of expert judgement in determining its composition, and administrative arrangements. These will be the subjects of subsequent chapters of this study.

But as the aspiration/resource gap in the production of heritage remains in essence an economic one, it will be useful to look next at how the production of heritage is to be understood in economic terms. It will be useful also to consider further the way tourism, as indicated by the findings of the heritage attractions survey conducted for this paper, has managed to forge a link between heritage and economic prosperity in Ireland. These issues are explored in the next chapter.

## The economy of heritage

### 3.1 Heritage and market failure

Most of the literature dealing with heritage from an economic perspective is relatively recent in origin. To some extent it is symptomatic of the mounting pressure placed upon the fiscal resources of governments by the exponential growth in heritage internationally, but more particularly in western countries, during the eighties and nineties. Certainly, the pace of economic analysis appears to have quickened considerably in the past decade, with a number of substantial publications emerging over the past five years.<sup>4</sup>

Virtually all economists agree that market forces alone are insufficient to ensure an optimum level of provision for heritage in a society because 'a significant component of the cultural value of heritage ... will arise *outside* the market' (Throsby, 1997:16). Therefore government intervention of some kind is needed to correct market failure. Economists attempt to capture the non-market (public) benefits arising from heritage through three values. Benefits, say Johnson and Thomas (1992:28-29), are diffused throughout the community in the forms of **option value** (the desire to retain the option of gaining some benefit from the resource at some time in the future), **bequest value** (the value placed on the resource as something to be handed on to future generations) and **existence value** (the benefit people enjoy from simply knowing that the resource exists, regardless of whether they will ever use it).

However, having accepted the role of public subvention in support of heritage, economists insist that the true cost of providing and sustaining these services be made plain as a fundamental requirement of policy formulation. Peacock (1998:22) states as a basic principle of the economic analysis of heritage that 'the

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<sup>4</sup> The three key texts are: *Economic Perspectives on Cultural Heritage* (Hutter and Rizzo, eds, 1997); *Preserving the Built Heritage: Tools for Implementation* (Schuster et al, 1997); *Does the Past Have a Future?: The Political Economy of Heritage* (Peacock ed., 1998).

preservation of the past is not some segregated element in the list of benefits to humankind, but consists of inputs of resources which must be shown to contribute to our welfare in a more effective way than in any alternative use'. Keeping up the stock of heritage amenities requiring care and conservation creates **opportunity costs** because the resources involved could be used for alternative purposes (Throsby, 1997).

The main focus of the economic analysis, then, is to ensure that the costs of heritage subvention are properly externalised relative to alternative or competing expenditure options in play at any one time. In the case of government support for heritage, as with culture more generally, Throsby (1997:18) is convinced that 'the real challenge now is empirical rather than theoretical, that is, objective data are needed on consumers' benefits arising from cultural heritage, their willingness to pay for them, and the "optimal" level of collective provision'. It could be argued, for example, that the monies spent on preservation could be used to improve community infrastructure and provide better health services. While the value of these alternative services may be outweighed by the indirect benefits that heritage preservation brings to the public space, we cannot, Stanziola (1998:174) argues, 'simply assume *a priori* that the provision of any historic artefact results in net benefits (positive externalities) as it has been assumed'.

### 3.2 Contingent Valuation

The attempt to determine the appropriate costs of heritage to society comes down to one question: how do we establish how much society is willing to pay for its heritage? It has been suggested that the optimal way to find a reliable answer to this question is through the use of referenda. Referenda are indeed used on an institutionalised basis in Switzerland, where citizens are asked to decide on communal, federal and national issues, including heritage, under a number of expenditure headings. However, the use of referenda remains at this stage peculiar to the highly distinctive Swiss political system and is likely to remain more an ideal than a practical option in other jurisdictions (Frey, 1997).

For practical purposes, attempts to ascertain willingness-to-pay in the heritage context have largely revolved around adapting the concept of **Contingent Valuation** (CV), initially developed in the context of environmental impact assessment. CV is essentially a



survey methodology used to elicit people's willingness-to-pay for objects or projects. In a CV survey, individuals are asked to state their maximum willingness-to-pay to preserve a heritage object or site. Alternatively, they are given a fixed price that secures the conservation of a site or monument and are asked to decide whether they are willing to pay that price (Frey, 1997; Garrod and Willis, 1999).

There are a number of drawbacks to CV studies, the most significant being that they do not deal with revealed but hypothetical preferences, which makes it costless for individuals to give strategic answers (Frey and Oberholzer-Gee, 1998). Nevertheless, they have the major advantage, due to their hypothetical nature, of being able to capture the non-use values of existence, option and bequest values. Their most beneficial use is in externalising choice issues for the public. In a US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration assessment of the CV method (Arrow Report, 1993), the authors stressed a number of stringent requirements to ensure the method's effectiveness in terms of revealing real choices. Among them were an insistence that (a) it must be made clear to respondents what alternative projects money might be spent on if the project proposed was not undertaken, implying that the budget constraints must be clearly specified and (b) it must be made clear also if they are currently paying for a given level of supply of the same cultural resource.

The validity of Contingent Valuation as a method of measuring non-use values has become a major subject of controversy amongst economists in recent years, with many remaining deeply sceptical of the method's ability to deliver credible or reliable information on how the public values environmental and cultural assets. Both sides of the argument received an airing at a major conference on the subject held at the University of Chicago in January 2002. In a paper delivered to the conference, Hutter (2002) is firmly of the opinion that the data generated by CV studies on the amounts people are willing to pay for cultural goods 'cannot be used to improve cultural policy'. However, later in the paper he appears to partially contradict that view by conceding that CV studies can be useful in testing for particularly high existence values. He gives as an example the case of a subsidised opera company where there is an extraordinarily high ratio of subsidy to the number of persons attending its performances. In this case, the CV survey could be used to explain whether existence value (the mere pleasure people

get solely from the idea that such a cultural service exists) is significantly high enough to justify the relatively high subsidy. CV studies can be useful in these contexts, he suggests, because the emphasis is on 'pattern recognition' and 'relational magnitudes' rather than on (in his view) less reliable monetary valuations.

This is not the place to go into a broad-ranging discussion of the complex arguments surrounding CV methods. However, two points seem clear. Firstly, despite many misgivings about them, CV studies remain the only alternative tool to expert valuation in measuring the value of cultural goods to society, and, as Rushton (2002) argues, 'experts on art [or for that matter heritage] may not be the best judges of public interest'. In a balanced discussion that explores the pros and cons of CV, Epstein (2002) comes down in favour of the tool's potential to strike some kind of balance between the public interest and expert valuations; 'the only alternative to contingent valuation', he concludes, 'are expert decrees or seat of the pants intuitions'. Secondly, as cultural goods make increasing demands on the public purse, the demand for a more transparent relationship between the cost of cultural services and the willingness of taxpayers to pay for them is likely to become more prevalent.

### 3.2.1 *Contingent Valuation and Irish heritage policy*

CV-type evaluation remains remarkably under-utilised in Ireland, and in the EU generally. Specifically in the context of heritage, apart from the work done by Tourism Development International (1996) on the performance of fee-paying attractions in the context of tourism, the only significant inquiry of any kind into Irish attitudes to heritage has been the Heritage Council's survey of *Heritage Awareness in Ireland* (1999). Despite the many valuable insights the survey provides into popular attitudes to heritage, it is clear that the methodology fell short of some of the key requirements for a CV study. Undertaken in pursuit of one of the Council's core policies – 'to establish current levels of interest in and understanding of the national heritage' – the survey's objective was to 'establish a baseline of heritage awareness in Ireland'. Heritage is consequently treated as an *a priori* value throughout and there is no attempt to establish how it rates *comparatively* in the hierarchy of people's overall valuation of social goods. Thus a question relating to the cost of heritage is presented in isolation from alternative or substitute values and assumes that the public is always willing to pay *some*

cost for heritage protection. It is hardly surprising therefore that the statement 'no matter how much it costs, our heritage should be protected' received a combined 66% 'Agree strongly' and 'Agree slightly' rating by those surveyed. Respondents were clearly not alerted to the opportunity cost involved in this valuation, given no sense of the practical costs of conservation, nor of the logic of limitless exposure implicit in the way the question was structured.

Of course, the *raison d'être* of the Heritage Council is the promotion of heritage, so it is perhaps not surprising that a survey commissioned by the Council would on the whole be conducive to a positive reading of heritage issues. The credibility of such surveys would be enhanced if they were independently commissioned (from a body such as the Institute for Social Research and Standards, for example) and designed to elicit comparative rather than singular valuations.

Another benefit that might flow from the use of CV surveys is that they would provide the pretext for auditing the real cost of heritage to the public purse. One of the preconditions for a CV survey is that the respondents must be advised of how much they are already paying for the resource in question.

A key question arising in the Irish context, then, is whether it is possible to determine a figure for the overall state sector expenditure on heritage. In 1997 the Heritage Council engaged UCD's Business Research Programme to try and determine an answer to this question. The subsequent report described a situation of immense complexity, in which the definitional elusiveness of heritage turns it into a will-o'-the-wisp in government accounts. No less than fourteen government departments with a heritage role or potential role are identified, and a web of funding arrangements in which European, government and Lottery funding sources combine and overlap are outlined. Despite the extensiveness of the research, no overall figure for heritage expenditure is provided, not to mention one that expresses it as a percentage of GDP. In a subsequent report, the Heritage Council (1999) identified problems arising from this situation, including confusion between heritage and tourism projects, overlap in EU instruments and sources, and poorly developed mechanisms for evaluating effectiveness of expenditure in heritage terms. Whatever the popular 'awareness' of heritage values in Ireland, awareness of its actual cost, whether at popular or administrative levels, appears to be low indeed.

Despite the inconclusive outcome of the research into state sector expenditure commissioned by the Heritage Council in 1999 and the general difficulties deriving from the elusive nature of the concept, it was nevertheless felt that some effort to form a broadly indicative picture of state expenditure on heritage would be a useful exercise in the context of this paper. More extensive information on the criteria used and statistical information gleaned is available in Appendix 1 and Table A.1. A summary of the findings reveals the following gross estimates of state sector spend for the three year period 1998-2000.

*Table 3.1 Gross estimates of state sector expenditure on heritage, 1998-2000*

<b>Year</b>	<b>Current Expenditure (€m)</b>	<b>%GDP</b>	<b>Capital Expenditure (€m)</b>	<b>%GDP</b>	<b>Total (€m)</b>	<b>%GDP</b>
<b>1998</b>	54.8	0.7	36.8	0.4	91.5	0.12
<b>1999</b>	67.1	0.7	55.4	0.6	122.5	0.14
<b>2000</b>	65.8	0.6	68.3	0.6	134.1	0.13

*Source:* Annual Reports of the Comptroller and Auditor General and Revised Estimates for Public Services (1998-2000).

*Note:* GDP statistics are calculated from GDP data (calculated at current market prices) supplied by the Central Statistics Office (CSO). The CSO uses the Public Sector Estimates in calculating GDP, but given the relatively small size of the amounts in the table, the level of deviation in calculating GDP percentages from the above expenditure figures is unlikely to be significant.

Though the sums appear relatively small in GDP terms, it is important to note that they probably underestimate the true cost by a significant margin (see Appendix 1) and tell us very little about the public valuation of heritage in relation to other forms of marginal state expenditure. Though a broader sampling of annual expenditure would help to give a more accurate picture of the trend rate of growth, the trend in expenditure is nevertheless clearly upwards, and this in a context in which gross GDP was rising rapidly over the years in question (see note to Table 3.1). It is noteworthy too that

while the second Operational Programme for Tourism was officially scheduled to conclude in 1999, the 2000 figures still include considerable overhand capital subvention from the Programme. The level of state capital investment in heritage is unlikely to decline over the coming years because of the cessation of the EU Programmes. Under the National Development Plan (2001-2006) the Government has committed approximately €130 million to capital expenditure on heritage.<sup>5</sup>

There would appear to be some resistance to the introduction of CV methodologies as a tool to measure the cost of cultural provision in Ireland. In her contribution to the Chicago conference, Patricia Quinn (2002), Director of the Arts Council, came down against it, citing in particular the problem of information failure associated with CV (that is, that respondents will not be familiar enough with the nature or complexity of the subject being measured to make a well-informed judgement). However, one cannot have it both ways on information failure: cultural service providers have been willing over the years to cite surveys of popular opinion showing high levels of support for arts in Ireland. But where survey respondents are not advised of the true cost of cultural services, an outcome showing general approval and support for them could just as logically be construed as a consequence of the failure to provide adequate information about its cost, which, if provided, might have resulted in a cooler and more circumspect judgement.

The essential proposal here is that future surveys of heritage awareness in Ireland should be based upon informing the public of the true comparative costs of heritage. The CV methodology has the potential to supply a reality check on public attitudes, and, even if not used to determine precise monetary valuations, it may prove useful in providing more realistic indications of the public's attitude to existence and bequest values in the context of heritage.

There is also a case for conducting such surveys at both local and national levels of government, where appropriate. In some contexts, it may be as appropriate for a local authority to carry out such surveys as for central government. For example, the current ongoing controversy over the fate of the replica Famine ship the *Jeannie Johnston*, built at over three times the initial estimated cost, is now the subject of intense local debate as to the level of responsibility

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<sup>5</sup> Information supplied by the Monuments section of Dúchas, the Heritage Service, January, 2003.

Kerry County Council should accept for the ongoing costs of sustaining the ship. A contingent valuation survey of Kerry rate-payers might help to illuminate whether and to what extent the people of Kerry would be willing to continue funding the project, and at what cost to the provision of other services. But so far there has been little reference to what the popular feeling in Kerry on the subject might be and how that might guide public representatives in making a decision.

The time would now appear ripe to press forward the debate about the use of such methodologies in Ireland. In 2001/2002, Jennings and Curtis carried out what appears to be the first ever CV exercise in Ireland in an attempt to measure the level of licence fee citizens would be willing to pay for the public service broadcast content of RTE. The authors concluded that CV 'is a valid methodology to assess the value of cultural goods' (Jennings and Curtis, 2002). More of such studies will undoubtedly follow in time, and studies of how and to what extent the Irish public values its heritage is as valid a subject for CV study as broadcasting or the arts.

### **3.3 Tourism and heritage**

An underlying assumption of the EU Operational Programmes for Tourism, 1989-99, was that the promotion of heritage as a tourism product could provide a major boost to the country's economic development, an assumption which has helped mould a popular perception of heritage as an agent of change and prosperity (Duffy, 1994).

#### *3.3.1 The growth of heritage tourism*

Prior to the Operational Programmes, Bord Fáilte's involvement with the 'hardware' of heritage had been limited, although regional agencies, such as Shannon Development, had built up substantial experience through running such flagship projects as Bunratty Castle and Folk Park. In general, the number of sites run by tourism agencies did not amount to an extensive portfolio, and they had no pretensions to be strategic players in the field.

The EU Programmes changed all that. Bord Fáilte worked rapidly to secure the first Programme for Ireland. In 1987 the government published its *Programme for National Recovery* and two years later the *National Development Plan 1989-94*. In the context of these plans, Bord

Fáilte drew up *A New Framework for the Development of Irish Tourism* (1989). This coincided with its *Operational Programme for Tourism*, which was designed to draw down assistance from the European Regional Development and Social Fund – a goal in which it proved spectacularly successful, with IR£152 million (€193 million) being secured to back up a total investment scheme of IR£300 million (€381 million) for the first Programme.

In a very short time Bord Fáilte, the conduit through which funds under the EU Programmes were to be directed towards eligible projects, produced *A Strategy to Interpret Ireland's Heritage and Culture for Tourism* (1991). Thus the first Programme was already two years old before the first strategic plan was produced. With only three years of the five-year Programme remaining, immense pressure was placed on assessing the feasibility of projects. Over the first Programme, a total of 145 projects with a heritage theme received funding. These ranged from walking routes, to historic houses, theme towns, museums and genealogy projects.

Despite the time constraints, and to its credit, Bord Fáilte worked hard to put in place systems to review and monitor the performance of heritage attractions under the Programme. Surveys of visits to tourism attractions were undertaken by Tourism Development International (TDI) on behalf of Bord Fáilte in 1991, 1993 and 1995. A critical review of the outcomes of the first Programme led to significant adjustments in criteria and policy orientation for the second Programme.

A key document in shaping this review was TDI's *Strategic Review of Fee-Charging Visitor Attractions in Ireland* (1996). One of the significant findings of the TDI Review was that 25 per cent of all visitor attractions had experienced a decline in visitor numbers between 1991 and 1993 and a 30 per cent fall between 1993 and 1995, at a time when the overall number of visitors to all sites was increasing. Further, a significant proportion of under-performing attractions had been opened since 1990. This would appear to reflect a weakness in the feasibility criteria and visitor number projections that had been used to assess projects under the first Programme. The *Review* accepted that over-production of heritage amenities may have resulted from these weaknesses, and cites English, Scottish and Welsh tourist board experience to the effect that there is a 'general acceptance' that 'oversupply ... is a contributing factor to the under-performance of existing attractions'. In its strategic

recommendations the *Review* advocated that, going forward into the second Programme, 'priority should be upon improving, upgrading and expanding existing attractions' rather than in developing new ones. (TDI, 1996:12)

In a separate review of developments under the first Programme, Browne and Stephens (1996:249) observed that 'in general ... Ireland has too many manufactured Heritage Centres' and emphasised the need for consolidation and refinement of existing strategies in relation to the heritage tourism product. In addition, *The Tourism Development Plan 1994-1999* further committed Bord Fáilte to placing greater emphasis on 'conservation of heritage in a holistic fashion', involving much greater levels of local involvement in the enhancement and presentation of heritage.

Overall, Bord Fáilte compares favourably with other players in the heritage field in terms of its concern to monitor performance and outcomes on a continuous and measurable basis, and to adjust policy goals in the light of findings. In terms of practical outcomes, there is discernible evidence that the determination to achieve consolidation was to some extent effected under the second Programme. In the survey conducted for this paper, 152 of the heritage attractions with visitor services identified were commissioned during the period of the first Programme, and 81 in the period of the second Programme.

But there are clearly some sobering lessons to be learnt from the excessive haste and enthusiasm with which heritage-as-tourism was embraced under the Operational Programmes. The most important is that the understanding in cultural terms of what works to provide an authentic and rewarding visitor experience was relatively shallow and unsophisticated. In particular, the confidence that design-driven, state-of-the-art multi-media presentations could deliver consistent visitor satisfaction was misplaced. The reality that low-key, low-tech forms of experience could prove more satisfying (visiting a pub, going for a walk, exploring a ruined castle, meeting Irish people as guides) ran counter to the capital intensive logic of the Programmes. Culture can be perverse in economic terms; less can mean more; 'unspoil' often means 'unspent'.

If tourism is to succeed better at presenting heritage as product, heritage professionals will need much better education in how to grasp imaginatively the cultural and philosophical nature of authentic and rewarding human experiences. Training in marketing



and management alone is unlikely to deliver this level of understanding. It requires a training in historical method and a deeper understanding of the sometimes perverse dynamics of culture. A post-graduate programme of Cultural Studies, or a Heritage Management programme with a strong cultural studies content, would make a major contribution to delivering this level of sophisticated understanding.

### 3.3.2 *Sustainable tourism?*

Bord Fáilte signalled a strategic shift in its policy orientation by sub-heading its 1994-99 Development Plan (1994), 'Developing Sustainable Tourism'. Deegan and Dineen (1993:116) had noted 'an inherent conflict between the policymaker's need to maximise the employment impact of tourism growth, through substantial increases in tourism numbers, and environmental conservation'. The government and Bord Fáilte responded to this criticism by dispensing with a growth target expressed in terms of absolute tourist numbers in the 1994-99 plan. Instead, the focus was put on higher-expenditure tourists and greater seasonal spread. The prime goals for the 1994-99 Plan, therefore, would be concentration on higher-spend tourists and achieving a 5 per cent redistribution (70 per cent to 75 per cent) of tourists from peak to off-peak season and overall growth in tourist numbers amounting to no more than 4.4 million in 1999 (as compared with 3.3 million in 1993). The other key targets were an increase of IR2.25 (€2.86) billion in earnings by 1999 and the creation of 35,000 new jobs.

This was, nevertheless, an attempt to give substance to the notion of sustainability through two *growth* targets: a greater number of jobs and a higher (though marginally reduced) target for overall visitor numbers.<sup>6</sup> The real weakness of the 1994-99 plan, however, was that it presented no clear sustainability indicators against which its commitment to the concept in theory could be measured in practice. The targets set indicate that Bord Fáilte's strategy remained predominantly growth-oriented. In the end, the actual out-turns suggest that maximisation had won out over optimisation. The

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<sup>6</sup> Baker (1997:383) has criticised the drift toward the concept of 'sustainable growth' in EU environmental policy. In her view 'sustainable growth as a policy goal would seem to uncouple environmental management from the more radical, social, economic and political changes envisaged by the Bruntland report'.

outcome for 1999 was a dramatic 5.9 million visitors – a third more than planned. More critically, it had only proved possible to shift an additional 2 per cent of visitors from peak to off-peak season – 3 per cent short of the target. This 3 per cent shortfall represents a particularly disappointing result in terms of sustainability, because it was one of the few targets in the Plan that expressed a qualitative or optimisation goal.

Bord Fáilte places heritage very much at the heart of its tourism development strategy. However, when the absence of credible sustainability targets is coupled with other aspects of the strategy it becomes clear that tourism can still operate to produce an expanded volume of heritage ‘hardware’. The 1994-99 Plan identified the growth of tourism ‘hot-spots’ in places of outstanding beauty (such as Killarney, Dingle and Connemara) as leading to traffic congestion and overcrowding in the peak season. It sought to redress this imbalance with a concerted policy of dispersal, both temporal (to off-peak) and spatial – to regions of the country hitherto underdeveloped in tourism terms. This was to be accompanied by niche targeting of higher spending tourists, involving a greater concentration on the rental-car market.

The relationship between tourism strategy and heritage expansion is perhaps most clearly seen in the planned Rural Tourism Areas (and to a lesser extent in Tourism Centres). It was envisaged that one of the supports to development of Rural Tourism Centres would be ‘visiting local museums or historic sites’. The Plan emphasised that the more low-key tourist experience envisaged for such areas should avoid ‘big expensive attractions’. All of this is positive, and in many instances should lead to real improvements in the upkeep and presentation of heritage sites that might otherwise have been neglected. However, there is likely to be a strong expectation on the part of local community groups that funding will be available to provide enhanced visitor service facilities at existing heritage sites and additional heritage centres where there is a perceived lack of such facilities. And there is nothing to indicate that the determination to avoid ‘big expensive attractions’ will not simply result in more diffused expenditure across a multiplicity of less expensive ones.

The Heritage Council (1999) drew attention to some of these difficulties in *Policies and Priorities for the National Heritage*, where it identified a general confusion between heritage and tourism

projects. It found that while projects were often officially designated as heritage they 'in reality are purely tourism projects, economically driven without a clearly defined heritage objective'.

On the whole, tourism agencies will need to project a much stronger emphasis on the sustainability message if the popular expectation of development through capital investment, promoted so strongly through the Tourism Programmes of the nineties, is to be successfully mitigated. Above all, sustainability aspirations will have to be given substance through a much more specific set of sustainability indicators. In this context there are some tough questions for a growth-oriented marketing organisation to address. For example, what would be a realistic estimate of the optimum number of visitors to tourism 'hot spots' in the peak season? Can the problem be expressed in statistical rather than anecdotal or perceptual terms? While a hot-spot dispersal strategy may be represented as an exercise in sustainability, it translates all-too readily into a means of accommodating inexorable numerical growth through spreading the burden. Given the exponential growth in the number of Irish vehicles on the roads in recent years, by how much does it remain feasible to grow the car-rental market in terms of carrying capacity? Could a *negative* growth figure indeed be envisaged under certain circumstances? In terms of the specific concerns of this study, the containable management of heritage is significantly dependent upon a tourism policy that sets realistic sustainability targets: qualitative goals must be clearly seen to have a real mitigating impact on quantitative outcomes, in capital investment and numerical terms.

### 3.4 Conclusion

The fact that the aggregate public expenditure on heritage appears difficult to determine and that public 'awareness' in Ireland remains relatively uninformed by any realistic sense of its cost, implies that opportunity cost factors play a relatively minor role in decision-making about heritage expenditure. Better information on actual public sector expenditure on heritage combined with CV surveys of the public's willingness-to-pay, it is suggested, would be one way of introducing a more realistic choice structure to the way the Irish public is surveyed for its attitudes to heritage. The limitations and difficulties associated with CV are well known, yet its capacity to provide broad measurements of existence and bequest values in

public attitudes is worthy of some testing. If CV surveys are to be carried out, it would be preferable if they were commissioned independently of the sector. Surveys of willingness-to-pay are not only relevant in the context of national heritage, but can also be useful in local and regional contexts as well.

The capital funding of heritage attractions on an unprecedented scale under the Operational Programmes for Tourism was soon revealed to have created oversupply of a product for which there was insufficient, or inadequately measured, demand. A paradox of culture is that less often means more in capital investment terms. It is suggested here that the provision of training for tourism professionals in the nature of culture (through cultural studies programmes) would lead to a more sophisticated understanding of the market for cultural goods.

The cultural paradox of less-equals-more also lies at the heart of tourism strategies aspiring to sustainability. Genuine sustainability indicators may result in *negative* growth – in less rather than more infrastructure, whether measured in environmental or cultural terms. Real sustainability indicators privilege qualitative measurements over purely quantitative or growth-oriented outcomes. A refinement of Bord Failte's policies along these lines would have a significant ameliorative impact on the overall contribution of tourism to heritage expansion in Ireland, particularly in relation to 'secondary' heritage in the form of new-build visitor facilities.

However, the resolution of economic issues in relation to heritage depends not only on how it is costed and surveyed, but on how it is organised and managed. At this point, it becomes clear that economic questions cannot be considered independently of administrative structures. There are two key issues here from a growth perspective. Firstly, administrative structures can operate either to engender real-cost perceptions of projects or to foster the 'fiscal illusion' that 'local' culture is paid for through the beneficence of some remote paymaster. Secondly, it is largely through administrative structures that professional or expert determinations of cultural value are mediated. What is the precise role of experts in this context, and what is their impact on the expansion of heritage? These two dimensions of heritage management are the subject of the next chapter.

## The administration of heritage

### 4.1 Levels of government and 'fiscal illusion'

The overall efficiency of heritage resource management is dependent on whether the scale of funding is proportionate to the level of benefit derived from the amenities in question. Netzer (1998) has pointed out that most public expenditure does not provide benefits that are uniform throughout each nation state, and the benefits of heritage are often specifically geographical. For example, the local economy and community of Cashel gains more from the preservation of the Rock of Cashel than, say, the local economies or communities of Dublin or Galway. Netzer's preferred solution to this problem is to 'finance the benefits that are narrowly confined spatially from local authority taxes and the benefits that are realised over a wide area from taxes collected over that wide area'. He further suggests that 'a hierarchy of buildings might be established in terms of the geographical distribution of benefits deriving from conservation, whether it is national, regional or local' (Netzer, 1998:150). The Swiss have developed a funding structure based on just such a system of valuation (Schuster, 1997:55). The percentage of costs covered by the federal government is linked to the relative significance of the historic property: 30-40 per cent for buildings of national significance, 15-25 per cent for buildings of regional significance, and 10-15 per cent for buildings of local significance. Bianca (1997:20) emphasises the importance of subsidiarity to ensure 'a more tangible interrelation between society and its heritage'.

The principle of subsidiarity (that policies should always be made at the lowest possible level, and that the higher level should only legislate when there is unanimous agreement that uniform regulation is necessary) governs EU funding allocations (Hueglin, 1994). Encouraged by this principle, the 1991 report on *Local Government Reorganisation and Reform* in Ireland recommended that local authorities should be 'given prime responsibility in the general amenity and heritage area', and specifically that 'non national parks, historic sites and buildings should become the responsibility

of local government' (Barrington, 1991:23). The same report pointed out, however, that the Republic remained one of the most centralised states in Europe, with local government expenditure accounting for only 5 per cent of GDP. In addressing the financial aspect of local government, the report was adamant that reform of the financial system 'must be an essential component of overall reform, if reform is to be meaningful'. It insisted that 'there must be some link between spending and raising money in order to promote responsibility and accountability' (Barrington, 1991:11).

Pignataro and Rizzo (1997) invoke the term 'fiscal illusion' to describe a discrepancy that can arise between national, regional and local levels of government when there is a weak or non-existent link between democratic structures and financial responsibility. Where, they argue, conservation projects can be realised through central government funds, but without imposing any significant burden on local finances, it is likely to produce an economically unrealistic assessment of heritage costs. Throsby (1997) also emphasises the need to ensure that financing is available at each level (national, regional and local) as a way of determining who the main beneficiaries are, and thereby apportioning costs realistically.

With regard specifically to Ireland, the potential for 'fiscal illusion' is apparent in the following two administrative scenarios.

**EU funding** As indicated in the previous chapter, discrepancies can arise between EU funding criteria and local or regional perceptions of the value of grant schemes. The fact that the capital cost of projects under the EU Programmes was met overwhelmingly through a combination of state funds and EU funding meant that only a small proportion of the costs were borne locally. In addition, a fixation with securing capital funding meant that very little attention was paid to recurrent costs, which would have to be met from local sources. There are some indications that neglect of the recurrent cost implications has affected the viability of a significant number of projects. In the research on visitor attractions carried out for this paper, for example, nineteen facilities were found to have closed during 2001. The illusion that state-of-the art heritage facilities could be had for 'free' has been rapidly transformed for some into the cold reality of expensive facilities requiring high levels of deficit funding to keep them open.

**Architectural Heritage** The second scenario is the division between financial and regulatory responsibilities for the architectural heritage as prescribed under the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act (1999) and the Architectural Heritage (National Inventory) Act (1999). Section 39 of the Planning and Development Act stipulates that the Minister for the Environment may make grants to planning authorities in respect of any or all of their functions under the Act, including grants for defraying all or part of the expenditure incurred by them. Meanwhile, Section 2 obliges local authorities to draw up a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) in their areas. Grant-aid to owners listed in the RPS is prescribed under Section 18 of the Act. In the start-up year of 1999 this consisted of a single fund of €5 million administered centrally through the Department of the Environment and Local Government. Given the breadth of criteria under which local authorities are obliged to consider properties for inclusion in the list, there is a real prospect that the number of properties eventually listed in the RPS will vastly outstrip the capacity of the fund to meet the compensation claims of property owners. Under the present arrangement, local authorities do not have to consider the direct cost implications of listing – that is a problem for central government which administers the compensation fund. As with the issue of waste management, there is a prospect that heritage could become the subject of a buck-passing exercise between central and local government. In the end, the only logical way of connecting up legislative provisions with real costs is by ensuring that the buck stops locally.

#### **4.2 Heritage and subsidiarity**

Since the abolition of household rates in Ireland in 1977, the true cost of a local service or amenity is not directly experienced as a local taxation issue, but as a somewhat amorphous expenditure from the central exchequer. For Americans, by contrast, the link between property tax, heritage conservation costs, and other local costs is likely to be more real and immediate. In the US, where there are much more developed systems of local government – and local property taxation – it is perhaps no coincidence that measuring willingness-to-pay is a more widespread practice.

In the Irish context, the correlation between the resort to legislation as the dominant government tool and the absence of decentralised government amounts to an expansionary nexus for

three reasons. Firstly, legislation that initiates an indeterminate inventory/landscape approach to heritage widens the gap between the cost of sustaining the resource and what society might be willing to pay for it if it were experienced as a direct cost. Secondly, as the Heritage Council's survey *Heritage Awareness in Ireland* (2000) revealed, it encourages a relatively cavalier attitude to heritage costs on the part of citizens: one quarter of those surveyed felt that heritage should be protected 'no matter how much it costs'. Thirdly, the more 'cost-free' the local perception of heritage is, the more exposed the state is to unrealistic demands for its intervention to save local heritage or to use the tool of ownership. The effective way to close this gap is through combining legislation with decentralised taxation systems. Schuster (1997:142) has observed that without effective subsidiarity 'there may not be a match between the appropriate level of government and the appropriate tool'. Thus, as with the current planning arrangements, local government can control designation (regulation), but has no control over grant schemes (incentives).

A separate but related issue is the manipulation of heritage to achieve ulterior goals. For example, some pressure groups have recently proved adroit at using heritage legislation as a weapon in waste-disposal and planning development disputes (NIMBYism).<sup>7</sup> This reveals a symmetry between the 'polluter pays' and the 'heritage producer pays' principles: if both were issues that arose in terms of local taxation communities might take a far more circumspect view of the issues involved, rather than seeking to deflect responsibility onto a putatively remote national government.

The weakness of local government in Ireland, therefore, puts increased pressure on central government as the funder of first and last resort. In the US, property-tax incentives for heritage are operated almost wholly through local government, which uses property tax as its principal revenue-raising instrument. In Ireland, the absence of local property taxes means that this tool is not available (except in the case of commercial properties) and the government is compelled to work either through strategic grant schemes or income tax relief measures.

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<sup>7</sup> Not in my backyard. For example, the *Irish Times* reported on 5 July 2002 that residents of a rural area of Co Galway near Ballydoogan Bog, Kilrickle, stepped up their campaign against a proposed superdump in their area by erecting a plaque to commemorate a 350 year old battle in the middle of the proposed landfill site.



As with the polluter, the challenge is to find ways of making the ‘heritage producer’ (whether it be an individual or a local authority) pay, rather than such producers constantly seeking to deflect costs, however delusively, onto the fiscally remote state.

But not all of the measures required are fiscal. The recent Heritage Council initiative to appoint heritage officers to local authorities is a step in the right direction in terms of ensuring that expert valuations of heritage (discussed more fully below) do not function preponderantly from the perspective of national government, but to serve the reality that heritage reflects the multi-layered character of modern society. If fiscal efficiency is ultimately to be delivered through local government, the presence of well-trained heritage professionals to provide leadership at that level will be essential.

However, the practical challenge of achieving effective levels of subsidiarity to provide a more effective link between heritage values and heritage costs faces two significant obstacles in the Irish context: the role of experts in consolidating a centralised approach to heritage and the relative weakness of the voluntary sector.

### 4.3 The role of experts in regulation

One of the effects of the subjective nature of heritage definitions (discussed in Chapter 2) is to confer wide discretionary powers upon individuals and agencies charged with initiating, interpreting and implementing legislation. This is presumably what Coopers and Lybrand (1998) were hinting at when they wrote of the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands finding itself ‘responding to a seemingly limitless externally driven demand profile, while in other respects, *it is itself the originator and the determiner of the demand profile*’ (emphasis added). Rizzo (1998:60) observes that ‘a peculiar feature of regulation in heritage is that the size of the regulated sector is not well defined *ex-ante* but is a matter of discretion of the regulator’. Thus heritage professionals frequently find themselves involved not only in drawing up legislation but in subsequently implementing its provisions. Economists identify this tendency as one of the two forms of ‘regulatory capture’ to which heritage regulation and inventory systems are prone.

Schuster (in Schuster *et al*, 1997:125-6) suggests that in countries characterised by highly centralised government bureaucracy there is a strong temptation to ‘reduce policy debate in any area of state action to a search for the right law’. Because of the centralised

nature of Irish government and the overriding preference for the regulatory tool in managing heritage, this criticism merits careful consideration in the Irish context. It is worth noting, for example, that Ireland's archaeological heritage is now overwhelmingly managed through regulatory processes, with the legislation itself subject to frequent review and amendment in terms of its perceived weaknesses.

The reliance on regulatory processes has particular expansionary implications. Throsby describes how this expansionary cycle works:

the increase in the demand for finance in the heritage area is both a consequence and a cause of regulation: a consequence because regulations covering listing of historic buildings and sites are constantly being extended, and a cause because to a certain extent the increased demand for funds prompts government into new regulation... (quoted in Schuster, 1997:44).

According to Benhamou, French conservation law and protection procedures are defined in a way that leads to a continual increase in spending, and takes no account of economic arguments to limit it. The inexorable growth in heritage properties requiring state care or subvention most commonly prompts proposals to rationalise the management of monuments, but 'is rarely seen as the result of the policy that organises the definition and production of heritage' (Benhamou, 1998:83). This raises sharply the issue of the efficacy of regulation in the control and conservation of heritage when used disproportionately by government in relation to the other tools at its disposal, especially information and incentives.

#### *4.3.1 Expertise and 'asymmetrical information'*

Benhamou (1998) identifies 'asymmetrical information' as characterising the relationship between experts and the public. The asymmetry arises from an informational imbalance in which experts have a 'permanent temptation to apply scientific, aesthetic, or even personal considerations' when making a decision, without adequately considering the public's needs or wishes. This, she says, 'is a classical problem of agency that emerges when an agent has more information than the principal' (Benhamou, 1998:78). Rushton (2002), in championing the cause of CV as a counterbalance to expert evaluation, points out that while experts may be the best judges of cultural value, they may not be the best judges of the public interest.

However, one needs to enter a note of caution here. There is no guarantee that the public attitude to heritage, however accurately divined, is likely to be more 'efficient' than that of experts. As already seen in the discussion of dissonance (Chapter 2), heritage is a phenomenon produced by multiple players. As it becomes increasingly bound up with issues of empowerment at local and popular levels in society, it is just as probable that the public will place a value on it that is no more economically realistic than that of experts. This is compounded by the tendency towards 'fiscal illusion' described above, and emphasises the need to develop public understanding of heritage in terms of opportunity cost as much as general appreciation.

Nevertheless, the critique by economists of the expert role in heritage is sustained and substantial and cannot be ignored. Stanziola (1998) describes an unvirtuous cycle: as professional groups expand the definition of what is 'historic' they increase the amount of people seeking funds, which in turn expands the grounds upon which these groups can approach government for more funding, or an expansion in their role and numbers. Rizzo (1998:60) insists that 'identification of cultural heritage should belong to some form of collective decision-making', with expert decisions as fully exposed as possible to democratic review through the use of willingness-to-pay surveys.

But while such methods can contribute to a more balanced assessment of the social benefit of cultural projects, their acknowledged limitations means that they must be accompanied by other strategies to adjust administrative imbalances caused by over-centralisation. The role of the voluntary sector would be crucial to any strategy for delivering effective subsidiarity.

#### 4.4 The voluntary sector

The Heritage Council's survey, *Heritage Awareness in Ireland* (2000:19), revealed a strong association between heritage and public ownership in the public mind. 'Because heritage is perceived to be inextricably linked with public ownership', the report commented, 'individuals are not felt to be accountable or ultimately responsible'. In general, the role of the individual or the community 'is perceived to be a reactionary or defensive one'. These findings probably accurately reflect the comparatively low level of voluntary activism in the heritage field in Ireland.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> For example, in England, Scotland and Wales up to 30 per cent of all those engaged in the built heritage in the mid-1990s were volunteers. See Peacock in Peacock (1998:5).

However, as governments come under mounting pressure to fund an ever-widening heritage resource, they are turning increasingly to the development of partnership strategies to help spread the burden of care. Voluntary cultural organisations and community groups are being looked to as means by which government can achieve the care and conservation of more heritage while reducing budgetary expenditure.

Bianca (1997:29) recommends that governments should give priority to private initiatives because governmental resources alone will never be adequate to deal with the full spectrum of conservational demands thrown up by heritage. Government, he says, should concentrate on playing a co-ordinating role, and encourage 'concerned community groups, interested non-governmental organisations, and committed individuals to become active players within a shared framework of mutual obligations and benefits'.

The *National Heritage Plan*, launched in May 2002 by the outgoing government, is in essence a strategy for the management of an increasingly complex heritage resource through partnership. The Plan (Department of Arts, Heritage, the Gaeltacht and the Islands, 2002:6) states unequivocally that success will depend 'entirely on the enthusiasm with which its objectives and actions are embraced by communities, volunteer and professional organisations, the private sector, local authorities, statutory bodies, and by all levels of government'. Thus a key goal of the Plan is to 'develop partnership between governmental and non-governmental organisations on heritage issues' and envisages an annual 'national heritage forum' as the basis for bringing these interests together.

The role of the voluntary sector, whether through community groups, voluntary organisations or voluntary professional groups, will be central to the success of this strategy. But while there has traditionally been a strong voluntary sector in Ireland associated with social welfare provision, one of the major challenges in implementing the Heritage Plan will be to redress the comparative weakness of voluntary organisations in the cultural sector in Ireland. It is disappointing, therefore, to find very little overt reference to the role of voluntary bodies in the Plan. For example, An Taisce, the principal heritage conservation body in the country, is not mentioned.

The inclusion of community and voluntary organisations as one of the four pillars of partnership in the Partnership 2000 agreement

was a significant step forward in formalising the role of voluntary bodies in terms of strategic planning and service delivery. Commentators have warned, however, that partnership needs to be managed carefully, as the independence which lies at the core of voluntary action is potentially compromised by the emphasis on partnership and inclusiveness (Donnelly and Jaffro, 1999). Bennett and Mercer have highlighted the paradox whereby governments seek to 'empower' communities through government support, but end up effectively conjuring such communities into being by controlling all of the connective tissue of association (funding, media, staff costs and so forth). Sometimes, indeed, it is only through government programmes that such bodies are able for the first time to envisage themselves as groups. If the level of dependence on government is too great, such groups end up as instruments of government action rather than agents of goals that are either self-determined or the result of genuine partnership and subsidiary decision-making. According to Bennett and Mercer (1997:22), the core principle to be kept in view is that 'partnership will not be achieved unless voluntary organisations can maintain their independence'.

The fact that in most western countries government is now the most important source of funding for voluntary organisations implies that the benefits in cost-saving to the state may be marginal rather than substantial in budgetary terms (Hayes, 1999). However, the scope for optimising the potential contribution of voluntary and community groups lies in enabling such organisations to be more efficient in the way they manage and organise their work through the partnership process. Some commentators have pointed to the link between capacity building within the sector and the role management training could play in it (Donoghue *et al*, 1999). Funding, therefore, needs to be directed as much towards improved organisational efficiency as towards operational goals.

The development of An Taisce, for example, as a professionalised body, sharing common goals and interests with the state and local government sectors, could be facilitated by directing increased grant-aid towards training in heritage management for its officers, and perhaps the provision of focused funding for core executive functions. This could provide the platform for transforming the organisation from a narrowly-based watchdog with a limited whistle-blower role under the Planning Acts, to an organisation like

the British National Trust which manages a substantial portfolio of properties, has its own independent voice within the sector, and, as described by Sawers (1998), sees itself as representing not just the interests of its members but as holding in trust for the nation – a goal and a burden shared in common with the state.

Finally, the contribution of the volunteering impulse depends significantly on the presence of a high level of historical and civic consciousness in society in general. The primary medium for forging this consciousness is the teaching of history and civic responsibility through the educational system. (Ironically, the number of students taking history at Leaving Certificate level has fallen significantly at a time when the public interest in heritage has never been higher.)<sup>9</sup>

But a more sophisticated informational strategy to complement the formal educational effort will be needed as well. Because heritage is about the *interpretation* of the historical dimension of our world, how it is mediated through society as an information system is crucial.

Encouragingly, the *National Heritage Plan* (2002) has a section on 'Promoting Awareness and Enjoyment of Our Heritage'. Less encouragingly, the notion of 'awareness' is perceived almost entirely in terms of knowledge transfer; if only the public was told more it would care more, seems to be the dominant assumption. And there is no specific mention of the role or potential of voluntary bodies in achieving these goals. The state should seek not merely to dispense and disperse information through its own agencies but to enable voluntary and community groups to become information sources in their own right (for instance, in defining 'local' heritage as advocated below in Chapter 6), so that citizens are prompted to engage more directly in the practical care of their heritage, and to learn through doing, rather than simply by passively acquiring knowledge, or by narrowly confining themselves to the reactive role of responding to heritage threats.

#### 4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has examined how changes to the administration of heritage could contribute to its containable management. The core argument is that without more real and effective forms of subsidiarity, which connect up the production of heritage to its costs

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<sup>9</sup> The *Irish Times* reported on 18 August 2000 that as recently as 1989 over 30,000 students had taken history in the Leaving Certificate, while in 2000 the number had fallen to 12,602.

in an immediate and tangible way for citizens, the expansionary tendency will continue unabated. In this context, the 'fiscal illusion' whereby centrally administered funds (whether at EU or national level) are perceived to be costless at local level needs to be addressed.

The dependence of Irish policy on legislative mechanisms has been noted. This in itself reflects a centralised approach to heritage management and a corresponding reliance upon expert valuations to define and inventorise the stock of heritage to be protected. While there can never be any doubt that the input of the best expertise will always be indispensable to setting heritage values and defining the field, there is, nevertheless, a need to counterbalance the input of expert judgements with well-informed popular valuations of it.

This policy paper assumes that *manageable* growth is an intrinsic and positive aspect of the heritage phenomenon in the modern world. Partnership strategies, therefore, are a vital element in any concerted attempt to manage this expanded volume of protected heritage. In the last chapter, CV was advocated as a means of tempering expert values with public ones. Here, it is also suggested that public interest and engagement with heritage can be developed through devolving more practical responsibility for its management onto voluntary organisations. But for devolution to work effectively voluntary organisations will need to develop a much wider role than the watch-dog one of reacting to heritage threats. This comes down to a need for significant investment in the management and leadership skills of such organisations.

To reduce this to a single but challenging recommendation, the state should seek to enable the emergence of a professionally managed 'Irish National Trust' capable of thinking independently on heritage issues, while working in partnership with the state and other bodies to manage a wide portfolio of heritage property.

Finally, there is a need to rethink the informational approach to building heritage awareness. The emphasis on centralised or expert transfers of knowledge to the public should be balanced by a greater emphasis on the public as a source of heritage knowledge in its own right. As voluntary and community organisations become empowered in this way, citizens will be much better placed to become knowledge managers in their own right, to take more direct responsibility for how heritage is produced and protected locally, and to work more productively with state agencies in a partnership approach to managing it.

## Heritage, landscape and the audit culture

### 5.1 Landscape and the heritage gaze

There appears to be something of an historic change, or paradigm shift, going on in the way heritage is now constituted. While the first phase of the modern 'heritage era' saw heritage as inhering in discrete objects and sites (see discussion of heritage production, Chapter 2), the trend in recent thinking has been to express it as a dimension of the environment. The Canadian state of New Brunswick's (1994) heritage policy captures the change succinctly: where older definitions saw heritage as 'an interesting collection of buildings and objects, the current view sees heritage as our total cultural and natural environment'. English Heritage's recently published report *Power of Place: the future of the historic environment* (2001) provides further insight into the new form of environmentalist thinking on heritage. *Power of Place* asserts the primacy of 'place' and of the 'historic environment' as the validating framework within which individual valuations of heritage phenomena must be set. 'What people care about', the report insists, 'is the whole of their environment'. But are caring for the environment and caring for heritage interchangeable or fully complementary values? There are a few difficulties, particularly with the desire to collapse the distinction between built and natural heritage.

The desire to assimilate built and natural heritage under an environmentalist ethos appears to mask important distinctions between the two fields. The fundamental rationale for nature conservation is a concern to sustain biodiversity and to preserve and nurture ecosystems. It is rooted in scientific evidence of man's impact on and relationship with the natural world, but increasingly driven by basic fears about our long-term survival as a species if we fail to take action in the face of the evidence.

The desire to protect the built heritage, on the other hand, is rooted in anxieties about loss of identity in historical and cultural terms, coupled with fears that the wholesale destruction of the historic dimensions of the environment leads to a loss of aesthetic



amenity, affecting our overall sense of the quality of life. Ultimately, the latter is a far more contingent anxiety than the former. This is because our relationship with history is wholly cultural, while our relationship with nature, though culturally conditioned as well, is nevertheless substantially governed by scientific imperatives.

Human identity is constantly adapting to a flux of gains and losses, erasures and alterations in those aspects of the environment that are the consequences of human actions (including the artefact of landscape). This adaptation even includes a capacity to interpret positively aspects of material heritage that are the product of decay, neglect and destruction through time (for example, the powerful aesthetic feelings evoked by ruins).

The conflation of ecological values with those aesthetic values that shape our sense of the built heritage threatens to suffuse our perception of environment in an all-embracing rhetoric of threat and disappearance. We may come to feel about the loss of a building the way we feel about the loss of a species, and are in danger of transposing the psychological sense of alarm provoked by ecological threats onto the built heritage. Indeed, *Power of Place* (2000:5) strains language to express this identification. The approach to the built heritage, the report proclaims, must no longer be 'an earthwork isolated in arable', but 'as in the natural environment, the overall health of the [historic] habitat is as important as that of individual species'. Against this assimilation of built heritage to an ecological vision it is necessary to make the commonsense point that the destruction of an historic building, no matter how deplorable, contributes neither directly nor indirectly to global warming, and, unless there are bats in the attic, has a neutral impact on biodiversity.

## 5.2 The audit culture

A practical consequence of the environmental approach to heritage is that it immensely widens the perceived knowledge base required for effective action and raises major resource issues in its own right. For example, English Heritage's National Mapping Programme has increased the number of known elements of buried archaeology by up to 60 per cent in well-known areas, and by over 500 per cent in less well-known areas (English Heritage, 2000). Boylan (1997) has pointed out that the number of heritage sites in the UK with some form of legal protection has risen from around one thousand in 1945

to nearly one million today. He warns that we need to protect ourselves against such an expansive burden of protection and to guard against the dangers of fossilisation arising from our 'newly-invented' idea of heritage.

In advocating a 'character appraisal' and conservation planning approach to the entire matrix of places that constitute the land of England, English Heritage (2001) is anxious to assert that 'this does not mean applying additional controls or attempting to fossilise the whole of the country', but provides instead 'the opportunity to regulate only what needs to be regulated'. However, total environment audits, whether natural, archaeological or architectural, generate a massively expanded range of phenomena that require *conscious* assessment, demanding responsible (and sometimes painstaking) decisions as to whether they require statutory protection or not.

This tendency can be seen at work in English Heritage's *Research Agenda for Archaeology* (1997), in which the implications of the Monument Protection Programme (MPP), set up in 1986, are teased out. The aim of the MPP was 'to complete a full scale review of the known and recorded archaeological resource of England in order to identify the most important sites and thereby help to inform national and local protection policies'. A review in 1984 had estimated that there were 600,000 recorded archaeological sites in England, of which fewer than 13,000 (described as 'an inadequate sample') were scheduled (listed) for statutory protection. The review suggested that up to 60,000 sites would need to be listed 'to give a properly representative schedule'. The authors of the 1997 report then comment (emphasis added):

What is considered important will need to be kept under review in the light of *advancing knowledge*. Appropriate mechanisms must exist to ensure that the results of *increased understanding inform the process of selection* of sites and areas for preservation (English Heritage, 1997: 63).

Benhamou (1997) says that listing processes are almost always amended by addition, and rarely by subtraction or substitution. An expanded knowledge base is bound to lead to more pressure on public authorities to schedule for more specific care and protection a greater range of heritage items, placing much greater strain on funding resources. And, as will soon be seen in the discussion of de-

accessioning (Chapter 7), formally adding units of heritage to the overall stock is relatively easy, de-listing them is not. Research methodologies are constantly being refined to capture things missed or overlooked, and there are likely to be appeals to extend the life of programmes to prevent an inventory becoming obsolete or losing its comprehensive status or credibility.

Part of the strain is the actual cost of such inventories themselves. The set-up costs may not be substantial, but it is difficult to prevent such programmes becoming indefinite or self-perpetuating. Sweden's inventory of churches belonging to the Church of Sweden began in 1912 and is still not complete; so far, exhaustive descriptions of 750 churches out of 3,600 have been published (Hoberg, 1995).

There are Irish examples too. The Archaeological Survey of County Cork was set up in 1982; the final volume of the inventory has just been published in 2001. In a recent article on Ireland's heritage protection legislation, McRory and Kirwan (2001) stressed that the current combined inventories of archaeological sites in Ireland (including the Sites and Monuments Record, the Archaeological Inventories and the statutory Record of Monuments and Places) do not constitute 'final lists of archaeological sites and monuments in each county'. Further, a vast range of post-1700 sites remains uninventoried (in Pickard, 2001).

Young (1997:9) goes so far as to assert that the practice of listing has become 'as fetishistic as the most antiquarian styles of artefact collecting'. Inventories are also subject to contest by a wide constituency of interest groups demanding that perceived gaps and omissions be addressed (see earlier discussion of heritage dissonance, Chapter 2). The Australian Register of the National Estate, says Russell (1997:72), 'has long been recognised for large imbalances in historic representation'. Heritage inventories remain inherently unstable because they are open to dispute by groups who perceive deficits or imbalances where their special interests are concerned.

Resource allocation and real-time heritage management comes down to discriminating choices. But once the elements of heritage are viewed as organically related within a holistic vision of environment, it becomes increasingly difficult to make resource-bound decisions requiring a prioritisation of elements. Adopting an environmental perspective on heritage – or a heritage perspective on environment – makes it more difficult to distinguish the heritage

from the non-heritage elements of the whole; a new and more extensive frontier of definition is brought into play, one that serves to compound rather than resolve the expansionary problems that the construction of heritage presents.

### 5.2.1 *Balancing conservation and innovation*

Constructs such as ‘the historic environment’ privilege a reading of environment in terms of one of its dimensions. Looking at environment with a ‘heritage gaze’ carries the danger of constricting the dynamic interplay of traditionalist and modernist values in the way the environment is understood. *Power of Place* (English Heritage, 2000:31) is mindful of this danger and sensibly asserts that ‘conservation policy is as much about mediating thoughtfully and sensitively economic and social change as about ensuring the preservation of what is valuable’. Elsewhere it advocates high quality new build in heritage areas.

A similar balancing of heritage and design values is needed in the overall framing of environmental issues in Ireland. There is a danger, to an extent deriving from recent planning legislation, of heritage values and architectural innovation being set at odds. The 1999 Act, for example, places no explicit value on modern architectural innovation in the way it specifies the designation of Architectural Conservation Areas. There is room for policy adjustment here. Rather than defining a heritage zone or streetscape by exclusive reference to its heritage content and prohibited developments, such areas might be considered as presenting an *opportunity* for sensitive, high-quality modern architectural innovation. It could be specified through legislation that any new build in a heritage zone should be subject to architectural competition to ensure a dynamic aesthetic to the evolution of such places. Accepting the need for this dialectical tension between heritage and innovation is a way of articulating not only our concern to conserve the best, but our own generation’s confidence to make a positive contribution to the heritage of taste and design. It may even raise a debate about the possibilities of displacing poor quality historic construction with *better* quality modern constructions – challenging the fetishistic vision that sometimes sees all aged structures as inherently superior to anything we are capable of producing in our day.

### 5.3 Information versus choice

The philosophical counter-argument to the environmentalist reading of heritage is based on choice and selection. Timoslav Sola has spoken eloquently about the knowledge mania that increasingly characterises the modern information culture. More specifically, the merging of heritage and environmentalist perspectives can be seen as predicated on encyclopaedic knowledge ambitions – exhaustive surveys, comprehensive inventories, indeterminable research programmes – the kind of audit culture just discussed. Addressing the issue in the context of museums, Sola (1995: 187-95) is convinced that the pursuit of such ambitions has led heritage into crisis. It had appeared that museums could ‘continue as an expression of their own inherent acquisitiveness’, but they could not. We have ‘touched the ceiling of growth, both physically and financially’, and this growth has resulted in ‘a deep conceptual crisis which endangers the museum’s mission and its position in contemporary society’. We have, he says, been led astray by a scientific idea of knowledge as consisting in the quantity and reliability of data. But it is choice that turns data into knowledge, choice that makes the message – ‘choice finally equals responsibility’.

Sola’s philosophical insight is addressed specifically to museums, but can be consistently extended to the world of heritage in general. Lowenthal (2000:20) locates the problem in conservational practice that pursues goals of ‘eternity, stability, and permanence’. These goals, he says, are being increasingly challenged on practical and philosophical grounds; ‘it is not a sign of despair but a mark of maturity’, he says, ‘to realise that we hand down not some eternal stock of artefacts and sites but, rather, an ever-changing array of evanescent relics’. Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996:268) emphasise that ‘heritage is a contemporary function, selecting from the past for transmission to the future’, a characteristic that makes it ‘especially amenable to goal-directed intervention’. So Lord Charteris was right after all: heritage is whatever we want it to be; the choice is ours.

### 5.4 Conclusion

The recent tendency to perceive heritage as a dimension of landscape and environment has disabled rather than empowered our ability to select what we value as heritage while confusing it with other values, particularly ecological ones. The encyclopaedic ambitions

that increasingly characterise heritage collecting and inventory processes may, in the end, bring the growth of heritage to a crisis quicker than any other factor. The totalising 'heritage gaze' is also enervating, privileging conservation at the expense of creative innovation. Thus, policies for protecting heritage should, where feasible, be looked at as presenting opportunities to make innovative contemporary interventions, particularly in relation to architecture.

But we also have to face up to the need to make subtractions from the stock. Before heritage was overtaken by the environmentalist vision, it consisted of qualitative selections of things (the biggest, the best, the finest, the rarest, the typical example). If heritage policy and planning is to set and achieve more manageable goals, there is a need to strengthen more rigorous selection processes in the way heritage is constructed. This does not imply dispensing with the protection of heritage complexes, such as streetscapes, townscapes, and landscapes, but it does imply making choices and selections – sometimes guided by inventories, but sometimes in the absence of them – and an implicit acceptance that all of heritage can neither be described or saved. It remains doubtful whether inventory processes with exhaustive ambitions – considerably costly exercises in their own right – are capable of definitive closure. However, if they are planned and managed through more rigorous classification and conscious selection processes there is some chance that they can serve to frame the heritage resource within manageable limits. The next task is to investigate how rigorous classification systems might serve to deliver that goal.

## The role of classification

### 6.1 The uses and abuses of classification

The last chapter ended by advocating the re-affirmation of selection and choice in regulating the growth of heritage. Classification is an essential tool in this process – but a two-edged one. Depending on how it is deployed, classification can serve either to contain heritage growth or contribute to its expansion. In this chapter the way in which classification can serve both these purposes is described and discussed. The issues involved are practically explored by examining the use of classification in two contexts: the geographical classifications used for the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, and the typological problems presented by the portfolio of properties in state care under Dúchas, the Heritage Service.

Heritage is prone to expansion through a creeping, case-by-case accretion in which existing classifications are altered and augmented. The formula ‘heritage *includes* these types, but we may discover more’ (see the earlier discussion of the UN Convention and the Irish Heritage Act, Chapter 2) is in essence a recipe for heritage expansion through classification. Benhamou (1998) cites ‘typological expansion’ as one of the causes of heritage growth, as new categories of things get added to existing typologies (she cites such things as décor in cafes, swimming pools, shops and industrial heritage as new types that have been added in the French context). On the other hand, Peacock (in Peacock, 1998:23) is very clear about the role of classification in resource management: ‘A classification of heritage artefacts with reference to historical period, different art-forms and domestic cultures must be implicit in any government policy governed by resource constraints’.

The process of selecting and ordering is the only logical means of distinguishing the representative from the vast range of distinctive and unique things that potentially constitute heritage. As argued in the previous chapter, under the impetus of holistic vision and environmentalism, our entire world is a potentially indivisible matrix of heritage. In the service of this vision, classification can lose

its normative (representational) rigour and become exhaustive (descriptive) inventorisation. However, sheer financial constraint ultimately compels us to make selections and hard choices – to distinguish between the heritage and the non-heritage dimensions of our world – or, failing that, at least to prioritise those aspects of it that can be affordably protected. Classifications, properly defined and deployed, can play an effective role in containing heritage growth within manageable bounds. The question is, therefore, how do we construct effective classifications – ones that contribute to the manageability of heritage rather than its inexorable growth?

The first requirement is to avoid taking the classification exercise for granted. Bailey (1994) has remarked that classification generally plays the same role in management processes as electricity plays in our everyday lives; one of those things that we use without knowing very much about how it works.

A poorly defined classification is likely to be little more than a semantic or administrative convenience. Classification is a valid method of simplifying complexity, but there is constant pressure on it to mirror that complexity; gaps are constantly being identified, and amendments, refinements and additions insisted upon – to the extent that classification is in danger of collapsing into the world of infinitely parseable phenomena which it is its function to interpret and evaluate.

For these reasons, not only should care and attention be paid to how classifications are drawn up in the first instance, but altering or augmenting them ought to be a strictly controlled process. Schuster (in Schuster *et al*, 1997:7) has a wry way of defending such rigour. He vigorously defends the contention that there are really only five tools of government action in the field of heritage, although he is prepared to offer a prize to anyone who can come up with a valid sixth. He tells the story of the man who after ordering a pizza was asked ‘would you like your pizza cut into six slices or twelve, sir?’ ‘Oh six’, comes the reply, ‘I couldn’t possibly eat twelve’. A small number of categories, he says, offers ‘analytical leverage’. The number should be large enough to capture the most important differences, but small enough to promote thinking about expanding the set – subject to the understanding that any addition is the product of rigorous analysis.

At the same time, close attention has to be paid to the sociological context of classification. Some commentators have seen the job of identifying and classifying as having been captured by the ‘coterie of



heritage experts' (architects, historians, archaeologists and planners) who create classifications to suit their own professional purposes, resulting in conflict between experts and other groups with a stake in the definition and control of heritage. Classifications nowadays have to fulfil a much wider set of demands if they are to be democratically acceptable and function realistically in a climate of heritage dissonance. As Davison and McConville (1991) put it: 'The heritage business is subject to a constant tension between the demands for bureaucratic consistency and impersonal expertise, on the one hand, and for popular participation and local autonomy on the other'. What this means is that the *process* by which heritage is classified is as important as the classifications themselves.

As administrative tools serving the containment goals being discussed here, heritage classifications have three main functions: to identify a credibly *representative* range of heritage places or objects for care and conservation, and to bring *consistent* criteria and some order of *priority* to bear on the efficient targeting of resources. The process of achieving these goals begins with the questions: representative of what and whom, and arranged according to which or whose priorities? The following examination of a key classification set used in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage may help to illuminate some of the issues and challenges raised by these questions.

## 6.2 National Inventory of Architectural Heritage: international, national, regional and local, record only<sup>10</sup>

The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) was set up in 1990 and placed on a statutory basis in 1999. The goal of

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<sup>10</sup> The definitions of the five categories are (Dúchas, The Heritage Service (1998:11):

international: structures of sufficient inherent importance to indicate the architectural heritage of Ireland in an international forum

national: structures that make a significant contribution to the architectural heritage of Ireland across the country at large

regional: structures that make a significant contribution to the architectural heritage of its own region or area

local: structures that contribute to the architectural heritage within their own locality

record only: structures deemed, at the time of making the inventory, to either not be of architectural heritage merit or not yet make a contribution to the overall architectural heritage.

the NIAH, which is administered through Dúchas, the Heritage Service, is to produce a comprehensive inventory of all structures of heritage significance in the Republic. The anticipated completion date for the full survey is 2013 (Pickard, 2001). The grouping of structures into *international*, *national*, *regional* and *local* and *record only* is used as a key classification set to establish a geographically-based hierarchy of importance for sites recorded in the Inventory.

The role of the NIAH is closely interwoven with the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act (1999), under whose provisions local authorities are obliged to draw up a Record of Protected Structures (RPS) for their areas. The Act further directs that local authorities must consult with the NIAH in drawing up the Record. To aid local authorities in the task, Dúchas, the Heritage Service, (1998) issued *Architectural Conservation Guidelines for Planning Authorities*. Though it is fair to point out that the Guidelines are in draft form and it is anticipated that they will be subject to refinement as the listing process evolves, they at present propose that the five-fold classification be used also by local authorities in drawing up an RPS.

The primary difficulty with these classifications is that they are not grounded in a geographical perspective that has real cultural or historical substance. They do not relate, that is, in any meaningful sense to the 'cognitive maps' of individuals who perceive the world, whether simultaneously or separately, from the particular perspectives which these terms imply. Thus the only credible, substantive meaning for 'local' is that which is perceived as such from *within* the geographical range to which it refers. In other words, it is 'locals' who should have priority in defining the local. The same principle applies for the other categories. But that is not the way the classifications are meant to work in either the National Inventory or the local Record.

The Guidelines make little or no reference to wider consultation mechanisms in the designation of architectural heritage according to these criteria. Instead, the need for assessments under the RPS to be 'objective and impartial' is stressed, coupled with the anticipated need for 'expert assessment' when difficult cases arise. In this way, terms with a basic geographic meaning are largely converted into metaphors for expert determination of architectural significance.

That problem of typological abstraction is perhaps even better illustrated by the 'regional' category, of which it could be asked straight off: does this classification have any substantive topographical meaning in the Irish context?<sup>11</sup> It might be argued that the four provinces, Munster, Leinster, Connacht and Ulster are the effective regions of Ireland. But in fact they would appear to have very little topographical reality in the life experience of most Irish people – nothing like the reality that counties have as markers of geographical and cultural distinctions and as representing a palpable sense of place. As Bate (2000:234) has observed, 'if national identity is to be grounded in regional identity, county boundaries, being markers of regional differentiation, are pressure points'. Short of defining the county as the region, would it not be more efficient to dispense with this category and operate with the classifications local and national alone? The examples of regional significance given in the Guidelines (Georgian terraces, Victorian pubs, Ryan's Pub etc.) fail to clarify the issue because the *geographical significance* of a structure is not inherent in the structure itself but in how it is situated relative to external hierarchies of topographical perception (whether it be local, regional, or national).

The point is crucial for heritage expansion. A redundant classification is in effect a vehicle for arbitrary ascription or duplication. A thing that might just as easily be classified under a different heading (or perhaps not classified at all) gets 'parked' in a redundant lot. It does not fulfil the categorical rigour required if classification is to serve the goal of containing expansion.

The type 'international' is defined in the Guidelines as 'structures of sufficient inherent importance to indicate the architectural heritage of Ireland in an international forum'. As all determinations under the legislation are to be made through the exercise of either local or national expertise, the perception of international importance must perforce be hypothetical in nature, because there is presumably no instrumental arrangement for arriving at this classification from a genuinely international perspective – a mechanism that clearly exists, for instance, in the case of UNESCO's List of World Heritage Sites (not alluded to in the definition). Moreover the term is fundamentally ambiguous: it can be taken to mean either (a) things that are perceived from an international perspective as possessing

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<sup>11</sup> It is worth noting that the Portuguese work with a twofold classification of 'national' and 'local'. See Tarschys (1996).

importance exclusive of national associations (a Rembrandt in the National Gallery for example) or (b) things that are perceived as of international importance precisely because of their pre-eminence in a national context. Examples of the latter would be icons of Irishness such as the Ardagh chalice or Newgrange. In the latter case, the international importance of a thing is potentially inherent in its national importance. But whichever the case, unless there is a demonstrable mechanism for adjudicating 'international' importance from an international perspective, what we are left with is a potentially arbitrary and artificial distinction among objects of national importance – resulting in the same category redundancy that exists between the regional and local classifications.

On the whole, this crucial range of classifications is weak. Even the definition of 'national' importance amounts to a question-begging formulation ('structures that make a significant contribution to the architectural heritage of Ireland'). The only attempt to clarify its meaning is to give a list of examples (including Leinster House, Nenagh Court House and Athlone Castle). The list, presumably, is intended to demonstrate the *self-evident* national importance of such structures. Which prompts the question: is there a relation between cursory classification and expert determination? It would appear that the looser the classification, the more discretion the individual expert has in interpreting the meaning and importance of a particular structure; instead of the classification guiding the expert, while simultaneously educating and informing the public about the criteria of determination, the expert guides the classification through personal judgement; the classification operates, finally, as a means of formalising the expression of expert taste and judgement.

Looking at this issue from the non-expert perspective, Russell (1997:79) has criticised the Australian National Trust's preoccupation with buildings; he finds that architecture-driven perceptions of heritage to be overly 'artefact centred'. What local people may classify as heritage may only be partly to do with buildings; more intangible aspects of heritage – music and folkloric associations, for example – may prove more important in defining the collective memory. He questions 'how far professionals and bureaucracies are willing to go to accommodate major shifts in focus, including community identification of its own heritage, and the management implications when heritage is conceived as the practices which sustain group culture as much as fabric'. (This comment raises an

intriguing distinction between cost-intensive heritage ‘hardware’ and potentially far less expensive ‘software’, suggesting that part of the resource problem is a bias towards the former.)

Making classification processes more transparent, therefore, can be seen as a way of distributing governmental efficacy across two of the tools of implementation: regulation and information. Instead of enabling legislative processes alone, more transparent classifications are a way of communicating values to and between a wider range of stakeholders – that is, they become a valuable means of informing the public about the grounds of government action, while facilitating their participation in defining and altering its direction (consistent with the redefined role for voluntary bodies described in Chapter 4 and with the *Heritage Plan’s* ambition to achieve real partnership in the management of heritage).

The potential benefits of well-defined classifications are not merely theoretical. The Swiss, as already noted, have adopted a wholly functional approach to geographical classification, in which the level of federal funding is linked to the relative significance of the property. In Ireland, the possibility of linking tax exemptions under Section 482 of the Finance Act to structures with a rating of regional or higher importance is currently under consideration. However, if this linkage is to work effectively, the inherent arbitrariness and weaknesses of the existing classifications would need to be clarified, so that they operate to a much higher standard of consistency and transparency.

### **6.3 Properties in state care and ‘national’ significance**

The question-begging way that properties of ‘national’ significance are described in the Guidelines, and the fact that this formula is supported only by a list of examples whose national importance is meant to be self-evident, leads on to the second topic for discussion here: the portfolio of properties in state care under Dúchas, the Heritage Service.

The history of the Irish state’s acquisition of heritage properties is, on the whole, one of pragmatic and sometimes opportunistic accretion, especially in the case of non-archaeological heritage. To the question: what qualifies a site for direct care by the state? there appears to be no obvious or consistent answer. There is simply no explicitly articulated ‘collection policy’ governing the portfolio of Dúchas properties to which one can refer, nor likewise any

transparent definition of the concept 'national significance' which is the baseline criterion of eligibility for inclusion in the portfolio. The commonly perceived advantage that is seen to derive from such a loose arrangement is that it allows for flexible interpretation and a wide margin of discretion in decision-making. But in reality what it amounts to is a bidding system, regulated by a combination of lobbying, political considerations and expert judgement, in which there is no clearly discernible rationale at work. As a result, the range of heritage properties that might be considered potentially eligible for adoption by the state is indeterminable.

It seems evident, however, that the state has for some time been feeling the pressure of bids upon its resources to adopt properties into state ownership, and has begun to search for other options. In a written reply in the Dáil in October 2000, the minister stated that it was not, in general, intended to 'acquire any further properties which might be offered for sale'. Nevertheless, even in the period in which this paper was written, the state came under concerted pressure to adopt three properties: the last home of W.B. Yeats in the Dublin suburb of Rathfarnham; Ballyfin House, a nineteenth-century stately home in County Laois; and the ruins of Daniel O'Connell's birthplace at Carhen, Co. Kerry. In the latter case, the state is able to make the reasonable argument that in already managing the O'Connell property at Derrynane, a few miles from Carhen, it has fulfilled its obligation to honour this outstanding Irish historical figure of the nineteenth century. Yet it is compelled to make the case on its unique merits: there are no overarching classificatory principles that preclude the state's having two – or for that matter more than two – O'Connell properties in the national portfolio.

There are both qualitative and quantitative questions arising from this poorly defined situation. Quantitatively, can over-representation of some types and under-representation of others be avoided? Qualitatively, is it possible to state more explicitly the criteria that qualify a property as 'nationally significant'? There are a number of changes to existing practice that might prove useful in resolving these questions.

**1. Time-line classification.** It would seem sensible to develop a time-line classification to serve as an interpretative framework for the existing range of properties and a guideline for future acquisitions. A time-line analysis might reveal, for example, that

there is under-representation of subject fields such as nineteenth-century heritage, scientific heritage, and twentieth-century heritage in general, and perhaps an over-emphasis (whether in strict numerical or proportionate cost terms) on eighteenth-century and nineteenth-century stately homes. There are precedents for this approach. In its Strategic Plan (1996-98), the Australian Heritage Commission identified as a key objective 'the design of a national framework of principal Australian historic themes to enable consistent identification of historic places'.

**2. Define 'national significance'.** A deeper interrogation of the term 'national significance' might help to show more clearly whether it bears a dynamic relation to the evolving debate about national identity. If the portfolio of properties in state care is meant to represent in some strategic way the full pre-historic and historic continuum in the physical heritage of Ireland, some rationale that interprets how all of the elements combine to serve this purpose is clearly needed. Is there an overarching 'story of Ireland' that emerges in some coherent form from the interpretation of the existing range of properties? If not where are the gaps, and what is missing? Against this background, how much would the acquisition of yet another stately home add to the story of Ireland as opposed to the acquisition of, say, the original terminal building at Dublin Airport as a monument interpreting the twentieth-century modernisation of Ireland? Again, such complexities indicate the need for the input of cultural research into the refinement of these classifications and policy formation generally. That, at least, would be better than working off the implicit proposition that national significance was either self-evident or existed solely in the eye of the expert beholder.

**3. Introduce an historic plaque system.** These systems are already working very effectively in urban contexts, most notably as used by Dublin City Council to mark the birthplaces of famous people. The principle might with benefit be extended nationally in a partnership venture between local authorities and the Heritage Service. The ruins of O'Connell's birth-place at Carhen, Co. Kerry, is a good example of a site with strong historic associations rather than a structure of intrinsic historic significance. If a prestigious, nationally validated plaque system were in place it would give an additional

low-cost option to government in considering how to honour historically important places, people or events. Without some such option, the public will continue to see the state's duty of adoption as the only available one.

**4. Build up the partnership approach to managing the heritage stock.** In this context, the need to find a practical differentiation between the 'national' and the 'regional' or 'local' dimensions of heritage connect up with the earlier argument about the need for subsidiarity. Devolution of management responsibility for defining and managing the local heritage stock onto local and voluntary bodies would appear to be the only realistic way of meeting our vastly extended ambitions as a society to protect our heritage, of dispelling fiscal illusions, and ensuring that there is a realistic approach to its cost-effective management.

Other more flexible partnership arrangements are also possible. The current rare but successful examples of heritage sites run jointly between the state and the private and voluntary sectors (Muckcross House and Roscrea Heritage being two of the best examples) are perhaps harbingers of a more dynamic reading of the 'national' portfolio. There have also been promising developments in the area of natural heritage. Until recently, the state's principal means of ensuring the conservation of natural areas was through acquisition (wildlife reserves, national parks). But recent legislative provisions for the care of Special Areas of Conservation and Special Protection Areas through management agreements with private owners, have revealed new ways of protecting natural habitats other than by direct state acquisition.

For the state, one of the goals of such partnership strategies might be to inculcate a sense of national significance as inhering in a mix of properties both in state and private ownership (whether run by their individual owners supported by tax exemptions, or an Irish 'National Trust', or by a Civic Trust). Eligibility for full state ownership could then be restricted to properties already designated as nationally significant within this more broadly defined framework.

#### **6.4 Conclusion**

The analysis given in earlier chapters underpins the discussion of classification here. The elusiveness and subjectivity of heritage



definitions do not serve to effectively contain the conceptualisation of heritage (Chapter 2). The absence of any opportunity cost dimension to the public's awareness of heritage was then described, and the possibility of using CV survey methods to redress this balance advocated (Chapter 3). But here a serious problem was encountered: the public may be placing an unreal value on heritage because, especially in the Irish and European contexts, it tends to be administered strategically, and not in a way that the public always experiences as a real, immediate or tangible cost. Subsidiarity, it was then suggested, is the only way to introduce realism into public valuations of heritage (Chapter 4).

More rigorous classification of heritage has the potential to bolster all of these perceived weaknesses. In the first place, classification could be described as a form of applied definition. Classification (whether through time-lining, research prioritisation, or simply by ensuring that the categories under which phenomena are described mean what they say and are rigorously mutually exclusive) is a necessary tool to ensure that choice and selection actively governs the way heritage is constituted.

Secondly, if applied with genuine topographical rigour, geographical classifications of heritage in terms of an international, national, regional and local hierarchy, will contribute to the development of genuine subsidiarity, a necessary condition, it has been argued, to close the gap between the real costs of heritage and the illusory perception of those costs that tends to arise when an overly-centralised approach is taken to its administration. A related point is that the simplistic connection between the perception of 'national' heritage and direct state care needs to be broken. Again, a more transparently defined concept of national significance, involving the use of a time-line framework, would help to develop the idea that caring for national heritage is not wholly or exclusively the responsibility of state agencies.

Other mechanisms, such as an historic plaque system, might serve to satisfy popular demands for appropriate recognition of historic associations with places. This would limit the exposure of the state and local authorities to campaigns for the vastly more expensive option of acquisition and control.

Thirdly, rigorous classification would seem to offer the only effective way of preventing open-ended inventory processes from becoming self-perpetuating. Otherwise, heritage is in danger of

subsiding inchoately into a totalised vision of landscape (Chapter 5).

All of these elements are interdependent. Classification will only work if the construction of heritage is not left solely to expert taste, if public opinion is informed by direct participation in its production (through voluntary bodies and adequate information) and in direct responsibility for its costs (regionalised or localised decision-making about its constitution and responsibility for its costs).

## Movable heritage: collection policies and de-accessioning

### 7.1 De-accessioning in context: the need for collections policies

The primary strategy economists advocate for dealing with heritage expansion is to ensure that true costs and choices are revealed in the decision-making processes surrounding it. But it is also recognised that more directly interventionist mechanisms are needed. When dealing specifically with movable heritage, the economic analysis has tended to focus principally on the issue of de-accessioning,<sup>12</sup> which might be succinctly defined as the pruning of surplus or redundant elements from heritage collections and inventories. But economists can be criticised for a tendency to concentrate too narrowly on this one issue. The broader picture is one in which *de-accessioning* arises as part of an institution's track record in *accessioning*, and both processes should ultimately be framed in terms of its collection policy – or the lack of it.

The process by which movable heritage is accumulated and the practical and ethical issues surrounding it are clearly of central importance to the issue of containment. These issues are explored in some depth in this chapter.

To begin with, it should be emphasised that expanding collections can be a very positive sign of an institution's responsiveness to social and cultural change and its determination to retain the interest and involvement of its visitors through dynamic collection policies. Expansion only becomes problematic in institutions where there is a weak or no properly articulated collection policy. An effective collection policy provides philosophical and practical guidance as to what exactly, and how much of it, should be collected, and takes into account an institution's financial and spatial capacities.

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<sup>12</sup> Policy in this area is frequently referred to as 'de-accession and disposal'. For convenience, the term 'de-accessioning' will be used throughout here to include the closely analogous process of 'disposal'.

Since the setting up of the American Accreditation programme in 1969 and the British museums' Registration scheme in 1988, an increasing number of countries have adopted similar schemes with the goal of inculcating systematic and professional standards of museum management. All these schemes specify the drawing up of a written and comprehensive collections policy as a core standard. Only in 1999 did Ireland take steps to devise its own museums standards scheme with the publication of the Heritage Council's policy document *The Introduction of a Standards and Accreditation Scheme for Irish Museums*. The implementation of an accreditation scheme for Ireland, therefore, is urgently required to provide (amongst other things) a consistent set of criteria to address the acute problems revolving around collections management in Irish museums, problems that are particularly acute in the case of the National Museum of Ireland.

## 7.2 The National Museum of Ireland

Since its establishment as the Museum of Science and Industry in 1877, the National Museum of Ireland has accumulated an *estimated* five million objects. No one is sure of the exact figure because, during decades of institutional neglect following the founding of the Free State in 1922, the Museum's records and housekeeping declined into a dire condition due to inadequate staffing and resources.

But over the past decade, concerted efforts have been made to place the Museum on a footing that meets internationally acceptable standards of management, curation and conservation. The Museum's new interim board, appointed in April 1994, together with Museum staff and independent consultants, faced a formidable challenge. In a Memorandum drawn up for the Irish Antiquities Division, the keeper stressed how the Egyptian, Classical and Irish Antiquities collections 'are stored in overcrowded conditions'. Finds from archaeological excavations are described as 'currently held by excavators in hundreds of different locations', while a large body of similar material was being held by the Heritage Service. None of this could be quantified (National Museum of Ireland: 1997).

Despite very substantial improvements over recent years in cataloguing procedures and staff allocated to this task, the issue of storage space for ever-expanding collections remains a serious issue for the Museum, both in the short- and long-term planning contexts.

The problem is most acute in the case of the Irish archaeological collections. In a 1995 memorandum on the storage needs of the research and reserve collections of the Irish Antiquities Division, the keeper estimated that to cater for projected needs 'a space of 75,000 sq. ft. should be earmarked to allow for the growth of the collections of excavated finds over the next 50-100 years'. But even this estimate excluded storage of finds then held by excavators, in relation to which the keeper comments: 'it is not possible to even estimate what size area would be required to house this material' (National Museum of Ireland: 1995).

### **7.3 The statutory burden**

When the burden of the Museum's statutory obligations under the National Monuments Act (1994) and the National Cultural Institutions Act (1997) are considered along with all of its many other functions as a national institution, it may well be that a more radical approach to collections management will be needed if the Museum is to stand any chance of consolidating the gains it has made in recent times.

The Amendment to the 1994 National Monuments Act makes the National Museum the legal owner of all archaeological materials found in Ireland. Though the Museum can waive its rights under the Act, and allow local museums to borrow material on short- or long-term loan, the administrative burden deriving from its being the port of first and last call for all archaeological finds in Ireland is immense. The legislation reinforces the Museum's role as the ultimate repository of all archaeological material found or excavated in the country. While the prospect of some relief from the curatorial burden is offered through the power to loan material to local museums, this is dependent on the development of a network of such museums resourced and operating to acceptable curatorial standards. The designation of eight local museums in 2000 as meeting the prescribed standards is a welcome development, but it is by no means clear how, apart from facilitating freer lending arrangements, the capacity problem constituted by an ever-expanding quantity of archaeological finds is effectively addressed by it. For even when the storage space available to local museums is combined with the space available to the National Museum, there is no guarantee that the aggregate storage capacity will be adequate to meet demands. Indeed, there is a strong likelihood that the

chronic storage problems which already afflict some of the local museums might be exacerbated.<sup>13</sup> This is a good illustration of a central contention of this paper: it may be possible to conserve more heritage by spreading the burden – but not if the pace and volume of growth outstrips the capacity of all the players involved.

The 1997 Act, however, does allow for a more pro-active role for the Museum in determining its accession policies. Section 68.3(a) amends the National Monuments Act (1994) to allow the director, when an object is considered ‘not of sufficient archaeological or historical interest to justify its retention by the State’, to dispose of it ‘by whatever means he or she thinks fit’. This provision gives considerable discretion to the director over the accessioning process, and clearly entertains the prospect of disposal as a management option. However, it is unlikely that the museum will be in a position to deploy a collections policy that effectively controls the rate of collections growth without first confronting the policy issues that arise in relation to its role in archaeology.

#### **7.4 Re-balancing priorities: archaeology and the National Museum**

The role of the Museum as the summary repository of the nation’s archaeological finds has to be seen in the context of its overall mission as the *National* Museum of Ireland. In this context, the question arises of whether the burden of legislative obligations placed on the Museum in the archaeological field seriously distorts its capacity to function as the institution representing in material form the identity of the nation in all its aspects. This problem is not, however, unique to the National Museum of Ireland; it is a management challenge that many museums in other countries have had to face over recent years. There may be something to be learned, therefore, from the experience of museums elsewhere that have found their archaeological roles threatening to swamp their other functions.

Max Hebditch, former Director of the Museum of London, has given a particularly useful analysis of the analogous problems faced by that institution. The pressure placed upon the Museum of London’s resources through its role as repository for the city’s

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<sup>13</sup> That the storage areas in some of the designated museums are restricted was confirmed to me by the curators of the Limerick and Cork Public Museums.

archaeological excavations is very considerable. Twenty years of excavation in the city filled up 3,000 square metres of stores. In 1997, Hebditch estimated the cost of processing the incoming archaeological archive from excavations, combined with the continuing cost of managing the accumulated collection, to be in the region of stg£750,000 annually. The archive is growing at a rate of 100 square metres a year. Crucially, this rate of growth is not driven by the museum's overall needs but by 'the pace of redevelopment and the requirements of archaeology'. Archaeology places particular pressures on museums with a broad collecting remit. Merriman and Swain (1999:252) have pointed to the fact that while in all other disciplines it is the museum itself that controls the rate at which material is collected, in the case of archaeology it is fieldwork, triggered by the planning process, that generates archives over which museum curators have very little control. They conclude that museums 'cannot ensure that the rate of collection is kept in balance with the resources available to curate them in the long term'.

Hebditch (1997:89-93) questions the effect this is having on the Museum of London's ability to carry out its mission. He defines the museum's main purpose as 'to explore London as an urban phenomenon', which requires collections that reflect a balanced view of the continuum of the city's past, from pre-history right up to the present. In this context, he perceives a divergence between the needs of archaeology and the needs of the museum. How as director, he asks, was he to balance the allocation of resources across the full range of the museum's functions against 'maintaining and increasing specialised, comprehensive but relatively little used scientific and archaeological collections'?

He estimates that spending over stg£750,000 a year to fulfil the museum's research role works out as an annual subsidy of stg£7,000 per researcher – as compared with an average cost for all other museum users of stg£29 per head. There is a clear need, he says, to rebalance the museum's policy in regard to archaeology. Putting it bluntly, he feels that the collection policy should 'fit the general public collecting purpose of the museum rather than the possible future needs of research archaeology'. In the context of its broader mission, the museum simply does not need all of the collections that archaeologists feel are necessary for their specialised research purposes. But his most radical point is to question whether research collections should be in museums at all. There is no reason, he says,

‘why scientific and archaeological archives could not be established in their own right’.

Hebditch’s consideration of the Museum of London’s predicament is very relevant to the Irish situation. There can be little dispute that the volume of archaeological finds is putting severe pressure on the resources of Irish museums – a problem that is, if anything, exacerbated by recent planning legislation, which has given added impetus to the number of excavations and volume of finds.

### **7.5 The case for a National Archaeological Repository**

The storage capacity of the National Museum in the Kildare Street premises and the space potentially available at Collins’s Barracks is limited, expensive, and likely to come under increasing strain as the number of archaeological finds continues to mount. However, if the logic of separating the storage problem from the Museum’s other functions is accepted, the possibility of setting up a separate ‘National Archaeological Repository’, bringing the systems and logistics of modern warehousing to bear on archaeological finds, should be considered.

The idea is neither novel nor impractical. An analogous approach to the storage of books has been taken by the library at Trinity College Dublin, which now stores a sizeable percentage of its library stock in a purpose-built facility in the suburb of Santry. The advantages of setting up a separate management process for research archaeological collections, combined with moving them to a purpose-built warehouse in the suburbs, could be significant:

- lower rental/purchase costs associated with a location away from the city centre where property is at a premium
- optimal use of floor space through adoption of modern warehouse systems of stacking and retrieval, leading to significant savings in storage costs
- more logical and efficient access and retrieval systems to facilitate researchers
- externalising the true costs of the repository<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> More logical storage systems, for example, should make it much easier to arrive at realistic estimates of storage costs. Merriman and Swain cite a cost of stg£34.30 per cu. m. per annum for museum archives (1999 figures) (Merriman and Swain, 1999:257).



- the possibility that the running costs could be shared between museums and third-level institutions (who, after all, are among the main users of archaeological repositories).

There is no reason why the existence of a 'National Archaeological Repository' should threaten or downgrade the national archaeological collection in the National Museum. In fact, it could well result in a qualitatively better national collection, based on rigorous selection criteria, with only the best or most representative examples held on display or in vastly reduced collections. This could result in a much better synergy between the Museum's public service goals and its archaeological collections, in that virtually all of the Museum's holdings would have display potential.

To make the 'National Archaeological Repository' the designated institution for receipt of all archaeological finds in the state would require legislative changes. The legislation would have to specify the pre-eminent right of the National Museum to select from the Repository such items it considered of outstanding national significance to augment its display collections. To save on staff costs, the personnel of a Conservation Unit could be shared between both institutions. Perhaps an agency might be the best way to structure such a relationship. Two of the beneficial consequences would be:

- existing storage space in the Museum would be freed up to facilitate the better management of collections in the Archaeological, Art and Industrial Divisions and Natural History Divisions
- it would create the opportunity for new categories of collection – for instance, in twentieth-century material – to be developed within the range of the Museum's existing storage capacity.

In summary, it makes little sense for Irish museums to focus more narrowly on the issue of de-accessioning before adequate collections policies are put in place, and before the acute storage problems posed by planning and other legislative burdens are effectively addressed. The principal merit of a Repository would be to externalise the true conservation and storage costs of archaeological collections, and allow a more scientific assessment of

feasible levels of collections growth in terms of costs per cubic metre of storage.

The proposal does not, however, address the possibility that the national collections may grow in other subject fields. Indeed, in one respect, it facilitates the potential for collections growth in new fields. Once again, this paper is not arguing against qualitatively regulated and efficiently managed growth in any aspect of heritage; it only insists that the nature of that growth, strategically considered, has to bear a realistic relation to available resources. Comprehensive collection management policies are the fundamental tool available to achieve this goal.

### 7.6 De-accessioning

The principle of de-accessioning in the heritage context extends wider than museum collections. Peacock (in Peacock, 1998:20) insists that 'professional support for accumulation of historical artefacts as an end in itself extends, *mutatis mutandis*, to the built heritage'. However, there is a formidable obstacle: de-accessioning, or de-listing, remains unthinkable for most European curators. Benhamou (1997:207) is convinced, nevertheless, that the 'contradictions between rising costs and diminishing funds' makes the subject inescapable. While accepting that all museums should have an active acquisitions policy, Gerald Elliot (1998:119;124), former Chairman of the Scottish Arts Council, says that museums, seen simply as repositories, cannot be subjected to illimitable expansion; sooner or later, 'policies for disposal to match acquisition will be needed'. But he, too, acknowledges that such proposals come up against a curatorial tradition that strongly resists de-accessioning on any, or any substantial, scale. He warns that 'unless the accumulation of objects is reversed the costs of storage and maintenance of stock will make increasingly heavy, and perhaps intolerable, demands on museum budgets'.

It seems entirely reasonable for critics to emphasise the questions of financial viability that arise from collections policies founded upon the doctrine of inalienability. Elliot (1998:121) questions in particular the British Museums and Galleries Commission policy which states that 'unless each museum governing body accepts the principle of "strong presumption against disposal", the whole purpose of the museum is called into question'.

There are, nevertheless, three substantial weaknesses in the economic approach to the issue of de-accessioning:

- it tends to concentrate overwhelmingly on the saleable contents of collections, particularly of art items
- it underestimates the extent to which museum collections today comprise objects with little or no market value
- it underestimates the constrictions placed upon more dynamic disposal policies by the fact that so much of museum holdings are acquired in trust and through donation.

Elliot's argument for de-accessioning is conducted almost entirely in terms of the potential market value of art objects in museums. He advocates a policy of judicious selling and buying to improve the overall quality of the collection. O'Hagan's (1998:197-207) discussion of the subject follows a similar logic, and in fact restricts itself entirely to art collections. But to conduct the argument for de-accessioning overwhelmingly on the basis of the realisable market value of objects, and the potential uses to which the proceeds can be put, substantially misses the real issue.

Indeed, it can be questioned whether it is appropriate to treat museum collections as marketable 'assets' in the first place. Carnegie and Wolzner (1997:174) have concluded that collections held by public institutions 'are not assets in any financial or commercial sense', nor do they satisfy the 'accounting definition of an asset'. For an object to be an asset, they argue, it must be available to meet debts, an attribute clearly not possessed by most museum collections.

Over the past thirty years or so, there has been a major shift in the collection policies of non-art museums away from arts and crafts items (perceived as elitist) and towards greater representation of popular culture (see discussion of heritage production, Chapter 2). As a result, museum collections today contain increasing amounts of things which have very low or even no market value. A sizeable proportion of them come free. For example, families are proud to donate memorabilia going back over a few generations that might otherwise be ditched in the proverbial attic clearance. By its very nature, this material is both very plentiful and easy to acquire, thereby facilitating a very rapid rate of acquisition – a significant factor in explaining rapid rates of growth in modern museum collections.

The important point to bear in mind about this trend is that the cost of keeping such material, in terms of conservation and storage space meeting acceptable climate control standards, may be equivalent to that of art objects, and in some cases higher. Large objects like vehicles or obsolete machinery take up lots of space and pose intricate and expensive conservational challenges, which can lead to high conservation and storage costs, relative to their market value. The direct holding costs, in other words, of artefacts from popular culture may be no less onerous on average than for art objects. The storage cost is the real and recurrent cost that all museums face in the management of their collections.<sup>15</sup> Buying and selling individual items from the collection is only likely to have a marginal effect on these costs if the overall trend in the collections policy is expansionary, leading to inexorable pressure on storage space.

The third weakness in the economic analysis is that it underestimates and undervalues the trust relationship that is constituted through donation. In this context, the hesitancy of curators has both an ethical and practical basis; ethical because the trust engendered through the understanding that donated material will be cared for in perpetuity is broken if it is de-accessioned; practical because the 'market' of donors on which the museum may very largely depend for new acquisitions may collapse if de-accessioning (especially through sale) is perceived to remove the prime motive for donation. Elliot (1998) suggests that most donors would be assured by a guarantee that donated objects would be kept for a period of twenty-five years before disposal could be considered. This seems to misunderstand the psychology of donation. When an object is donated, its potential market value is *sacrificed* by placing it *indefinitely* in a memorial space *beyond* market value. (Pomian's (1990:42) distinction between the public museum as a 'gift economy' and the market economy of tradeable artefacts is pertinent here.)

Yet even when due allowance is made for these weaknesses in the economic analysis, there is no escaping the very real challenge that inexorably expanding collections present to the managers of

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<sup>15</sup> Whether an object is in storage or on exhibition is not a critical issue here; an object on display can be seen as 'stored on view' in the sense that the space it occupies has a cost in terms of climate, conservation and security costs, which, if anything, is likely to be appreciably higher than when it is held off display.

most modern museums. Insistence on impeccable ethics now, based on policies of inalienability, is likely to prove ethically flawed over time. For if the gap between the rate of accession and the financial resources to care for collections widens too far, the trust with donors will ultimately be breached through decay and neglect. The weaknesses in the economic argument for de-accessioning do not, in the end, absolve museum curators from the obligation to deal with the gap between conservation and resources as bearing directly on the safe-keeping of collections.

However, even when the principle of de-accessioning is accepted, the path to the goal of cost-savings is by no means a clear or direct one. The ethical requirement that de-accessioning be carried out transparently and scrupulously turns it into a time-consuming process. Hebditch (1997) warns that the cost of 'culling' material from a collection can be higher than the capitalised cost of maintaining the material. De-accessioning, in other words, only makes sense if it can be efficiently organised and results in real financial savings.

### **7.7 The practice of de-accessioning**

There are two prime factors that should prompt the question of whether to de-accession an object: decay and poor documentation. According to Sola (1999:189), experience shows that only 10 per cent of collections can be preserved to an acceptable standard, despite 60 per cent of museum budgets being focused on collection care. If this estimate is even remotely accurate, it means that a sizeable proportion of most museum collections is subject to deterioration over time. At some point in the deteriorated life of an object the question of whether it fulfils its role as an historical document has to be asked. Riegl (1926:74) has described how the progressive deterioration of a monument leads to the gradual effacement of both its age and historical value, until such time as 'a distinct trace of the original form, of the former work of man' is barely discernible in it. The dead, accumulating weight of such legacies constricts an institution's ability to pursue more dynamic collection policies into the future.

Amongst longer established institutions, poor documentation is often a legacy from earlier eras before the adoption of modern management practices, exemplified by collection policies and best practice. What is to be done with objects rendered inscrutable by a lack of adequate information and where present-day research is

unlikely to supply the absence? Evaluating an object's enduring worth to the museum is substantially a matter of its informational potential and prompts the question of whether de-accessioning might be a realistic option.

The pursuit of a robust de-accessioning policy in either of these contexts requires courage and leadership. It may mean openly acknowledging that the museum has not succeeded over time in conserving adequately everything it holds, or admitting that its records on certain objects are less than adequate. The alternative is to proceed with the pretence that it can cope with the burden of expanding collections, instead of striving towards optimal use of its resources to achieve enduringly manageable and well-managed collections. As Thomson (2002:82) insists, it is no longer enough for the museum to be defined by its collections; 'collections must be defined by a constantly evolving function'.

In the latest strategic review of the National Museum's functions, currently at draft stage, there are indications that the issue of de-accessioning is being actively addressed. In a section 'Realising the Role of the Museum' a paragraph on curation states that 'policies will also cover disposal and the integration of objects acquired through excavation'.

In a later section dealing with specific 'Objectives in Curation' some further detail is offered on the potential scope of de-accessioning:

To maintain and develop appropriate policies for disposal (including use in the Museum's Education Department and exchange with other institutions) and destructive sampling of objects in the interests of the collections as a whole (National Museum of Ireland, 2000).<sup>16</sup>

Together, these statements indicate that the Museum has begun to address seriously the relationship of resources to capacities in devising a long-term management strategy for its collections.

The National Museum of Australia is already pursuing active de-accessioning and disposal processes as part of its overall collection management policy. In its annual report for 1998-99, it announced that about 1,000 items had been listed for de-accessioning and disposal for the following year, subject to the

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<sup>16</sup> I am grateful to Nigel Monaghan, of the Museum's Natural History Division, for letting me see the initial draft of the Strategy Statement (2000) and discussing its contents and implications with me.

approval of the Museum's governing Council. In its 1999-2000 Report (in a section revealingly headed 'Collection Development') the Museum announced that a total of 537 objects had been approved for de-accessioning, adding that these objects had been selected 'primarily because of their condition status, lack of provenance or duplication within the collection' (National Museum of Australia, 2001:21). The Australian example shows that a bolder approach to de-accessioning is possible when the process is fully integrated with comprehensive collections management.

### **7.8 The limits of archaeology**

From the discussion so far, it is clear that the ability of the National Museum to manage its collections effectively is closely bound up with the practice of archaeology in Ireland. Again, the debate about the relationship between the practice of archaeology and museums has already gathered momentum in England. Owen (1999:133) complains about the progressive 'disenfranchisement' of museums as decisions over excavation and which objects to collect are situated increasingly within the planning process. The result, she says, is to reduce museum managers to 'the role of interpreters with a duty to provide access to material collected by others, disenfranchised from decisions about what is recorded and preserved'.

If the management of archaeological collections is to be reformed, a more rigorous approach to defining the terms and conditions under which material is accepted into the national collection is needed. Hebditch (1997) suggested, for example, the following three-point plan to deal with the Museum of London's archaeological collections.

- Devise new sampling techniques with the goal of reducing the quantity of material to be retained from each excavation.
- More investment in the excavation/archiving process to reduce the long-term financial pressures arising from the storage of infrequently consulted finds.
- A review of existing collections with a view to de-accessioning poorly archived material.

But adopting a similar approach in the Irish context may first require a debate over the presuppositions governing Irish archaeology. Cooney (1995:264) has argued that Irish archaeological practice

shows a lack of concern with theoretical issues. The acquisition of information, where the data 'speaks for itself', he says, is seen as primary. This has led to a situation where urgent national archaeological inventory and management problems are used to support the argument that 'an explicit theoretical perspective can be added at a later stage when the archaeological resource has been safeguarded for the future'. According to Woodman (quoted in Cooney, 1995), 'sorting the raw data has been the primary motivating principle guiding Irish archaeological practice'. Again, it is instructive to compare this situation to that prevailing in Britain. Commenting on British attitudes, Merriman and Swain (1999:262) bluntly assert that

... archaeology continues, both in the mind of the public and that of the discipline itself, to place greater value on romantic-heroic notions of discovery of new data through fieldwork than on the analysis of material that has already been excavated.

The need seems plain enough: the strain being placed on the state's resources by an ever-growing (raw) data mountain emerging through the planning and development process has made urgent the need for new theoretical frameworks for research archaeology. In addition, it is worth noting that there appears to be no classification system informing the Archaeological Survey of Ireland. Without a theoretical framework, or rigorous classification, the presumption must be that all archaeological data are of equal importance. The recording exercise, therefore, is likely to be indefinite and open-ended (see Chapter 6). As Cooney (1995:269) says, 'there is a clear inverse relationship between the development of theory and the wealth of archaeological data; the more data, the less concern there is with theory'. In terms of the policy concerns of this paper, these priorities need to be inverted.

Whatever the means chosen, there is a pressing need for archaeologists to engage with the resource implications of the growing data mountain thrown up by archaeological practice in Ireland. Addressing the English context, Merriman and Swain (1999) suggest that a unified circular approach is now needed: one in which archive holdings are used to fulfil present-day research projects, which in turn help to frame research questions that feed directly back into excavational practice. Whatever the case, it is surely no longer good enough to see the deposition of material in a



museum as the end of the archaeological management process. The putative research potential of collections cannot remain overwhelmingly a blank cheque drawn on the future.

### 7.9 Conclusion

The expansionary problem is perhaps seen at its most critical with movable heritage. We simply cannot go on collecting at current rates, deluding ourselves that we can cope with its costs, or pretending that the burden we are constructing will be gratefully accepted by future generations as a precious, unalterable and inalienable bequest. In any wider historical perspective, the idea that all decisions made by *our* generation about what is precious and important as heritage will be received unquestioningly by our inheritors, seems dubious at best, vanity at worst. Part of their 'heritage' may well be to take the tough decisions we have postponed or procrastinated upon.

However, there are signs that the inescapable reality is beginning to be faced. Having for long been virtually a taboo subject, the issue of de-accessioning is now central to the debate about the future of museums. Museums need to match the quality of collections to the resources available, and to be rigorous in the selection of acquisitions and the de-accessioning of redundant material.

The National Museum of Ireland's ability to present a balanced representation of Ireland's prehistoric and historic evolution in material form is critically bound up with the positioning, or repositioning, of archaeology within its overall remit. That repositioning, however, is unlikely to happen unless there is a wider debate about the theoretical framework governing the practice of archaeology in Ireland. This would have to include a realistic assessment of the manageability of incremental data collection through unprecedented levels of excavation, and information gathering in the form of exhaustive – or more likely inexhaustible – survey work. An Archaeological Repository would free the Museum to restructure its collections in terms of their display quality, while putting the cost and management of research archaeology and its finds on a more rational and transparent basis.

## Policy framework: a summary of proposals

### 8.1 The overall challenge

The *National Heritage Plan* (2002) asserts that it is 'a legitimate and compelling objective' for society to support the protection of heritage through financial and other forms of support. This objective is, of course, shared by the present analysis. However, the *Plan* also speaks of the 'unquantifiable' economic benefits and other 'less tangible' ones that flow from heritage. It has been the purpose of this paper to show that we cannot continue to live contentedly with an open-ended vision of heritage's unquantifiable or intangible benefits. The inexorable expansion of the heritage burden demands that some quantifiable sense of its costs and benefits is needed to keep aspirations and resources in some kind of realistic balance. Otherwise, the result may be the same as in the case of curators who on principle refuse to de-accession: time, neglect and decay will perform the function for us, or future generations will be left to make the hard choices that we forbear to make in our generation.

It has been shown that we cannot rely exclusively on definitions of heritage, no matter how well enshrined in legislation, to set limits to heritage expansion. Heritage is produced by a multiplicity of groups and individuals, each with their own subjective sense of heritage values. These values are often in harmony, but frequently in conflict with each other. A containment strategy for heritage, therefore, requires a broad framework that takes conceptual, economic, administrative and socio-political factors into account. The elements of this framework can now be summarised under the following headings.

### 8.2 Conceptual elements

Definitions of heritage as stand-alone formulas are subject to (expansionary) refinement. To strengthen the exclusionary effect of heritage definitions, greater attention must be paid to the rigour with which 'down-stream' classification processes work to implement definitions.

Inventory and auditing processes must be questioned for their ability to achieve closure in terms of their stated goals, and challenged to contribute practically to the selection and prioritisation of heritage phenomena drawing upon finite protective resources.

The celebratory rhetoric surrounding heritage needs to be moderated. Heritage can work to produce cultural cohesion, but it can also act as a marker of differentiation and conflict, not only culturally or ethnically, but also between planes of perception that see it as internationally, nationally, regionally, or locally important. The effect of these multiple perspectives is to expand the overall heritage burden.

Landscape perceptions of heritage confuse ecological values with the historical and identity issues that lie at the core of heritage. More importantly, they debilitate our capacity to make resource-bound choices and selections of things for expensive conservation and protection. Sentimental holism can be challenged on the grounds of rational management: an effort should be made to disentangle ecological concerns from perceptions of the built heritage. One of the most effective ways to clarify heritage costs might be to restructure what is now called natural heritage as environmental/ecological management, leaving a more streamlined and rationally cohesive range of built and moveable phenomena to be managed as heritage. To further promote choice and selection, a more dynamic interpretation of the built landscape that places greater emphasis on architectural innovation alongside the protection of the best elements of the old should be encouraged.

Heritage is a knowledge system mediated through the interpretation of material culture. There is a need to rethink the informational dynamics surrounding the promotion of heritage awareness. Knowledge can flow not only from the centre or from strategic sources of expertise, but from groups and individuals acknowledged as 'experts' in understanding their own hinterland of heritage. Reshaping our perception of heritage awareness in this way, so that heritage consciousness reflects more accurately the multi-layered nature of heritage values, is a necessary first step in creating a more realistic link between heritage values (that is, awareness) and value (that is, costs).

### **8.3 Economic elements**

The costs of heritage protection are not intangible but are difficult to determine. Ways have to be found of both measuring heritage costs

and embedding a realistic sense of them in public consciousness. In this context, Contingent Valuation surveys may have some potential to develop a better connection in the public mind between heritage values and heritage costs. But if surveys of public attitudes to heritage are carried out, they should preferably be done by agencies independent of the sector.

The equation between heritage infrastructure and economic development, as fostered by tourism agencies, needs to be tempered by realistic and measurable sustainability indicators. Tourism professionals should receive training in cultural studies to develop a better understanding of sustainable practice in cultural contexts.

#### **8.4 Administrative elements**

Because perceptions of heritage are stratified through society (national, regional, local), building social awareness of heritage costs will require more effective forms of subsidiarity. In particular, a concerted effort is needed to make voluntary and community organisations into managers as well as advocates of heritage, so that they can take greater responsibility for its production, and work more effectively with central and local government in a partnership approach. For this to happen, the emphasis should shift from a vague aspiration to raise heritage awareness generally, to more focussed efforts to provide training for those interested in and engaged with heritage. To re-emphasise the point made above about the need to rethink the way heritage awareness is cultivated, voluntary bodies can play a central role in moving the popular understanding of heritage from a condition of passive awareness to active custodianship.

On the pretext of developing tourism infrastructure, unprecedented levels of capital funding flowed into the Irish heritage sector under the EU Programmes from 1989 to 1999. There is a particular need to dispel illusory perceptions that heritage comes free or cheap at the local or national levels because of strategic funding. One of the benefits of subsidiarity would be to develop a more realistic, and less rhetorical, sense of heritage value at local and national levels within Ireland. This would also promote a more practical differentiation between those heritage resources that justified direct state care because of their strategic national importance and those that might be better managed through local agencies or partnership approaches, helping to streamline the state's role in heritage protection.

In this context, the possibility of developing a 'National Trust' for Ireland, which would operate in partnership with the state to manage a wider portfolio of nationally significant properties, should be explored.

A prestigious national historic plaque system would provide the state and local authorities with an option to honour an historical association where at present there is consistent and widespread pressure for the state to adopt the more costly option of ownership and control.

There is also a need to better integrate regulatory functions with heritage costs, particularly in the architectural listing programme which, as currently organised, divides compensatory funding and the regulatory role between central government and local authorities respectively.

An analogous separation exists in the production of archaeological finds through the planning process and the long-term burden of care these constitute for the National Museum. Management of the national archaeological collections should be separated out from the National Museum's strategic role as a cultural institution through the setting up of a 'National Archaeological Repository'.

To contain the growth of movable heritage, much more proactive policies on de-accessioning, framed within comprehensive collections policies, are needed in all Irish museums. De-accessioning mechanisms can also be extended to the built heritage by ensuring that legislation contains much more explicit mechanisms for de-listing properties from lists and inventories.

### **8.5 The socio-political challenge**

The proposition that heritage is intangible and unquantifiable facilitates a discretionary and pragmatic approach to heritage regulation. Such an approach allows the state to expand or contract budgets within the sector with greater political freedom than applies in others. However, an overly pragmatic approach to heritage funding only serves to expose the hollowness of regulatory prescriptions that demand high ethical standards of care and conservation of an ever-widening heritage resource, the greater part of which we aspire to protect *in perpetuity*.

As the *National Heritage Plan* (Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, 2002) correctly identifies, we can only

manage more heritage better if the burden and responsibility for its care is spread between all players – the state, local authorities, voluntary bodies, community groups and private owners. At the same time, the need for actual limits to be set to collections, portfolios and inventories remains real and is becoming more urgent. For all of this to happen, the state will need to show more tangible commitment to decentralised management; heritage professionals will need to look radically at existing policy frameworks and honestly at their own role and interest in the production of heritage; voluntary and community groups will need to become more directly involved in caring for and paying for their own heritage.

Some such revised framework is needed to construct an affordable heritage, one that is passed on to coming generations as a genuine bequest, and not as an insupportable burden.

## Appendix 1

### **Criteria for statistical table on state sector expenditure on heritage**

Despite the inconclusive outcome of the research into state sector expenditure commissioned by the Heritage Council in 1999, it was nevertheless felt that some effort to form a broadly indicative picture of state expenditure on heritage would be a useful exercise in the context of this paper.

Given all that has been written here (Chapter 2) on the illusiveness of heritage, it is not surprising that identifying all forms of expenditure is extremely difficult. Much heritage expenditure is implicit in or undifferentiated from other types of government expenditure. For example, whereas the running costs of the Irish Museum of Modern Art can legitimately be construed as an arts/cultural sector expenditure, expenditure on the fabric or maintenance of the building could be seen as heritage expenditure, given the historic importance of the Royal Hospital at Kilmainham. But while it is possible to identify capital sums spent on the building (through the Office of Public Works (OPW) vote) it is far less easy to identify heritage maintenance costs in current expenditure allocations. Further, it is difficult to distinguish, in the case of many heritage buildings, between expenditure on functional adaptations to modern office, administrative or accommodation standards and on the historic fabric (the Custom House, headquarters of the Department of the Environment, and Farmleigh, the official government residence, are two examples).

Natural heritage presents some equally difficult challenges. To recall the argument presented in Chapter 5, how is expenditure on the Rural Environment Protection Scheme (REPS) through the Department of Agriculture and Food to be interpreted? The intent behind this scheme is to encourage farmers in designated areas to farm their land in ways that conserve habitats and species. It is administered through the Department of Agriculture and Food, suggesting a purely ecological or environmental intent, but in close consultation with Dúchas, the Heritage Service, creating an ambiguity as to whether REPS expenditure can be interpreted as an

explicit heritage expenditure. In the context of the present exercise, the financing of the REPS scheme through the Department of Agriculture and Food is taken at face value, and is therefore not accounted as *explicit* heritage expenditure.

The overriding problem, of course, is that identifying aggregate expenditure on heritage has not hitherto been considered a necessary exercise in the context of government accounting procedures. In the absence of any existing conclusive data, it would take a major research project to make judgement calls on all forms of heritage expenditure within the budgets of the fourteen government departments in which the Heritage Council research found evidence of 'potential' heritage expenditure.

For the purposes of this exercise, therefore, a much more restrictive approach has been taken. The sole focus of the exercise is to identify where possible all *explicit* and *unambiguous* heritage sector expenditure as presented in two official annual sources: the *Annual Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General and Appropriation Accounts* and the *Revised Estimates for Public Services*. For comparative purposes, the three latest years for which records are available have been chosen (1998-2000). In Table A.1, figures from both sources are combined (with figures from the *Revised Estimates* in italics) to provide a clearer breakdown between current and capital expenditure. The Comptroller and Auditor General's report presents composite figures, whereas amounts in the *Revised Estimates* are broken down into capital and current expenditure. The former presents actual outturn, while the latter presents provisional outturn figures only. However, the discrepancy between the provisional and actual outturns is usually marginal.

Other factors to be taken into account in interpreting these figures are:

- all national institutions, with the exception of the Museum of Modern Art, are treated as heritage institutions. However, explicit expenditure on the fabric of the Royal Hospital, Kildmainham is treated as a heritage expenditure
- expenditure on the 'Arts and Culture' sector and Gaeltacht and Islands is not included
- capital and current sector expenditure could be adjusted to take account of Appropriations in Aid (exchequer



receipts) in respect of heritage services, but this is not government accounting practice and these have been left out of the table. The figures available in the *Comptroller and Auditor General's Reports* for Appropriation in Aid for the three years in question are: €5,703,036 (1998); €5,795,153 (1999) and €6,693,499 (2000).

To augment this picture, an effort was made to determine if explicit amounts could be identified for three other significant forms of heritage expenditure for the years in question: (1) the disaggregated cost of heritage administration (i.e. salaries and expenses) within the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands, (2) the level of expenditure on archaeology within the budgets of the National Roads Authority and (3) the taxes forgone in respect of reliefs granted under Section 482 of the Finance Act.

**(1) Disaggregated administrative costs of heritage in the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands**<sup>17</sup> There is no definitive breakdown of administrative expenditure in relation to heritage for the Department. However, in response to my query, the Department's Finance Unit was able to provide an estimated percentage expenditure under the pay subheads for each of the three years. These figures have been entered in the table on this basis. The gross outcome figures in the table, therefore, must be read as reasonably indicative rather than definitive.

**(2) Expenditure on archaeology within the National Roads Programme** No specific figures are available. Work is currently under way to try and determine costs for *ongoing* schemes. In the past eighteen months, project archaeologists have begun to assess costs as part of their remit. According to the National Roads Authority (NRA), 'direct archaeological costs associated with road schemes on current projects is [sic] in the region of 5-7% of scheme costs', but can be higher or lower in some cases. For example, the direct archaeological costs of the South Eastern Motorway (the next leg of the M50) are 'in the region of €10m and may exceed this when the final post ex costs emerge'. These figures do not include the more indirect cost of delays to contractors, which can range from

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<sup>17</sup> In June 2002, the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands was dismantled. The heritage responsibilities formerly discharged by it have been split between three departments.

€40,000-€80,000 per week.<sup>18</sup> About 64 per cent of the investment in the national road structure by the NRA in its 2000-2006 plan comes directly from the exchequer. Calculated at 1999 prices, this is estimated at €3.55 billion. A further €800 million in European Union support is also anticipated.<sup>19</sup> Quite evidently, the costs of the archaeological work associated with developing the national road network are very significant, if not precisely determined at this stage.

**(3) Taxes foregone in respect of relief under Section 482 of the Finance Act** No precise figures are available. However, in relation to 1998-99 the estimated cost is €1.9 million, with a similar estimate for 1997-98. The true current cost of relief is estimated to be much higher than this, but no figures are currently available.<sup>20</sup>

*Table A.1: Explicit state sector expenditure on heritage, 1998-2000*

Year	Department	Description	Current (€)	Capital (€)
1998	Office of Public Works	Clock Tower, Chester Beatty		120,053
		National Gallery of Ireland (NGI) Improvements		18,385
		National Library of Ireland (NLI) – NCAD Extension		457,199
		National Museum of Ireland (NMI) – Turlough Park		124,349
		NMI – Programme		2,294,490
		NLI – Programme		1,265,926
		NGI – Programme		757,686
		Royal Hospital Kilmainham (RHK) – Deputy Master’s House		775,373

<sup>18</sup> Information supplied in reply to e-mail query by the Director of Archaeology for the National Roads Authority, 10 September 2002.

<sup>19</sup> Information on the financing of the roads scheme available at the NRA web site: <http://www.nra.ie/full/brown/index.html>.

<sup>20</sup> Information supplied by e-mail in reply to query to Direct Taxes Administration, Revenue Commissioners, 16 September 2002.

*Table A.1: Explicit state sector expenditure on heritage, 1998-2000  
continued*

Year	Department	Description	Current (€)	Capital (€)		
	Department of AHGI	Heritage Council – Admin. Expenses	952,303			
		Heritage Council – Current expenditure	1,587,172			
		Heritage Council – Capital expenditure		2,039,199		
		Education and Visitor Services	848,185			
		Misc. services at Visitor Centres	146,019			
		Maintenance and supplies	171,414			
		<i>National Parks and Wildlife Service</i>	7,184,178	7,730,165		
		<i>Inland Waterways</i>	7,254,013	7,016,572		
		Conservation Works (N. Lottery)		1,236,724		
		<i>National Monuments and Historic Props.</i>	18,722,287	12,773,565		
		Overseas Marketing	846,915			
		<i>National Archives (NA) – Pay and Administration</i>	1,914,765			
		<i>NMI – Pay and Administration</i>	6,493,440			
		<i>NLI – Pay and Administration</i>	3,750,806			
		<i>NGI – Salaries and expenses</i>	2,634,706	162,526		
		<i>Administrative costs, Dept. AHGI</i>	2,249,975			
		<b>Totals (1998)</b>	<b>54,756,178</b>	<b>36,772,212</b>		
		1999	Office of Public Works	NLI – National College of Art & Design (NCAD) Extension		1,912,225
				NMI – Turlough Park		3,774,931
				NA		55,868
NMI – Programme				6,598,828		
NLI – Programme				3,824,451		
RHK – Deputy Master’s House				2,036,659		
Department of AHGI	Heritage Council – Admin. Expenses			970,079		
	Heritage Council – Current expenditure	1,731,922				

Table A.1: Explicit state sector expenditure on heritage, 1998-2000  
continued

Year	Department	Description	Current (€)	Capital (€)		
		Heritage Council				
		– Capital expenditure		2,460,752		
		Education and Visitor Services	966,270			
		Misc. services at Visitor Centres	222,204			
		Maintenance and supplies	187,921			
		National Parks and Wildlife Service	18,540,715	4,802,149		
		Inland Waterways	7,662,869	4,380,596		
		Grant – Waterways Ireland	106,658			
		Conservation Works (N. Lottery)		1,430,994		
		National Monuments and Historic Props.	21,097,967	20,922,744		
		Architectural Inventory	372,033			
		Overseas Marketing	1,027,218			
		NA – Pay and Administration	1,754,778			
		NMI – Pay and Administration	5,806,512			
		NLI – Pay and Administration	3,745,727			
		NGI – Salaries and expenses	2,891,193	333,941		
		Administrative costs, Dept. AHGI		2,858,180		
		<b>Totals (1999)</b>	<b>67,084,066</b>	<b>55,392,318</b>		
		2000	Office of Public Works	NLI – NCAD Extension		5,031,803
				NMI – Turlough Park		4,483,940
NLI – Refurbishment				145,834		
NMI – Programme				8,116,655		
NLI				6,221,849		
National Monuments, Killarney				1,072,852		
RHK – Courtyard resurface			1,068,868			
Department of AHGI	Heritage Council					
	– Admin. Expenses		1,118,639			
	Heritage Council					
	– Current expenditure		1,904,607			
	Heritage Council					
- Capital expenditure			3,999			
Education and Visitor Services	966,270					
Misc. services at Visitor Centres	186,651					

*Table A.1: Explicit state sector expenditure on heritage, 1998-2000  
continued*

Year	Department	Description	Current (€)	Capital (€)
		Maintenance and supplies	63,486	
		<i>National Parks and Wildlife Service</i>	14,356,928	4,910,077
		<i>Inland Waterways</i>	1,630,343	1,088,165
		<i>Grant – Waterways Ireland</i>	6,635,651	6,073,157
		Architectural Inventory	375,842	
		<i>National Monuments and Historic Props.</i>	21,651,573	18,797,202
		Overseas Marketing	662,803	
		Boyne Valley Visitor Centre	213,684	
		<i>NA – Pay and Administration</i>	2,081,100	126,973
		<i>NMI – Pay and Administration</i>	6,906,105	1,841,120
		<i>NLI – Pay and Administration</i>	3,733,029	427,901
		<i>NGI – Salaries and expenses</i>	3,267,036	952,303
		<i>Administrative costs, Dept AHGI</i>		4,122,839
	Department of Environment	Architectural Heritage Protection		3,824,451
		<b>Totals (2000)</b>	<b>65,753,747</b>	<b>68,309,988</b>

*Source:* Various – see detail provided in Appendix 1.

*Note:* Department of AHGI refers to the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands.

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