Rhythmanalysing the coach tour: the Ring of Kerry, Ireland

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This paper utilises and extends Henri Lefebvre's ideas about rhythmanalysis to explore the rhythmic qualities of taking a coach tour. The paper investigates the Ring of Kerry tour in the West of Ireland and reveals both the reproduction and disturbance, through itinerary and narratives of the coach drivers, of anticipated discourses and visual indexes of commodified Irishness. Central to the paper is the ordering of different rhythmic assemblages, which connect and disconnect in multiple ways. It is argued that the rhythmic multiplicity of coach tours involve entanglements of embodiment, affective registers, technologies and materialities. The paper reveals how the myriad tempos and rhythms of the tour take on different consistencies and intensities at different stages of the journey, and investigates the capacities of these rhythms to affect and be affected by the pulse of the spaces moved through and stopped at. In so doing, a supplemented rhythmanalysis is suggested as a productive approach for apprehending tourist spaces, practices and landscapes.

key words rhythm rhythmanalysis tourism mobility Ireland materiality embodiment

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Introduction

Our lives and the spaces we dwell in and move through are composed of a multitude of different rhythms, temporalities, pacings and measures. Here, we take the example of a guided coach tour and examine it under the influence of Henri Lefebvre's rich, suggestive rhythmanalysis (2004). Despite some scrutiny within human geography, the heterogeneous ensembles of spatiality and temporality examined in Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis have yet to receive extended investigation (although see McCormack 2002; Mels 2004; Matos 2007; Cronin 2006, Evans and Jones 2008). As Mels argues, rhythmanalysis usefully emphasises the dynamic and processual, circumvents the reifications of place and culture and explores the

multiple articulations of individual and collective; the subjective and the intersubjective; nature and society; body and world; and the spaces of experience, memory, symbol and action. (2004, 9)

In this paper, we develop a more nuanced approach to rhythmanalysis for three reasons: to develop sociological and geographical conceptions of timespace; to further explore this in the context of mobilities; and to critique reified constructions of 'the tourist' as a duped, passive and shallow figure.

By exploring its rhythms, we suggest that tourism is processual, ever-changing and in a flow of becoming, replete with planned and unplanned happenings, always and inevitably embodied, sensual, affective and informed by the dynamic characteristics and processes of the space within which it occurs and unfolds. More specifically, we deconstruct the characterisation of the tour coach as the archetypal insulated, air-conditioned tourist bubble, by apprehending touring as an affective complex connecting with multiple rhythms. Nevertheless, attempts to impose institutionalised rhythms upon tourism cannot be ignored, and it is vital to explore how (commercial, political, bureaucratic) power attempts to order particular rhythms so they become habitual, embodied and thus difficult to knowingly contravene.

Accordingly, we show that rhythmanalysis can capture the always emergent regularities of tourist production, consumption and performance, yet simultaneously allow us to think through diverse other rhythms and arrhythmic experiences that decentre strategies to order a timed, controlled experience.

A study of rhythms highlights the ongoing organisation of temporalities in space and spatio-temporal experience, foregrounding how humans are 'rhythmmakers as much as place-makers' (Mels 2004, 3). The specific ensemble of tourist rhythms that we explore involves a guided coach tour of the Ring of Kerry in the West of Ireland. Previous rhythmanalyses have tended to focus upon place as the site for the constellation of multiple, changing rhythms and flows, but here we show how the coach tour continuously folds together both the rhythms of place and mobility.

We begin with a broad discussion about rhythms and space, as well as a critical look at Lefebvre's rhythmanalysis, followed by an examination of the rhythms of tourism and mobility. In the second half of the paper we scrutinise the Ring of Kerry coach tour.1 Firstly, we show how the rhythms of itinerary and spoken narrative delivered on the tour encompass and reproduce many normative versions of Irishness, yet simultaneously reveal how such reproductions are always incomplete, dissonant and contingently assembled. Secondly, we inspect the multiple, differently assembled rhythms of the tour that continuously emerge, weaving and blending together seemingly regimented and repetitive moments with arrhythmic events to produce a continuous becoming of (dis)ordering. Composed of varying consistencies, intensities and disruptions as the tour proceeds, diverse corporeal, natural, cultural and mechanical rhythms orchestrate tourist experience.

Rhythms and space

The rhythms of the geographies we study are multiple, complex and often dissonant. This complexity is initially revealed by identifying the enormous range of scales and contexts within which they occur and are performed: rhythms can be institutionally inscribed (marked by national festivals, religious occasions, hours of commerce or television schedules), locally organised (via hours of work and local folk customs), or form synchronised collective habits (eating, playing, sleeping and working together) (see Zerubavel 1981). These social rhythms are comple-

mented by 'natural' seasonal rhythms, with (sometimes shifting) temporalities of fecundity and decay. There are longer and shorter rhythms - including the varied rhythms of the life course and its states of embodiment - and there are linear and cyclical rhythms at circadian, weekly, monthly, annual, millennial and geological temporal scales. Importantly, the different scales, pulses and durations of rhythms intersect, and may clash or harmonise, producing reliable moments of regularity or less consistent variance. These degrees of rhythmic consistency emerge according to the time and space between events, the clustering or separation of elements, their tempo and intensity, the modulations of unpredictability and disruption, and the coinciding effects that produce polyrhythmia, eurythmic synchronicity or arrhythmia. The rhythms of space order and disorder experiential terrains and mesh with subjective apprehensions wherein time can appear to drag, speed up or feel at odds with habitually placed rhythms.

The braiding of rhythms can produce distinct forms of spatio-temporal consistency through, for example, the imposition of work schedules and school hours, legal restrictions about when activities may occur, television scheduling and the allotting of holidays. It is therefore essential to understand the instantiation of rituals, habits, timetables, the ordering of events, and notions of appropriate timings that inhere in the temporal arrangements that reinforce normative ways of understanding and experiencing the world. The diffuse working of power seeks rhythmic conformity through the ordering of normalised interpretations about when particular practices should take place. As Amin and Thrift (2002, 17) argue, despite the city's multitemporality, it is rarely subject to rhythmic chaos for the synchronisation of thousands of rhythms, from official strictures to work and leisure rituals, are all part of collective and individual 'repetitions and regularities that become the tracks to negotiate urban life' (see also May and Thrift 2001). The diurnal pace of urban life varies within and between cities, with their hectic rush hours, quiescent mid-afternoons, vibrant early evenings and low-key nights. Superimposed upon, intersecting with and achieved through these pacings and measures are the habits of individuals, their body rhythms, seasonal and 'natural' rhythms, broader institutional rhythms of media and officialdom and the continual but varied pulse of water and electricity supply. Places are thus distinctively constituted by a multitude of

rhythmic constellations and combinations that 'fold time and space in all kinds of untoward localizations and intricate mixtures' (Amin and Thrift 2002, 47). In any space, the rhythms of a multitude of social actors intersect, as suburbanites, shopkeepers, dogwalkers, the religious and the festive, drug addicts and alcoholics, schoolchildren, shoppers, workers, traffic wardens and students collectively constitute space through their rhythmic and arrhythmic practices. And enduring, predictable, recognisable fixtures provide a backdrop to these flows of people and energy, further stabilising a sense of place through their successive, serial apprehension. Such rhythmic mixtures may induce a sense of spatial and temporal familiarity or alternatively, constitute the strangeness of unfamiliar space. However, any suggestion of a fixed, harmonic temporal scenario is dispelled, since rhythms continually change, intersecting and flowing in diverse ways, and apparently repetitive and regular rhythmic patterns are apt to be punctured, disrupted or curtailed by moments and periods of arrhythmy.

Highmore (2005, 141) suggests that the city is the most 'complex exemplar of the dynamic interplay of forces' in space and we can agree that the thick temporal flows through major cities possess a density and complexity that produces a rich rhythmic stew, although such rhythms are enormously varied (see Edensor 1998a, on the rhythms of the Indian urban street). Contrastingly, the rural is typically conceived (and promoted) as a slower paced realm, though the expansion of urban lifestyles and practices into the rural renders this debatable. Indeed, it appears as if the regular temporalities of industrial modernity are devolving into more complex arrangements as spheres of work, leisure and sustenance are characterised by more variegated, customised rhythms.

Rhythms are therefore manifold:

some long run, some short term, some frequent, some rare, some collective, some personal, some large scale, some hardly noticed – the urban [or rural] place or site is composed and characterised through patterns of these multiple beats. (Crang 2001, 189–90)

This multiplicity is articulated in Lefebvre's insistence on the indissolubility of time and space, which 'need to be thought together rather than separately' (Elden 2004, vii). Thus:

all rhythms imply the relation of a time to a space, a localised time, or, if one prefers, a temporalised spaces. Rhythm is always linked to such and such a place, to its place, be that the heart, the fluttering of the eyelids, the movement of a street or the tempo of a waltz. (Lefebvre 2004, 89)

Recognising the mutual implication of time and space allows for a rhythmanalysis of different spaces and places, wherein different spatialities are formed through 'bundles, bouquets, garlands of rhythms', differentiated as 'slow or fast, syncopated or continuous, interfering or distinct' (Lefebvre 2004, 20, 69; original emphasis). Recognising these different rhythms of space and place becomes the rhythmanalyst's object of study.

Rhythmanalysis is a (multidisciplinary) method that requires the calling on all our senses to make one 'sensitive' to time-space ensembles: the rhythmanalyst 'draws on his breathing, the circulation of his blood the beatings of his heart and the delivery of his speech as landmarks' (Lefebvre 2004, 21; *sic* throughout). Here, the rhythms of the body – its 'respirations, pulses, circulations, assimilations durations and phases of durations' are key to understanding the rhythms of human geographies. The body becomes an example (if not *the* example) of polyrhythmia, eurhythmia (in a state of health) or arrhythmia (in a state of illness), and it is through the body that one senses the rhythms of different spaces: 'He listens – and first to his body; he learns rhythm from it, in order consequently to appreciate external rhythms' (Lefebvre 2004, 19). Starting with the body, the rhythmanalyst becomes aware of the relative movement and timing of everything. Whilst we acknowledge that Lefebvre's insight into the body as a site through which rhythms are realised and centred is a useful starting point for thinking through rhythms and space, we extend his conception to include how bodies and their rhythms are composed through heterogeneous lines of force. We thus foreground the capacities of bodies to affect and be affected by myriad and contingent rhythmic effects, highlighting the ongoing emergence of rhythmic affectual assemblages that variously amplify the experiential terrain of touring and mobility.

Touring blends the mobile and grounded apprehension of place and space, for multiple rhythmic constellations also emerge *in situ*. Lefebvre exemplifies the garden, at first seemingly inactive and dormant, to demonstrate how it is suffused with the polyrhythms of 'trees, flowers, birds and insects', an 'apparent immobility that contains one thousand and one movements' (Lefebvre 2004, 17). Composed

through 'very diverse rhythms, slow or lively (in relation to *us*)', he asserts that 'nothing is inert in the world' (Lefebvre 2004, 17). Yet though sensitive to the polyrhythmic constitution of different spaces, often including the non-human, technological and material, Lefebvre's analysis never fully grasps the manner in which this co-evolvement is assembled and how rhythms produce an apprehension of unfolding space and time.

Beyond recognising polyrhythmia, Lefebvre critigues industrial, bureaucratic and capitalist rhythms, demonstrating that 'political power knows how to utilise and manipulate time, dates, time-tables' (2004, 68) and investigates how 'rational, numerical, quantitative and qualitative rhythms superimpose themselves on the multiple natural rhythms of the body' (2004, 9). Thus the rhythms of industrialism and its repetitions and mechanisations, where clocktime becomes the time of 'everydayness', seek to control, inhibit and accommodate the body and its rhythms. These rhythms are deemed 'linear': 'any series of identical facts separated by long or short periods of time; the fall of a drop of water, the blows of a hammer, the noise of an engine' (Lefebvre 2004, 76), and yet though regulatory and 'rational', they are constantly in contact with 'what is least rational in human being: the lived, the carnal, the body' (Lefebvre 2004, 9). While corporeal rhythms may become accommodated, the body is also apt to find discord with these delineated temporal procedures according to chance: as Lefebvre (2004, 75) puts it 'to become insomniac, love-struck or bulimic is to enter into another everydayness'. Moreover, and importantly, Lefebvre holds that linear time is never purely repetitious, for although 'rhythms imply repetition' (Lefebvre 2004, 9),

(mechanical) rhythm preserves both the measure that initiates the process and the re-commencement of this process with modifications, therefore with its multiplicity and plurality. Without repeating identically 'the same', but by subordinating the same to alterity and even alteration, which is to say, difference. (Lefebvre 2004, 79)

Indeed, Lefebvre also points out how clock time is simultaneously both uniform and fragmented. For instance, he depicts 'appropriated' time as a spell during which 'time no longer counts' due to unreflexive absorption in creative activity, dreaming or contemplation (2004, 76). Accordingly, there are moments which break up the mechanically repetitive rhythms of institutionalised time. However, there

is a tendency in Lefebvre's work to instate a limiting duality of the institutional and structural against the resistant and agential, as with the conditioned but often resistant body. Instead, we emphasise the *ongoing* engineering of institutional consistency. It is from within the precarious *orderings* that continually emerge, rather than structured forms of *order*, that (institutional or resistant) action flows (Law 1993).

Tourism, mobility and rhythm

Tourism is typically constituted by a blend of placed and mobile rhythms, yet so diverse are contemporary tourist practices that such rhythms are multiple, ever-changing and place and time specific. Studies of tourism have been bedevilled by over-general and ethnocentric accounts derived from studies of particular kinds of tourists and tourisms, which formulate overdrawn typologies (Cohen 1988), motivations (MacCannell 1976) and theoretical metanarratives (Boorstin 1964; Urry 2002). Frequently, these assert negative assumptions that tourism concerns the empty, postmodern consumption of otherness, is a passive, spectacle-oriented, disembodied and superficial pursuit. And certain kinds of tourist endeavour - sightseeing, backpacking and package tourism - dominate discussion, to the exclusion of beach tourism, clubbing and any nonwestern tourist practice, for example.

However, different tourisms produce diverse, emergent rhythms. For instance, Saldanha (2002) shows how Goan beach raves are an amalgam of pulsating music, smells of sweat, kerosene and cannabis, the sight of the moon and coconut trees, the tactilities of moving bodies, sand and humidity, which combine - together with the effects of sensealtering drugs - to produce a distinctive and intense rhythmic experience. Beach tourism, with sunbathing interspersed with swimming in the sea or pool, and the ever-present pulse of the waves, the hubbub of gulls and fellow tourists, provides a familiar rhythm impressed upon memory and remembered upon re-acquaintance. British second home owners in France adopt holiday routines and modes of 'dwelling' organised around a slower pace at variance to the rhythms of work (Chaplin 2002). By contrast, the coach tour, the focus here, is frequently assumed to involve the seamless visual consumption of spectacle within an 'air-conditioned bubble' that limits sensory and experiential diversity. Such characterless spatialities are combined with

empty conceptions of time, wherein tourists move between attractions at regular intervals, producing a monotonous, minimal rhythm.

Certainly, tourism often produces a rhythmic repetition 'of movements, gestures, action, situations, difference' (Lefebvre 2004, 15) through the practised knowledge of what, how and where to act; performances carried out, often unreflexively, within familiar spatial and social contexts. These culturally coded praxes initiate tourists into how to competently tour (Edensor 2007 2001) and inform further discursive, practical, embodied norms of 'appropriate' modes of looking and photographing, for example (Edensor 1998b). Such habituated practices connect individuals so that 'cultural community is often established by people together tackling the world around them with familiar manoeuvres' (Frykman and Löfgren 1996, 10-11): synchronised and embodied repertoires, akin to what Lefebvre calls 'dressage', where 'something passes as natural precisely when it conforms perfectly and without apparent effort to accepted models, to the habits valorised by a tradition' (2004, 38-9).

Emergent modes of normalised tourist performance are often supported by directors, stagemanagers and choreographers, by travel networks and by technologies of comfortable mobility. Particular tourist environments are designed to minimise experiential disorder through architectural and managerial techniques that endeavour to banish harsh sensations through the assembling of modulated soundscapes, tactilities, smells and scenes. Together with the timetabled hotel stay, selective visits and participation in events within 'enclavic' tourist space (Edensor 1998b), tourist rhythms are produced by a spatio-temporal ordering that seeks to minimise external intrusions and cultivate relaxing atmospheres, particularly in the space of the 'other', where life is apt to move to a different beat. Timetabled activities, selective routes and sights, and the reiteration of potted narratives strain toward rhythmic repetition and predictability. As enclavic spaces (re)emerge, so do grounded routines tidying, cleaning, lounging, eating, loving, shopping - which make space homely, a sensual and practical engagement with familiar material textures and affordances (Gibson 1966). This rhythmic ordering fosters a sense of being in place in which regular routines constitute regular patterns of 'social practices, coded gestures, metaphorical styles, technological applications and experiences' (Mels 2004, 6)

that globalise notions of dwelling. Tourism thus constitutes a particular rhythmic way of 'being-in-the-world', a form of 'dwelling' within particular spaces and various mobilities (Urry 2000) that is often habitually, unreflexively performed.

However, we do not suggest that these tourist rhythms are always and everywhere realised as structural forces from which tourist action proceeds. Neither do we imply that it is necessary to posit ordered tourist rhythms against a series of disorderly and disruptive (even transgressive) tourist rhythms (akin to Lefebvre's depiction of the institutional versus the resistant). For performance is an interactive, contingent process. Its success depends upon the mobilisation of forces such as skill, context and audience interpretation. Thus the attempted delineation of social performance is always subject to re-enactment in different conditions, with the potential for both constancies and unpredictable receptions. All performative orderings thus co-evolve and attempt to keep in check seemingly dissonant performers and reflexive critics. Tourists, then, can and do perform in accordance with norms that seek to territorialise agency, but these orderings are always full of potentialities that may 'open out experience and even sketch out alternative ways of being' (Obrador Pons 2003, 55). Moreover, competing performances may occur on the same stage (for instance, see discussion of tourism at the Taj Mahal; Edensor 1998b), where different assemblages of action and performance resonate, coincide, connect, disconnect and diverge adding multiplicity to tourist experience and identification.

The ongoing endeavour of ordering tourist experience emerges out of a variety of trajectories that can include bodily irruptions, climatic conditions or unexpected interruptions. A focus on the design and management of tourist spatialities and temporalities resonates with the Lefebvrian perspective that conceived space is too often prioritised over perceived space. Yet this duality does not fully recognise the relentless effort required to hold together forms of ordering that attempt to control (and sometimes curtail) action and experience (see Graham and Thrift 2007). For affective and sensual apprehension is always liable to emerge out of distraction and contingency, and render ordering liable to breakdown. While such experience is partly dependent upon the qualities of the space moved through, all forms of space are inevitably saturated with excess meaning and sensual superfluity: a

potentiality that opens out all efforts at regimented territorialisation. There is always a plethora of other intersecting non-tourist social rhythms, embodied and 'natural' rhythms in process.

Nevertheless, and despite our hesitancy towards conceptions that tend to fix social ordering as order, serial rhythms do emerge through tourist representations, and in the experiencing of landscapes, where signs and sights recur like musical notations. For instance, all motorised travel reveals the repetition of similar signs and sights at regular intervals: road signs, telegraph poles, road markings, service stations, roadside embankments and co-travelling vehicles (see Edensor 2002 2006a). Visual consistencies may also be identified in regional or national landscapes, where common features (post offices, pubs, telephone boxes, oak trees, pylons, mosques) persist. Indeed, tourists frequently scan space for signs of 'Frenchness' or 'Irishness'. Moreover, organised tours highlight selective spatial and temporal biases. Weightman (1987) highlights the recurrent themes of royal palaces, Moghul heritage and the past in the 'Golden Triangle' (Delhi-Agra-Jaipur) tour in northern India through which

symbols, maps and metaphors also tend to encourage particular dominant rhythms and routine ways of organising human spaces and actions, while excluding, controlling or masking the rhythms of others. (Mels 2004, 6)

These rhythms of representation also resound through the circulation of images before, during and after any tour, in the postcards, leaflets, audio-visual material and signposts consumed, as well as the photographs that tourists themselves take, representations that can be recognised according to 'their curves, phases, periods and recurrences' (Lefebvre 2004, 22). Through this production and consumption of sights and signs 'a thing-like appearance or permanence' is produced in the landscape, 'and rhythm disappears into the mist-enveloped reified realm of fixed things' (Mels 2004, 23). The reification of tourist spatiality is thus attempted through the repetitive visual index of attractions, sound-bites, photographs and guides' accounts. However, we do not infer that visual repetition obliterates other embodied experiences. Tourism is not merely the endless repetition of consuming visual spectacles (Boorstin 1964) as recent critiques have noted (Jonkinen and Veijola 1994; Crang and Franklin 2001; Obrador Pons 2003; Edensor 2006b). Instead, mobile experience reconfigures the landscape in

accordance with the technology of travel and the affordances of space, and tourists are thus 'situated and embodied subjects whose lives unfold in reciprocal interactions with their environments' (Obrador Pons 2003, 47), creating and dissolving multiple modes of ordering.

This corporeal experience seems obvious when we consider that, in the labour of ordering, tour schedules seek to become attuned to the corporeal requirements and desires of tourists' bodies. Tours cannot go on for too long or discomfort, torpor, sickness or cramp may result. Tourists will become hungry or thirsty if moving at length without a break. Despite the tourist industry's desire to colonise the space and time of the tour, this can only provide a framework within which other elements intrude, aligning themselves or striking discord with tour rhythms. Pre-existing practical and epistemological conventions are a line of force in emergent tourist expectations, but the potentialities through time and space can emerge to disrupt and surpass the rhythmed mobility of manufactured

Rhythm is intimately associated with movement, particularly in its association with music where there are typically a 'succession of event durations and periodical accents' (Matos 2007, 95). Ordering familiar and homely rhythms for tourists produces a form of mobile dwelling that shapes the ways in which places are encountered and perceived. The emergence of the railway, coincident with the rise of mass tourism, was promoted as a form of transport that would reorder the apprehension of the landscape. Schivelbusch (1979) highlights how the unfamiliar speed of train travel initially disordered the senses. The outside world is framed through the window, and the whole experience is suffused with the rhythms of ascent, speed, slowing down and stopping, engendered through the sense of vision, motion and sound. As we show, the technologies of the coach are trajectories of ordering that can similarly configure particular ways of experiencing space and produce distinctive rhythmic patterns. They also reconfigure the rhythms of the inhabitants of the spaces through which such mobilities flow, as part of the broader penetration of industrial and administrative rhythms into everyday life (Lefebvre 2004). In this sense, tourist attractions are spaces of mobility, toured by 'actors, objects and imaginative geographies materialised and mobilised in and through photographs, films, television programmes, souvenirs, clothes, food and so on' (Haldrup and Larsen 2006, 282) that continually intersect and clash with other multiple rhythms of place.

The rhythms of mobility also intersect with other forms of regulative ordering. In the case of coach travel, the laws of the road, traffic surveillance, speed limits, signage and road marking assemble the progress of the coach along with the mechanical and manoeuvrable capacities of the vehicle. As with other modes of travel,

discourses, sensuous bodies, machines, objects, animals and places are choreographed together and build heterogeneous cultural orders that have the capacity to act, to have effects and affects (Haldrup and Larsen 2006, 278)

producing visual and non-visual sensations that are informed by prior discourses and representations, but are assembled with other trajectories that are confronted and (sometimes) accommodated within the rhythmically choreographed experience. The complex rhythmic assemblage of coach touring, as it is enacted and emerges on the Ring of Kerry tour, is something we turn to in more detail now.

Irishness, rhythmic itineraries and commentaries on the Ring of Kerry

Tourist numbers to Ireland doubled between 1990 and 2000, and tourist revenue increased by 250 per cent, overseas visitors reaching 7.4 million in 2006 (Fáilte Ireland 2006). The selling of Ireland on the global tourist market by the Irish Tourist Board (Fáilte Ireland) is often marketed around five distinct themes: romantic nature, agricultural work, religious heritage, Celtic history and tradition, literature and folklore, attributes that critics regard as producing a 'green theme park'. Such attributes match the dominant images in brochures and guidebooks identified by Markwick (2001): empty, green scenery; a patchwork of farms and fields; thatched, whitewashed cottages and ancient buildings; a traditional village pub and its fun-loving denizens; deserted coastal scenes; and golfers, horse-riders and anglers. Such mythic representations are reinforced by a gamut of knick-knacks, souvenirs and images for sale, along with representations of Guinness, leprechauns, fiddles and harps. This fantastic, rural Ireland is supposedly found in the West, where Kerry and neighbouring counties have become a crystallised concoction representing Ireland-as-a-whole. The tourist construction of Rural Kerry, therefore, serves as a national landscape ideology, a 'metaphor for the nation' (McManus 2005, 237), and landscapes

devoid of people, seascapes, folkiness, leprechauns and rustic locals all feature on postcards and are promised and highlighted on tours of the area.

It might appear that place-marketing has produced an empty tourist spectacle through which 'Ireland' is rendered available for easy consumption. Heritage production is limited by the need to produce an identifiable and unambiguous global brand, and whilst there are 'many identities and many heritages, co-existing and yet competing . . . such subtleties are unwelcome' (McManus 2005, 237). Accordingly, this highly selective, orthodox tourist production leaves out people, events and places. There is nought of the dynamic economic success of the emergent 'Celtic Tiger' and the huge growth in electronics, tele-marketing and software industrial sectors, no mention of recent literary, musical and cinematic representations or postcolonial academic accounts that critique nostalgic, nationalistic and idealistic histories (Foster 2001). There is rarely any reference to twentieth-century military and political conflict, problems of rural out-migration, poverty and deprivation, the proliferation of holiday homes and their impact upon rising house prices (Storey 1995), or the recent in-migration of European workers and appearance of Polish shops.

The Ring of Kerry tour fits comfortably into this production of 'Ireland' and 'Irishness'. Taking some five hours around its 109 miles of moorland, peat bogs, mountains, village and seascape, the tour encompasses the Kerry peninsula, beginning and ending in Killarney, and typically passing through Killorglin, Glenbeigh, Cahirciveen, Waterville, the Coomakista Pass and Sneem. Guide books and websites recommend that the peninsula be toured in an anticlockwise direction, along with the flow of organised coach tours. We have taken the coach tour six times, and once one of the authors followed the coach by car.

As with Jorgensen's (2003) discussion of a coach tour in County Wicklow, the Ring of Kerry itinerary reproduces many of the aforementioned archetypal themes and representations of Irishness, presenting an expected, familiar repetitive visual index. The first stop at Glenbeigh visits the Red Fox, a simulacrum of an Irish pub, flanked by a themed reproduction of an Irish 'bog village' replete with thatched, whitewashed cottages, bog ponies, peat-cutting tools and carts (Plate 1). Inside, folk music is piped through speakers hidden amongst various knick-knacks, posters and stuffed animals. A large souvenir shop offers numerous mementoes (cuddly leprechauns,



Plate 1 The Kerry Bog Village Museum at Glenbeigh Source: Authors' own photograph

Guinness glasses, tea towels) for sale. As coaches disgorge their customers, a stall inside the pub produces multiple Irish coffees. This attraction – materially, architecturally, sonically – is a constellation of many of the themes by which rural Ireland is marketed for tourists. Furthermore, the stop, with its opportunity to stretch one's legs, have a drink (as a key Irish experience – see McGovern 2003)

and buy a souvenir fits into the familiar tourist rhythm of the coach tour.

'Nature' is foregrounded by selective pauses such as at the esteemed 'Lady's view', a vista comprising lakes and mountains apparently revered by Queen Victoria, where tourists are encouraged to photographically record the scene (Plate 2). Elsewhere, mountain scenes and rugged seascapes – such as at



Plate 2 Lady's view Source: Authors' own photograph

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Plate 3 Coomakista Pass Source: Authors' own photograph

Dingle Bay – are gazed upon. Passengers disembark at the Coomakista Pass and spend some time photographing and viewing the landscape while a busking accordion player plies his trade, framed by a statue of the Virgin Mary (Plate 3), and occasionally, a local sits with baby goats that can be petted for a fee. Other highlights consolidate 'Irishness', including at Waterford, a scenic seaside location where tourists usually purchase lunch in a local pub, or at Sneem, a village with several souvenir shops, an Irish music shop and river walks.

The tour undoubtedly reinforces and reproduces many of the themes – rurality, nature, tradition – through which Irishness is constructed. It is shot through with a comforting rhythm of expected sites and sights, which are performed through often

unreflexive tourist practices - taking photos of spectacular views and shuffling round gift shops, for example. The familiar visual and practised rhythms of touring, managed through the tour's structure and design, are supplemented by the narratives of the driver-guides as they assemble known, expected and typical meanings of Irishness. Commentary draws attention to selective points in the passing landscape: peat bogs, rivers and lakes, types of flora and fauna, histories of small villages, aspects of rural life, and places where tradition and archaeology inscribe history on space. The commentary also embeds notions of Ireland as a place of myth, religion and the supernatural with the provision of dense details about particular churches, saints, pilgrimage routes, supernatural creatures, and uncanny events (such as the Puck Fair at Killorglin, a festival where annually, a goat is crowned and hoisted onto a platform, celebrating a wild goat that supposedly alerted the townsfolk to Oliver Cromwell's advancing army).

The Ring of Kerry tour then, sustains an imagined geography resonant with other popular representations, as well as an itinerary that sustains shared assumptions of apposite sites, sights and tourist modes of practice and performance. Yet the configuration of an institutionalised mode of touring, both through habitual practice and expected narratives, is only one kind of rhythmic ordering that emerges. Crucially, we argue that the tour and touring is constituted through heterogeneous assemblages and modes of ordering. Rather than seeing the tour as composed through a duality of expected and institutionalised rhythms on the one hand, and unexpected and non-institutionalisation on the other, the Ring of Kerry tour is processual and composed through multiple orderings that are never finalised. This is revealed by taking the tour on different occasions: the itinerary orders mobility through the landscape in similar ways on different tours, yet any movement towards an institutionalised order or rhythmic unity is dispersed by the sheer diversity of these tours. For example, differences in tone, style and content of the commentary produces multiple experiential configurations. Touring becomes a shifting assemblage born out of the constant movement and tempo of different performances, practices and rhythms: moments of performative consistency give way to discontinuities, which in turn are absorbed or succeeded by habitualised orderings in the ongoing flow of mobile passage and stoppage.

Mobility through space is configured through multiple, shifting assemblages and modes of ordering, in the diverse performances of driver-guides and their individual character, accent, style, preoccupations, changing whims and moods. As one line of force in the touring complex, the drivers' narratives have the capacity to affect the registering of the tour. For example, some drivers vociferously deliver a constant and detailed spiel, affecting moods of concentrated listening amongst the passengers (although this register can easily slide to inattentiveness). Other narratives offer long periods of silence (over ten minutes are common) which shape different affectual registers, varying between expectation (for the next period of narrative), surprise (when the microphone unexpectedly clicks back on), annoyance (when something apparently interesting

passes by the window without explanation) or pleasure: as one tourist put it to us 'it was good there was not too much information. If there was it would've become too monotonous'. The narratives are (variable and varying) 'active and affective interventions in a world of relations and movements' (McCormack 2005, 122), a capacity to affect that is further revealed, paradoxically, through absence and silence. For instance, we pass a noticeable monument to Irish republican heroism and martyrdom in Cahirciveen (Plate 4), yet mostly, drivers make reference neither to general twentieth-century Irish political and military conflicts nor to the area's specific history of republican activity. These conspicuous silences intervene in the assembling of the tour through stimulating a reflective awareness of omissions and partialities. The rhythms of narrative, through multiple modes of delivery and variable content, configure touring as a constellation of differentiated lines of (dis)ordering.

In variable conjunctions with the details and exclusions of the narrative, numerous other passing sights have the potential to overwhelm, affect and shift tourist attention from the visual rhythmic predictability of rural scenery and rusticity. Most obviously, the landscape beheld is often one of conspicuous rural poverty, littered with abandoned bothies and farms, disused peat bogs, signs signifying decay rather than green productivity and thriving community (Plate 5). This economic decline is accompanied by signs of new industrial enterprise, small factories that occur sporadically. Moreover, several long stretches of drab moorland counter the romantic Irish idyll present elsewhere along the route and featured in postcards. Numerous other sights intrude (Plate 6); including a man with a tiny lawnmower mowing a huge lawn, a completely overgrown climbing shrub on a house's gable end, a sheep's skeleton by the roadside, plentiful examples of vernacular house décor (Plate 7), garden ornamentation, unsightly piles of rubble, fence posts, agricultural fixtures, thickets and collections of disused automobiles and machinery (see MacDonald 2002). The ways in which the tour and touring is enacted through heterogeneous assemblages and modes of ordering are further revealed through the traversal of other trajectories and lines of practice. For example, there is an intersection with quotidian practices and spaces: the tour passes through a landscape in which people live everyday lives, producing commonplace events and sights that shift the ordering of the tour. Mundane signs warn 'Temporary Dwellings



Plate 4 Statue to Irish Republicanism in Cahirciveen Source: Authors' own photograph

Prohibited' and 'Keep Vodafone Out', complementing washing on lines and the persistence of the non-quaint in concrete farm buildings, new housing developments, holiday homes, sports centres and country clubs. Driver-guides are usually from Kerry and their interactions with bypassers and bystanders draw tourist passengers into local social constellations and quotidian assemblages. On one occasion, the driver slowed and asked another driver 'how was the stew?' On numerous other occasions, drivers greet, wave and otherwise gesture to familiar people encountered en route.

Rhythmic bodies, coaches and landscapes in motion on the Ring of Kerry

In the previous section we focus on the itinerary and narrative of the coach-guides, their relation to Irishness and the complex, rhythmic modes of ordering that configure the tour and touring as a

practice of mobility. In this section we explore the multiple rhythmic assemblages of touring through a focus on embodied rhythmic forces and further constellations of affect and tempo. In order to counter the tendency to characterise tourists as disembodied creatures or as simply visually oriented, we examine how bodies continually insinuate themselves as lines of force into the experience and enactment of tourist mobility. We explore the various rhythmic cartographies of motorised travel, somatic processes and affectual registers, moments of imaginative conjecture and other entanglements with the polyrhythmia of the unfolding non-human landscape, examining how taking a coach tour 'brings with it a differentiated time, a qualified duration' (Lefebvre 2004, 78) that unfolds a rhythmic mobility.

There are undoubtedly moments of rhythmic performative consistency that lend a sense of regularity to the tour, most obviously in the decisions of when and where to disembark: as one of the



Plate 5 Abandoned cottage *Source*: Authors' own photograph



Plate 6 Strange sights

Source: Authors' own photograph



Plate 7 Vernacular house décor *Source*: Authors' own photograph



Plate 8 The intersection of different tours at the Red Fox Inn, Glenbeigh Source: Authors' own photograph

tourists reflected, 'you get used to travelling, so you know what to expect'. This rhythmic repetition lays bare the tourist product itself as one joins numerous other tourists as coaches consecutively discharge their passengers at certain locations (Plate 8). Here, any spell of customised touring is broken as tourists congregate en masse and perform routine practices; buying a keepsake or lining up to photograph a view. In addition, the habitualised routines of everyday life necessarily permeate the tour's structure, featuring lunch, exercise and toilet breaks. Modes of ordering that seek to produce an institutionalised rhythmic consistency are thus performed through the length of stops, yet they never achieve an unswerving periodicity since the duration of any stoppage is often negotiated between driver-guides and tourists. Furthermore, the attempted enactment of institutionalised ordering is one rhythmic trajectory that synchronises and desynchronises with other rhythms in multiple ways. In particular, the habituated somatic rhythms of tourists trace out differentiated assemblages as their bodies produce involuntary rhythmic affects: stomachs rumble, people grow hungry, fart and belch, tap their feet to release excess energy, become uncomfortable or restless, suffer from eye strain, cramp and the need to urinate. Bodies react differently to, and combine in numerous ways, with the process of motor travel. Large bodies may feel cramped, occasionally the coach must stop to allow a travel-sick passenger to disembark and the morning ingestion of Gaelic coffee at the Red Fox can cause a hazy sensation as the body reacts to the unfamiliar early intake of alcohol. For the body is conditioned by diurnal rhythms featuring habituated moments of activity, digestion and relaxation, and these rhythms often intersect with those of others, producing moments of synchronicity. Any disruption to habitualised somatic tempos and routines can interrupt trajectories that seek normative touristic rhythms. Touring is thus always an incomplete configuration animated through a 'polyrhythmic ensemble of competing and overlapping rhythms' (Highmore 2005, 322).

The manifold, unpredictable cartography of bodies and motorised travel are bound into and ordered through the materiality and technology of the coach. The tour is assembled through engine capacity, suspension, speed, manoeuvrability, seating and air conditioning, all of which are entangled with the seated bodies of tourists, producing both relaxing mobile rhythms and arrhythmic disruptions. Paying attention to these qualified agencies reveals how the tour may be conceived as a series of non-human forces and energies that connect/disconnect with bodily sensations in differently rhythmed ways. The rhythms of the tour are thus never independent of 'technological devices that speed them up or slow them down, reverse them or magnify their current' (Mels 2004, 7). At times, the cushioned sense of gentle motion can cajole passengers into a relaxed, somnolent state as the vehicle smoothly glides over

straight, well-surfaced roads, with regular pulses of acceleration and mild braking. At other times, this sense of movement is disorderly and striated: roadworks, obstacles, other drivers, uneven roads, and pedestrians or animals crossing the road cause the vehicle to stop, or brake sharply, arresting smooth rhythm and producing discordance amongst the travelling bodies. On one occasion, bodies were thrust forward with accompanying shouts of surprise as the coach drove over a large pothole, violently shifting the composition and sensual geometry of the coach and its inhabitants, laying bare the potentiality of the space to be rhythmically otherwise. Saturated by potential eventfulness, the tour 'encounters the event that arrives or rather arises in relation to sequences or series produced repetitively. In other words: difference' (Lefebvre 2004, 7). Narrow parts of the road, gusts of wind, steep gradients and sharp bends likewise modify bodies from relaxed positions, shifting modes of attentiveness and affective-sensual registers.

This potential arrhythmia indicates degrees of absorption in the tourist product, and how this shifts contingently as different lines of force unfold and trace out different affectual and rhythmic assemblages. Furthermore, besides the drivers' commentaries, the aural ordering of the tour is composed through the technology of the coach: sometimes a lullaby comprising the engine's low purr, the swish of passing vehicles, the sound of indicators and if it is raining, the metronomic pulse of the windscreen wipers. At other times, a staccato of jarring noises irregular juxtapositions of chirping mobile phones, rustling crisp packets and crunching gear changes that lend a discontinuous measure to the mobility experienced. The aural ordering is further assembled through passengers' conversations, another line of force in the 'multiplicity of contingent affective encounters, relations, directions and speeds' (McCormack 2002, 470) that compose the tour. There is a patterned rhythm to the animated talk at the tour's commencement or after a bracing stop, yet these discussions unpredictably ebb and flow in shared reactions to the driver-guide's commentary and through conjecture over the meaning of sights. The polyrhythmic ensemble of the tour, of which the auditory ordering is one trajectory, thus emerges through its different stages. For example, following the lunch stop at Waterville and brief disembarkation to view the vista at the Coomakista Pass, a tourist's affectual register is usually composed of a slow, somnambulistic rhythm (although slowness



Plate 9 Mobility and visual apprehension Source: Authors' own photograph

should not necessarily be seen as inaction – see Bissell 2007). These more sedentary rhythms affect sensate dispositions as passengers lapse into periods of rumination and intense gazing.

The cartography of the tour is further compounded by the visual rhythms that emerge as the tour progresses. Like any motorised passage through space, visual rhythms composed of that which is passed are conditioned by the speed and style of motion. Here, the passing roadside is folded into a visual rhythm characterised by the beat of passing telegraph poles, stone walls, gates, buildings and fences, and the regular swish of traffic passing in the opposite direction, together with occurrences that linger, such as distant mountains, clouds above and a host of other disparate items successively glimpsed, or gazed upon at leisure. There are, therefore, different ways of envisioning the landscape, in the varying senses of proximity and distance, where, for instance, one side of the coach moves close to a verge, while on the other side vast expanses stretch away. The visual encompassing of expansive moorland, mountains and seascape is, towards the end of the tour, replaced by an inability to focus on the density of the foliage in an afforested area. An image might be fixed in the onlooker's vision but then shifts into a blur of movement without focal point. On one tour a tourist described how they became 'hypnotised by the landscape going past'.

The eye catches numerous objects in ephemeral moments, whereas other gazes are directed by the tour guide, stoppage or speed. For instance, at Daniel O'Connell's House, the coach slows to focus upon the ruined building. This sequence of passing scenes collectively constitutes serial and enduring features that make up a landscape experienced through mobility (Plate 9). Thus the visual apprehension of the journey is phased according to different temporalities: a polyrhythmia composed of sometimes disjunctive durations and speeds of the coach, the commentary, habitualised somatic states, kinaesthetic sensations of movement and different registers of mobility.

There is a tendency for linear vehicular progress to sensually eclipse the numerous rhythms of other mobile flows that intersect with this movement, and yet such skeins and entanglements might be suddenly apprehended. The tour is experienced through and with the non-human mobile forces within passing space: the cross-cutting movements in the flight paths of herons, jackdaws and hooded crows, in gusts of wind that shake the coach and course through the surrounding foliage, in rivers that swirl under the road and in the giant pulse of the sea's waves, by a world of other humans and non-humans in motion that produce complex, intersecting polyrhythms. Likewise, the longer rhythmic circadian and seasonal rhythms accompany



Plate 10 The beach at Waterville *Source*: Authors' own photograph

and enfold the journey, shaping the experience of light, climate and flora: sensual experience emerges through an awareness 'that each plant, each tree has its rhythms, made up of several: the trees, the flowers, the seeds and fruits, each have their own time' (Lefebvre 2004, 31). Landscape, rather than an inert entity available for distanced viewing, is a space of rhythms and flows, always immanent, in process, fecund and decaying. The coach is but one mobile element in a seething space pulsing with intersecting trajectories and temporalities, rather than the vantage point from which landscape is 'known' (Rose and Wylie 2006; Wylie 2006). Indeed, as we have seen, mobile technologies are responsive to, and affected by, the conditions of terrain, route and climate through which they travel (and affect the sensual register of touring; as another tourist described 'when the sun was on you, you could easily drop off'). This unfolding rhythmic entanglement takes in further rhythms from history, those of grinding daily work, pilgrimage and agriculture, historical rhythms that press in on the present, provoking an awareness of how the past, present and future 'are implicated one in the other' (Crang 2001, 197). Despite being somewhat intangible, this sense of time is in part imaginatively recoverable, and moments of empathy with the texture of landscape erupt in involuntary memories previously beyond recall, non-cognitive memories

based on prior embodied experience, sensing, for instance, what it would be like to walk up that hill or wade into the rolling surf that crashes onto the many beaches (Plate 10).

Conclusion

Rhythmanalysis offers a perspective of spatiotemporal ordering and experience that transcends the abstractions of time-geographies and pays attention to the 'various (and uneven) networks of time stretching in different and divergent directions across an uneven social field' (May and Thrift 2001, 4). It foregrounds the processual, dynamic and complexity of both space and time, and their imbrication with each other. By focusing upon the particular social and spatial context of a coach tour, we have shown that rhythmanalysis can highlight the experience of both mobility and situatedness, and the ways in which they are blended. This analysis has depicted the multiple assembling of temporalities: the historical, the mundane, the spectacular, and the efforts at order through time slots of stops, the temporal flow (its rhythms, disruptions, pacings and velocities), the technological and somatic temporalities and attendant co-entanglements. This coach tour is a varied, unfolding entanglement or composition of multiple rhythms: 'slow or fast, syncopated or continuous, interfering or distinct' (Lefebvre 2004,

69), each of which takes on different consistencies and intensities as the tour progresses. Enveloped in certain phases there is a sense of time passing and space unfolding that can be experienced as a varying cartography of smoothness and disjunction. Thus the tour is never purely repetitive, for despite taking on passages of recognisable ordering and habitual tempo, other heterogeneous durations and refrains rise and fall, always becoming and shot through with potentialities. Each rhythm is folded with a series of forces, materialities, sensations and visual registers, marshalled through multiple corporeal and incorporeal, human and non-human assemblages that take on different intensities, speeds and textures through different phases and spaces. The technological apparatus of transportation and information, the tour's temporal structuring, the delivery and timing of amplified commentary, the selective stops and points of interest, and the machinic throb of the coach constitute the recognisable lineaments of the coach tour rhythm. Yet despite attempts at producing temporally and rhythmically institutionalised procedures through space, tourist industries cannot delimit the ways in which space and time are experienced, cannot merely reproduce homogeneous rhythmic routines. Accordingly, the experience of tourist mobility is also typified by an imaginary drifting to elsewhere and moments of giddiness, distraction and boredom (Anderson 2004).

The rhythmic experience of coach tour mobility is deeply corporeal and, as with other modes of travel, 'the embodied and sensuous experience of movement is kinaesthetically sensed through our joints, muscles, tendons and so on as we move in and across the physical world' (Haldrup and Larsen 2006, 284). Such sensations are dependent upon bodily comportment, comfortable affordances, qualities of suspension and engine capacity, the characteristics of the road, driving skill and habits, and the disposition, shape, size, age and sex of bodies, and their familiar accommodation with the space and procedures of coach tourism. Each of these entanglements brings forth different capacities to affect or be affected, different geometries of sensation and timbres of experience – from phases of staccato arrhythmia to phases of almost protracted and flattened-out rhythm. Different rhythms possess capacities to affect different apprehensions and experiences: one drifts away from the unfolding spaces or finds oneself in a state of heightened attention to a particular event, sight or occurrence within or outside the coach. This affectual capacity enters 'into the lived; though that

does not mean it enters into the known' (Lefebvre 2004, 77), producing habitual and unreflexive passages but also offering the possibility 'of emergent non-determined forms' (Crang 2001, 207).

A rhythmanalysis of coach touring and mobility must therefore recognise that rhythms are architectures of sensation, narrative and embodiment. The multiple rhythms of the tour – emerging as moments of eurhythmic consistency and arrhythmic inconsistency - are part of the production of tourist identities, products and experiences. These rhythms of mobility include punctuations where tourists disembark to confront momentary rhythmic discord, when the body's co-habitation with the comfortable lull of motorised travel is suddenly curtailed by effortful movement to the outside and a shift from cocooned sensation to immersion in different climatic conditions, textures, sounds and smells. Being and enacting tourism is such that 'sensation and perception dwell in the moving midst of things' (McCormack 2007, 366; Deleuze and Guattari 1988), a notion that disrupts analytical ventures that posit the tourist product as repetitive and routinised or simply their opposite. This rhythmanalysis reveals touring mobility as an emergent performance, an ordering precariously achieved and open to becoming, replete with potentialities and differentiation. The apprehension of space through touring mobility is a rhythmic cartography that traces moments where 'the repetition of elements in the landscape, and their pacing on both time and space ... suggest some kind of uniformity, tempo and periodicity' interspersed, co-joining and emerging with trajectories sensed as 'irregular' and 'asymmetrical' (Harrison et al. 2004, 48) under multiple assemblages of 'polyrhythmia', 'eurhythmia' and 'arrhythmia' (Lefebvre 2004). We suggest that a rhythmanalysis identifies the conditions under which ordering processes delimit and foster experiential and interpretive diversity, and might profitably be applied to the analyses of the workings of power in other modes of spatiotemporal ordering.

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Note

1 The authors have created a website to accompany this article, which can be found at http://www.sci-eng. mmu.ac.uk/ring_of_kerry/. The Publisher, Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) and the Editors are not responsible for the content of third-party websites.

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