

Section 3 Contemporary locations of oral folk tradition in Cornwall

Chapter 7: Continuity and revival in the public domain

Chapters 7 to 10 consider the social, geographic and contextual locations where the process of oral tradition can be observed to take place in contemporary Cornwall. In order to do this Hoerburger's model of a first and second existence in folk dance¹, and the development of this model by more recent dance theorists such as Ruyter² and Nahachewsky³, is applied to phenomenon of oral folk tradition as a whole. Thus the "first existence" is where the phenomena takes place unselfconsciously in its original cultural location and is an integral part of community life. In contrast to this, the "second existence" is where the phenomena is consciously revived, or cultivated by a given group of people, rather than owned by the whole community.

Key issues for Ruyter and Nahachewsky are the extent to which a folk phenomenon's evolution is relatively unrestricted in the first existence and open to a wide range of influences whereas in the second existence, evolution is subject to a more reflective approach on the part of a given subculture with a shared notion of the authentic. This section is therefore divided into two, corresponding to Hoerburger's "two existences". Chapters 8 and 9 will show that there are examples of oral folk tradition in Cornwall that continue to exist, or have been revived, within their original cultural location. Chapters 10 and 11 will explore and examine the new cultural locations for oral folk tradition that have developed in the latter part of the twentieth century and the early part of the twenty-first. It must, however, be recognised that this division is an analytical device to assist enquiry rather than something empirically descriptive. The distinction between these two existences can be very fine at times but this model nevertheless helps to identify and understand the processes within oral folk tradition.

Identity is another key issue inextricably linked to tradition and Jones' study of American artist, Gary Robertson, shows how performance and performers "... draw upon tradition to create objects or to perform, and thereby fabricate a personal identity and social role for themselves."⁴ Jones distils late twentieth century constructions and deconstructions of tradition⁵ and suggests a number of features that can be associated with identity and the construction of self in relation to tradition in that it:

1. has continuity through time
2. is social and communal nature rather than individual

3. defines events and marks the passage of time
4. becomes moribund or inactive at one stage only to be revived and engaged in later
5. is a process where people will select which aspects they will learn, perform and actively transmit
6. involves symbolic constructions of the past in the present for the future

These features provide a useful model against which to compare oral folk tradition in locations considered in this section.

The model of enquiry underpinning this thesis is “action research” which seeks to explore a social phenomenon from within and understand by critical reflection, triangulating the researcher’s experiences with information from other sources.⁶ This section places particular emphasis on reflection and discussion informed by participant observation and action research.

Chapter 7 focuses on two groups of oral folk phenomena located in the public domain: Guizing customs; and dances associated with feast days. By looking at the provenance and evolution of these phenomena together with the context in which they take place today this chapter argues that, for all the episodes of revival and introduction of the “new”, these folk activities remain located within an original existence. Furthermore, the changes that take place in the course of revival and the introduction of new ideas and meanings are the very substance of oral folk tradition

Guizing Customs

This thesis follows the convention of the Old Cornwall Society in grouping under the generic term “Guizing”, customs where the participants disguise themselves by cross-dressing, blacking up faces, wearing veils or masks and process around the area to perform dances, songs or a folk play at venues varying from streets and pubs to private houses and farm kitchens. This is a convention broadly following the description of Guizing provided by Jago⁷ in 1882 but also reflects the experience of participants such as Tom Miners⁸ and the recollections of his contemporaries in the nineteen twenties. In doing so, it is sought to reflect oral testimony and descriptions by participants rather than the taxonomy of folklorists. The Bodmin Play discussed, below, is a good example of where disguise, mock mayors, mumming, procession and the performance of spots merge within one guizing custom.

The term “darky party” was also a Cornish dialect expression used to describe groups of Guize Dancers. Modern English usage has seen this term associated with demeaning people but it is evident that historically in Cornwall, this was a descriptive term rather than a reference to an ethnic minority.⁹ Nevertheless, out of respect for modern sensitivities, the Boxing Day Guizers in Padstow changed their name of their event “Padstow Darky Day” to “Padstow Mummers Day” in 2006 and this thesis follows their lead in avoiding the use of terminology which may be misleading or seen as offensive.

This distinction between the custom as experienced by participants and that interpreted by others is an important one. When Jenner wrote to Sharp seeking some explanation for the storyline of a what was possibly a Guize dance play recalled by an informant from childhood, the response was:

It is an amazing story - obviously a ritual death to ensure a re-birth and renewal of [unreadable] vitality, similar to the killing in the mumming play and subsequent revival. The dual death is curious but probably would be cleared up with more detailed evidence.....¹⁰

In this Sharp follows the example of Frazer in “Golden Bough”¹¹ where meaning is ascribed in classical terms, in this case that of death and resurrection. In much the same interpretative vein, Lavolette describes both the midsummer bonfire customs and the Padstow May festival in terms of “signifying the destruction of evil and the strengthening of good”.¹² Whilst formal, published interpretations of these events by the organisations involved broadly echo such sentiments, this is not necessarily the meaning readily ascribed by participants.¹³ Interviews with people attending the midsummer bonfires provided a contrasting focus. For example: “The bonfire festival is about keeping an old Cornish tradition alive, it is a pity when it gets swamped with something else like it does at Golowan in Penzance”;¹⁴ “ it is good to meet up with people and have a bit of a sing, they always ask me to bring my accordion”.¹⁵ Similarly Magliocco’s interviews with Padstow’s Mayers showed that for them birth, life and death was about continuity within a family.¹⁶ It is perfectly possible that the distant antecedents of these customs held a meaning for participants consistent with folkloristic interpretation but the point is that ascribed meaning is not static, it changes over time, generation and social location.

The table below is drawn from the database. It is not a comprehensive catalogue of Guizing in Cornwall but illustrates the provenance of some reasonably well known customs. These phenomena divide into three overlapping groups indicated by black, blue and red colour fonts in the table. The first group (black) comprises of those traditions that have a provenance reaching back into the nineteenth century. Although the narratives interpreting these traditions tend to argue for much older origins, the nineteenth century provides detailed documentary description. The second (blue) is that of traditions revived from records and recollection of nineteenth century traditions. The third group (red) is that of recently introduced customs which draw from the narratives of history or legend for their substance or imagery.

Table 1 Guizing Traditions

Guizing Tradition	Area	Time of Year	Provenance
Hal An Tow Procession and Ritual Dance / song	Helston	8 th May	Continuity since 19 th Century
Padstow Mummers Procession through village	Padstow	Boxing Day and New Year	Continuity since 19 th Century
Padstow Obby Oss Procession and ritual dance / song	Padstow	1 st May / May Day	Continuity since 19 th Century
St Ives Guizers Procession with singing and step dances	St Ives	St Ives Feast (Feb) And Christmas	Continuity since 19 th Century
Tom Bawcocks Eve Procession through Village	Mousehole	Midwinter	Continuity since 19 th Century
Wassail Tour around Bodmin pubs and houses to sing the Bodmin Wassail.	Bodmin	Christmas and New Year	Continuity since 19 th Century
Turkey Rhubarb Band / The Madron Mummers Play Procession with singing and step dances	Madron / Penzance	Christmas	Continuity 19 th Century to 1930s Revived 2009
Black Prince Procession and launch of Boat	Millbrook	1 st May Day / May Day	Revived 1986
Bodmin Riding Beating the bounds and procession in Medieval costume returning the Bones of St Petrock	Bodmin	July 5th	Revived 1974

Guizing Tradition	Area	Time of Year	Provenance
Polperro Mock Mayor Mayor is elected, Processed through village and thrown into sea	Polperro	Midsummer	Revived 1996
Mazey Day Procession with Singing and dance following “Pen Glas” (Horse Skull Hobby Horse)	Penzance	Midsummer	Revived in 1992
Montol Procession with singing and dances following “Pen Glas”	Penzance	Midwinter	Revived in 2008
Bodmin Play / Mock Court Inspired by historical Mock Mayor topical themes are woven into story of the capture and trial of the Beast of Bodmin.	Bodmin	July 5th	Revived 1974 New elements introduced 2003
Pen Gwyn Procession with Singing and dance following “Pen Gwyn” (Horse Skull Hobby Horse)	Perranporth	October – Lowender Peran Festival	Revived / Introduced 1979
Calstock May Revels Procession with Puppet Giant	Calstock	Early May	Revived / introduced 1980
Bolster Play Promenade community play based on the Legend of Giant Bolster	St Agnes	Last Sunday in April	Introduced 1994
Lostwithiel Giants Procession of Puppet “Giants” from Cornish Legends	Lostwithiel	New Years Eve	Introduced 2000
St Piran Play and pilgrimage (Promenade community play based on Legend of St Piran) St Pirans Welcome St Pirans Mummings Play	Perranporth	St Piran’s Tide / March 5th	Introduced in 1990

Generic descriptions throughout the nineteenth century illustrate the continuity, and the communal nature, of guizing:

.... during the early part of the last century (i.e. 1800s) the costume of the Guize dancer consisted of an antique finery such as would now raise envy in the head of a collector. Male players were to be seen in long waisted, gay coloured coats, resplendent with buttons of brass or tin as

large as crown pieces and having long ruffles at their breast and wrists. The chief glory of the men, however, lay in their cocked hats which were surmounted with streamers and ribbons. (Heath - 1800s)¹⁷

Maidens(dress) as young men, men for maidens. Thus dressed visit neighbours dance ... make jokes.....and the spirit of drollery and wit kept among the people. Music and dancing, they are kept with liquor then proceed to next house and carry on the same sport.....geese dancing is done in nearly every town and large village. The term applied to all Christmas plays and indeed any kind of sport in which characters were assumed by performers or disGuizes worn.(Hunt -1881). ¹⁸

Bottrell¹⁹, Courtney²⁰, Quiller-Couch²¹, and Jenkin²² provide similar descriptions. The detail provided by Bottrell ²³ accords well with the descriptions provided by Miners²⁴ some hundred years after the events in Bottrell's account. These references show that during this period Guize dancing acted as a cultural location for an evolving folk dance tradition in Cornwall and provided a thread of continuity between the dance traditions of much earlier times, and revivalists of the early twentieth century.

It is also clear from these descriptions that these events mark the passage of time, Midwinter, Spring, Midsummer and Harvest time as well as Christmas, New Year and the Saints days or feast days in the annual calendar. This can be constructed as a symbolic representation of past present and future and an example of a dance custom that embraces this is provided in Mrs Rowse's description of the solo scoot dance "Cock In Britches".²⁵ This is a harvest dance performed at the same time as the crying the neck ceremony in the autumn. Using dance movements and lyrics it describes the cycle of the agricultural year in terms of preparing the ground, sowing the corn, weeding, reaping and finishes saying "good bye to Gertie Grey" the old rye bread from the last season. This celebration of the seasons through folk custom resonates with modern Paganism where activities such as the Midwinter excursions of Pen Glaz and the Midsummer bonfires of Golowan are identified with eight segments within the pagan "Wheel of the Year".²⁶

St Ives Guizing, a study in continuity

The story of Guize dancing in St Ives shows how a tradition can follow a cycle of popularity and inactivity where the revival of interest reflects selectivity on the part of participants. At the beginning of the twentieth century Guize dance seems to have been popular but not well received by all parts of the community:

I learn with greatest satisfaction that the worthy Mayor of St Ives, Mr Edward Hain has prohibited Gees Dancing for the year 1900. In this I feel he has the support of every man and woman having any pretensions to moral refinement in the parish.

As to the origin of Guy (sic) Dancing, we know but little. Whether it was an ancient religious rite, a manifestation of superstitious heathenism, a monkish performance having for its object the promotion of ignorance to monastic rule matters very little. St Ives Guize Dancing may be summed up in a few sentences. On twelfth night, or Epiphany Eve, people parade the principle streets many being “dressed up” , shouting, singing, dancing, and an indulgence in a rough kind of play, which sometimes ends in broken heads, broken glass and belabouring one another with anything handy in the form of a cudgel. Some masquerade as animals, some as kings and queens but what seems to create the greatest fun, and is the most enjoyed by the crowd, are men dressed as women and women dressed as men, girls as boys and boys as girls, some of whom under the influence of drink, perform sundry antics which, for vulgarity, would be hard to beat. (St Ives Weekly - 1900)²⁷

Guize dancing is occasionally reported in the St Ives Times²⁸ over the next 20 years but popularity would seem to have waned until its revival by the St Ives Old Cornwall Society in 1925. It was then framed as “the revival of an ancient custom” and the “sundry antics” were replaced by a more sober “parade of Guizers”.²⁹ In the immediate post-war period children were encouraged to take part and William Barber describes how they enjoyed the novelty of cross dressing.³⁰ By 1957 the popularity of guizing and New Year edition of the St Ives times carries an article going into some detail about the customs chequered history and comments that the streets of St Ives are “quiet enough now , television, radio and cinema having replaced older and more vigorous entertainments”.³¹ In 1979 the custom enjoyed a new lease of life at the

instigation of the Mayor, Keith Slocomb, with the help of a Cornishman in exile Dave Lobb, a Morris dance enthusiast whose father took part in earlier Guize dancing.³² For the practical reason that it was a quieter time of year for dance enthusiasts, the Guizing date was moved from Christmas to the St Ives Feast Day celebrations.³³ It now took the form of a series of masked processions through the town and adopted greenery in the style of the “green man”.³⁴

By 1989, Guizing was less well supported and the numbers of participants and audience reducing. It is interesting to note that a correspondent in the local paper comments that this was “not surprising as Guize dancing should be a spontaneous activity and was never traditionally associated with the feast”.³⁵ Participants felt that there was an issue about Guizers coming from outside of St Ives and Cornwall³⁶ and Dave Lobb felt that they had been a bit too rowdy for the people of St Ives who were a bit reserved.³⁷ Participant observation, however, did not find any evidence to support this,³⁸ and Will Barber was quite enthusiastic about the Guizers of the 1980s, “they were out to have a bit of fun, it was quite a good thing really we all liked it.”³⁹

Even if there is little evidence to support any ambivalence in St Ives towards the Guizers it is interesting that they were conscious that this might be an issue. It shows that there was an expectation of being perceived as the “other” from outside of St Ives. In practice, encouraged by the influence of an artist’s colony and a high level of commitment to the tourist industry St Ives had an arguably positive relationship with the “other”. Both William Barber and Mary Quick described being brought up in the “Digey”⁴⁰ on Teetotal Street, they witnessed change but neither expressed resentment nor a feeling that St Ives was losing its identity. The demand for properties in the “Digey” encouraged residents to sell up and move to modern comfortable housing, on the outskirts of St Ives.

In 1990 selection and preference took place again. The mayor of St Ives invited a local Cornish dance group, Ros Keltek, to become involved with and lead a Furry dance for the Well procession held on the Feast day. It is significant that the selection and preference was for an expressly Cornish dance group as this is a statement of identity. Ros Keltek acted as a core group and invited other Cornish dance groups and musicians to join them, especially people from St Ives. They did not use Guize costume but elected to remain in the team costume they normally wore for dance displays. Within ten years this had become a largely local performance, with some support from

musicians from elsewhere in Cornwall.⁴¹ In 2007 the St Ives a masked version of the Guizers was introduced again drawing from musicians and dancers who had been taking part in the Well Procession. The dancers dressed “mock posh”, much along the lines of Heaths description and toured the streets and harbour side pubs with displays of scoot dancing on the eve of the Feast Day.

The historical trajectory of the St Ives Guizing clearly illustrates the first five features of tradition described by Jones as above but for the sixth, “the symbolic constructions of the past in the present for the future”, it is necessary to look at the motives of the participants and the meaning they ascribe to the St Ives Guizing. There is little information about the motives of the Guizers prior to the 1920s and it has to be said that there is no evidence or indication that the participants themselves were consciously constructing anything other than “party time”. In the nineteen twenties, however, Guizing was clearly an expression of Nance’s mantra “to rebuild a new Cornwall from the past” in that the Celtic identity of the future was to be reconstructed from the gathered fragments, in this case of oral folk tradition.⁴² We have seen a deliberate move towards a Cornish identity in the nineteen nineties by the organisers seeking the help of specifically Cornish dancers and musicians for the procession. Likewise, the Guizers of 2010 make a clear statement about their performance being an expression of Cornish identity both in the introduction provided by the Master of Ceremonies and by their choice of material.⁴³

The Polperro Mock Mayor and Tourism

Both Couch and Miners describe the Mock Mayor custom in Polperro.⁴⁴ It is not clear when it became inactive but in 1925 Miners refers to it in the past tense. It was revived again in 1996 as part of opening of the Polperro Festival, which takes place during the third week of June around the date of the midsummer. Other events during the festival include concerts, pub bands, Furry dances and displays from touring Morris sides. The revived Mock Mayor is based on Jonathon Couch’s description and comprises of four groups of activities. Firstly, there is a procession bringing the previous year’s mayor from the top of the village down to the “Green” and in some years a Furry Dance, performed largely by school children, has been incorporated into this. The new mayor is then inaugurated who makes a speech about how he or she will improve Polperro. This incorporates comments about ensuring that the quality of the beer remains good and inexpensive and by guaranteeing good weather. A further procession through the village then takes place stopping at each pub to test the beer,

make a short speech of approval and distribute the new mayors “bank notes”. Eventually the procession reaches the outer harbour and beach where the new mayor is dropped into the sea.

The mayors attire themselves in bizarre costume stylised to suit each individual but usually involving some symbolism involving Cornwall e.g. the St Piran’s black and White flag or Cornish tartan . The mayor is accompanied by an entourage of six “merry men” dressed in a combination of bowler hats decorated with the St Piran’s flag and fishermen’s smocks .⁴⁵ The procession is complete with a green man and lead by two musicians, a piper and drummer.⁴⁶ The mayor is normally a well-known local figure and the “merry men” are recruited from the immediate community, typically fishermen. The character of green man is played by the same person each year, again a Polperro resident, but the piper and drummer are brought in from outside.

The location of this revived tradition within part of an early season festival, seems intentionally part of the tourist attraction.⁴⁷ This could be criticised as a commodification of culture or re-inventing tradition for the sake of the tourist market. Bendix, however, argues that appeal to a touristic audience might only constitute a surface rationale for inventing traditions:

Economic motivations are one part of the story, perhaps an important rhetorical argument in the process of creating display events. But wished for economic benefits do not sufficiently explain why such events are continued for decades or even centuries. A close examination of the motivations and choices of originators, performers, and audiences of new, traditionalized displays points instead toward an affirmation of local and national cultural identity in the face of seasonal mass foreign invasion.⁴⁸

In the light of Bendix’s argument the intensely local and Cornish focus is interesting. The reasons given for the selection of the mayor and the subsequent inaugural speech are largely opaque to outsiders who will not be familiar with the names or activities of the people concerned.⁴⁹ The mayoral procession is seen to have priority over other activities in the town, particularly the Morris displays which take place fairly randomly in the streets and can temporarily block routes. When this happens the Merry Men’s sense of ownership will normally encourage the procession

to proceed regardless of any interruption this might cause. This is entered into in the spirit of fun on both sides but in 2008 a display on the outer harbour at the same time as the mayor was due to be thrown in the water did cause discontent and the procession forced its way through despite protests from one of the display organisers.⁵⁰ This is an example of the tension between two speech communities, in this case local / Cornish and folk dance revivalists in the form of visiting Morris sides and their hosts. Both groups felt that they had a priority of ownership for the event, one group because they were local and Cornish the other because they were folk performers taking part in a folk event.

Affirmation of Cornish identity is not only evident in the use of Cornish symbols in the costume. In the 2000 event musicians were added to the entourage and booked from outside expressly to ensure that Cornish was music played.⁵¹ There was also an interesting discussion during the 2006 event around the use of the Cornish flag which had been incorporated stylistically into the programme design. A view was expressed within the ranks of the Merry Men that the Cornish flag was sacrosanct and should not be interfered with in this way. The significance is not so much on the rationality of any argument but on the value associated with Cornish identity by the participants in the Mock Mayor custom.

Polperro's Mock Mayor custom is a clear illustration of Bendix's point that economic motivation does not fully explain continuity. Although it adds to the carnival of the opening procession, it is only one entry among many and its absence would have little impact. Similarly, it adds colour to the formal opening of the festival but once the procession through the town is underway, it becomes a very localised activity with little to offer as a spectacle. What it does do, is provide an anchor point for immediate local and broader Cornish identity within a multicultural festival driven by the tourist industry and economic need.

Bodmin Riding, the Beast and the Bodmin Play

The Bodmin Riding Day was revived in 1974 and was based on the "beating the bounds" and the mock mayor customs that took place historically during the first week in July.⁵² The day comprised a series of events representing Bodmin's history and traditions and included a procession of the bones of St Petrock, followed by the presentation, and consumption of the Riding Ale, a Furry Dance and a Mock Mayor ceremony. The Mock Mayor custom took the form of a procession through the town in

medieval costume followed by a “banquet” on Mount Folly (the town centre, which is adjacent to the Old Crown Court house). In a representation of the events following the 1549 Cornish rebellion, the “Kings Troops” arrested the “Mayor” during the banquet and marched him away to be hanged for his support of the insurgents. There was later a staged hanging of the Mayor managed by a professional stunt crew, which became a major spectacle. From the outset of the revival, the mock mayor custom recognised Bodmin’s role in the Cornish rising of 1549 and at various times this was augmented with the help of a re-enactment society by staging a battle between Henry VII’s troops and the Cornish insurgents sporting the St George’s cross and the St Piran’s cross respectively. ⁵³

The event has followed a cycle of varying support and popularity depending upon the vagaries of the weather, local interest, and the opportunities for arts grant funding since its inception. For example, it expanded its compass considerably in the mid nineteen nineties with help from Kneehigh theatre and Arts Council Funding to become Bodmin Heritage Festival and Riding Day with a broader range of arts events in the preceding week. When sightings of a large cat (presumed to be a feral panther or similar animal) were reported in the Bodmin area, the opportunity was seized to create a contemporary myth. “The Beast of Bodmin Moor” became a feature of the festival and local children took part in a project lead by members of Kneehigh theatre to create a large carnival cat to act as focus for the processions.

In 1974 the event was seen to be drawing on the past for the benefit of the future and the hope was expressed that Bodmin Riding would become “a permanent part of the calendar of Cornish customs”.⁵⁴ Thirty years later Bodmin Riding’s mock mayor developed to become the “Bodmin Play”⁵⁵ and provide a particularly good representation of Jones’ “symbolic constructions of the past in the present for the future”. The contemporary “Cornish Studies” challenge to the notion of a subdued medieval Cornwall gradually losing its distinctive identity to a provincial Englishness is embraced in the narrative of the play.⁵⁶ The Beast of Bodmin becomes the spirit of Cornwall which is hunted, captured and tried by a jury of Bodmin dignitaries (The Ragadasiow – forefathers) lead by Justice Jan Tregagle, and charged with being “a deviation from the acceptable” and “an affront to decency”.⁵⁷ Witnesses are summoned in the form of historical figures such as Flamank and Angove (leaders of the 1497 rebellion) and contemporary characters such as Miss Minx a television personality with a second home. These witnesses show that the only crime the beast

has committed is to proclaim Cornishness and challenge the “accepted and decent notion” of Cornwall’s provincial Englishness. The outcome, with the support of a vociferous campaign on the part of Bodmin children to “free the beast”, is the exoneration of Cornwall’s spirit of distinctiveness, in the form of the beast, and the castigation of the forces of that deny this, represented by Tregeagle.

Although initially introduced with a detailed written script which was carefully rehearsed the play evolved over the six years to date to become much more communal in authorship with a series of improvised sketches within the framework of the original narrative. These improvised sketches can incorporate contemporary issues. For example, when the local MP, Dan Rogerson, took part in the play in 2009 against a background of news coverage around MPs expenses his lines involved an assurance that his character would not be claiming expenses. Local people have grown into the characters and community involvement with the play is also enhanced by the action of the Helliars, the hunters, played by young people whose task it is to chase the beast around the town with much shouting but little to rehearse. Despite this modern interpretive creativity and vision of a future Cornwall, the play nevertheless has continuity with the traditions of the past and uses these as a medium for comment. In particular the use of masks, bizarre costume and the creation of large hairy pantomime “beast” are anchored firmly in Cornish Guizing tradition.

Feast Day Dances

Guize dances in their original location are invariably associated with feast days and make up part of a package of customs that include processional dances. The database shows two groups of processional dances associated with feast days, the Furry and the Serpent Dance. The Furry dances are based on a formula comprising of a music led procession, a natural grouping of people in couples and a simple dance choreography that accommodates movement forward. A typical formula is eight bars processing forward and a further eight bars performing a “dosi-do” or a “star” (see app 5 – Glossary). The Serpent, or Snake dance, also follows a very simple formula of a long line of people holding hands and led through a series of snake like loops and spirals that can either gradually process forward or take place within a large open area or field. This dance is a form of the medieval “farandole”.⁵⁸

The early nineteenth century provides a starting point for this thesis and the enquiry into oral folk tradition in Cornwall for the simple reason that this is when

information that is more detailed becomes available. It is clear that as early as 1803, Polwhele understood feast day dances as an historically deep rooted and well-established tradition.⁵⁹ By his own admission, Polwhele's "history" was an antiquarian romp for the purposes of entertainment rather than a scholarly study but this makes it all the more valuable in gauging popular contemporary understanding of oral folk traditions. For all he confuses the couple formation of processional Furry dance with the hand in hand, line formation of the farandole Polwhele clearly links the feast day traditions of Cornwall to customs in Ireland and on the continent:

In Ireland and in France we trace the fade or the Furry-dance. And the ancient Irish dance the Rinceadh-fada answers like the Furry of Helston to the feastal dance of the Greeks. According to Mr. Halloran, the private and public balls of the Irish used to always conclude with the Rinceadh-fada. And still, in the county of Limerick and many other parts of Ireland, this dance is always danced on the Eve of May. In 'Miss Plumtree's residence in France', is an account of a Provençal dance very much resembling that at Helston. 'It being the festival of the republic day that we were at Avignon, I there first saw the Farandeule, a sort of dance which the Provençaise are passionately fond, but which is only danced on occasions of festivity. A string of people go hand in hand, dancing along the streets, At intervals they stop and dance different figures and then again go on again, still dancing and catching hold of any body they meet to join the train.'⁶⁰

The extent to which these are pan-European traditions, which stem from each other is an interesting question. In the Breton *Kas Ha Barh* for example, couples move forward for 8 bars as in the Furry dance and the gentleman then draws his partner through a figure of 8 shape with his right hand. An adaption of the *An Dro*⁶¹ step is used to travel which comes close to the one two three slide travelling step of the Helston Furry dance. It is tempting to see this as reflecting the cultural links between Brittany and Cornwall but such a simple choreography could equally have been arrived at quite independently. There is an interesting comparator in the Isle of Man in that the Manx *Hop Tu Na* also has a similar structure, moving forwards with a reel step which is like the "one, two, three, hop" of the Furry for eight bars followed by a figure with arches. At least one Cornish engineer is known to have moved to Mann to work on

Laxey Wheel, but again there is no evidence that this is anything other than a chance convergence of dance evolution. Furry type processional dances are also recorded in Ireland⁶² Derbyshire⁶³, Wales⁶⁴ and Sharp's *Winster Processional*⁶⁵ uses this as a device to move the dancers from one location to the next. The Derbyshire tradition is often attributed to communities of Cornish Miners⁶⁶ moving to where their skills were in demand and similarities in the music do support this.⁶⁷ There are, however, many examples of early music thematically related to the Furry Dance the oldest of which comes from 16th Century France.⁶⁸

The Serpent Dance provides another example of a shared melting pot of choreographic ideas and as the "Farandole", it appears in various forms across Europe. The Flemish painter Pieter Breughel captured the dance in a painting in 1628,⁶⁹ the early twentieth century dance collector, Violet Alford, found versions in Switzerland, The Pyrenees and the Provençal.⁷⁰ There are contemporary examples of Swedish, Scottish, Estonian and Lithuanian groups incorporating Farandole shapes into dance displays.⁷¹ Lee's description of the Serpent Dance in "Dorinda's Birthday" captures the atmosphere of the simplified version used to follow a brass band:

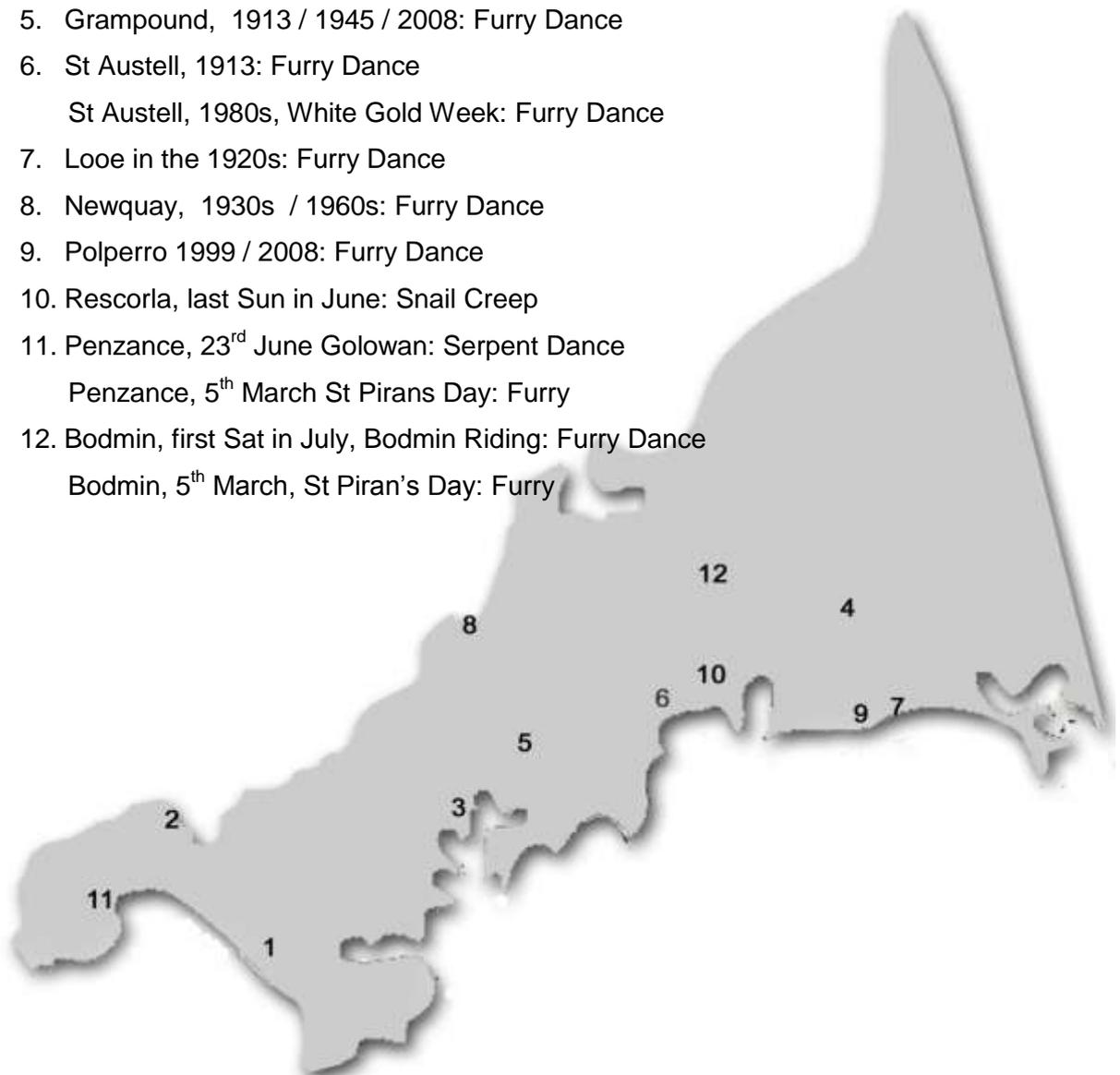
..... The mazy evolutions had endured for full quarter of an hour..... The fugleman nodded, and prepared for the final manoeuvre by shaping a straight course for his starting point in the middle of the field. Here he began what appeared at first to be the primary evolution over again; but before the circle was joined, a slight change of direction converted it into an inward winding spiral. A shout from the knowing ones gave warning to all of the imminent climax. Tighter and tighter were drawn the coils, slower and slower grew the pace, until, amid much laughter and shrieks not a few, the leader lifted his flag at arm's length and stood calmly triumphant in the centre of a huddled mass of breathless humanity.⁷²

It was recorded as part of the Tea Treat traditions up to the nineteen forties in the Clay Country area of mid Cornwall and features in revivals.⁷³ The Serpent dance has also been revived as part of the Golowan festival in Penzance on 23rd June. Here the band process ahead of the dancers rather than leading them so that more elaborate figures are possible, involving arches and threading the needle (the entire line proceeds through an arch formed by the last two dancers).⁷⁴

These feast day dances are intrinsically tied to a place and the community who live there, and are perhaps the easiest of Cornish folk phenomena to argue a case for a first existence location according to Hoerburger's model.⁷⁵ They also provide an unambiguous example of a tradition marking time, one of the features identified by Jones.⁷⁶ The map below is drawn from the database, and provides examples of feast days dances that have been recorded in the twenty first century but have a continuity broken or otherwise with the nineteenth century.

Diagram 3: Examples of contemporary locations of Feast Day Dances in Cornwall

1. Helston, 1790 / present, 8th May: Furry Dance
2. St Ives, 1801 / present, five yearly Knill Ceremony in July: Furry Dance
St Ives Feast, first Monday in Feb: Furry Dance
3. Truro, 1822: Furry Dance
Truro, 1990, St Piran's Day: Furry Dance
4. Liskeard, 1856 / present, St Mathews Feast: Furry Dance
5. Grampound, 1913 / 1945 / 2008: Furry Dance
6. St Austell, 1913: Furry Dance
St Austell, 1980s, White Gold Week: Furry Dance
7. Looe in the 1920s: Furry Dance
8. Newquay, 1930s / 1960s: Furry Dance
9. Polperro 1999 / 2008: Furry Dance
10. Rescorla, last Sun in June: Snail Creep
11. Penzance, 23rd June Golowan: Serpent Dance
Penzance, 5th March St Pirans Day: Furry
12. Bodmin, first Sat in July, Bodmin Riding: Furry Dance
Bodmin, 5th March, St Piran's Day: Furry



Furry dances, the evolution of meaning within tradition and reflexivity.

For much of the oral folk tradition explored in this thesis we are reliant upon participant observation combined with narrow snapshots of the past for data. Furry dances, however, particularly that associated with Helston, are well documented, witnessed in oral testimony and often subject to published commentary. The term “Furry” is used for this group of dances throughout this thesis as this reflects the current practice in Helston and the convention of dance groups in Cornwall. The history of the dance, however, shows a succession of terms being used starting with the term “Faddy” in the eighteenth century, the “Furry” for the latter half of the nineteenth with “Flora” and then “Floral” becoming popular terms in the twentieth century. “Furry” has nevertheless become the preferred term where people have sought to anchor the dance within Cornish tradition and identity. This progression of terms helps to signpost the different meanings and interpretations held by people about this tradition over these two centuries. It also demonstrates the process of reflexivity in the way that outside influences have impacted upon the trajectory of change within oral tradition.

The earliest written reference found to date for the dance in Cornwall is a letter published in the Gentleman’s Magazine of 1790:

“It is called the Furry – day supposedly Flora’s day; not I imagine, as many have thought in remembrance of some festival instituted in honour of that goddess, but rather from the garlands commonly worn on that day.
..... About the middle of the day they collect together to dance hand-in-hand round the streets to the sound of a fiddle playing a particular tune, which they continue to do till it is dark. This is called the “Faddy”.⁷⁷

It is clear that the writer understands that “Furry” refers to the day and “Faddy” to the dance although he does hint at confusion between use of the word “Flora” used adjectivally as “flower” day and the goddess “Flora”. The letter is framed as a descriptive observation rather than a scholarly study and it is reasonable to suggest that this might represent the understanding of the terms by the wider population at the time of writing. Polwhele also presents “Furry” as the name for the celebration and

dismisses the use of “Flora” as a “vulgar error” explaining “I scruple not to deduce *Furry* from the old Cornish word *fer*, a fair or jubilee: whence, also the Latin *feriæ*.”⁷⁸

Polwhele uses *Fadè* as the name of the dance and he describes this as being an old English word for “go” but it is interesting that he does not appear to make a connection with the Irish “Rinceadh-Fada” (Rinceadh – Dance, Fada – Long) to which he refers in a later volume in the series.

Although he may personally have been dismissive of the value of Cornish Celticity Davies Gilbert connects with the “Celtic Imaginary” in his explanation of the *Furry* dance and associated customs:

This specimen of Celtic Musick is heard in Ireland and in Wales, when the people dance round their bonfires, originally kindled in honour of the Summer Solstice, although now dedicated to St John. In Cornwall it is peculiar to the town of Helston, where a *Foray* was annually celebrated up to recent times, with all the pantomime of a predatory excursion into the country, and a triumphant return of the inhabitants to this air. Some shadow of the festival is even still preserved in the more elegant amusements of the eight of May but with its nature totally changed, and its name obscured, by a fanciful allusion to Greek or Roman Mythology.⁷⁹

There is no evidence to suggest that “*Foray*” was widely understood to be the meaning of “*Furry*” but it is interesting that in providing his own explanation, Sandys (1846) misquotes Gilbert by saying that he supposed the *Foray* into the town “to be in commemoration of some victory over the Saxons”. Sandys dismissed this as being just as improbable as a connection with the Roman *Floralia* but continues to describe the day as the “*Furry Day*” and the dance as “*faddy-ing* around the town”. In his dialect gloss he describes “*fadè*” as meaning “to go” and particularly applied to the *Furry Dance*⁸⁰. Elsewhere he illustrates this use of “*fadè*” in a dialect narrative:

Then a passel of maidens comed en to the pleace.
Each so smart thee caan't think, weth a pure roagish feace
And beginn'd for to skeyce and to *fadè* so friskis,.
Why they seemed to my mind like a passel of piskeys.⁸¹

“Passel” is a parcel in the sense of a group, and skeyce is to run away or frisk about, stemming from the middle Cornish “skusy - to escape”⁸².

Fadè / faddy is intriguing. “Fadic” appears in the *Vocabularium Cornicum*⁸³ and is given the Latin meaning “profugus” which glosses as “fleeing, fugitive, banished, migratory”. This would be consistent with the way that faddy is used by Polwhele and Gilbert in their description of the dance and also Jago’s dialect vocabulary of 1882 where it is described as meaning “to go”⁸⁴. Hodge, however, points out that “there is a medial /d / which, if this word existed in Middle Cornish, would have become “fasy”, “fassey”, and then “fazzy” in Late Cornish and dialect”.⁸⁵

The Oxford English Dictionary describes (The) “Fadding” as “apparently an Irish dance, with an unknown etymology” but acknowledges that a suggested origin is the Irish “feadán” for a pipe or whistle (but not the Rince Fadé, literally Rince – dance, Fadé – long, which would seem obvious). Contextual references are also made to Sandys as above and a play in English dated 1606 / 1611.⁸⁶ At the time of writing, it has not been possible to locate fadè, faddy or fading in the Anglo Saxon or Middle English dictionaries⁸⁷ and there is thus the possibility that it was introduced into sixteenth and seventeenth century English usage via the Gaelic “Fadé”.

For all the uncertainties of origin, it is interpretation and meaning attached to the term, which is the focus of this thesis. For Courtney in 1882 the Fading was “an old English term for a dance from country to town”⁸⁸ but for the growing Pan Celtic movement it was linked to the Irish “Rince Fadé”. In 1911 Grattan-Flood described Helston “Faddy” as stemming from the Irish “Rince Fadé”⁸⁹ which does make some sense but he also described the Furry dance tune as a bagpipe tune called “An Maidhrin Ruadh” (sic) which it is not. “An Maidhin Ruadh” (maidhin – fox, ruadh – red) is a competition pipe tune popularly known as the Red Fox and a quite different melody. The link with the Rince Fadé does have some grounding, however, as this name is currently identified with a processional dance performed as part of a midsummer custom in Kilkenny.⁹⁰ It may well be this is the Irish dance, or type of Irish dance, to which Gilbert was referring in 1823.⁹¹

For Hunt⁹² and Courtney⁹³ in the latter half of the nineteenth century the “Furry Day” and the “Furry Dance” were indistinguishable. Courtney still recognises “Faddy” as an alternative name and introduces the term “Flurry” which, like Gilberts “Foray”

does not seem to have been used widely. Hunt, however, subscribes to Classical romanticism and for him there was "... no doubt of the Furry originating from the 'Floralia', anciently observed by the Romans on the fourth of the calends of May".⁹⁴ For all they confuse the tunes of the Furry Dance and the Hal an Tow both Baring-Gould in 1891⁹⁵ and Sharp 1913⁹⁶ refer to the dances as the Furry not the Faddy or Flora.

Dunstan recalls the popularity of the "Flora" from his days as a tutor / student in Brass Band culture of Tea Treats and Regatta in the late nineteenth century⁹⁷ and by 1901 the following words seems to have become popularly being sung to the Helston tune:

Jan said to me wan day
'Can' ee dance the Flora?
Iss I can with a nice young man
Ere we'm off to Trola⁹⁸

The Celto-Cornish movement challenged the correctness of the term "Flora" in the correspondence pages of the *Western Morning News* and the *Mercury*. In 1931 the Old Cornwall Society published a booklet discussing the origins of the Furry in detail⁹⁹ and this is referenced to and expanded upon by Toy in his history of Helston.¹⁰⁰ For all the Celto-Cornish movements' preference for the term "Furry", "Flora" became embedded in popular usage. The Helston Flora Day committee today takes the position that the day is "Flora Day" but the dance is the "Furry".¹⁰¹

The use of the term "Floral" can be dated to Katie Moss's composition, "The Floral Dance" which was inspired by her visit to Helston in the spring of 1911. Although to all intents and purposes this was an entirely new composition with Edwardian lyrics celebrating the rural idyll, the Furry Dance tune from Helston was employed as a recurrent theme by Moss.¹⁰² Peter Dawson recorded it on a 78-rpm disc in 1912 with a number of subsequent re-issues due to its popularity. By the nineteen sixties the term "Floral" had become inextricably linked with the Furry Dance and used interchangeably with "Flora". This link was subsequently popularised and reinforced by the Brighthouse And Rastrick Band LP recording of 1977 and Terry Wogan's 1978 Top of the Pops performance. This was not altogether well received in Cornwall:

Helston's Furry Dance tune has been raped from its home town and given a place among the best selling L.P. records, flooding the media with its haunting melody. Although irritating no doubt to many who think it a breach of west-country unwritten copyright, it has the advantage of free advertisements. It also brings a whiff of sanity to the cacophony accepted by many as music. The popularity will pass; in time it will become again Helston's own tune, and we who love its unique appeal conjured up by true Cornishmen will be joining the crowds in the old town's revelry as usual.¹⁰³

Whilst the popularity may have passed, there has nevertheless been a reflexive impact upon tradition in that the term "Floral" has replaced the term "Furry" in many first existence locations of this tradition. For example, it was the express wish of the Boscastle archive to have their photographs of the Village Furry dance to be labelled as the Boscastle "Floral Dance" not "Furry Dance".¹⁰⁴ There are also practical problems with the Brighthouse And Rastrick arrangement of Katie Moss's "Floral Dance" in that the pattern of bars and tune make this very difficult to dance a conventional Furry Dance to.¹⁰⁵

Feast days as a device for social interaction - "party time!"

One of the striking insights that emerges from this enquiry is the extent to which interpretation of some folk dance phenomena as a form of ritual derives not from the participants but from folklorists. William Barber describes the St Ives Guizers as "all a bit of fun really".¹⁰⁶ For Malcolm McCarthy, the Padstow Mummers is "just a happy festival where we all have a lot to drink and a bloody good time".¹⁰⁷ For Norman Mannell, the Furry Dance at Grampound was an opportunity for people "to come in from the country and all meet up".¹⁰⁸

Whilst dress marks performers out for the Guize Dance this is not so much the case for the feast day dances. There is an element of "evening dress" code for the Helston Furry but for the most part it is simply a matter of being colourful and "party time". This can make the line between a feast day dance and a social dancing a very fine one. It seems likely that the feast day traditions fostered by Cornish chapel culture were partly an adoption of long standing customs but also driven by the desire to provide alternative social activities to those based around the sale of alcohol.¹⁰⁹ The significance of the calendar event is that it provides an opportunity, perhaps even an

excuse, for a socially interactive event rather than being the real driving force. Time is nevertheless still marked in the way described by Jones.¹¹⁰

Badges of Cornishness

Both Guize Dancing and Feast Days traditions are carnivalesque, they provide an opportunity for colour and costume and here they are particularly open to influences that lie beyond the immediate event. For example, musicians and dancers in a procession are limited to using the same text as far as lyrics, tune and choreography are concerned but costume is much more flexible and open to choice. There may be dress codes, the Guizers at Padstow black their faces for disguise but after that it is a free for all with bright colours being the theme.¹¹¹ The St Ives Guizers use masks and dress “mock posh” but that leaves much opportunity for self expression, similarly the Penzance Guizers focus attention on the detail of their masks and then dress as colourfully as possible.¹¹² Feast day processions do not feature disguise in the way of Guize Dancing traditions, but they do invite the adoption of some form of costume. What is interesting is the extent to which “Badges of Cornishness” have been incorporated into these locations to become part of the tradition.

Howlett uses the term “Badges of Cornishness” in describing the success of E. E. Morton-Nance’s Cornish National Tartan and the adoption of the St Piran’s Flag as national emblems for a modern Cornwall.¹¹³ These are clear products of the Celto-Cornish movement and present Cornwall alongside the other Celtic Nations in having its own national costume and flag. Distinctive historic costume also provides an image of place for the Celto-Cornish movement, the most iconic of these is probably the Gook (women’s bonnet) but the Newlyn school of painters frequently used stylised working costume as a subject¹¹⁴ and this has served to inform the notion of Cornish historic dress. The marketing opportunities provided by Cornwall’s success in the County Rugby League championships has also ensured the wide availability of clothing in the Cornish colours of black and gold. What is found in that these four groups of Cornish imagery are used in different ways but, nevertheless almost universally, in Guizing and Feast Day traditions.

Conclusion

These locations thus lie within a “first existence” according to Hoerburger’s model of oral folk tradition. Rather than a seamless flow, however, continuity seems to

comprise of a series of alternating periods of inactivity and popularity with both the Guizing and Feast Day traditions. This challenges the whole notion of a “revival” as a discrete entity. As far as oral folk tradition as a process is concerned, it can be seen that “revival” is an essential component of continuity. Not only this, but as a tradition moves from a state of decline to one of relative activity so it becomes open to a wider range of influences which Ruyter¹¹⁵ and Nahachewsky¹¹⁶ suggest as a marker for oral folk tradition in a “first existence”.

These locations also demonstrate the distinction between reflexivity and reflectivity, which can sometimes be a fine one. For example, if the practitioners involved in Furry Dance traditions were acting reflectively they would consider the origins of the term and would be likely to deduce that “Faddy” or “Furry” were the more authentic in as much as they were free from unfounded classical allusion or popular media imagery. It is principally the Helston tradition that has retained the term “Furry” and this is can be attributed to research and reflection on the part of the Helston Old Cornwall Society.¹¹⁷ Elsewhere the terms “Flora Dance” and “Floral Dance” are widely used and the latter is a particularly good example of reflexivity in action because of its link with the commercial and popular music industry.

Although scholars and commentators made links between these traditions and the construction of a classical or Celtic past in Cornwall there is uncertainty that nineteenth century participants were extending the identity expressed by these traditions beyond their immediate location. What we do find, however, is that these traditions embrace a clear Cornish identity in the latter half of the twentieth century. This is evidenced both by the adoption of “badges of Cornishness” and by the adoption into the texts of the performance of material and narratives that are identified with Cornwall. The revival of the Polperro Mock Mayor ceremony is based primarily on Jonathon Couch’s description,¹¹⁸ but draws on familiar contemporary images of Cornwall for the costumes of the Mayors and the Merry-men, none of which is described by Couch. Similarly, for all the debate about what the correct term for the dance might be, the Furry / Floral dance is clearly identified as Cornish whether through recognition of tradition or promotion in the popular media. To choose to do a Furry dance as part of or instead of a carnival procession is an act of positive selection towards Cornishness.

Notes

¹ Felix Hoerburger, "Once Again: On the Concept of Folk Dance" *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* (1968), pp. 30-31.

² Nancy Lee, Chalfa Ruyter, "Some musings on folk dance", *Dance Chronicle*, Vol 18, No 2 (1995). <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1567880>, accessed 19th September 2008.

³ Andriy Nahachewsky, "Once Again: On the Concept of 'Second Existence Folk Dance'", *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, Vol. 33. (2001), pp. 17-28.

⁴ Michael Owen Jones, "'Tradition' in Identity Discourses and an Individual's Symbolic Construction of Self ." *Western Folklore* Vol. 59, No. 2 (Spring 2000), p.116.

Stable URL - <http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0043-373X%28200021%2959%3A2%3C115%3A%22IIDAA%3E2.0.CO%3B2-P> , accessed 13th Nov 2007.

⁵Michael Owen Jones, " Tradition in identity discourses" pp.115 - 141.

Summarises contemporary debate on the nature of tradition including: Continuities and tradition - Honko, Lauri et al. "On the Analytical Value of the Concept of Tradition", *Studia Fennica* No. 27, 1983, pp. 233-249: Social and communal nature of tradition – Robert A. Georges and Michael Owen Jones, *Folkloristics: An Introduction*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995): Traditions becoming inactive /extinguished and revived many years later - Kenneth Goldstein, "On the Application of the Concepts of Active and Inactive Traditions to the Study of Repertory". *Journal of American Folklore* 84, 1971, pp.62-67: traditions becoming inactive /extinguished and revived many years later Traditions - Elli Kaija Kongas, "Immigrant Folklore: Survival or Living Tradition?" *Midwest Folklore* No. 10, 1960, pp.117-123: Deconstructing tradition– Eric J. Hobsbawm, and Terrence Ranger, ed. *The Invention of Tradition*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983).

⁶ Peter Reason, Hilary Bradbury. *The Sage Handbook of Action Research : Participative Inquiry and Practice*. (London: SAGE, 2008).

⁷ Fred W. .P Jago, *The Ancient Language and the Dialect of Cornwall* (Truro: Netherton and worth, 1882.) Entry under Guise Dance: "A kind of comical or Bal masque at Christmas. Polwhele calls is the guise or disguise dance, for so the Cornish pronounce guise (geeze). This dance answers to the mummers of Devon, and the Morrice dancers of Oxfordshire &c. In Celtic Cornish ges, means mockery, a jest."

⁸ Tom Miners, "The Mummers' Play in West Cornwall", *Old Cornwall* Vol. 1, No. 8, (1928), pp. 4 -16.

⁹ Merv Davey "Guizing: Ancient Traditions and Modern Sensitivities." in *Cornish Studies 14* ed Philip Payton (Exeter, University of Exeter Press, 2006), pp. 229 - 244.

¹⁰ Courtney Library, Royal Institution of Cornwall, Jenner Manuscript Box. Reply letter from Cecil Sharp dated 16th July 1921. There is no copy of Jenner's original letter to Sharp.

¹¹ James Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, (London, Wordsworth Editions Lt, 1993), First published in 1922 as an abridged version of twelve volumes published between 1890 and 1915.

¹² Patrick Laviolette, "Landscaping Death: resting places for Cornish identity" *Journal of Material Culture, Vol 8(2):* (2003) , pp 224 -225

¹³ Cyril Noall, *The Cornish Midsummer Eve Bonfire Celebrations*, (Penzance, The Federation of Old Cornwall Societies, 1963 and 1977). Also Donald R. Rawe, *Padstow's Obby Oss and May Day Festivities : A Study in Folklore and Tradition*. (Padstow: Lodenek Press, 1982).

¹⁴ Trevor Lawrence, interview with author, Penzance, 20/01/06.

¹⁵ Conversation with Mark Hawken, accordionist leading community singing at Midsummer Bonfire, Castle An Dinas, 23rd June 2008.

¹⁶ Sabrina Magliocco and John. Bishop, *Oss Tales*, Media-Generation. (2007). DVD and DVD rom format.

¹⁷ Alfred Kenneth Hamilton Jenkin. *Cornwall and Its People: Cornish Seafarers, Cornwall and the Cornish, Cornish Homes and Customs*. (London: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1945), p. 424. Cites Robert Heath but gives no reference details.

¹⁸ Robert Hunt, *Popular Romances of the West of England; or, the Drolls, Traditions, and Superstitions of Old Cornwall*. (London, J.C. Hotten, 1871), p. 392.

¹⁹William Bottrell, *Traditions and Hearthside Stories of West Cornwall*. (Penzance, Deare and Son, 1873).

²⁰ Margaret Ann Courtney, *Cornish Feasts and Folk-Lore. Revised and Reprinted from the Folk-Lore Society Journals, 1886-87.*(Penzance, Beare and Son, 1890).

²¹ Arthur Quiller-Couch, *The Delectable Duchy*, (London, Dent and Sons,1900).

²² Alfred Kenneth Hamilton Jenkin, p. 422.

²³William Bottrell, *Traditions and Hearthside Stories*, pp. 9, 15, 16, 17, 26, 38 - 39, 97-98, 119,161 -162, 283, 287.

²⁴ Tom Miners, "The Mummers' Play in West Cornwall".

²⁵ See appendix 4.2.

²⁶ Cassandra Latham, presentation and performance with Pen Glaz at the Devon and Cornwall Pagan Conference, 6th March, 2010, Penstowe Manor, Kilkhampton, Bude. A summary was produced on the festival web site:

<http://www.paganfederationdevonandcornwall.co.uk/pages/wheel.htm>, accessed 7th March 2010:

Samhain - 31st October (pronounced Sow-in):

The Wheel of the Year is seen to begin at Samhain, which is also known as Hallowe'en or All Hallows Eve. This is the Celtic New Year, when the veil between the worlds of life and death stands open. Samhain is a festival of the dead, when Pagans remember those who have gone before and acknowledge the mystery of death. As Pagans we celebrate death as a part of life.

Yule - 21st December (archaic form Geola, pronounced Yula):

Yule is the time of the winter solstice, when the sun child is reborn, an image of the return of all new life born through the love of the Gods. The Norse had a God Ullr, and within the Northern Tradition Yule is regarded as the New Year.

Imbolc - 2nd February:

Imbolc, also called Oimeic and Candlemas, celebrates the awakening of the land and the growing power of the Sun. Often, the Goddess is venerated in her aspect as the Virgin of Light and her altar is decked with snowdrops, the heralds of spring.

Spring Equinox - 21st March:

Now night and day stand equal. The Sun grows in power and the land begins to bloom. By Spring Equinox, the powers of the gathering year are equal to the darkness of winter and death. For many Pagans, the youthful God with his hunting call leads the way in dance and celebration. Others dedicate this time to Eostre the Anglo- Saxon Goddess of fertility.

Beltane - 30th April:

The powers of light and new life now dance and move through all creation. The Wheel continues to turn. Spring gives way to Summer's first full bloom and Pagans celebrate Beltane with maypole dances, symbolizing the mystery of the Sacred Marriage of Goddess and God.

Midsummer - 21st June:

At summer solstice is the festival of Midsummer, sometimes called Litha. The God in his light aspect is at the height of his power and is crowned Lord of Light. It is a time of plenty and celebration.

Lughnasadh - 1st August (pronounced Loo-nassa):

Lughnasadh, otherwise called Lammas, is the time of the corn harvest, when Pagans reap those things they have sown; when they celebrate the fruits of the mystery of Nature. At Lughnasadh, Pagans give thanks for the bounty of the Goddess as Queen of the Land.

Autumn Equinox - 21 September:

Day and night stand hand in hand as equals. As the shadows lengthen, Pagans see the darker faces of the God and Goddess. For many Pagans, this rite honours old age and the approach of Winter.

Samhain - 31st October:

The Wheel turns and returns to Samhain, the festival of the dead, when we face the Gods in their most awesome forms. This is not a time of fear, but a time to understand more deeply that life and death are part of a sacred whole.

See also: Ronald Hutton, "Modern Pagan Festivals: A Study in the Nature of Tradition", *Folklore*, 119:3, (2008), pp. 251 — 273; Sabina Magliocco, *Witching culture: Folklore and Neo Paganism in America*, (Philadelphia: Penn, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004).

²⁷ S. T. Rowe, "Guise Dancing at St Ives", *St Ives Weekly Summary*, January 6, 1900, page 5, column 1.

²⁸ *St Ives Times*, January 1901, Jan 1921.

²⁹ *St Ives Times*, January 11th 1929 "Successful Revival of Ancient Custom".

³⁰ William Barber, interview with author, 30/10/09.

³¹ Cyril Noall, "Guize Dancing At St Ives" *St Ives Times*, January 4th 1957.

³² Dave Lobb, Interview with Author, Withiel, 26/07/06.

³³ St Ives Feast Day is held on the first Monday after the third of February and involves a Furry dance procession from the Guild Hall to St Ives town hall now led by an informal band of local musicians. Participant observation: 07/02/05, 06/02/06.

³⁴ “St Ives Feast”, “What’s on listings”, *Cornish Life*, Feb 1984: 4th Feb, Dressing of St Ives town hall, Porthmeor Beach in the afternoon. Guize Dancing 7.30pm: 5th Feb, Green Morris men from several parts of the country will dance: 6th Feb, Parade of Guizers to Guildhall at 9 am. Hurling of the Silver Ball at 10.45. See images appendix 4.8: St Ives Guizing

³⁵ Mary Quick, “Guizing through the ages”, *The St Ives Times and Echo and Hayle times*, February 3rd 1989.

³⁶ Pauline McKeon, conversation with author 6th Feb 2006 . Pauline was a member of the Guizers who came to St Ives in the seventies and eighties. Participatory action research 06/02/2006.

³⁷ Dave Lobb, Interview.

³⁸ St Ives Guizing, participant observation: Stopped by people on several occasions and asked if these were the Guize dancers, where were they performing next and commenting that they had enjoyed seeing them twenty some years ago. Participatory action research: 04/02/07, 08/02/09, 18/12/08, 01/02/10.

³⁹ William Barber, interview.

⁴⁰ “The Digey is a small area of streets in the lower part of St Ives most strongly associated with the old fishing industry but now a popular studio area.

⁴¹ Rod Lyon, conversation with author, Rod Lyon was first invited to lead the St Ives Well procession in 1993 together with Ros Keltok who felt this was an important promotion of a Cornish tradition. Participatory action research, 06/02/06.

⁴² Robert Morton Nance, “Introduction”, *Old Cornwall* vol. 1, No. 1, (1925).

⁴³ St Ives Guizing, participatory action research, 04/02/07, 08/02/09, 18/12/08, 01/02/10. The Master of Ceremonies took time at each venue to explain the Cornish nature of the tradition and the music, dances and songs performed. Songs included “Cornish Lads” and Poetry written by local Poets were read.

⁴⁴ Jonathon Couch, *An Historical Account of the Village of Polperro in Cornwall and Its Neighbourhood*. 1815. (Truro, Lake, unidentified date); Tom Miners, “Mock Mayors” *Old Cornwall* 1926, Vol.1, No.3, p. 15-22.

⁴⁵ See appendix 4.7 for images of the mock mayor procession

⁴⁶ Participant observation, the author has played this role since 2000

⁴⁷ Ted Pilchur, conversation with author; Ted (mock mayor 2005, owner of local gift store) explained that the tourist industry in Polperro held a very precarious position in terms of the weather and it was hoped that festival would bring more consistent trade into the village. Participant observation, 26/06/07,

⁴⁸ Regina Bendix, "Tourism and Cultural Displays: Inventing Traditions for Whom?", *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 102, No. 404 (Apr. - Jun., 1989), pp. 131-146. Published by: American Folklore Society Stable URL:

<http://www.jstor.org/stable/540676> Accessed: 04/10/2009 13:21

⁴⁹ Participant observation 2008, the route of the procession avoided a particular pub because it had declined to take part in a money- raising event earlier in the year. The allusion in the mayors speech was not apparent until the change in route was commented upon by the author and explanation provided by one of the "Merry Men".

⁵⁰ Participant observation 2008. The author, as musician, found himself encouraged to continue leading the procession on through the Morris teams display by the Lord Mayor and Merry Men but asked to wait until the performance had finished by the festival organiser responsible for booking the Morris sides.

⁵¹ Ted Pilchur, conversation with the author. Explained that when he was festival organiser in 2000 he booked a piper expressly to play Cornish music for the procession. Participant observation 22/06/07.

⁵² Pat Munn, *Bodmin Riding and other similar Celtic customs*, (Bodmin, Bodmin Books Ltd, 1975).

⁵³ The distinction between the rebellions of 1497 and 1549 might be profound for historians, but as a site of memory representing Cornish identity the two fuse and in the later Bodmin Play characters from both are drawn into the trial of the Beast. See appendix 4.9.

⁵⁴ Ivor Whiting, "Forward", Munn, *Bodmin Riding*, p.9.

⁵⁵ The play is performed at Mount Folly, the town centre, at the beginning and end of the day and is performed as a shortened mummers play at various pubs and venues around Bodmin in between. See appendix 4.9

⁵⁶ Philip Payton, " 'A concealed envy against the English': a note on the aftermath of the 1497 rebellions in Cornwall", in *Cornish Studies One*, ed. by Philip Payton, (Exeter, Exeter University Press, 1993); Bernard Deacon, *A Concise History Of Cornwall*, (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 2007).

⁵⁷ Participatory action research – The improvised speech of the character, "Tregeagle", during the 2008 performance.

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- ⁵⁸ Alison Davey, Merv Davey, and Jowdy Davey. *Scoot Dances, Troyls, Furrys and Tea Treats: The Cornish Dance Tradition*. (London: Francis Boutle & Co, 2009), pp. 40 - 129.
- ⁵⁹ Richard Polwhele, *The History of Cornwall*, Volume 1, (London: Cadell and Davies, 1803, facsimile reprint: Dorking, Kohler and Coombes Ltd, 1978), pp. 41-44.
- ⁶⁰ Richard Polwhele, *The History of Cornwall*, Volume 7, p. 138.
- ⁶¹ The “An Dro” is a basic Breton dance comprising of a line of people gliding to the left with a characteristic step and specific arm movements.
- ⁶² John Fry, and Alan J. Fletcher, 'The Kilkenny Morris, 1610', *Folk Music Journal*, 6 (1992), p. 382.
- ⁶³ Needham, Joseph 'The Geographical Distribution of English Ceremonial Dance Traditions', *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society*, 3 (1936), p. 21.
- ⁶⁴ Hugh Mellor, *Welsh Folk Dances; an Inquiry* (London: Novello and company, Ltd., 1935), P. 59.
- ⁶⁵ Cecil J Sharp, and Herbert C. Macilwaine, *The Morris Book : With a Description of Dances as Performed by the Morris-Men of England. Parts 1, 2 & 3*. (Wakefield: EP Publishing, 1974), p. 76.
- ⁶⁶ Joseph Needham 'The Geographical Distribution of English Ceremonial Dance Traditions', p. 22, attributes the Derbyshire Processional to Cornish Miners.
- ⁶⁷ Dave Bathe, "Oddfellows and Morris Dancing in a Peak District Village." *Folk Music Journal* 5.1 (1985), pp. 4 - 47. Gives examples of tunes collected which, whilst not identical to the Helston Furry, are related in their structure.
- ⁶⁸ Mike O'Connor, *Ilow Kernow 4*. Wadebridge, Lyngam House, 2007), p. 29.
- ⁶⁹ Pieter Breughel (Pieter the Younger), b. 1564, Bruxelles, d. 1638, Antwerp, *The Kermesse of St George*, 1628.
- ⁷⁰ Violet Alford, "Music and Dance of the Swiss Folk." *The Musical Quarterly* 27.4 (1941), pp. 500-13: Violet Alford, "Notes on Three Provençal Dances.", *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society* 4.2 (1941), pp. 67-76: Alford, Violet. "Dance and Song in Two Pyrenean Valleys.", *The Musical Quarterly* 17.2 (1931), pp. 248-58.
- ⁷¹ *Féile Europeade 2004: European Folk Arts Festival County*. Mayo County Development Boar. 2004. On DVD format. Representatives from Estonia and Lithuania performed the farandole: Participant Observation, 30/05/10, International Fold Dance Festival – Bromley, both Sällskapet Gammeldansens Vänner (Malmö, Sweden) and the MacIennan Scottish Group used part of the Farandoles known as the “Tobacco Roll” in their choreography.

⁷² Charles Lee, *Dorinda's Birthday: A Cornish Idyll*, (London, J M Dent and Sons, 1911), p. 238 - 247. This is based on his experiences, recorded whilst staying at St Mawgan in the early 1900s.

⁷³ Merv Davey and Alison Davey, "Clay Country Customs", (St Austell, Rescorla Festival Project, 2008). See appendix 4.2. Clay Country Customs project.

⁷⁴ Participant observation 23/06/10, Pen Glaze, Chapel Street, , 9pm to 11pm, as part of the Golowan Festival.

⁷⁵ Felix Hoerburger, "Once Again: On the Concept of Folk Dance".

⁷⁶ Michael Owen Jones, "The Meaning of Tradition".

⁷⁷ Durgan, letter addressed to Editor, Sylvanus Urban. *Gentlemans Magazine and Historical Chronicle* for the year MDCCXC, p. 520.

⁷⁸ Richard Polwhele, *The History of Cornwall*, Vol.1, (London: Cadell and Davies, 1803, facsimile reprint: Dorking, Kohler and Coombes Ltd, 1978), p. 41.

⁷⁹ Davies Gilbert, *Some Ancient Christmas Carols* (London, J Nichols and Son, 1823), p. 79.

⁸⁰ William Sandys, *Specimens of Cornish Provincial Dialect Selected and Arranged by Uncle Jan Trenoodle*, (London: J.R. Smith, 1846), p. 93.

⁸¹ William Sandys, *Specimens*, p.19.

⁸² Pol Hodge / Cornwall Council Cornish Language information service, correspondence with author 7th July 2010.

⁸³ Carl Anderson, "Vocabularium Cornicum", 2004.

<http://www.carlaz.com/cornish/voccorn.txt>, accessed 1st July 2010.

⁸⁴ Fred Jago, *The Ancient Language and the Dialect of Cornwall* (Truro: Netherton and worth, 1882), p.163. "fadé or faddy" is described as meaning "to go" .

⁸⁵ Pol Hodge / Cornwall Council Cornish Language information service, correspondence with author 7th July 2010.

⁸⁶ Oxford English Dictionary, 1989, Fading/fadding – noun,

<http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50081615>, also fade - verb,

<http://dictionary.oed.com/cgi/entry/50081597> accessed 1st July 2010, citing literary examples: Beaumont and Fletchers " The Knight and the Burning Pestle" 1609 /1611 III. v, "I will have him dance Fading; Fading is a fine jig": And also William Sandys, "Specimens", 1846, p.19.

⁸⁷ "Bosworth Toller AS Dictionary",

http://home.comcast.net/~modean52/oeme_dictionaries.htm, accessed 29th July 2010

"Middle English Dictionary", University of Michigan, 2000,
<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med/> accessed 29th July 2010.

⁸⁸ Margaret A Courtney, Cornish Feasts and "Feasten" Customs. [Continued] *The Folk-Lore Journal*, Vol. 4, No. 3 (1886), pp. 221-249.

⁸⁹ William Henry Grattan-Flood. *The Story of the Bagpipe*. Music Story Series. (London; New York: Walter Scott Pub. Co.; C. Scribner's Sons, 1911), p. 97 – 98.

⁹⁰ John Fry, and Alan J. Fletcher. "The Kilkenny Morris, 1610." *Folk Music Journal* 6.3 (1992), pp 381-83: Also, Joseph Needham: The Geographical Distribution of English Ceremonial Dance Traditions: *Journal of the English Folk Dance and Song Society*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (Dec., 1936), p.31.

⁹¹ Davies Gilbert, *Some Ancient Christmas Carols*,

⁹² Robert Hunt, *Popular Romances of the West of England; or, the Drolls, Traditions, and Superstitions of Old Cornwall*, (London: Chatto and Windus, 1881).

⁹³ Margaret Ann Courtney, *Cornish Feasts and Folk-Lore. Revised and Reprinted from the Folk-Lore Society Journals, 1886-87*. (Penzance, 1890).

⁹⁴ Robert Hunt, *Popular Romances* , p171

⁹⁵ Sabine Baring-Gould, and Rev. H. Fleetwood Shepherd. *Songs and Ballads of the West: A Collection Made from the Mouths of the People*, (London: Methuen & Co, 1891).

⁹⁶ Sharp, Cecil J., and George Butterworth. *The Morris Book, with a Description of the Dances as Performed by the Morris Men of England*. Vol. 5. (London: Novello, 1913), p. 102.

⁹⁷ Ralph Dunstan, ed. *The Cornish Song Book, Lyver Canow Kernewek*, (London: Reid Bros Ltd 1929), p. 31.

⁹⁸ John Betjeman and A.L.Rowse, *Victorian and Edwardian Cornwall from old photographs*, (London, B. T. Batsford Ltd, 1974), caption to plate 132 "The Furry Dance Helston, 1901".

⁹⁹ James Dryden Hosken, *Helston Furry Day*, (St Ives, Federation of Old Cornwall Societies, 1931).

¹⁰⁰ Spencer Toy, *The History of Helston*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1936), pp. 367 - 379.

¹⁰¹ Souvenir Programme, Helston Flora Day, 2009.

¹⁰² Ian Marshall, *The Amazing Story of the Floral Dance in Words and Music*. (Dobwalls, Cornwall, Songs of Cornwall publications, 2003). Pp. 25 – 32.

¹⁰³ "By The Way", Editorial note, *Old Cornwall*, Vol. 8, no.10, (1978), p. 467.

¹⁰⁴ Rod and Anne Knight, discussion with author, 28th Aug 2008.

¹⁰⁵ “Celebrating Cornwall”, primary school workshop and performance, participant observation 17th June 2010. Teachers used the “Brighthouse And Rastrick” Floral dance CD to teach children the Helston Furry with very limited success which appeared to make the dance and not the music, the problem.

¹⁰⁶ William Barber, interview with author, 30/10/09.

¹⁰⁷ Malcom McCarthy, correspondence with author 6/04/2006.

¹⁰⁸ Norman Mannel, interview with author 03/11/09.

¹⁰⁹ David Harvey, Catherine Brace, and Adrian R. Bailey. "Parading the Cornish Subject: Methodist Sunday Schools in West Cornwall, C. 1830-1930." *Journal of Historical Geography* 1.2007 (2006): pp. 24-44.

¹¹⁰ Michael Owen Jones, “Tradition’ in Identity”.

¹¹¹ See appendix 4.1

¹¹² See appendix 4.6

¹¹³ Jonathon Howlett, “Putting the Kitsch Into Kernow”, Philip Payton ed. *Cornish Studies Twelve*, (Exeter, Exeter University Press, 2004), p. 44.

¹¹⁴ Josephine Stewart, *The Costume of Cornwall: Workwear of the Newlyn Area in the Late Nineteenth Century*. (Bodmin: An Daras Folk Arts Project, 2004).

¹¹⁵ Nancy Lee Chalfa Ruyter, “Some musings on folk dance”.

¹¹⁶ Andriy Nahachewsky, *Once Again: On the Concept of "Second Existence Folk Dance"*.

¹¹⁷ Spencer Toy, *The History of Helston*, (London, Oxford University Press, 1936), p. 369.

¹¹⁸ Jonathon Couch, *An Historical Account of the Village of Polperro*.

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