TOURISM AS ETHNIC PRESERVATION
The Cajuns of Louisiana

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ABSTRACT
This paper addresses the impact of tourism on the preservation of ethnic identity with specific reference to the Louisiana Cajuns. Tourism has helped the Cajuns retain a separate identity by reinforcing the differences between Cajuns and outsiders. Cajuns are increasingly relinquishing their traditional culture in favor of standard U.S. values, but they retain a strong sense of identity and ethnic pride. A growing tourist industry was institutionalized at about the same time as the development of ethnic pride, and the two phenomena have profoundly influenced each other. Cajuns have become tourists in their own culture, joining outsiders in seeking and celebrating their brand of "local color." Cajun culture is now enacted on a "tourist stage" for the benefit of locals and their visitors. The tourist stage is an arena for the expression of ethnic differences, and it helps perpetuate an ethnic boundary that might otherwise disappear due to acculturation. Using the Cajuns as a case study, this paper proposes a model for the process of ethnic preservation through tourism. Keywords: internal tourism, ethnic preservation, Louisiana Cajuns.
RÉSUMÉ


INTRODUCTION

Tourism studies have emphasized the many effects that a tourist industry can have on local culture. Economic, political, social, and other impacts have been extensively, if not conclusively, examined (see Boissevain 1979; Greenwood 1972; Smith ed. 1977). Frequently the discussions concern the adverse effects of tourism on local economies or on cultural stability, suggesting that tourism disrupts native culture, causes excessive strains on local environments, and reduces economic self sufficiency. These conclusions apply in certain contexts, but they do not pertain to situations in which acculturation preceded tourism, and where the economies have not been self sufficient for many years. In short, not all tourist subjects are members of pristine cultures to be despoiled by the influx of new wealth and development.

One important consequence of tourism worldwide is that it increases contact between members of different cultural groups.
This can produce stress, especially where the tourists are perceived as rich and leisured and where locals are obligated to take servile roles and do not earn enough money to share the affluent tourist lifestyle. But there can also be positive benefits to tourism and its attendant contacts with outsiders. Contact with members of other groups is generally recognized as an instigator of ethnic pride and solidarity and of ethnic revitalization in contexts of acculturation (Barth 1969; Cohen 1974). Tourism, by providing these contacts, can encourage a renewal of pride and the preservation of local expressive culture, if not the entire culture itself.

This paper discusses the role that tourism has played in promoting the retention and revitalization of Cajun identity. Cajuns are neither isolated nor "primitive," and their contacts with outside tourists lack the overtones of colonialism or racism so prevalent in other parts of the world. They are fully modern U.S. citizens, wholly integrated into the overall cash and industrial economy. For them, tourism provides an arena for the enactment of cultural differences, a series of messages emphasizing these differences and exhorting ethnic pride, and an opportunity to preserve aspects of traditional culture that might otherwise perish. The Cajuns have reinforced their identity and its value largely because of the active tourist industry in their area.

Definitions of "tourism" and "tourist" are many, but all agree that a tourist is someone who travels to an "alien" location for the purpose of some form of enjoyment and/or personal enrichment. It is generally assumed that the tourist's culture and/or place of origin are distant from the destination, and that the distance and differences form a large part of the motive for travel (Nash 1981; Smith 1977). This pattern applies when Westerners visit non-Western countries or even when they visit one another. If the culture they visit is similar to their own, then at least the scenery, location, and history are not. It is generally recognized that tourism and travel are not coterminous, since business or family travel need not entail tourism. For this reason tourism has been viewed as a subset of travel. But travel can also be a subset of tourism. If tourism involves an activity "for the purpose of experiencing a change" (Smith 1977:2) or to highlight the difference between ordinary and non-ordinary states (Graburn 1977), it can occur even close to home when people choose to reaffirm or renew themselves in familiar surroundings. An acculturated member of a still culturally distinct ethnic group may become a temporary tourist within that culture even when the destination is close to home. The question of people being tourists in their own culture has been raised by
Bodine (1981), but the consequences of this kind of tourism have not been examined systematically.

Not all visits within cultural boundaries constitute tourism. Bodine's illustration of a suburban women's group trip to the city for shopping and theater would not necessarily be a tourist trip. A tourist venture generally is marked by an altered state of awareness and of structure (Graburn 1977). When a trip is undertaken for the purpose of change, be it psychological, cultural, or any other, it can be classified as a tourist trip. Internal tourism is then a visit within one's own geographic and/or cultural environment for the purpose of enrichment or to achieve a heightened emotional state.

Internal tourism has different impacts on the local economic and social structure than does tourism involving outsiders. Internal tourists spend less time and money, and the money they spend comes from within. It is not "free" windfall money as is that derived from outside visitors. In addition, internal tourists visit culturally similar or identical hosts, eliminating the stresses that so often characterize more adventurous tourism. This paper suggests that internal tourism can help protect an ethnic boundary in a context of rapid acculturation, especially when it is reinforced by conventional, external tourism.

Cajuns have become tourist consumers of their own culture, visiting locales and events within their own area for various purposes including the renewal of identity. Tourism and ethnic pride emerged at roughly the same time in Louisiana, during the 1960s. Initially there was no causal relationship between them: both were independent outcomes of economic prosperity, acculturation, and external conditions which fostered interest in ethnic groups out of the mainstream of U.S. life. However, since their inception the phenomena of ethnic pride and tourism have profoundly influenced each other. The outside interest in them, manifested through tourism, has bolstered Cajuns' pride in themselves; conversely expressions of Cajun pride and culture appeal to outsiders and increase the amount of tourism in the area. Outsiders call Cajuns' attention to cultural features of the area, bringing both inside and outside tourists to the same attractions. Together the two kinds of tourists have helped preserve Cajun identity itself.

This paper is based on twelve months of intensive participant observation (August 1970-August 1980) and eight months of less intensive observations (June 1981-February 1982) in an area of south Louisiana. The overall topic of study was ethnic revitalization, a complex subject of which tourism is only one component. Although this paper contends that tourism can provide a forum for the
expression and retention of ethnic identity, it should be recalled that in complex societies there may be any number of other variables that can contribute to the process of ethnic awareness.

LOUISIANA AND ITS TOURIST INDUSTRY

Tourism is an old industry in Louisiana. New Orleans has long been a popular destination for honeymooners, winter vacationers, Mardi Gras visitors, and others. As early as the 1930s the state had tourist promotions emanating from the Department of Commerce and Industry, and in 1959 tourism was reported as the state's largest industry. But the tourist business, in Louisiana as elsewhere, boomed during the 1960s, and it was then that south Louisiana became a popular destination for outside visitors seeking something other than New Orleans. As both cause and effect of the tourism boom, the Louisiana Tourist Commission was formed in 1964. This agency and its successor, the State Office of Tourism, still devotes most of its energies to promoting New Orleans, but it has recently begun to emphasize the other parts of the state as well.

Today tourism is the state's third largest industry, surpassed by agriculture and petrochemicals. The drop to third place since 1959 is not due to a decline in tourism, but rather to increased agricultural efficiency and to the tremendous growth of the oil industry in the past two decades. Domestic tourists alone generated $2.8 billion in Louisiana in 1980 (U.S. Travel Data Center 1981:1). Many of the state's visitors come from other countries, and their impact on the economy is not reflected in these figures. Most tourist money is still spent in New Orleans and its suburbs: Orleans Parish (county) and adjacent Jefferson Parish together accounted for 66.7% of 1980 tourist revenues, while comprising only 24.1% of the state's population and 3.1% of the parishes. Baton Rouge, the state capital, is also a popular destination. East Baton Rouge Parish, where that city is located, attracted 7.5% of tourist revenues while containing 8.7% of the state's population and only 1.6% of the state's parishes. The remaining 25.9% of 1980 tourist revenues, were divided between the northern and southern portions of the state (U.S. Travel Data Center 1981).

In 1980, the 22-parish area legally designated as "Acadiana" or Cajun country (south Louisiana) received 9.8% of the state's total domestic tourist revenues, or $275 million (see Figure 1). This is a small share given that the population of that region is 28.7% of the state's total and the 22 parishes in Acadiana comprise 34.3% of the state's parishes. In terms of absolute dollars, then, Acadiana is only
a minor contributor to the state's tourist industry. However, Louisiana has more than one tourist public, and those who go to New Orleans for Mardi Gras, the Superbowl, or conventions are a population apart from those who travel the countryside. Excluding Orleans and Jefferson Parishes from calculations, the Acadiana region received 29.9% of domestic tourist dollars in 1980, while comprising 37.8% of the population and 35.5% of the parishes. Since foreign visitors contribute heavily to tourism in south Louisiana, the actual proportion of total revenues may be higher.

THE CAJUNS

The Cajuns comprise a heterogeneous ethnic group with a complex history. Their principal ancestors were French exiles from Acadia, now Nova Scotia, who settled in Louisiana beginning in the late 18th century. The exile, journey, and initial Acadian settlement of Louisiana were chronicled in Longfellow's romantic epic poem Evangeline (1847). Other Cajun forbears include Louisiana Indians,
blacks, French and Spanish Creoles, immigrant Germans and other Europeans, among others. The French component of their heritage and culture has always been the strongest and the most emically salient and, until recently, dialects of French were spoken as a primary language throughout the area. Cajuns created their own culture based on economic adaptations to Louisiana environmental conditions, and strongly influenced by Catholicism. Until the middle of this century most Cajuns were isolated and poor, and had little opportunity or desire to mingle with others.

The Louisiana environment is characterized in part by its swamp and marsh lands. The resources of these environments were skillfully and thoroughly exploited by Cajuns, who became accomplished trappers, fishers, and hunters. Today these occupations persist, though they are less common as subsistence practices than they once were. For urban or acculturated Cajuns these activities have been reduced to the level of hobby or sport. Maintaining a "camp" in the swamp or marsh, used for weekend hunting and fishing, is common and desirable. Cajuns retain a sentimental attachment to the swamp environment and those who are familiar with it take pride in that knowledge.

Since the 1950s, south Louisiana has seen rapid acculturation. French is no longer the first language, and many young Cajuns are at best passive bilinguals. New roads, television, and other aspects of outside American culture have altered traditional values and practices, and a booming oil industry has provided prosperity and new opportunities to travel. Newcomers have begun to move in at a rapid pace due to the healthy economic climate fostered by the oil industry. Traditional Cajun values such as close family ties remain, but are changing in the face of new economic pressure to go where the jobs are. Cajuns have adopted the "American dream," or their own version of it, and have been shedding the most conspicuous diacritica of their old culture in favor of standard U.S. practices. Except for a few aspects of expressive culture, such as a unique musical style and an emphasis on festivity and play, Cajuns are almost indistinguishable from other U.S. residents (Esman 1981).

Cajuns have always been known for their fun-loving and easy-going spirit. As early as 1805, a visitor to their region reported regular Saturday night dances (Robin 1966); these dances persist as integral parts of the weekly cycle. Cajuns have a variety of expressions that capture this spirit: *laissez les bons temps rouler* (let the good times roll) and *lache pas la patate* (don't get excited, stay calm—literally, "don't drop the potato") are the most famous. Cajuns remain committed to having a good time, so much so that "having a
good time” has emerged as an end in itself and the most important characteristic describing the modern Cajun (Chafetz, Esman, and Manuel 1982). The region is sprinkled with festivals, dance halls, bars, and other forms of celebration both organized and not. The emphasis on good times is one of the few aspects of traditional Cajun culture that survives intact.

Since the 1960s, there has been a strong and ever increasing interest in Cajun culture and identity, an interest manifested by Cajuns and by outsiders. In 1968 the state legislature enacted a series of bills designed to reintroduce French into the public schools and to promote that language in all aspects of life. For the first time in a century, legal documents were allowed to be printed in French as well as English. French is still a second language in Louisiana, since its use is optional in such documents while English remains mandatory, but it has been restored at least to semi-official status.

In addition to the legal and legislative efforts at cultural revival are large numbers of organized, semi-organized, and unorganized expressions of ethnic pride. These activities include a multitude of festivals, attendance at dances featuring Cajun-style music, and the almost ubiquitous “Cajun power” and similar slogans that appear on all sorts of commercial products (Esman 1981). However, a demonstration of pride in tradition is not tantamount to a rebirth of that tradition. Contemporary Cajuns are interested in their traditions and heritage, but they have little desire to adhere to them, having worked so hard to surpass them. They want to preserve a separate identity but also to participate in mainstream American culture. For most Cajuns today, especially those of middle age and below, expressions of ethnic pride largely substitute for the actual cultural distinctiveness that they proclaim.

TOURISM IN SOUTH LOUISIANA

Tourism in south Louisiana is of the “ethnic” or “cultural” variety (Smith 1977). Cajuns are known as a culturally distinct group and they attract tourists on that basis. French and Canadian visitors are especially interested in a living Franco-American culture that has remained separate from the dominant, superordinate American one for over two centuries. There are no resorts or large cities in the Cajun area, so mass tourism has not developed as it has in New Orleans. Some organized bus tours pass through, but most visitors arrive in small private groups with their own itineraries.

There is no centralized agency to coordinate tourist activities in south Louisiana. The region is comprised of 22 individual parishes
all of which are served, along with the rest of the state, by the state Office of Tourism, but there is no Cajun Tourist Bureau or equivalent. However the city of Lafayette, the de facto capital of Cajun Louisiana, has a Convention and Visitors Commission which operates as the unofficial clearinghouse for tourist activities in the region. Lafayette has the best hotel facilities and is usually the base of operations for visitors to the region. Visitors may spend their days in other parishes, but they return to Lafayette to sleep and often to eat, and that parish derives the financial benefits of their stay. Therefore, popular tourist destinations throughout Acadiana are promoted by the Lafayette Parish commission even though most are actually located in other parishes.

The Lafayette Parish agency advertises in national and international magazines, promoting Acadiana (itself a media-invented word) as "the spice of Louisiana." Ads picture ethnic foods, for which Cajuns are justifiably famous: musicians; and young, modern, trendy couples dancing. Tourist brochures picture young women dressed in "Evangeline costumes"—17th century French peasant dress consisting of full length blue dress, white apron, black bodice, and bonnet. The texts read "food and fun in French," stressing the foreign flavor of the region and encouraging visitors to come and enjoy an exotic culture right here in the USA. These images are misleading since the use of French has all but disappeared in the city of Lafayette and is on the decline in the surrounding rural areas, and since Cajuns are not in any way exotic in personal appearance. But the image of archaic, quaint, peasant French folk so close to home appeals to "ethnic" and "cultural" tourists who seek exotic peoples and "different" cultures.

Most of the messages produced by the various tourist agencies are transmitted outside the region, since the purpose is to attract outside tourist revenues. But these messages find their ways back home, promoting the image of the quaint Cajun to Cajuns themselves. Thus Lafayette based television stations run promotional spots featuring tourist-oriented attractions (local historic sites, natural resources such as the swamp), against a background of Cajun music and with an accompanying text that sounds like a travel brochure. Cajuns see themselves as fun-loving, rustic, French-speaking folk with a noble peasant past that has not yet died. Those Cajuns (most of them) who deviate from this stereotype seek the mystique just as outside tourists do.

Popular tourist destinations include historic sites such as St. Martinville (one of the area's oldest communities and ostensibly the setting for Longfellow's story of Evangeline); the Acadian Village (a
TOURISM AS ETHNIC PRESERVATION

reconstruction of a 19th century Cajun town): the Atchafalaya Basin (the largest freshwater swamp in the U.S.), and other swamp and marsh lands. To the outsider these represent what is “quaint” and “exotic” about the Cajun people, and to the Cajun they recall the past and the traditions that have disappeared. It is of little import that many Cajuns are unfamiliar with the Evangeline story and do not identify with the heroine, that the Acadian Village is just a museum, and that nobody lives in the swamp anymore; these destinations suggest Louisiana exotica and they are promoted as ways to understand Cajuns. One travel brochure invites visitors to “explore the Acadian Village... and learn just WHAT these Cajuns are all about.”

Other popular attractions are festivals and Cajun music. The Cajun proclivity towards a “good time” has created a wide variety of festivals that appeal to Cajuns and to their visitors. These festivals celebrate everything from harvests to ethnic identity itself (Esman 1982). It is impossible to estimate the overall annual attendance at Cajun festivals since there are so many (perhaps a hundred) and attendance records are scanty and conjectural. The most popular, the biennial Crawfish Festival, draws roughly 100,000 participants. Others attract smaller crowds, but in the aggregate the festivals may be the most popular Cajun tourist activities.

The festivals are popular because they are ritual celebrations of Cajun culture and identity. Although they are recent in origin (the oldest is less than 50 years old and most were initiated within the past 15 years), these festivals are markers of an ethnic boundary because they celebrate those aspects of Cajun culture that are “different” (Esman 1981). They honor ethnic food and identity, and they are institutionalized manifestations of that all-important Cajun trait: the ability to “have a good time.” They represent what the media and tourist bureau messages have told Cajuns and their visitors about Cajun culture. They therefore appeal to both inside and outside tourists, all those who seek the mystique of the Cajun. “Ethnic” tourists want to witness “authentic” ritual in order to participate as fully as possible in the culture they visit (Greenwood 1977; McKean 1977; Smith 1977), and Cajun festivals are the closest thing there is to public ritual.

Many Cajuns cite their music as one of the diagnostics of their culture. Traditional Cajun music was played by small amateur bands comprised of fiddle, accordion, triangle, and a percussion instrument that was sometimes drums but often a washboard. Today professional Cajun bands play traditional tunes on fiddle, accordion, electric guitar and/or bass, and drums. Few Cajuns regularly listen to Cajun music in their homes, referring to it as “that old chunky-
Thank stuff.” The main outlets for Cajun bands today are the bars and clubs that cater to foreign visitors, acculturated Cajuns, and local university students—both inside and outside tourists. At one small town club, within the span of a few weeks, one of the regular bands was filmed by both French and German television stations. Several local bands went on European tour in the summers of 1982 and 1983. Elderly Cajuns enjoy Saturday night dances at local dance halls featuring Cajun bands, but the musicians who play at these establishments are less famous and popular than the ones who play to tourists. Cajun music has become largely a tourist commodity, performed for locals and visitors seeking unusual forms of expressive culture.

In general, tourist destinations and activities in south Louisiana are whatever is perceived as unique about Cajuns. Although this is ethnic or cultural tourism, almost all of the interactions occur in public contexts. Cajuns do not have their homes or their villages invaded by uninvited tourist guests; the visitors confine themselves to public events such as festivals and to public locales such as bars, restaurants, museums, and state parks. Because Cajuns feel neither invaded nor overwhelmed by their visitors, and because many visitors are Cajuns themselves, tourism in their area is marked by cordial, if brief and impersonal, relations between hosts and guests.

TOURISM AS ETHNIC PRESERVATION

The local interest in ethnic identity is both a cause and an effect of tourism. The agency created to oversee the 1968 bilingual legislation package was formed specifically “for the cultural, economic, and tourist benefit of the state” (Louisiana State Legislature 1968). Few Cajuns can read French because, until the enactment of the 1968 bill, education had always been conducted exclusively in English. Bilingual legal documents, and the ads and other media messages that are now issued in French, are therefore of little use even to monolingual francophone Cajuns, and they do not answer a genuine need of the group. Instead they are tourist devices, ways to promote the image of an actively bilingual state. But their very presence reinforces Cajuns’ perceptions of themselves as “different,” and the bilingual efforts have stimulated ethnic pride while simultaneously promoting tourism.

Much of the interest in Cajun cultural revival comes from foreign francophone areas. France, Quebec, and Belgium vigorously support the “French movement” by subsidizing bilingual education programs and by sending personnel, in a kind of Peace Corps, to teach
French in Louisiana schools and to develop a French mass media. These foreign cultural missionaries strongly support Cajun musicians, at least one of whom had a foreign reputation long before he became popular at home. By cultivating an image of Cajun exotica (an image supported by Cajun ethnic and tourist brokers, who promote Cajuns abroad), the foreign francophones have strongly influenced tourism in south Louisiana. France was third in visitors' state or country of origin in 1980, after Louisiana and Texas, and Canada eighth (Lafayette Convention and Visitors Commission 1981). The attention from foreigners has also increased local ethnic pride by promoting ethnic activities and artificially reviving aspects of traditional culture. These foreign governments therefore increase ethnic pride and assist in cultural preservation.

Many of the local leaders of ethnic sentiment can be classified as culture brokers, individuals whose own prestige and status in their communities rests on their ability to manipulate and profit from their identity. The most authentic of the ethnic festivals were initiated by such individuals: merchants or local professionals who wanted to call attention to their identity and simultaneously to profit from it (Gold 1980). These individuals, also including the restaurant and bar owners who hire Cajun bands, support local tourists bureaus and chambers of commerce because they stand to profit from the tourist interest in the culture that they promote.

Organized manifestations of Cajun ethnic awareness, then, can be interpreted as a promotional device initiated by the state and perpetuated by local tourist agencies, culture brokers, and foreigners. The tourist industry actively encourages expressions of ethnic pride and the revival of traditional patterns, just as the agencies for ethnic revival encourage tourism. The Lafayette Convention and Visitors Commission subsidizes a major festival devoted to Cajun culture, the Festivals Acadiens. This is really a collection of festivals designed to emphasize and promote aspects of traditional expressive culture: music, food, and arts and crafts, among others. The music festival has successfully promoted the local careers of many small Cajun bands and has helped reawaken the interest in Cajun music. In a similar fashion, the Acadian Village provides its facilities to local groups needing performance space, especially in conjunction with larger events like the Festivals Acadiens. To attract more visitors, the Village encourages a local theater group to perform its skits, in Cajun French, on the grounds. Musicians and craftspersons are likewise accommodated. These expressions of ethnic pride benefit the tourist industry, and the performers benefit from the tourist facilities.
Tourists in south Louisiana seek "local color," a commodity that in reality is in short supply in all but the most isolated communities and the most private contexts. In order to accommodate the need for cultural exotica, Cajuns have created a special tourist domain, a kind of tourist "stage." Business leaders erect signs in French that they themselves cannot read; festivals hire Cajun bands when the festival directors themselves prefer other music; businesses owned by non-Cajun immigrants to the area locate in newly-built Acadian style buildings; craftspersons work as a hobby, and they and their work are used as museum displays. The economic value of tourism is such that Cajuns put on the requisite show to attract the money, but, as one commentator observed, "the ethnic theatre provided...is often the only show of its kind in town" (Gold 1977:11). Cajuns are willing and eager to provide the show, but they give it up as soon as the audience leaves.

The public, staged nature of Cajun tourism is essential to its perpetuation. Since the show provided for the tourists is atypical, it is essential to keep tourists out of private domains. Small, rural communities do still contain some authentic manifestations of the otherwise staged "local color." but few tourists regularly visit the towns that have no regular tourist attractions. Those towns that do have tourist attractions create staged tourist domains that resemble those in the cities (Gold 1977). St. Martinville, for example, boasts a cafe that serves Cajun food, with interior signs written in impeccable standard French. The signs were written, by hand, by someone from France. Several visits to the cafe suggest that many customers are French or Canadian tourists, who speak French to the employees. Local customers are likely to speak English. The little town of Mamou has a bar which is popular with tourists largely because it hosts a live Saturday morning radio show, in French and featuring a local band. On Saturday mornings the clientele of this bar is almost entirely tourists, except for the owner/radio host who serves as tourist and culture broker for the event. At other times the bar's customers are local citizens, who stay home on Saturday mornings to avoid the crowd.

The "ethnic theater" or tourist stage caters not just to non-Cajun visitors but to Cajuns as well. The traditions of older Cajuns are almost as exotic to their grandchildren as they are to outside visitors. Acculturated Cajuns seek a way to affirm the uniqueness that they no longer possess. As the objective bases for their separate identity disintegrate, Cajuns have had to seize arbitrary and artificial ethnic boundary markers and to remind themselves repeatedly of the salience of these markers. They attend festivals, listen to Cajun
bands, respond to ads in French that they cannot read, and maintain emotional and physical recreational ties to the swamp. They become tourist consumers of their own heritage to remind themselves of their identity.

McKean's description of what he calls "cultural involution" in Bali applies equally to the Cajun case: a local desire for modernization conflicts with the tourists' desire for "the perpetuation of ancient traditions" (1977:100). The dynamic interplay between these conflicting needs results in the retention of certain traditional culture traits, for tourist purposes, in an otherwise modernizing context. In many parts of the world, hosts provide a "front region" for tourists in order to preserve the authenticity of their private worlds (MacCannell 1976). Cajuns provide such a "front region," but for the opposite reason: to continue to adopt standard American middle class values in their private "back regions." South Louisiana has become a tourist fiction, perpetuated by the tourist industry and by Cajuns themselves.

CONCLUSIONS

By joining their outside visitors as consumers of their own culture, Cajuns acknowledge the exotic nature of that culture and a desire to have it continue. But since they do not wish to perpetuate their traditions on a daily basis, Cajuns have constructed a tourist stage which permits them to act out aspects of their culture for their own and their visitors' edification. This tourist stage, stimulated by a general interest in ethnic identity and a desire to maintain an ethnic boundary, has helped to preserve aspects of traditional culture that might otherwise have died. Cajun music now thrives in its new niche as a tourist commodity; French is kept alive by tourism and attendant media messages and is used more for public than for private consumption.

Ethnic revitalization through tourism is not unique to Cajuns. The function of ethnic and "tourist" art in preserving local expressive culture has been examined (Deitch 1977; Graburn 1976; Swain 1977), as has that of ritual (McKean 1977; Esman 1982). The strengthening of ethnic identity through tourism has been observed in Bermuda (Manning 1979), among the Amish (Buck 1978), in the Seychelles (Wilson 1979), in Bali (McKean 1977), among Native Americans (Deitch 1977), and elsewhere. All of these cases suggest that for tourism to reinforce an ethnic identity the host group must be obviously different from its guests and must be undergoing acculturation or, as with the Amish, must be in regular contact with
a dominant outside group. However, the ways in which tourism reinforces ethnic identities vary according to the nature of the interaction between hosts and guests. Tourism can lead to the almost total retreat of the "host" group, leaving contact with outsiders only to brokers (Buck 1978), or it can provide contact between groups otherwise isolated from each other. The stress of the tourist presence can create conflict (Crystal 1977; Greenwood 1977) or it can lead to the deliberate separation of hosts and guests (Buck 1978; Manning 1979). In most cases tourism is one of many outside influences that induce both acculturation and measures designed to protect traditional culture.

Cajuns differ from most other groups in that tourism is not responsible for acculturation. Cajuns are tourists within their own culture because acculturation preceded tourism, making Cajun traditional culture almost as exotic to Cajuns as it is to their outside visitors. In this instance tourism has done more than to reinforce an identity; it has revitalized that identity and helped preserve some dying customs. The tourist version of Cajun culture is now interpreted by many Cajuns as authentic and traditional even though much of it has been created specifically for tourists.

The Cajun case suggests that an already acculturated group will respond to tourism differently than will a nonacculturated one. Internal tourism develops when acculturation coincides with outside tourist interest in traditional culture. As tourists seek culture traits that no longer exist, these traits must be revived, recreated, or even newly created. This produces an image of ethnic revitalization that itself becomes a subject of tourist attention. Newly created traits can be reinterpreted as authentic, and a new version of an old identity reinforced. When introduced subsequent to acculturation, tourism can reverse the dissipation of a separate identity and even of traditional culture traits. Outside tourists are important to this process, but they require the assistance of internal tourists who reinterpret their own traditions and ultimately reenact new versions of old behaviors that they have learned through the tourist experience.

In many parts of the world tourism has contributed to the decline of traditional cultures and has caused serious problems for the host groups. Acculturated peoples generally suffer less from the potentially adverse effects of tourism, particularly when there is economic parity between hosts and guest. For the Cajuns, the very fact of tourism has allowed a separate identity to survive. □ □
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