

Ege University Publications  
State Turkish Music Conservatory Publication No: 16

# **The Cultural Development of Folk Dance Festivals and the Sustainability of Tradition**

This book is dedicated to Andrée Grau (1954–2017)

Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin, Liz Mellish (Editors)

Ege University Press  
İzmir, Turkey  
2018

# **The Cultural Development of Folk Dance Festivals and the Sustainability of Tradition**

Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin, Liz Mellish (Editors)

**ISBN: 978-605-338-238-6**

## **Sponsorship**

İzmir Metropolitan Municipality  
Ege University State Turkish Music Conservatory,  
Turkish Folk Dance Department

## **Editors**

Mehmet Öcal Özbilgin  
Liz Mellish

**Cover paint artist:** Hasan Rastgeldi

**Cover graphic design:** Buse Yılmaz

## **Printed by**

Ege University Printhouse  
Bornova, İzmir  
Phone: 0232 388 10 22  
e-mail: bsmmd@mail.ege.edu.tr

## **Printed Date**

March, 2018

## **Book order contact**

Ege University  
Department of Library and Documentation  
Bornova-İZMİR  
Phone: +09 0232 388 46 42 / 127  
Fax: +90 0232 388 11 00  
e-mail: egekitapsatis@mail.ege.edu.tr  
[http: //kutuphane.ege.edu.tr/Satis/](http://kutuphane.ege.edu.tr/Satis/)

This book published with the decision of Board of Ege University  
dated 06/02/2018 numbered 3/12.

All rights and responsibilities to the content remain with the authors and editors

© 2018 Copyright by Ege University.

T.C. Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı Sertifika No: 18679

- I. Kültür, uluslararasılaşma -- Festival -- Halk dansları  
Cultur, internationalization -- Festival -- Folk dance
- II. Gelenek - Gelenegin sürdürülebilirliđi  
Tradition -Sustainability of tradition
- III. Halk dansları -- Gösteriler -- Yarışmalar  
Folk dance--Presentations -- Competitions
- IV. Uluslararası halk dansları festivali  
International folklore festival

793.31 dc20 - Dewey

# **International folk dance festivals in Ireland: a comparative analysis of *Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne* and *Damhsafest*, Cork International Folk Dance Festival**

Catherine E. Foley

Ireland

This chapter examines the notion of festival within the field of traditional dance in Ireland. It explores how the term *feis* or festival is conceptualised and experienced in Ireland by focusing on two different dance events: *Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne* (the World Irish Dancing Championships) with its roots in cultural nationalist ideologies from the end of the nineteenth century; and *Damhsafest*, Cork International Folk Dance Festival established in the 1990s in Cork, Ireland, to promote regional development, tourism, cosmopolitanism and the traditional arts. The chapter looks at the development of these festivals and illustrates differences in concept, mission, resources, social interaction, and strategies relating to festival organisation and management.

**Keywords:** Irish dance; Ireland; festival; *feis*; cultural nationalism; cosmopolitanism.

## **Introduction to the notion of festival**

In *The European Arts Festivals Strengthening Cultural Diversity* report by the European Commission in 2011 it states:

Festivals are a very interesting object of study, and not only because of their constant increase in number. Who is the main driver of the process of cultural integration? The nation state, the European Union or private initiatives? [...] What is the purpose of festivals? Branding, urban regeneration and democratisation, or rather transmitting the ideas of openness, dialogue, curiosity, cultural diversity, internationalism and critical inquiry? [2011:5]

These questions, amongst others, were addressed in the European Commission's Euro-Festival project [2011] in which festivals were seen as important expressions of aesthetic public culture. The notion of festivals was also addressed. Briefly, the authors summarised them as follows [European Commission Report 2011:7]:

- Festivals are spaces and times of concentrated debate and social effervescence. In recent times [...] these debates are about issues of representativity (gender, ethnic, age-groups etc.)
- Festivals are interesting examples of those sites in society where the performance dimension of culture is emphasised more directly than in other situations. The performance dimension of culture [...] highlight[s] culture as a symbolic domain of practices that are enacted in the public domain (Alexander et al. 2006).
- Festivals are good examples of the ways in which local cultures get expressed using other cultures. Aesthetic cosmopolitanism as a new way of expressing or reshaping one's own culture in light of the culture of 'others' or the 'outside' (Regev 2007, Papastergiardis 2007) is of particular relevance to European identity by reason of the latter's equal emphasis on diversity and tolerance.

In this chapter, I look at how these notions of festival are applicable to two different examples of festivals in Ireland, as representative of Irish culture at particular moments in its historicity. I take my understanding of festival as follows: it is a space or time of “concentrated debate or social effervescence” [European Commission 2011:7]; it is, as Falassi argues, “a time out of time” [Falassi 1987:10]; and as Vissicaro [2014] suggests, it is a “rite of intensification” [2014:291]. In this chapter I examine the notion of festival within the field of traditional or “folk” dance in Ireland. I also explore how the term *feis* or festival is currently conceptualised and experienced in Ireland by focusing on two different dance events: *Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne* (the World Irish Dancing Championships) with its roots in cultural nationalist ideologies from the end of the nineteenth century [see Foley 2012; 2013; Hall 2008; O'Connor 2013; Wulff 2007]; and *Damhsafest*, Cork International Folk Dance Festival established in the 1990s in Cork, Ireland, to promote regional development, tourism, cosmopolitanism and the traditional arts. The chapter looks at the inception and development of these festivals and illustrates differences in concept, mission, resources, social interaction, and strategies relating to festival organisation and management. It also examines how these festivals frame the discourse of identity in relation to national / local / and global interfaces.

## The *feis*

As the European Commission report stated [2011], festivals are indeed increasing but they also have a long history. In Ireland festivals date back to Gaelic Ireland when the *feis* [festival] was:

An ancient Gaelic assembly of Irish nobility, chiefs, politicians, judges, doctors, poets and bards, who gathered for the annual festival at Tara, the residence of the high King of Ireland. This event focused on politics and law making but it was also accompanied by much festivity including entertainments and sports events. Ireland's 800-year colonisation put an end to the *feis* but it was re-invented at the end of the nineteenth century by the Gaelic League, a cultural nationalist movement in Ireland [Foley 2013:138].

The first modern *feis* took place in the town of Macroom, County Cork in 1899 under the auspices of the Gaelic League, a cultural nationalist movement in Ireland, and the main driver of this initiative. The *feis* would later develop and be popularised from this local event to national and international platforms. The *feis*, as traditionally conceptualised, was a rural event and comprised of outdoor staged competitions in Irish traditional music, dance, song, and Irish poetry (see Figure 1); the Irish language was the language of communication at the event. Sports competitions also occurred at these outdoor *feiseanna*, sometimes called *aeraíochtaí* (see Foley 2013). In this initial *feis* endeavour, the Gaelic League, in Kevin Whelan's words 'deployed the past to challenge the present to restore into possibility historical moments that had been blocked or unfulfilled earlier' [Whelan in Matthew 2003:28]. Thus, within this new 'invented' context – as in the 'invention of a tradition' [Hobsbawm 1983],<sup>1</sup> the dissemination of the Irish language as the language of Irish people and familiarisation with Irish language literature were central, but competitions in Irish indigenous performing arts – traditional Irish music, song and dance were also important to popularise the ideologies of the Gaelic League and its political agenda. As the Gaelic League was more organised in urban contexts [Brennan 1999; Foley 2012; 2013], from the 1920s onwards, schools of Irish dancing were established in towns and cities of Ireland with a focus on transmitting Irish dancing to the youth of these areas;<sup>2</sup> the majority of

attendees were female. Competitions at a *feis* thus gradually became a primary platform for the performance and dissemination of Irish dancing, and the indigenous performing arts in general, not only in Ireland but elsewhere in the world where the Gaelic League had influence and where there was an Irish diasporic community.



Figure 1. A feis. Irish Traditional Music Archive

(<https://www.itma.ie/features/galleries/competitive-dancers-irish-examiner> accessed August 2017). Copyright The Irish Examiner newspaper.<sup>3</sup>

Reported conflict relating to dancing competitions at *feiseanna*<sup>4</sup> gave rise to the establishment by the Gaelic League of an organisation of Irish dancing named *An Coimisiún le Rince Gaelacha*; this organisation would function under the auspices of the Gaelic League and continues to do so to the present day. The role of this organisation was to control, regulate and manage *feiseanna*, including dance competitions, dance competitors, teachers and adjudicators. Gradually *An Coimisiún* became a significant organisation for teachers and students of Irish dancing. It established rules for dances permitted to be performed at competitions and for participants at *feiseanna*; in 1943, examinations for the registration of teachers and adjudicators who wished their students to compete at registered competitions, *feiseanna*, and *Oireachtais* were introduced.<sup>5</sup>

In *Step Dancing in Ireland* (2013), I also argue that:

The notion of authenticity was important to the Gaelic League who endeavoured to define what was, and was not, Irish culture. This debate developed around a structure of binary oppositions

which marked the cultural and ideological debate of twentieth-century Ireland: authentic/in-authentic, traditional/modern, pure/innovative, moral/immoral, rural/urban, west/Europe and Irish/Other [Foley 2013: 137].

In 1931, at the Gaelic League's *Árd-fheis* in Belfast, it was declared that:

[...] members who had anything to do with rugby, cricket or hockey or dances which were not 'Gaelic' could not become a member of any committee' in the organisation [Foley 2013:143].

Thus, specific dances were selected by *An Coimisiún* and only those considered to be "Irish" were published in *An Coimisiún* publications – *Ár Rincidhe Fóirne*,<sup>6</sup> the main dance textbook for aspiring and registered Irish dance teachers with *An Coimisiún*. These dances numbered 30 in total and they became the official canon of Irish dances. They were transmitted in dance classes and were further institutionalised and disseminated through competition and teacher's examinations [see Foley 2012; 2013].

Up until the 1960s, *feiseanna* at which Irish dancers performed their solo Reels, Jigs and Hornpipes, and the selected Irish *céili* dances, took place during summer months in rural areas where sports events also occurred; dancers paid on the day and performed on flatbed lorries to live traditional Irish music. Generally, one or two traditional Irish musicians (generally fiddle or melodeon players) sat to one side of the stage allowing enough space for dancers to perform. During winter periods, however, dancers performed and competed on indoor stages in local town or city halls. Competitors paid an entry fee to compete in each competition in advance. Attendees at these *feiseanna* events were socially and culturally connected to the indigenous performing arts and consciously or unconsciously to the political ideologies of the Gaelic League [Foley 2013]. By the 1970s, because of the increased popularity of Irish dancing, *feiseanna* became more frequent, took place indoors, and came to be associated solely with Irish dancing competitions; traditional Irish music and song competitions were no longer included. Today the most significant of these *An Coimisiún* dance competitions for step dancers and teachers of Irish dancers is *Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne* (The World Irish Dancing Championships) [see Foley 2013; Wulff 2008]. At *Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne*, thousands of competitors from all over the world, between the

ages of 10–30 compete at these competitions, which have become more popular post ‘Riverdance’ and ‘Lord of the Dance’, the Irish dance commercial stage shows [see Foley 2001; Hall 1997; O’Connor 2013]. Indeed, the majority of the dancers on these stage shows have had years of training with registered Irish dancing teachers and have competed at local, regional, national, and world championship levels (see Figure 2).

*Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne* is a one-week long festival that takes place annually at Easter time. Usually, it is held in Ireland but it has also been hosted outside of Ireland. For example, the 48th *Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne* event will take place in 2018 in Glasgow, Scotland where more than 14,500 dancers and supporters are expected to travel to the city for the championships, boosting the local economy by an estimated £14m. Glasgow has hosted the event already four times. Throughout the event dancers can be seen wearing special dance costumes for both solo and group-dance competitions; they also wear special hard and soft-dance shoes for specific dances [see Foley 2013]. The *Oireachtas* forms strong links between Irish dancers, teachers, and adjudicators nationally and internationally. It gathers these social agents together as members of an exclusive club with Irish dancing as the connecting and binding glue.



Figure 2. The 46th World Irish Dancing Championships at Glasgow Royal Concert Hall. The Guardian, Wednesday 23rd March 2016. Guardian photojournalist Murdo Macleod (<https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/ng-interactive/2016/mar/23/world-irish-dancing-championships-in-glasgow-photo-essay> accessed 24th August).



Within the competitive context of the *feis* and *Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne*, Irish dancing continues today to thrive and grow: competitions that are managed by *An Coimisiún* are still under the auspices of the Gaelic League; teachers and adjudicators pay annual fees to *An Coimisiún*; and dancers pay teachers for dance classes and *An Coimisiún* for entry to competitions at a *feis* or *Oireachtas*. Audience members at these competitive events continue to be those who are intimately connected to the competitive Irish dancing world – dancers, teachers, adjudicators, *feis* musicians, organisational administration, family members, and friends; these events are open however to anybody wishing to attend on a small admission fee.

*An Coimisiún* continues to be the largest Irish dance organisation internationally, however there are also other organisations of Irish step dance within which step dancers also compete.<sup>7</sup> Together with the competitive context, there are other contexts for the practice and development of Irish dancing: exhibitions at concerts, weddings, and corporate events; popular staged shows; emergent new theatrical productions; and university degree programmes [see Foley 2012b]. However, as this chapter focuses on festival, I will continue by examining another festival Damhsafest, Cork International Folk Dance Festival, which has different objectives reflective of a modern, post-nationalist, Europeanised Ireland.

### ***Damhsafest, Cork International Folk Dance Festival***

Damhsafest, Cork International Folk Dance Festival, was established in 1995 by Barry Cogan, a County Councillor in Cork and a member of the Carrigaline branch of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* (CCÉ).<sup>8</sup> Barry is a native of Carrigaline, a commuter town in County Cork, situated 14 kilometres south of Cork city in the south of Ireland with a population of approximately 15,000 people. In 1994, Barry was invited to bring a group of Irish traditional musicians and dancers to perform at an International Folk Dance Festival in Denmark.<sup>9</sup> Resulting from the positive experience in Denmark, Barry decided to establish a similar folk dance festival in County Cork with Carrigaline as its central location and tourist destination [Cogan 2017, personal communication]. *Damhsafest* was thus established with Barry as its founding director and with a remit of local / regional / and international sharing and integration through folk dance.

*Damhsafest* was established as an annual festival with Irish and invited international folk dance groups who provided workshops and concerts, including open air concerts in different areas of Cork city and rural towns in County Cork including Carrigaline, Kinsale, and Cobh. The aims of *Damhsafest* were as follows:

- to promote Irish and international culture through the medium of traditional folk dance, music and traditions
- to advocate for acceptance and promotion of cultural diversity
- to encourage entertainment, education and tourism
- to raise the profile of Cork, Ireland, as a venue for international folk dancing
- to build and consolidate international linkages.

According to Barry Cogan:

*Damhsafest* is the only International Folk Dance Festival in the Cork Region, in fact it is the only one of its kind in the 32 counties of Ireland. Since its inception in 1995, our festival has hosted over 30 international folk dance groups. Over these years performances were held in Cork City, as well as towns, both large and small, across the county. Our visitors went home with great memories of Cork and Ireland, and expressed an interest in being invited back again [Cogan ≤2013].

In the *Damhsafest* Festival 2013 programme,<sup>10</sup> the following international and local folk dance groups participated:

- Aigulek from Kazakhstan
- I Burgisi di Marsala from Sicily, Italy
- Drummers and Dancers from Togo, West Africa
- Kayumangging Filipino Performing Arts
- Owenabue Valley Traditional Group (Carrigaline, County Cork)
- The Kiely Walsh School of Irish Dance (Carrigaline, County Cork)

According to the *Damhsafest* website publicity on the group Aigulek it stated:

Only in the last ten years, the team “Aigulek” traveled around the coast of Turkey, many cities in Russia and Ukraine, and in other

European cities. They are the winners of art competitions in Spain, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Poland, Germany, France, Italy, Monaco, San Marino, Hungary and Cyprus. The team is quite well known abroad and is always welcome at international competitions and folk festivals. Permanent artistic director is Kalanova Raikhan (Honoured artist of Kazakhstan) who led the group for more than 35 years. The most important thing is the opportunity for culture exchange for people living in different countries far from Kazakhstan [Damhsafest 2013].



Figure 3. Aigulek performers from Kazakhstan

<http://www.damhsafest.ie/festival/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/Kazach-1.jpg> accessed 19 July 2017

On the same website, the Kayumangging Filipino Performing Artists stated:

We set up our group in 2005 (that is the Filipino Community in Cork) by then we started participating in the Damhsafest. This year we gave our group an official name -Kayumangging Filipino Performing Artists. Kayumanggi means brown which is the colour of most Filipinos. Each member came from different regions in the Philippines and we are some of the Filipinos living and working overseas and majority of ours already acquired the Irish citizenships [Damhsafest 2013].



Figure 4. Kayumangging Filipino Performing Artists

[http://www.damhsafest.ie/festival/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/DSC\\_09791.jpg](http://www.damhsafest.ie/festival/wp-content/uploads/2012/07/DSC_09791.jpg) Accessed July 2017

The Local Owenabue Valley Irish Traditional Music and Dance Group publicity stated:

The Owenabue Valley have been keeping the Irish traditions alive with their Irish music tunes, Gaelic songs, stories of local Cork and Irish folklore, Irish céilí and set dancing. Through their interactive performances they are passing these traditions on to the next generation in Ireland and internationally. Up to 3 generations perform together in County Cork and Cork City at private parties, weddings, corporate events, local Cork festivals and international festivals. The unique atmosphere that Owenabue Valley bring with them allows for all ages, creeds and nationalities with very different dancing abilities to take to the floor together to enjoy the *ceol*<sup>11</sup> and the *craic*<sup>12</sup> [Damhsafest 2013].



Figures 5 and 6. Some of the Owenabue Valley Set Dancers.

<http://www.damhsafest.ie/the-festival/festival-2013/groups-2013/owenabue-valley-traditional-group/attachment/ovtg-1/> Accessed 19 July 2017

Owenabue Valley Set Dancers collaborate locally not only with international folk dance groups but also with another Irish dance group, the Kiely Walsh Academy of Irish Dancing. The Kiely Walsh Academy is a school of Irish dancing in Carrigaline, County Cork that is registered with *An Coimisiún le Rinci Gaelacha*. Many of its dancers have won National and World Championships. They provide workshops internationally (for example in South Africa) and in 2004 they launched The Cork Irish Dance Company, a group of senior dancers of the Academy who perform at corporate events, conferences and weddings all over Cork City and county.

*Damhsafest* 2013 occurred between Friday 28th June and Thursday 4th July. It was a 7-day event, which included dance workshops and concerts in Cork city and county to promote and share international and Irish folk dances with audiences in the region of Cork. According to Barry, dance education within an enjoyable and participatory manner was an important aspect of the festival (see Figure 4). All events, according to Barry, were family orientated and inclusive. Most concerts included an element of participation for all and any age, young and old alike – whoever wished to get involved, was welcomed. During the weekend of the festival, local crafts and food stalls, including homemade produce, were also exhibited to provide an overall perspective on Irish culture for tourists and locals alike.



Figure 7. A *Damhsafest* dance workshop.

Photo <http://www.damhsafest.ie/the-festival/> accessed 17 July 2017.

According to Brian Cogan, *Damhsafest* 2013 raised the profile of folk dancing in Cork and showed Cork to be a culturally diverse city using folk dance and folk music as products or cultural commodities to promote tourism. Not only were folk dance groups invited from abroad, but local international communities in Cork also participated in *Damhsafest* such as *Afro Show – Drummers and Dancers from Togo*, West Africa (established in Cork in 2010) and *Kayumangging Filipino Performance Arts* (established in Cork in 2008). I would argue that *Damhsafest* succeeded in providing a platform and a motivation for these local diverse cultural groups to continue, develop, and sustain their own cultural practices, while

living in Ireland. I would also argue that *Damhsafest* promoted intercultural dialogues by means of community participation, informal cultural exchange, and a sharing of dance practices through workshops and performances.

From its establishment until 2013, *Damhsafest* had supporting social networks which successfully assisted in annually mobilising limited resources efficiently; it also allowed for the exchanges in dances and folk-dance groups. As international folk dance groups participated in *Damhsafest*, folk dance groups in Cork such as the Owenabue Valley Traditional Music and Dance Group visited other countries to participate in their international folk dance festivals. According to Brian, “these travels provided opportunities for dancers and artists to meet and exchange; they were platforms to connect both local and international artists” [Cogin 2017]. Local, regional and international support, collaboration and exchange were therefore important attributes for the sustainability of *Damhsafest* which had huge dependence on local goodwill and hospitality. *Damhsafest* relied heavily on the work of its volunteers and local families. It was a bottom-up run festival.

The success of *Damhsafest* from 1995–2013 illustrated that human capacity, goodwill, common interests and goals, together with voluntary collaboration and inclusive participation were important features of this local self-organised, grass-rooted project. However, for the survival of any festival continued local/regional/national sponsorship are important issues. *Damhsafest* depended upon local families to accommodate and host the dancers and musicians from the international folk dance groups. *Damhsafest* also depended upon local regional / sponsorship in kind such as food donations from small companies, and space provision for workshops/performances. In turn these sponsors received local, national and international exposure through Internet Exposure ([www.damhsafest.ie](http://www.damhsafest.ie)), social media, festival focused TV, Radio and Press coverage, and inclusion in promotional materials.

However, after the 2013 *Damhsafest*, the local organising committee took a break. The festival has not since been re-established but it is the hope of the committee to continue its work in the near future. I would argue that in the case of *Damhsafest*, festival sustainability became an issue with

an over dependence on the commitment and energies of its local volunteers and the goodwill of its local community.

The examination of these two festivals – *Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne* and *Damhsafest* has shed light on different cultural processes. They are summarised in the following table:

	<i>Feis / Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne</i>	<i>Damhsafest</i>
Infrastructure	Local / National / International	Local / International
Cultural Specificity	Monocultural Symbolic of a culturally unified nation	Multicultural Symbolic of a European / global region that is culturally diverse
Participating Community	Exclusive to Irish dancing community	Inclusive of different dance cultures; local crafts and food displays.
Organisational Function	Cultural Nationalism	Tourism / Cosmopolitanism
Financial Resources	Self-Funding; Organisational Fees	Voluntary Contributions and Co-operation
Dances	Presentational	Participatory and Presentational
Contexts	Formal Competitions	Informal Contexts: Workshops and Concerts

## Conclusion

From briefly examining and analysing two examples of folk dance festivals in Ireland, this chapter argues that there is not one conceptualisation of a folk-dance festival in Ireland. *Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne* and *Damhsafest* represent different ideological systems, values and objectives. Both festivals emerged within specific historical and socio-political climates. At the end of the nineteenth century, within the context of colonialism, the *feis* was reinvented to promote a cultural nationalism as a monoculture, and Irish dancing became a powerful tool of embodiment in this process. Today, the *feis* and *Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne* continue to develop but with the increased international appeal of Irish dancing since



the 1990s – post ‘Riverdance’ and ‘Lord of the Dance’. It is arguable that the power of the Gaelic League is no longer as strong as it once was, however, *An Coimisiún* continues to exist under the auspices of the Gaelic League and Irish dancing continues to culturally express Ireland in its competitive form. On the other hand, *Damhsafest*, established in 1995, has an inclusive, multicultural and international objective showcasing the Cork region in Ireland as a cosmopolitan and culturally diverse area. In this endeavour it has utilised folk dance and folk music as tourist attractions. *Damhsafest* is reflective of a modern post-nationalist and connected Ireland within a global context. It draws attention and awareness to folk dancing, international and Irish folk dancing, within the context of international representation. Both festivals – *Oireachtas Rince na Cruinne* and *Damhsafest* are symbolic domains of practice. They are important “time out of time” events (Falassi 2001) that provide sites and opportunities for social integration and dance exchange for further discursive developments around dance, culture and identity.

## Endnotes

1. See Foley [2012 [1988]; 2013] for an examination of the application of Hobsbawm’s notion of the invention of tradition to Irish dancing.
2. See also Hall [2008].
3. See ‘Competitive Dancers from the Irish Examiner Archives, 1920s–1940s’.
4. *Feiseanna* (festivals) is plural of *feis*.
5. *Oireachtas* is a major competitive event at regional, national or world levels.
6. Three little volumes of *Ár Rincidhe Fóirne* were published by *An Coimisiún* in 1939, 1943, and 1969 with ten figure dances in each volume [see Foley 2013].
7. Other Irish dance organisations include *Comhdháil na Múinteoirí le Rinci Gaelacha*, *Cumann Rince Náisiúnta* (CRN), the Festival Dance Teachers of Northern Ireland (FDTA), and the World Irish Dancing Association (WIDA) [see Foley 2013].
8. *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann* is a cultural nationalist movement established in 1951 for the promotion of Irish traditional music and dance. See Henry [1989].
9. Barry Gogin cannot remember who invited them or where they went in Denmark.
10. See <http://www.damhsafest.ie/the-festival/festival-2013/> for the festival programme. Accessed 19 July 2017.
11. Music.
12. Translates loosely as fun.

## References cited

### **Brennan, Helen**

1999. *The story of Irish dance*. Dingle: Brandon.

### **Cogan, Barry**

2017. Personal communication. Telephone interview. 13<sup>th</sup> August.

### **Cogan, Barry**

2013. "About." *Irish International Folk Dance Festival*. Online:  
<<http://www.damhsafest.ie/about/>> (Accessed 2017 July).

### **Cullinane, John**

2003. *An Coimisiún le Rincí Gaelacha* [Irish Dancing Commission]: *its origins and evolution*. Cork, Ireland: Self-published.

### **Damhsafest**

2017. "The festival." *Irish International Folk Dance Festival*. Online:  
<<http://www.damhsafest.ie/the-festival/>> (Accessed 2017 August 18).

### **Damhsafest**

2013. *Irish International Folk Dance Festival*. Online:  
<<http://www.damhsafest.ie/the-festival/festival-2013/groups-2013/>>  
(Accessed 2017 July 19).

### **European Commission**

2011. *European arts festivals: strengthening cultural diversity*. Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities. Report funded under the Social Sciences and Humanities theme of the European Union's Seventh Research Framework Programme. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

### **Falassi, Alessandro**

1987. "Festival: definition and morphology." Alessandro Falassi (editor), *Time out of time: essays on the festival*:1–10. Albuquerque, New Mexico: University of New Mexico.

### **Foley, Catherine E.**

2001. "Perceptions of Irish dance: national, global, and local". *Dance research journal* 33(1):34–45.

### **Foley, Catherine E.**

2012. *Irish traditional step dancing in North Kerry: a contextual and structural analysis*. Listowel, County Kerry: North Kerry Literary Trust.

### **Foley, Catherine E.**

2012b. "The roots and routes of Irish step dancing: issues of identity and participation in a global world". Ian Russell and Chris Goertzen (editors), *Routes and roots: fiddle and dance studies from around the North Atlantic* 4:145–156. Aberdeen, Scotland: Elphinstone Institute, University of Aberdeen.

### **Foley, Catherine E.**

2013. *Step dancing in Ireland: culture and history*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.

**Hall, Frank**

1997. "Your Mr. Joyce is a fine man, but have you seen *Riverdance*?" *New hibernia review* 1(3):134–42.

**Hall, Frank**

2008. *Irish dance: discipline as art, sport, and duty*. Madison: Macater Press.

**Henry, Edward O.**

1989. "Institutions for the promotion of indigenous music: the case of Ireland's Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann." *Ethnomusicology* 33(1):67–95.

**Hobsbawm, Eric and Terence Ranger (editors)**

1985. *The invention of tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Mathews, P. J.**

2003. *Revival: the Abbey Theatre, Sinn Féin, the Gaelic League and the co-operative movement*. Cork, Ireland: Cork University Press in association with Field Day.

**O'Connor, Barbara**

2013. *The Irish Dancing*. Cork, Ireland: Cork University Press.

**Vissicaro, Pegge**

2014. "The emergence of creative communities: Fesras Juaninas in Sao Paolo, Brazil." Elsie Ivancich Dunin and Catherine Foley (editors), *Dance, place, festival: 27<sup>th</sup> symposium of the ICTM's Study Group on Ethnochoreology*:291–295. Limerick, Ireland: University of Limerick.

**Wulff, Helena**

2007. *Dancing at the crossroads: memory and mobility in Ireland*. New York; Oxford: Berghahn.

