TIME-SPACE DISTANCIATION – PAST AND PRESENT


llanllyr SOURCE
NATURAL PURE SPRING WATER DRAWN FROM BENEATH
THE ORGANIC FIELDS OF LLANLLYR FOR OVER 800 YEARS
CA CRV
750ml e 25.4fl.oz
SPARKLING

We were out last night with friends.

The water at the local restaurant in Palo Alto — imported from Wales, bottled in the squire’s house, Llanllyr, in the village of Talsarn, where we once lived (next to the house where Dylan Thomas wrote “Under Milk Wood”), before we moved to California.


llanllyr SOURCE
NATURAL PURE SPRING WATER DRAWN FROM BENEATH
THE ORGANIC FIELDS OF LLANLLYR FOR OVER 800 YEARS
CA CRV
750ml e 25.4fl.oz
SPARKLING

Here is what the company web site says about the madness of shipping bottled water from Wales to California [Link]:

We take our responsibilities to the environment, society and the community very seriously. In fact Llanllyr Water Company mirrors the ethical aspirations of the Llanllyr Farm over the generations. The farm has been accredited organic by the Soil Association for many years, but more than that it has never been farmed any other way.

Our sources are entirely sustainable. We have Organic Farmers and Growers accreditation for both our line and processes and have established programmes to maximize the use of recycled materials including now over 25% of the glass we use. We are UN Global Compact signatures.

We play an active role in regional activities and have won its Exporter of the Year Award for the last 2 years and were judged its Business of the Year in 2007.

Much is made of history and tradition –

We bottled our first water only a few years ago in 1999, but behind our highly contemporary product there’s a truly fascinating story that begins literally centuries ago!

We know the same sources have been providing drinking water for over 800 years because a Cistercian nunnery was established on the site in 1180 and it survived for over 400 years, The history of the site goes back much further than that though.

Saint Madomonoc is said to have established a hermitage on the site in the 6th century and indeed evidence remains there to this day which is a magnet for historians from all over the world.

Untainted, organic, remarkable in its global reach, pure, the result of local entrepreneurial acumen, rooted in deep history; and the bottle itself – contemporary:

The original SOURCE bottle won the industry's worldwide award for the Best Concept in Glass in Milan in 2002 and recognition at design awards in London, New York and Dubai followed.

And then the look improved. Source was probably the first brand to popularise the now well known and user friendly 'wine style' bottle. The stunning and easily recognizable black (still) and silver (sparkling) label combined with it to win Class Magazine's 2007 Best Soft Drink design award. And our pioneering use of black and

silver for still and sparkling respectively is being copied so often it might soon be an industry norm!

So people lived here in the past and had enough water! OK they were nuns and maybe a saint hung out here promoting Celtic Christianity (on the rise again today). Sustainable? Well there's certainly a lot of water in Wales. Our garden up the road had eight springs. Contemporary design? A nicely styled label indeed.

It comes to mind that this compression of time and space is part of what Tony Giddens called

time-space distanciation

– a major feature of cultural experience.

There's something of a history to selling Welsh water worldwide under a "designer" rhetoric. *Ty Nant*, bottled at Bethania, not far from Llanllyr, also travels everywhere because of it its rather distinctive blue glass bottle.

Here's another perspective on this appropriation of water – the compulsory state purchase, evacuation, and drowning of the Welsh-speaking village of Capel Celyn in the Tryweryn valley – a gross act of colonialism to make way for a reservoir to provide water for Liverpool in England (Brith Gof, the performance company I served with, produced a TV work about this – Y Pen Bas | Y Pen Dwfn [Link])

This global reach, rhetoric of quality and distinction, appropriation of resources, references to achievement and social standing, is age old. After my recent visit to Sweden [Link] I can't help but think of an earlier prehistoric global age – the bronze age of the second and early first millennium BCE. The key components of the ideological world of the warrior retinues that traveled over Europe in search of metals, adventure, achievement, is encapsulated in the ships, armor, weaponry, musical instruments, mythology, ritual, iconography common across Europe, and so evocative in the rock art of Bohuslän in western Sweden.

Cosmo-political coding

as Johan Ling calls this –

where cosmos, the arrangement and order of the cultural imaginary, meets poltical economy.



Boat, warrior, sword, shield, lur (the curved horn), sacred animal




CARBONATED
TŶ NANT
Eau Minérale Naturelle
Natuurlijk Mineraalwater
750 ml
GAZEUSE
KOOLZUURHOUDEND