Where in Scotland is Dumfries and Galloway? Tourism as a vehicle for locating and challenging national and local politics, economics and identity in periphery Scotland.

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Abstract: To the tourist, Scotland, as promoted by its national tourist site, elicits a distinctive picture: castles, tartans, bagpipes, the highlands and kilts. However, regions on the periphery of the nation often struggle to attract tourists because they do not always "fit" this national picture. I examine Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland as a site at the crossroads of national tourism: an important economic endeavor that concomitantly highlights how marginalized regions struggle to compete for tourism profits and challenges national policies designed to promote economic development. As an archaeologist, I approach tourism, its practices and processes, as artefacts/material culture that reveal local agency in the midst of hegemony. The use of ethnography uncovers locals' everyday experiences with their past and present landscape revealing a diverse but no less intimate relationship with the changes brought about by tourism. Tourism thus becomes a vehicle for exposing deeper political, economic and social issues at play in Scotland's development as a nation.

The title of my paper, "Where in Scotland is Dumfries and Galloway" is a play off of the popular computer game and American television show for children and young teens "Where in the world is Carmen Sandiego?" In the game, players are charged with finding an important landmark, icon or artefact, stolen by Carmen Sandiego or one of her accomplices. The goal: find the thief by using geographical and/or historical clues. These clues are usually traditional, standard, and/or famous pieces of information that alone or in combination reveal the whereabouts of the thief. So, what does my paper and Carmen Sandiego have in common? After running across a clip of the show, I asked myself what clues would be used if Carmen or her accomplices were hiding in Scotland? What would be considered the most important geographical and/or historical landmarks? In essence, I found myself asking "What is Scotland and could I find Dumfries and Galloway in it?"

Since devolution, "Scotland" has worked endlessly to define itself now that it is finally parliamentary free to make key decisions about its future. One of those key decisions has been to develop tourism as the prime industry for Scotland. Peter Lederer, the ex- Chairman of VisitScotland, wrote:

> Post-devolution Scotland has a unique opportunity to think and act differently; a unique opportunity to shed some of the past 'baggage' and start building a confident, successful country competing with the best in the world. Tourism can and must play a major role in the economic and social success of this new Scotland. Tourism must be a significant, growing part of a smart, successful strategy for Scotland (Yeoman, 2004: page).

Tourism does appear to be a solid program for economic development. Since 2001, Scotland has seen a nation wide increase in tourist visits per year, with an almost 50% increase. This has resulted in billions of pounds in income across the nation. Overall, approximately 17 million visitors spent 4 billion pounds in the tourism industry in 2005. This has led to an industry which nationally employs more than 200,000 workers accounting for 9% of national employment. Strategists project the nation

can achieve another 50% increase in these figures by 2015. In April of 2005, the new tourist agency, VisitScotland, was launched consisting of the tourist website, www.VisitScotland.com and the web based marketing and research division www.VisitScotland.org. The agency works towards implementing the strategies to reach the 2015 goal.

Dumfries and Galloway is a unique area of Scotland that I believe is at the crossroads of national tourism. For periphery regions, such as Dumfries and Galloway tourism is a double edged sword: it is an important economic endeavor that can increase regional income but concomitantly the practice of tourism highlights how marginalized regions struggle to compete for tourism profits. Nationally, tourist money is spent in one of three areas: the cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow and the Highlands. But, research also shows that tourists who return to the country are looking for new experiences.

Why come to Scotland?

Live it! Visit Scotland!

The VisitScotland answer: "Enduring, Dramatic, Human". The three key words in the brand developed for marketing the nation were derived form research conducted in 2001 and 2002. These words were not used by Scots to describe themselves, but by tourists who had visited the region and ones which they felt represented their experience. In addition to these descriptive words were icons: "… such as whisky, tartan, golf and castles along with strong, romantic imagery" (webpage). Together these images and descriptors create a powerful message to tourists, "…the true spirit of Scotland: awe-inspiring rural and urban scenery, an ever present sense of history, welcoming people, passionate and proud of their country" (webpage).

A key sell to tourists is the history or heritage of Scotland. The leading tourist destinations within Scotland are historical in nature: Visiting castles, monuments, churches etc ranks highest in activities undertaken with UK visitors going to such places 39% of the time and overseas visitors going 86%. Visiting museums, galleries and heritage centers are third with 29% and 56% respectfully (fact sheet, Scotland). These places house what is considered "Scotland".

What, then, is Scotland? Most people outside of Scotland give the standard answer: clan, kilt, tartan, bagpipes. To them these symbols represent the fight for freedom against England because of their association with the Highlands. Scots rarely provide the same answers. Instead they may name "Rabbie" Burns, Sir Walter Scott, Thomas Telford, or Robert Louis Stevenson. Some I queried talked about the Covenanter movement and Presbyterianism. Others spoke of Mary, Queen of Scots. A few gave other answers such as Skara Brae, early prehistoric settlements and the Vikings. Versions of "outsider" symbols can be seen anywhere in Scotland, like for example, the actor or starving student dressed as *Braveheart* in a Breacan an Fhéilidh (early kilt) and blue face paint standing on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh, and in the tourist shops on the high streets in almost every mid-sized town where a tourist might pass. The Declaration of Arbroath, for example, is written on tea towels, postcards depict kilted men with Highland cattle and trinkets of heather or thistle can be picked up almost anywhere. Whisky bottles, glasses, books on whisky and whisky tours are immensely popular and one person even stated that whisky was the new golf. William Wallace's sword can be bought at the Glasgow airport as can a kilt in the tartan of Rob Roy's clan, MacGregor. "The key to heritage," writes McCrone, Morris and Kiely "is to sacrilise its objects" (1995:8).

The role of history is critical in the production of symbols and gives credence to national narratives and

identities: "If a national culture is to remain alive, its history too must live in some distinctive way and must be perceived as integral to the lives of those who share it. This helps to define their sense of collective identity, gives them their confidence, lets them know where they are (McCrone, 2001: 141-2 from Beveridge and Turnball, 1989:16). However, the utilization of symbols is one such aspect that has as its roots heritage in addition to history because, as McCrone, Morris and Kiely suggest, heritage has

> …a tenuous connection to actual events, to history…It has a much stronger one with the past, that is to say our interpretation formed in the context of the present. If there has been a boom in interest in history and archaeology, it has been because of what we want to use them for in the context of our own lives, and their potential for mapping out the future (1995:65).

This mapping out is critical to the tourist industry. Scotland's future does not rest on history or heritage but it does rely heavily on the tourist industry as a future for economic stability. According to Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay (1996: 4), these processes are not about establishing a space for "*being"* in the present, but instead, are used in order to produce a guideline for "*becoming*" a particular place in the future. This "place" however must be legitimate and in order to legitimize it, a mobilization and compartmentalization of specific histories, traditions and cultures must take place in order for symbols which are meaningful to the population as well as to a global community to be formed or chosen (Finlay, 2001:386).

Marketing a brand that is attractive to tourists is crucial. As the opening line of the Chief Executive's Report reads: "We need to see Scotland as one brand, a unique country that stands for quality and a great welcome." While there is a difference between "destination branding" – that of the "enduring, dramatic, and human" - and "place branding" – that of the clan, tartan, bagpipe and Highland, investors and stakeholders are interested in investing where they know there will be a return (Yeoman, personal communication). All of Scotland may be enduring, dramatic and human but tourists have prioritized specific areas because, for them, these are areas that embody the clan, tartan, bagpipe, whisky and golf. Whether they see this in literature, movies or while visiting, these images are what draw people to Scotland; this is what makes Scotland "enduring, dramatic and human."

Dumfries and Galloway in Scotland

On April 1, 2005 I stood in a regional tourist information booth in Dumfries and Galloway and spoke in depth to an employee about the launching of VisitScotland. It had been announced on the news the night before with a promising outlook. Our conversation was productive but as an employee in the industry she felt she needed to choose her words carefully. Her concerns were valid, however; Dumfries and Galloway had never been a place many people wanted to visit even though she believed, like many others that the region was well worth visiting.

On April 1, fourteen regional tourist agencies were incorporated into the VisitScotland national tourist agency. Dumfries and Galloway was one of the fourteen. Previous to April 1, tourism was promoted via the regional tourism board which was a part of the Dumfries and Galloway Regional Council. This board maintained the local tourist information booths in several towns like Dumfries, Castle Douglas and Kirkcudbright as well as published brochures and maintained the regional tourist website. Most locals felt that their local tourist board did a good job at promoting the region and several people I

spoke with talked specifically about how hard the board had worked to rebuild the area as a tourist destination after foot and mouth disease ravaged the area in 2001. Though Dumfries and Galloway has never been a top Scottish tourist destination, people I spoke with in the tourism industry said there had been a steady increase since. Today, many accommodation providers feel they have fully recovered and many give the credit not to VisitScotland, but to the regional efforts. VisitScotland was received with mixed emotions by many in the region and fears were that a national agency would not recognize Dumfries and Galloway as a viable destination worth promoting. Asked another tourist information booth employee, "why would they [promote us], they perceive us as having very little."

The simple fact is that Dumfries and Galloway has very little in terms of what investors and stakeholders are looking for (Yeoman, personal communication). Though "rural rustic" was one image that tourists used to describe the nation, Dumfries and Galloway isn't considered as such even though it is a rural (and rustic) region (Yeoman, PC). Research shows that Scotland, to tourists, is very limited in scope and research conducted by VisitScotland and Moffat Centre for Travel and Tourism Business Development, Cultural Business Group, Glasgow Caledonian University, shows that "the South of Scotland" which also includes the Borders region, the area was the least visited region in 2005 (fact sheet). Though "multiple destinations visited" was reflected in the figures, the lack of trips is significant. With only .97 million UK visitors spending 200 million pounds and overseas visitors coming for .06million trips spending 26 million pounds, Dumfries and Galloway was near the bottom (fact sheet).

This is hard for people in the region to fathom. In interviews conducted with various locals and from responses on surveys I received (2005), most locals felt their region was rich in heritage and offered wonderful experiences for tourists. Though most responses focused on the sites maintained by Historic Scotland, several listed alternative sites such as Mabie Farm Park and Cream O' Galloway, a dairy farm with several outdoor activities offered to visitors. Loch Ken was mentioned as a popular destination for fisherman and boaters and the loch has hosted water skiing events that draw good crowds. The region boasts some of the best hill walking with the Southern Upland Way cutting through the majority of it. Mountain biking is also popular at the 7stanes, a park with trails and tracks for beginners to advanced riders. The region has spectacular scenery along the coast, with beaches and beach type-resorts, golf and other outdoor activities for tourists. And, the newly themed tourist areas like Castle Douglas-Food Town have the potential to further increase visitors to the area.

However, there are struggles. In general, VisitScotland.org found that many tourists felt Scotland was remote and expensive and Dumfries and Galloway is no exception. Limited railway access means most drivers must arrive by car. Based on the numbers published by visitscotland.org, most overseas visitors come by air making renting a car a necessity to reach the region. UK visitors do come by car but it does not mean they are coming to the region. Glasgow and Edinburgh are still the top sites listed as visited for a quick weekend trip. As one English person I spoke to in Edinburgh noted about the region: "I didn't even know anything was really there." Another person simply said, "I thought that was still England." Those who do come are not coming for extended visits but are day trippers on their way through or come for shopping. People visiting for the weekend have come before or own property in the region.

Once there, access to certain sites is difficult because many sites are not located on main roads and require driving some distance to get there. Speaking directly with the custodians of sites across the area, they stated that fewer and fewer people were actually coming and spending time at sites. "Passers-by" as they were often referred to, were frustrating because they didn't take the time to stop to experience the site. One custodian laughed and stated that he could tell those who were on their way elsewhere. Though these people would paid the entrance fee, they stood at the entrance, took a few pictures and got right back in their bus or car, never asking any questions or going further into the site.

Simply asked by another local, "What does it take to get people to stay?"

Attempts to attract visitors by different means are consistently being made. One woman who has spent several years organizing what she calls the "Border Gathering," a lowland version of the Highland games, has struggled to get people to buy into an event that challenges the status quo. Though the event highlights the South and attendance is rising, she can't fully break into the market. This year, standing in her way could easily be the Highland Festival, a heavily advertised year long series of events on the Highlands. No where on the VisitScotland site was there a notice for the Border Gathering, but yet there was front page coverage of this new festival. Additionally, new businesses have begun to pop up that are tourist focused and older ones are becoming more aware of the power of the tourist pound. Cream O'Galloway, the third most visited site, has worked hard to increase its visibility focusing on the quality of local dairy products like its ice cream. With 70,000 family groups visiting per year, their focus is a family outing with ice cream as its main draw (www.castledouglasfoodtown.org). Organic products, including their own beef, are sold which helps to highlight the region's history as an agricultural producer for Scotland and the United Kingdom. It also demonstrates how a locally owned farm has regenerated itself into a popular tourist spot and broadened its horizons to meet a niche market. Efforts are clearly being made by the region and locals to bring people in but the frustration level is growing.

At the Crossroads: Tourism as Material Culture

So where is Dumfries and Galloway in Scotland in terms of the tourist industry? I tackle this question archaeologically by looking at tourism, its policies, practices and processes as artefacts or material culture that can reveal local agency in the midst of hegemony. The idea of tourism as material culture/artifact is a challenging one, especially for the archeologist. In most cases, archaeologists are focused on the physical object(s) – the artifact or assemblage. To investigate tourism in the realm of material culture is look upon it as an object(s) that can be studied using typical archaeological processes or analyses as well as what Meskell describes as "…the broader interpretive connotations around and beyond the object, on the unstable terrain of inter-relationships between sociality, temporality, spatiality, and materiality" (Meskell 2005:2, 2004). Julian Thomas (1996:61) follows a similar line of thinking, writing that, "…things and their meanings have been handed down as heritage, from one generation to another, losing something in their significance but also gaining something...the past context has *become* present context." Tourism, I believe, is one of the unique instances where researchers can find material culture existing in a multitude of relationships while moving from one context to another including from the past to present. But to do so means to question "…the specific moments of crafting, forging, exchanging, installing, using, and discarding objects, histories in a variety of contexts…"(Meskell, 2005:7). It is crucial, I feel, to examine tourism via what Meskell and others refer to as *material habitus*: "...a material lifeworld that is conceived and constructed by us, yet equally shaping of human experience in daily praxis..." (2005:3).

Apart of the material habitus of tourism is its function as a commodity which has value in local, national and global markets and to both producer and consumer. This value rests in the desire of tourists to come and experience something they have not before or for return visitors, to recreate their first time. Value is also determined by consumption of the site and/or experience as well as of the policies produced by tourism agencies by smaller agencies and/or individuals wishing to participate in the tourism industry. Lindsay Moira Weiss examines her site of study, South African rock art, via ideas developed by Danny Miller: "…the practice of consumption is also a process of formulating material significance, which occurs within a much more complex and nuanced interplay of personal agency and

market forces (Weiss, 2005:47, Miller 1987). She continues her discussion in terms of the heritage industry, a key component of tourism:

> The daily life of heritage is a much more nuanced and ambiguous sphere in all its vernacular incarnations, particularly as a site of consumption as well as a site of production – and not only consumption performed by the tourist. The epistemic horizon of the heritage site must be liberated from the discursive limits of 'authenticiy' and other such suspicious hermeneutics, because heritage consumption is not merely about discursive framing of the past, but has become an integral aspect of identity-making particularly in the multicultural state, where community consumption of the past is seldom coterminous with state production of the past, and the individual is even more likely to fashion their consumption of the past differentially than national rhetoric might prescribe (50)

Much in the same way that objects a have social life, commodities do as well (Appadurai, 1986:3). Tourism has a social life and by looking into the multidimensional producing, marketing and selling of it we can begin to establish how it is shaped by and shapes human experience. Tourism as material culture contains not just the physical objects produced – the policies, the brochures, or even the sites – but also the changing relationships locals have with their histories, their present activities and their experiences with tourism. Ethnographic research affords researchers the best opportunity to fully explore how is a vehicle for exposing deeper political, economic and social issues at play in Scotland's development as a nation.

In my research, tensions about tourism were found in the opinions locals have about themselves and their neighbors. Criticism ranged from many locals not willing to change or grow to better the nation or to better the region. Some stated that the reason no one ever came was because the region was backward. Others stated that the region had few clear goals or plans and offered up the failure of region to market Robert Burns' life in Dumfries and the surrounding countryside as an example. They discussed how, in their opinion the region had failed to act quickly enough and now Ayrshire "owns" Burns; reads the county signs "Welcome to Ayrshire, Burns Country." Burns country, one man said, should have been Dumfriesshire. Property development is on the rise and there has been a significant increase in real estate for holiday rental as well as for sale, but many locals don't want property being sold to outsiders.

Tourism elicits a wide range of feelings of those in tourist sites because of the changes that accompany this practice. Tourism does highlight, more than perhaps other practices, where social, economic and political issues are rooted because not everyone can participate. The experience of locals in tourism is also akin to what Raymond Williams writes about concerning the growing interest of country houses in 19th century Britian in his work The Country and The City. In the below passage, Williams notes the change in the country setting as people with money move in; I envision tourism in periphery regions in a similar manner

> Money from elsewhere is an explicit and dominant theme….Detached capital, detached income, detached consumption, detached social intercourse inhabit and vacate, visit and leave…An internal capitalism, consumption and indifference to real neighbors has become external and mobile accentuating all its inherent vices.(249)

This detachment leaves regions in flux or at a crossroads where they must decide to follow the national path and work towards making tourism the top industry or stay the course. I do not think Dumfries and Galloway is an exception to the rest of the nation, but the rule in terms of regions not promoted in the tourist picture. Locals across the nation are fully aware that tourism is a crucial component to their

future livelihood and that tourism is supported by the Scottish Executive. To miss out on an economic venture that will better the lives of individuals as well as local communities, on up, is to miss out on what Scotland is becoming – a unified nation.

The discourse surrounding this "unification" carries a powerful message that goes beyond coming together to sell a product. Unification can come at a high price and one such cost is the promotion and development of a normative national identity – in essence that Scotland is "enduring, dramatic, and human" but only in certain areas where tourists can have their desires and demands met. Nadel-Klein sums up the tourism experience in this manner:

> To see Scotland becoming a theme park means not only that the images of Scottish peoples, industries and ways of life produced and seen in museums and visitor centers are inauthentic and essentializing, but also that Scottish people must increasingly accept and adopt these images as real or at least relevant. The 'tourist gaze' might disrupt a local culture that some see as inherently fragile (Nadel-Klein, 2003: 175).

In the tourist gaze, there is no room for mundane practices, crime, poverty or modernization and regions stand to lose a little bit of their diversity in the act of attempting to carve out a place in the tourist industry. Regions become or remain invisible because they do not fit into the national narrative. What goes missing are the every day practices of living. In popular tourist areas these every day practices are conducted behind the scenes, carried out "after hours", changed to meet tourist expectations, or in some cases, stopped completely. Missing or covered up are peoples past lives. In some respects, tourist sites were once locals' homes or playgrounds. People's parents and loved ones are buried in or near sites that have now been incorporated so that access is limited. Histories are altered or compartmentalized to only show one time frame not the entire life of a site, which inevitably includes locals.

Tracing the beginnings of such changes in periphery regions can highlight how tourism acts upon local lives, generating tensions among locals that often split communities or more positively, bringing groups together working toward a common goal. In either instance, it is the practice of maintaining an identity that people in Dumfries and Galloway are seeking in the midst of changing lives.