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# *Power, Culture and the Production of Heritage*

Donald Macleod

## **Introduction**

This chapter focuses on cultural heritage and includes examples of built heritage, memorials to actual people, and other forms of material culture. It examines the pro-active production of heritage, which draws attention to the parties who are able to actively manipulate their environment in pursuit of creating something that represents their notion of their heritage, whether through original creativity or the interpretation of an object. And it places these examples into the context of tourism development.

Heritage is a concept that has undergone serious changes during recent years. At one time it was generally thought to embrace property passed down through the generations, to describe things that could be inherited: 'All property which is not forcibly taken by conquest but has been passed on by means of some contract or other is heritage' (McCrone *et al* 1995: 1). However, since the late twentieth century the term 'heritage' has taken on a far broader remit: 'It has come to refer to a panoply of material and symbolic inheritances, some hardly older than the possessor' (Ibid).

In a wide-ranging discussion of the term 'heritage' Timothy and Boyd conclude: 'What has clearly emerged by escalating the intellectual and economic profile of heritage is an expansion of the term to apply not only to the historic environment, both natural and built, but also to every dimension of material culture, intellectual inheritances and cultural identities' (Timothy and Boyd 2003: 5). According to Browne (1994) heritage can be classified into the following groups: natural (e.g. landscape, habitat, seashores); built (e.g. prehistoric remains, monuments, buildings) and cultural (e.g. literature, music, art, language, folklore). Indeed, it is an entertaining puzzle to ask what, in contemporary society, can not possibly be or become heritage? There are already museums for computers, and many small volunteer-run heritage centres house the most mundane of domestic objects: the potential for something to become a heritage item is only limited by the human imagination.

Heritage becomes relevant to visitors as well as to the indigenous community, local neighbourhood, region and nation. Moreover, heritage may be deliberately oriented towards outsiders and visitors in order to attract them or to promote a particular image of the host community. Given the relevance of history and identity to communities worldwide, as well as the necessity to make money, the production of heritage is a sensitive, serious and valuable activity, but an activity which is permeated with ambiguity, complexity, superficiality, egocentricity and ethnocentricity in its practice.

For the purposes of tourism and the attraction of visitors, heritage has assumed an important role, and this will increase in value along with the growing need to differentiate one destination from another through the utilisation of culture as a means of distinction. It has been calculated by the British Tourist Authority in 1995 that 20% of all visits to tourist attractions in the UK were to historic properties, equivalent to 67 million visits per year (Hubbard and Lilley 2000). In Pennsylvania USA heritage tourism contributed almost \$5.5 billion to the state economy in 1997 (Timothy and Boyd 2003: 10).

Tourism is playing an increasingly important role in the production of heritage. Various groups are aware that heritage in the form of attractions, centres, museums and monuments can become a magnet for tourists and consequently bring money into a community, region or nation. However, the production of this heritage, in terms of choice of focus, interpretation and representation will usually be in the hands of a few people who are already in positions of relative power (cf. McCrone et al 1995; Lowenthal, 1998).

In a discussion on power, Keesing (1981: 299) writes: 'Power, virtually all analysts agree, is a matter of relationships between individuals (or units such as corporations or governments) who exert control and those who are controlled by them'. Using a more abstract approach (Adams 1977: 388) defines power as 'The ability of a person or social unit to influence the conduct and decision making of another through control over energetic forms in the latter's environment'. Macleod (1998) explores the manifestation of power and its actual influences: these may be described as control over the physical (energetic), intellectual and social environments. Areas of control are divided into 1) primary areas such as contracts, payments and legislation; 2) secondary areas which are manifestations of the primary relationship and would include physical constraints over space and time: in the workplace or use of resources for example; 3) tertiary areas such as the social and intellectual activities of staff or citizens, including the restrictions on public speech and control over official historical accounts.

This chapter shows that control over heritage production can be imposed in all three areas described above, such as legislation on activity, restrictions on physical creation or display, and the prohibition of public expression regarding history and heritage. One of the primary sources of control is the nation-state, which we see as producing and controlling the official heritage of the nation. In the examples given various social units exercise some form of power and these include state politicians, local politicians, government agencies, the media, wealthy individuals and businesses. Power might also be amassed by groups of people in the form of a grass-roots movement or kinship networks who react against a more powerful, influential group.

Furthermore, this chapter explores the relationship between power, culture and the production of heritage, specifically looking at how cultural heritage is represented by groups in society and their ability to use their position to promote a particular aspect of their culture for the purpose of tourism or for their own advantage. The aspect of culture promoted may become recognised as purporting to represent the essence, symbol or archetype of the entire society; or it may simply be the only part of a culture that is promoted. In each case study there are examples of particular people who have been memorialised, sometimes by a statue, or through portraits, plaques, images and dedicated spaces. This public recollection of actual individuals is one of the more blatantly sensitive aspects of cultural heritage and enlightens contemporary contests over identity and ownership.

There are some overarching patterns which present themselves in the case studies and these become manifest as official, state supported heritage in contrast to unofficial, grass-roots heritage. In general, the official heritage is utilised by the government tourism authorities for marketing purposes; however, we can see that unofficial heritage can eventually become embraced by tourism agencies as a means to attract

visitors. Similarly, state organisations and representatives such as political parties may come to embrace the unofficial grass-roots heritage if it suits their purposes. The official, national heritage, as opposed to unofficial, grass-roots heritage is a binary opposition that will serve as a flexible template for our analysis of the case studies.

By looking at three examples based on field research this chapter offers a comparative study in differing socio-cultural and political environments and seeks to draw similarities enlightening us about the place of power in the process of heritage production and representation, and its relationship with tourism.

## **Valle Gran Rey, La Gomera**

### **Introduction**

La Gomera is one of the seven Canary Islands located close to the west coast of Africa. They form an autonomous region of Spain. The islands were inhabited by indigenous people known as the Guanches, believed to have settled some three thousand years ago arriving from Africa and of Berber origin (Hernandez and Hernandez 1986; Castellano-Gil and Marcias- Martin 2002). The Guanches pursued a pastoral economy using goats, sheep, pigs and cattle; they had a stratified society with a system of kingship as well as an elite tier of religious leaders. The Iberian powers conquered the islands over a long period during the 15<sup>th</sup> century coming to different arrangements on the separate islands which had hitherto operated independently.

The Guanches form a central part of the modern Canary Islander identity, manifest through activities such as eating and drinking, work and leisure pursuits, and recorded in literature, art, historical records and popular writing such as Concepcion (1989). It is believed that numerous traditions and skills have been passed down from the Guanches that form part of contemporary culture including musical instruments, dance, song, household items, pottery, basket-weaving, herbal medicines, animal husbandry, the Silbo whistling language, food and drink (c.f. Galvan-Tudela 1995). These phenomena may be part of everyday modern life today or celebrated in museums, exhibitions, and festivals.

There are many day-trippers from Tenerife visiting La Gomera on coach tours arriving via sea-ferry. The coaches disembark at San Sebastian, the capital and port, and drive around the island stopping at the visitors' centre in the middle of the island (where Guanche traditional skills are used to make items for sale) as well as the coastal destinations: Valle Gran Rey and Santiago. Tourists are predominantly German, including independent backpackers and (more frequently since the arrival of the internet) those who have booked self-catering apartments in advance: they dominate the winter season. In summer the Spanish holidaymakers arrive, mostly from Tenerife and mainland Spain. By 1999 there were 600,000 visitors to the island in total, and 5000 beds available on the island, with 3500 in Valle Gran Rey alone.

Tourism has come to be the major industry for most of the larger islands (Tenerife, La Palma, Gran Canaria, Lanzarote) and forms a large part of the GDP for the region. There were 10 million foreign tourists visiting the archipelago in 2001 and official data describes the tourist sector as playing a central role in the economy (Pascual 2004). Tourism has become increasingly important for La Gomera, where the primary

industries of agriculture and fishing were once dominant until the 1980s; this small island has a population around 22,000 (2006) and a size of 378 square km.

### **The commodification of culture: Spanish national heritage**

La Gomera is also known as '*La Isla Columbina*' – Columbus Island. However, this appellation is rarely used by the islanders themselves, but appears in tourism promotional material: brochures refer to his residence on the island. It was here that Christopher Columbus repaired his ship and prepared his crew for their initial journey across what we now know as the Atlantic Ocean: San Sebastian, La Gomera was his final departure point. He is associated with numerous buildings in the port and capital San Sebastian, where he was based for several months. One house where he stayed is now a museum; another building is the '*Torre del Conde*' former tower house of the Count of Gomera (c.f. Bianchi 2004).

Today Columbus is an international icon, a very strong brand for marketing purposes, and strengthens the island's promotion of its historic built heritage and role in the Spanish colonial experience. A recently sculpted bust of Columbus now stands outside the Tourism Information Office in San Sebastian and there is a large gallery in the building which celebrates him with biographical details, models of his ship, maps of his journeys, and depictions of contemporary island life.

Along with the association with Columbus, elements of the culture of the pre-Hispanic indigenous people (The Guanches) have remained among the population, and skills such as the whistling language (*Silbo*), basket-weaving, hand-made pottery, music-making and dance have become commoditised and are sold to visitors through material gifts or attractions (see Macleod 2006 on commoditisation). Examples of such gifts include hand-held drums (*tambors*), large castanets (*chacarras*), hand-made pottery, and figures and symbolic designs based on pre-Hispanic Guanche belief. The visitors' centre (known as *Juego de Bolas*) in the middle of the island hosts a model of a traditional peasant's home, and has various people employed on the site to demonstrate how traditional craft products are made. It also hosts a model of Columbus's ship (Santa Maria), and an exhibition of regional flora and fauna. Some of the Spanish Roman Catholic religious festivals such as that celebrating the Virgin Carmen have been commercialised, and become extended periods of late night entertainment and profane events (such as donkey races) lasting up to five days. They also offer cultural entertainment including traditional (pre-Hispanic) '*tarajaste*' dancing and Gomeran music.

In contrast to the above examples of the commodification of culture and its transfer into the market-place by official organisations (such as the *Cabildo* - Island Government - and the Gomera Island Tourist Board) some of the local people in the popular tourist destination Valle Gran Rey (a municipality on the Southwest coast) lament the passing of simple festivals which focused on the original religious meaning, and miss the collective community actions associated with celebration such as the burning of bonfires on the festival of St Mark. They worry about the loss of their access to the beach because of overcrowding by visitors, the lack of time to spend with their families because of changing work patterns and increased hours, and the diminution of fishing as a livelihood.

### **The decline of fishing and associated heritage**

Fishing has been an important economic activity for the people of Valle Gran Rey for more than a hundred years. In earlier times it formed part of a number of ways of surviving including subsistence farming and plantation work, and was a good means of obtaining additional protein. During the Twentieth Century the port of Vueltas, on the coastal margin of the valley, developed into a busy fishing village with a population over 300 people almost wholly dependant on fishing as a livelihood. However, since the 1990s there has been a rapid decline in the number of professional fishers based in the valley. This economic livelihood had a major influence on the culture of those associated with it, impacting on kinship alliances, marriage partners, social activities and perspectives on the world: the decline of fishing has meant the erosion of numerous social and cultural phenomena associated with the fishing community (see Macleod 2002).

People in the fishing community believe their heritage is being eroded, physically disappearing or beyond their grasp, and not commemorated. This is a less obvious sort of tragedy than the dramatic transformation of a cultural event exemplified by of the Alarde of Fuentarrabia as documented by Greenwood (1989) and others, where a historically important festival is turned into a show; rather, the transformation of Vueltas is a more profound and widely felt development. These transformations witnessed on La Gomera, moving from a fishing and agricultural lifestyle to one oriented towards the tourism sector, reflect the experiences of many people worldwide living in tourist destinations, where livelihoods once based on primary forms of production are disappearing, leading to a reorganisation of their social and cultural lives (c.f. Boissevain and Selwyn 2004).

The transformation can be very rapid: for example, Vueltas has changed in one generation from being a traditional fishing village with a small harbour full of fishing boats into a tourism and recreation centre with a port and harbour dominated by leisure boats and ferries. Valle Gran Rey was composed mainly of private dwellings, smallholdings and banana plantations up until the 1980s; the agricultural sector has been reduced since then, while many cultivated terraces have been abandoned. Old vernacular houses have been demolished, especially in the fishing zone, the original village rising vertically as additional storeys turned into tourist accommodation.

### **Monuments and local history: the people's heritage**

Two significant monuments to people and events involving the local population have been established on the coastal plain of Valle Gran Rey since the mid-1990s. The first one, on the edge of Vueltas, is located on a large, grassed roundabout (funded by the European Union) built in the mid-1990s. The memorial commemorates the sailing boat 'Telemaco' which illegally transported 171 people from the valley across the Atlantic Ocean away from poverty in a quest for economic survival in Venezuela. The memorial is composed of an 11-metre fishing boat named Telemaco, once owned and used by a fishing family in Vueltas for regular work and offered as a donation to preserve the memory of the original journey. There is also a large boulder on which a metal plaque describes the event which occurred in the 1950s during the period known by Canary Islanders as '*La Miseria*' (the misery). This was a time of poverty and desperation when Spain suffered hardship and lacked support from the victorious allies after the Second World War; consequently people were obliged to remain in Spain to develop the economy, and emigration from the Canary Islands was severely

restricted. A film entitled 'Guarapo' depicts this famous episode when people risked their lives crossing the ocean, often in inadequate vessels, including the Telemaco.

The second monument is a statue measuring around four metres in height, commemorating Hautacuperche who is depicted carrying a broken bowl in one hand and a spear in the other (see Plate 1...Hautacuperche). He was one of the leaders of the 'Rebellion of the Gomeros' against the Spanish colonial authority on La Gomera in 1488. The Count of La Gomera, known as Hernan Peraza the Younger, was the Spanish representative and colonial master on the island. The rebellion began because the Count was regarded as a tyrant who had broken an agreement between the Spanish and the Gomeros. Moreover, he had conducted an illicit relationship with a gomeran woman known as Iballa. Hautacuperche is celebrated as the man who entered a cave and killed Peraza, but who was himself killed in a second battle against Spaniards protected within the '*Torre del Conde*', the tower house of the Count in San Sebastian. The murder of the Count led to heavy-handed repercussions from his surviving wife, the Countess Beatriz de Borbadilla, involving violence towards, and the enslavement of, the Gomeros.

The slaying of the Count of La Gomera, a historical and politically momentous event is celebrated throughout La Gomera, and is particularly close to the people of Valle Gran Rey, where the conspirators met to plot against the count and where they would pass information while meeting on a small rock located some 200 metres off the coastline of Vueltas, known today as the 'Rock of Secrets'. These meetings and the entire episode have been recounted in stories and song passed down through the generations.

The imposing statue of Hautacuperche was erected on Canary Islands Day (30<sup>th</sup> May) 2007: a plaque commemorates the event with the Canary Island Government, the Island Council of La Gomera, and the Regional Council of Valle Gran Rey giving their support. The establishment of this statue has been promoted by a political grouping 'The Canary Islands Coalition', composed of political parties including the Central Democratic Party which happens to be the majority party holding power in the municipal council of Valle Gran Rey since the late 1980s. It was suggested by one local resident that these politicians are seeking to show an allegiance to the people, as well as promoting the raising of consciousness regarding the distinctive identity of the Canary Islands in relation to mainland Spain.

A Canary Island Government sponsored leaflet explains:

This monument is a testimony to the bravery of the Gomero people, it is in recognition of their nobility and courage and a tribute to the force necessary to arrive at what is today La Gomera: a free community, wealthy and prosperous, with solidarity and the capacity to learn from the past in order to live better in the future. (My translation)

It is interesting to note that both monuments discussed above celebrate the local people and their attempt to avoid oppressive circumstances precipitated by the state (c.f. Bianchi 2004). Both events are well known by people living in Valle Gran Rey and form part of the folk memory as well as formal, official history. People in the valley identify directly with the events whether through considering their own Guanche past or remembering the impact of *La Miseria* on their lives or those of their relatives (see Macleod 2004). This local history linked to monuments contrasts

directly with their association with Columbus which is minimal. Columbus could easily be regarded as a representative of the state, and he is said to have had an amorous relationship with the Countess Beatriz de Borbadilla, an orchestrator of oppression for the Gomeros.

There is therefore a massive contrast between the cultural heritage celebrated by monuments in San Sebastian and that celebrated in Valle Gran Rey. San Sebastian boasts of its association with and accommodation of Columbus who departed the port for his first voyage across the Atlantic. Along with the colonial buildings, a large mosaic in the recently redesigned plaza depicts his route across the Atlantic. Marketing literature has promoted the connection with Columbus and every year festivals celebrate the international connections that have grown since his journeys. Whereas, Valle Gran Rey monuments recollect the brave journey of Gomeros across the same Atlantic Ocean, away from poverty and oppression during the Franco era. They also commemorate the popular rebellion against the early Spanish colonisers. We might explain this contrast by considering that San Sebastian, as capital and the main sea port of La Gomera is celebrating its Spanish colonial and maritime heritage and international links, especially with Latin America. Columbus played an immensely important part in the development of the Canary Islands' as a trans-Atlantic link between the old and new worlds (Fernandez-Armesto 1991). He is an icon, a globally recognised figure, and as such a useful device for gaining prestige and recognition. This means he can be used advantageously for publicity, not the least in tourism terms. The use of Columbus is part of a marketing ploy which looks outwards towards the international community, potential visitors and friends of the islands.

In comparison to San Sebastian and the Columbus connection, Valle Gran Rey is celebrating local heroes. The monuments commemorate the history of the people and are inward looking in that they seek to address indigenous Gomeros, and may serve to bond these people together and to their collective past. The two monuments in Valle Gran Rey do not immediately seek to attract the attention of outsiders, potential visitors. However, they do have the capacity to emphasise the unique history and experience of the local people, something which is of increasing importance in the globally competitive world of tourism where destinations need to establish distinct identities to help attract tourists. It may be a coincidence, but the statue of Hautacuperche now appears as an image on leaflets promoting island culture in the valley tourist office.

A division between the heritage of Spain as nation and that of the Canary Islands, an autonomous region, is visible when we consider the examples above, where the rebellious Hautacuperche and the desperate refugee migrants in the Telemaco sought to challenge the might of the state through direct opposition or escape. The Spanish nation state would not wish to celebrate those who have fought against it, or tried to escape illegally: as a primary area of control the government is able to restrict the public communication of such events. However, given the historical relevance, the distance in time and other factors it clearly does not see these monuments as sufficiently threatening to be discouraged. Certain political representatives have chosen to support the memorialisation of these events and symbolically embrace them as distinct representations of the rich history of the place. Similarly, tourism marketing material is beginning to use them as examples of the cultural distinction possessed by La Gomera.

## **Bayahibe, Dominican Republic.**

### **Introduction**

The following case study of the Dominican Republic deals largely with heritage that relates to the representation of national identity which has been defined (to an extent) in opposition to its neighbour Haiti with which it shares the same island. An example is given of how heritage can be utilised to create a sense of group unity and establish boundaries for the group. A strong sense of history, which has been manipulated to suit powerful elites, is also apparent. In contrast to the national heritage described, the study also examines a grass-roots drive to achieve a sense of local identity, belonging and heritage, through ownership of the land using legal contest, memorialisation and the recording of historic events.

The Dominican Republic shares the same island with Haiti and occupies almost two thirds of the territory, with a population of approximately nine million. Hispaniola was the name given to the entire island by the Spanish after colonisation following its discovery by Columbus in 1492. It had previously been discovered by Amerindian groups thousands of years earlier and they were occupying it when the Spanish arrived: one ethnic group, the Taino were dominant at that time. Santo Domingo, the capital, was founded in 1496 by Bartolomé, the brother of Christopher Columbus. By the early 16<sup>th</sup> century the Amerindian groups were being severely repressed and almost eradicated through illnesses and enslavement. Eventually slaves from Africa were imported to work on the plantations.

In 1697 the western part of the island was ceded to France and became known as Haiti. By 1795 France had gained nominal control over the entire island, but by 1804 Haiti declared independence, the first example of its kind. In 1822 Haiti governed the whole island, although it was eventually defeated, and by 1844 the Dominican Republic declared independence; Spain regained control briefly but independence was recovered in 1865. Thereafter much of the governance of the Dominican Republic has been through dictatorships until the 1960s, with the United States military occupation occurring in 1916-24 and military intervention in 1963. The Dominican Republic is currently a representational democracy (Howard 1999).

This brief review of historic political events illustrates the fraught relationship the country has had with its neighbour Haiti, one that is further exacerbated by ideological differences relating to cultural and ethnic heritage, as well as serious economic disparities between the two nation states, with Haiti experiencing extreme poverty and the Dominican Republic becoming gradually wealthier partly because of income from tourism.

Currently the Dominican Republic is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Caribbean receiving US\$1.8bn in 1997 (Howard 1999). Other sources of income include agricultural and mineral exports, manufacturing and remittances from overseas ex-pats. Despite the dramatic growth of tourism income in recent years, the country remains relatively poor with a GDP of \$US 9,200 per person in 2007.

### **Official cultural heritage**

In his first journey of exploration, Columbus left La Gomera and travelled across the Atlantic eventually reaching the island of Hispaniola. In time the Spanish established a colony on the island, and the capital city, Santo Domingo, contains a large area of Spanish colonial architecture preserved and presented as the '*Zona Colonial*' which has been designated a World Heritage Site. The zone contains a park dedicated to the memory of Columbus with a large statue of the famous explorer as well as the first cathedral built in the Americas, a church, a fort, houses belonging to wealthy individuals, royal buildings, a house for Jesuits, a palace complex, the residence of the son of Columbus who became the first viceroy of the New World, a Franciscan monastery, a hospital, town hall, convent for Dominican followers and numerous other historically important buildings and parks. These all testify to the strong links which the Dominican Republic had with Spain, a connection continued in the official language (Castilian Spanish), and religion (Roman Catholicism). They also form a large part of the 'product' promoted in tourism literature: for example the '*Insight Compact Guide to the Dominican Republic*' (Latrell and Rester 1998) devotes several pages to the subject of the Colonial Zone.

An elite cadre of businessmen and politicians who occupy the upper echelons of government and the establishment have promoted the Spanish heritage of the country and its people, sometimes unfairly overshadowing other groups and ethnicities who have contributed, specifically those of African descent and the original inhabitants, the Taino Indians (Pons 1997: 243; also see Calvo-Gonzales and Duccini in this volume for a similar phenomenon in Brazil). One example of the state officialdom making a deliberate statement about the nation's cultural and ethnic roots is seen in the developing form of the *Museo del Hombre Dominicano* (The Museum of Dominican Man) in the capitol city Santo Domingo. Here, the state had at one time represented its cultural heritage through two huge statues standing outside the entrance: these were of the Spanish priest Bartolome de Las Casas and the Amerindian 'Taino' chief Enriquillo. However, there was one very important group missing: those of African descent, many of whose ancestors were transported to the Dominican Republic from Africa across the Atlantic as slaves. This deliberate exclusion was eventually rectified and a statue to Lemba, the ex- slave leader and symbol of emancipation was erected. As an example of the manipulation of heritage by a powerful group this is exemplary. The governing elite have maintained and promoted their cultural links with the early Spanish colonisers and Hispanic culture. They remain a dominant economic, political and cultural force in the country, and have previously sought to organise their history and heritage very tightly to reflect their prejudices (see Dobal 1997; also Lowenthal 1998 on the bias of historical works and heritage).

The scholar Frank Moya Pons makes the point that in the early days of the Dominican Republic it was a minority who controlled education and communication because they were able to read and write and had the unique capacity to leave documents for posterity; this minority also governed the country. Furthermore, he notes that: 'In all Latin American societies the conquistadors imposed an order of things that obliged the population of indigenous Indians, negroes and mixed races to accept the whites as excellent' (Pons 1997: 238). Dominicans referred to themselves as 'whites of the soil'. This goes in some way to explain the governing elite's antipathy towards the Haitians who were proud of their African slave origins. This mentality has continued

among many members of the establishment and an affinity towards Latin American countries as opposed to the Caribbean grouping, as well as hostility towards Haiti, was noticeable in some newspapers during electioneering in the Dominican Republic in the year 2000 (Macleod 2005).

The production of heritage and representation of a population or place through specifically chosen icons and symbols also occurs in the maritime village of Bayahibe on the south west coast, with a view to attracting visitors. This small village, recognised by many locals as being established in 1798, is represented and marketed by national organisations as a 'fishing village' in brochures and on billboards using images of the picturesque gaff-rigged sailing fishing boats that have been associated with the area. This image is becoming increasingly misleading as the fishermen have dwindled from a total of around 100 in the 1980s, to some 15 in 2004. Most have found work on the motor-boats that ferry tourists to a small island: Saona, part of the National Park Del Este. The fish have been driven away from the coastline by the heavy traffic of motor boats, necessitating the few remaining fishermen to travel much further for their catch, increasing their fuel costs and time spent at sea. In short, the attractive image of the 'fishing village' is rapidly becoming wholly inappropriate to reality in Bayahibe as it develops into a transit port for package tourists on their way to the pristine beaches on the small island of Saona. Very few tourists enter the village to purchase goods or stay in accommodation: rather, they are shepherded onto waiting motor boats and driven off immediately.

### **Grassroots cultural heritage**

From the official state representation of the national cultural heritage and the official image-making and branding of a 'fishing village' we move to unofficial local 'grassroots' understandings, interpretations and cultural representations of community and family heritage. One family, the Britos, is busy writing up its history and has made claims to ownership of Bayahibe village land and surrounding plots in the courts (Macleod 2005). They believe that their ancestor, Juan P. Brito, who arrived from Puerto Rico, had several children, and the youngest, a son, bought the land, but he had his title to the land stolen many years later by the local government. They have nailed the ancestor's portrait to a post in the village square and celebrate him as the 'Founder of the Village'. This portrait of the 'founder' is joined by another oil painting nailed to the post: that of one-time politician Senator Alberto Giraldi, a native of France and a politician with the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD), elected as Senator for La Romana province which includes Bayahibe. He defended the villagers in their struggle for the rights to the land which they believed to have been wrongly taken from them. He is described as 'The father of the liberation of Bayahibe' in a hand-painted description next to his portrait (see Plate 2...Heroes of B.). This 'unofficial' creation of a special place is a physical manifestation of cultural heritage, a form of 'representational space' as distinguished by Lefebvre (1991) in the sense of space created by local inhabitants through their daily lives and experience: as opposed to one created by government planners (see Macleod 2004b: 40-41).

Together with the written history of the Brito family in the region the commemorative representational space begins to engender a strong sense of heritage among family members which is disseminated to other villagers. It is a narrative of the past and an explanation of the present situation in the village that inhabitants hear regularly and interact with. For the Brito family the land is their heritage, as is their family history,

both of which are indigenous productions, and they are not sanctioned by the officials of the nation state. In theory it might be possible for the Brito family to create a museum commemorating their family history and that of the village, and we could imagine this becoming a tourist attraction; however, a lack of resources at least means this is unlikely.

The culture of the villagers, including family life, local history, music, dancing, religion, cooking, farming and fishing is overlooked as a resource for attracting visitors. This contrasts to stereotypical aspects of 'Caribbean' culture that are promoted in brochures and sold to tourists as entertainment in nearby hotels where evening performances are given which include rum, calypso, reggae, and merengue. The closest that many hotel guests get to the villagers is through helicopter trips over the village and quad-bike rides through it. The hotels actively discourage their guests to leave the hotel grounds unaccompanied (this corresponds to findings recorded by Sommer and Carrier in this volume).

In this example it seems that the world of the villagers, their own sense of family and village heritage is very distant from the cultural heritage promoted by the state: the division between official and unofficial heritage is clear. There is a sense of a muted celebration of freedom from oppression by the state in the case of the Brito family. Nevertheless, there is a common theme promoted by the state which can see commercial advantage to utilising the fishing heritage and tradition of the village. And yet the reality is that the villagers and other business interests are busily, albeit indirectly and through necessity, marginalising the fishing economy in this small community. The power of the tourism industry has led to the diminution of the fishing in the village, and at the same time encouraged the government authorities to brand Bayahibe as a fishing village: an ironical and unsustainable outcome. Meanwhile, the relatively poor villagers struggle to retain their historical links to the land through aggressively pursuing their legal rights, recording their history and representing their ownership through visible, if fragile, public memorialisation. Recognition of the local heritage as rich and distinctive has not yet been made by the tourism industry.

## **Dumfries and Galloway, Scotland**

### **Introduction**

Dumfries and Galloway occupies the south west corner of Scotland, and extends some 90 miles East-West and 45 miles North-South, containing a population of around 140,000. It has a rich history embracing visitors, invaders and occupiers from a variety of ethnicities including the Celts, Angles, Britons, Irish-Scots, Romans, Normans, Vikings and the English; all have left physical remnants on the landscape and cultural elements among the people (see Robertson 1992). There are stone circles, Roman roads, medieval castles, ruined abbeys and examples of fine architecture to be found throughout the region. Writers, poets, artists, engineers, philosophers, scientists, bankers, inventors have all been illustrious inhabitants at some time; one local man became the founder of the US Navy. Its proximity to England invited many major battles, sieges and the building of castles and fortified homes; it also led to the development of a no-mans land separating the two countries, a zone known as the 'debateable lands', where the infamous 'Reivers' undertook to steal cattle, amongst other nefarious activities.

Nevertheless, despite its rich cultural heritage, the region is currently considered to have problems establishing a strong identity in modern times by agencies such as VisitScotland and the local council. The local tourist board helped develop the strap-line 'The natural place to be' which whilst being pleasant, is undoubtedly insipid and indistinct, and might easily be applied to other destinations (Nepal uses 'Naturally Nepal'). Tourism brochures have certainly described the more memorable, dramatic historic events in the region, but a genuine capitalisation on the region's cultural heritage does not yet seem to have occurred. Powerful groups of people, and groups struggling for power have left their marks across the landscape through built heritage and archaeological remains, but many visitors to the region are unaware of the rich history in their midst, and arrive for the purpose of relaxation, and more recently, vigorous outdoor activities such as mountain-biking: the attraction of natural heritage is strong.

There is a large gap between the assets which the region possesses, its comparative advantage, and the way it uses its resources, its competitive advantage. This section shows how unofficial groups have begun to use the cultural resources of the region to promote particular places, especially towns. Whereas the well known Scottish icon, Robert Burns, continues to be vigorously promoted by national organisations, but unfortunately the region lacks the clear and total association with him and becomes hindered in its objectives.

Tourism is very important to the region in terms of employment and income; it receives around one million tourists per year contributing almost £150 million, and in addition 11 million day visitors, (VisitScotland 2006; TNS 2006). It is estimated that 11 % of the working population are involved in tourism-related services, slightly higher than the national average for Scotland. It is nevertheless regarded as an agricultural region, providing a substantial proportion of Scotland's cattle and sheep; it is heavily forested and has a light manufacturing industry based in Dumfries.

### **Robert Burns: Scotland's National Poet**

Robert Burns spent his final years in and around Dumfries before his premature death in 1796: he had chosen to live in this region, as opposed to his region of birth, Ayrshire. He had worked as a customs and excise officer and was an active member of the local defence corps and Masonic club, as well as being a man of letters and song. Burns was famous in his own lifetime and had a wife and lovers who bore him many children. He travelled widely in the country and there are sites that claim association with him throughout Scotland. In Dumfries alone there is a Robert Burns Centre; his old town house – now a museum; the Globe Inn, which keeps a bedroom where he stayed as an exhibit, as well as a dining room devoted to his memory, and his mausoleum in St Michael's Church graveyard. Just outside the town is Ellisland Farm where Burns tried to make a living as a farmer: it now retains his living quarters as an exhibit. Dumfries possesses a 'Burns walk' along its river (The Nith) and has an impressive statue of him with his dog at one end of the town, while at the other end, opposite St Michael's church, stands a recently erected statue of his wife, Jean Armour. One taxi firm sports his facial image on their cars; and one man offers a private 'Burns Tour' of associated places in Dumfries. There are, in short, a plethora of physical associations with Burns throughout Dumfries and its proximate region, and the tourism authorities regularly mention him in their marketing media: for example,

the brochure 'Dumfries and Galloway See and Do 2006' produced by VisitScotland Dumfries and Galloway devotes an entire page to him as 'Scotland's National Bard' describing his life, and listing the opening times of his home, the Globe and the Burns Centre (D&G 2006: 22).

However, there is one problem regarding Burns in Dumfries, and that is Ayrshire, where Burns was born and where the Burns National Heritage Park is based. This unspoken competition means that Dumfries is certainly not the monopoliser of Burns and his memory, and has to some extent been the weaker candidate as a visitor attraction. Nevertheless, because of the strength of support for Burns due to his national and international fan-base he remains an icon and deemed worthy of commemoration. Only recently a national competition known as 'Burnsong' was held in schools celebrating his legacy, and furthermore in 2009 a 'Homecoming' event will celebrate 250 years since his birth, on an international scale.

Robert Burns is a national icon and has been claimed by numerous places around Scotland as someone with whom they have a strong association. There are many sites in Dumfries which have strong links with Burns, yet despite the critical mass of highly important sites the town and region do not attract large numbers of visitors solely through the poet and related cultural heritage. This is partly because of the strong competition from Ayrshire. Powerful organisations funded by the Scottish Government continue to market Burns in Dumfries, and he is an example of the state sanctioned national identity used as a heritage attraction.

### **The Theme Towns: grass-roots developments**

In contrast to the focus on Burns, there are local grass-roots initiatives that are celebrating cultural heritage which is not directly promoted by public funded organisations. The theme town developments are examples of such initiatives: an interesting and recent phenomenon in the region. These are initiatives largely undertaken by the indigenous population, sometimes with the stimulus from national agencies that have created new structures of cultural heritage, for example: Wigtown Book Town, Kirkcudbright Artist's Town and Castle Douglas Food Town (see Plate 3, CDFT). These towns are building on their association with products, activities and people, and have evolved their proactive branding since the year 1998 when Wigtown was awarded the title of the first Scottish Book Town. Much of the work has been initiated by volunteers; thereafter opportunities arose for funded posts to employ town development officers. Specific bodies have steered and managed the towns' developments which have included book festivals, the refurbishment and organisation of an old town hall building, art exhibitions, a campaign for a national art gallery outpost, and annual festivals.

Wigtown itself has experienced a growth in the number of businesses in the town, a substantial increase in property value, and an increase in the number of visitors, all directly related to its book town status. Kirkcudbright has experienced a growth in its visitor numbers linked to its regular exhibitions. This success is stimulating other towns to build on their heritage and promote themselves based on a local characteristic: thus Moffat, once a spa town, is promoting itself as a centre of 'Wellbeing', and Newton Stewart is emphasising its links with outdoor pursuits. Another town, Dalbeattie, has considered using its associations with granite quarrying

and building. All hope to increase the numbers of visitors into their towns and encourage spending in the vicinity.

### **Authority and the presentation of cultural heritage**

The above towns are promoting products that generally fit into the definition of 'culture' as understood by tourism agencies: a form of 'high' culture supposedly appealing to the educated audience. The concept of 'culture' has been interpreted by VisitScotland (ex-Scottish Tourist Board) in tourism brochures and development strategies as the following: visual arts, literature, film and music (DGTB 2001): 'cultural products' as listed include festivals and events and castles (DGATP 2007). This approach tends to ignore other aspects of culture as understood in its broadest sense by anthropologists (e.g. Geertz 1973; Tylor 1871), which include different modes of livelihood, folk beliefs and customs, everyday activities and material items: the type of material culture that forms the bedrock of many local heritage collections around the world, and is to be seen increasingly in Dumfries and Galloway (e.g. the small towns Creetown, Dalbeattie and New Galloway) manifest in collections of photos, household products and community memorabilia (c.f. Lowenthal 1998: 3).

One recent example of unofficial, grass-roots development is the 'Wicker Man' music festival which is very loosely based on a 1970s film made partly in the region. This festival began as an outdoor music festival in 2002, run by a farmer on his own land. It received a lot of press attention in the region because The Wicker Man film itself was regarded as anti-Christian by some people, and the festival was consequently roundly criticised for giving the region a bad image. In its early years it attracted a few thousand people, a figure that grew to just over 10,000 by 2007. The festival has received some financial support from the council, and due to its continuing success is now being promoted in tourism literature. It represents the division, albeit hazy, between officially promoted cultural heritage and grass-roots, unconventional unofficial heritage. It also shows how non-mainstream heritage can become adopted by officialdom relatively quickly.

Nevertheless, we can conclude that there continues to be a representation of the cultural heritage of Dumfries and Galloway by 'authority' (state power) such as official agencies including VisitScotland, in terms of icons and 'high' culture: with such notables as Robert Burns the poet, together with images of castles (see the brochures: D&G 2002; D&G 2004; D&G 2006). Such ubiquitous icons may equally well be used to represent the nation as a whole and inadvertently veil the region's local distinctiveness. A similar approach can be seen with the National Trust for Scotland: McCrone *et al* (1995) show how traditional and conservative the membership of this organisation is, as is its definition and approach towards heritage. It is an organisation which is dominated by people from the more powerful sectors of Scottish society: the authors note 'From the outset, this organisation has had a strong aristocratic and landlord domination of its council' (Ibid: 101). In a time when tourism destinations need to distinguish themselves and their unique selling points the narrow focus of some Scottish agencies can become an expensive oversight.

The division between the official agencies of the nation and unofficial grass-roots initiated promotion of heritage is not absolutely clear in this case study. Many of those promoting themes towns are contributing their time voluntarily while holding jobs in local government or quangoes. Some towns have received seed-funding from

the local or national government. However, in the majority of cases, it is the local people who live in the towns who have done the actual work and initiated and supported the projects, as opposed to centrally controlled agencies like VisitScotland or Scottish Enterprise taking an official lead. Moreover, it must be concluded that it is those local people with cultural capital (Bordieu 1986) in the sense of formal education, professional experience and network contacts, and having discretionary time, who are able to take a lead in the development of theme towns.

## Conclusion

Power is exercised variously by different groups in accordance with their ability to enact their desires. There is a clear link between power and the promotion of heritage, especially for the purposes of tourism, as only those able to do so can express, manifest and legitimately promote their heritage on a large scale, significant enough to attract the attention of potential visitors, or to influence the wider public. For example, in the Dominican Republic officials of the government influenced the interpretation of the nation state's ethnic cultural heritage as represented in the official Museum of Dominican Man and originally ignored the African ethnic group in its symbolic statues outside the entrance; while the original Spanish colonial buildings remain protected to an extent and promoted through their World Heritage Site status. This contrasts with the Brito family's relatively miniscule and fragile commemorative portraits of the 'village founders': a cultural heritage space constructed to inform villagers and possibly visitors, with one of their intentions being to reinforce their claims to the territory.

Similarly, within La Gomera, government agencies help maintain the dominance of the connection with Columbus as well as the museumification of the Guanche culture and peasant activities that represent the island's cultural heritage and offer specific marketable products. In contrast, aspects of recent cultural heritage, for example fishing traditions, are being overlooked, while religious ceremonies and festivals are becoming increasingly commercialised. Meanwhile people and events that represent acts against locally perceived state repression have become memorialised officially only recently, such as the Telemaco and Hautercuperche; but they are not promoted to visitors as attractions.

Within Dumfries and Galloway government agencies such as VisitScotland continue to promote Scottish icons including Burns, and built heritage, including castles, which dominate the promotional media: they are directing and constructing a particular 'tourist gaze' (see Urry 1990). However, grassroots desires to represent folk heritage and very recent memories is growing and beginning to create a new cultural image for the region. This is particularly apparent with the creeping success of the theme towns.

These examples have shown that there has been a gradual assimilation of grass-roots cultural heritage into various nation states' representation of their cultural experience and heritage. The African heritage in the Dominican Republic; the rebellious Gomero Hautacuperche, and illegal Gomeran emigrants on the Telemaco; the theme towns and the Wicker Man Festival in Dumfries and Galloway: all have become part of the representations promoted by state agencies. Where tourism enters as a consideration into the equation the state, through its agents, becomes especially active in promoting

identities and facets of history that are deemed attractive. Thus we perceive the irony of the promotion of Bayahibe as a fishing village at the same time as its fishing industry disappears. Heritage promoted for the purposes of being consumed by tourists might be seen as superficial and possibly irrelevant to those indigenous people experiencing contemporary events. Columbus is largely irrelevant to the current inhabitants of La Gomera: identities are promoted beyond the locale which may be out of joint with the destination's inhabitants and their worldview. Economic forces are driving the image-making, operated by powerful business and political interests.

Statues and other portrayals of actual people become important and fascinating parts of this cultural heritage process because they are representative of those who once lived, and they become emotional touchstones (sometimes literally) for the local populace and others. A statue becomes a symbol of a person and a group of people. Because of their intrinsic power to represent and epitomise someone or something, statues are also vulnerable to symbolic destruction, especially those with religious or political significance. When political regimes replace others they will often remove the physical monuments that celebrate people, the iconic statues representing previous masters, for example the felling of Saddam Hussein's statue witnessed globally, or the removal of communist heroes in post-soviet Europe. This destructive process reveals the symbolic weight of such statues and their significance as representational statements. Historically they will generally have a strong link with the people of the territory where they are placed, rather than outsiders or foreign visitors. However, because of this very fact, they will become markers of distinction, cultural signifiers and therefore assets in the drive to differentiate one place from another in the global tourism market. The role of the statue and the public portrait is expanding as they become potential tourist attractions.

The awareness among policy-makers and the general public of the economic importance of tourism and the part that cultural heritage can play in attracting visitors has led to an increase in the products of heritage (see Hewison 1987) and promotion of heritage by not only policy makers but also indigenous populations: this is the case in Dumfries and Galloway. Whereas, in contrast, for the Brito family of Bayahibe, Dominican Republic, action leading to the public recognition of local heritage is a statement of ownership and identity. This difference in the utilisation of heritage indicates different levels of power between population groups: in Dumfries and Galloway the residents have legal security over their property but desire to represent their own heritage and compete for additional outside resources, especially in the form of visitors; but in contrast, in Bayahibe the villagers need to prove their legal right to their land first. Their ownership of the land, as the cohesion of the community in the sense of physical attachment to land and buildings, is continually threatened by powerful people in the shape of local and national governing bodies and big business interests. Primarily, in Bayahibe the people need to make a successful claim to their cultural and natural heritage. They are currently in the process of creating their history and consolidating their rights to property. After this has been secured they may utilise these assets to attract visitors. At the same time, powerful groups, including government agencies, are using the fishing heritage to publicise and market the region.

The recent increase in importance of cultural heritage as an attraction for tourists is due to factors including a bigger market overall, a wealthier and more educated tourist

base, a changing demographic profile of tourist, a desire to offer something more than sunshine, sand and sea for competitive purposes. Consequently cultural heritage becomes an additional attraction and a distinguishing element in a destination's inventory of products. This increase in potential value means that those who can gain from promoting aspects of culture will do so, and may be intent to display or interpret facets of their own culture that do not reflect well or fairly on all inhabitants, or simply give a false image.

Powerful groups have always been able to shape official historic records and public memory to their liking; however, with the introduction of a potential tourism market in mind, they will be more inclined to think of the public image abroad in order to attract visitors. Add into this mix the increasing popularity of constructing grass-roots heritage memorials and collections, or attractions based on indigenous culture, together with the ostensible democratisation and opening up of communication channels afforded by the internet, the relationship between power, tourism and cultural heritage is becoming increasingly complex and relevant.

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