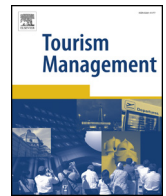




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## Book Review

**Scotland and tourism: The long view 1700-2015,**  
**A.J. Durie. Routledge, London and New York**  
**(2017). viii + 133 pp. (Hbk.), £110 ISBN:**  
**9781138854604**

Alistair J. Durie, who died shortly after this book was published, was a Scottish historian, latterly of the tourism industry of his native country. *Scotland and Tourism: The Long View* comprises a short Preface followed by eight chapters.

The first chapter begins with a short and unresolved discussion of the problems in defining tourism, before proceeding to consider some of the issues pertaining to the quantity and quality of historical sources on tourism in Scotland. Chapter 2 establishes how Scottish tourism evolved in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries including such disparate influences as the role of saltwater bathing and the writings of Walter Scott. Chapter 3 focuses on the role of transport in tourism development. Whereas the railways are usually credited with the opening up of tourism elsewhere in Great Britain, it is interesting to read here of the important role of the steamship, which facilitated touristic possibilities for larger numbers of the indigenous population as well as non-Scots, not least on the west coast. Together with the railways, wide-ranging steamship routes in Scotland encouraged the development of day excursions (and associated social problems such as public disorder rooted in drunkenness). The chapter also contains interesting vignettes on the impact of cycling, tramways and, inevitably, the arrival of the motor car on Scottish tourism.

Chapter 4 examines forms of Scottish tourism and includes informative vignettes on the role played by Thomas Cook and his company, and on the peculiarities of marriage tourism facilitated by more generous (to men) Scottish laws on divorce. Class, income and gender played an important role in the stratification of tourism. Sporting tourism was a largely upper class male phenomenon; golf was allegedly more democratic; and seaside resorts, initially attracting the upper class, soon followed the same path of democratisation. People in search of 'health cures' not least for tuberculosis, were an important market.

Chapter 5 makes the case for the distinctive features of Scottish tourism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries focusing on the 'doun the watter' (down the water) phenomenon; hydropathic hotels; and sporting tourism. The first of these refers to the role played by steamships and railways in transporting (primarily) the working class citizens of Glasgow to nearby scenic and bathing places in the Firth of Clyde – and sometimes beyond – including associated impacts on the development of resort towns. Growth of the hydropathic hotel sector was linked to a range of beliefs about health cures and principally attracted the middle classes. The role of Scotland as the playground of the wealthy comes out forcefully in the account of sporting tourism of the hunting, shooting and fishing kind (although golfing also expanded rapidly). The positive effects on the income of highland estates of slaughter of the local fauna were remarkable, appealing, Durie argues, to old and new (i.e. emergent bourgeois) markets. The management of estates for the purposes of these activities also generated conflict over

land rights.

Chapter 6, entitled 'Growth and fluctuations' focuses mainly on the effects of the two world wars and the great depression on Scottish tourism. The last of these curtailed but by no means ended working class tourism within the country but there was a decline in loyalty to place (mainly seaside resorts) and an increase in day excursions. Camping and staying with friends and relatives also increased in popularity as an alternative to boarding houses.

Chapter 7, 'The balance sheet in economic and cultural terms', is arguably the book's most complex as its title might suggest. Until comparatively recently, the absence of any systematically gathered statistical data makes generalisations about the economic impact of tourism in Scotland largely impossible. Durie does not comment on the shortcomings of modern techniques (and interpretations) of such data which, for example, almost invariably exaggerate the number of jobs dependent on tourism. In general he appears to favour the view that tourism has been a significant if underrated and ignored (by the establishment) contributor to the Scottish economy, a theme subsequently revisited in Chapter 8. The cultural dimension to the discussion focuses on the impacts of tourism (and vice versa) on the Scottish diet, the manufacture, sale and fashionableness of tartan and the Presbyterian imperative of observing the Sabbath as a day of no public activities. Chapter 7 also contains a short but informative discussion on the emergence of the hotel management 'profession' in Scotland with some useful insights into the role played by women in the business.

Chapter 8 is a very brief commentary on Scottish tourism since 1945. A great many industry voluntary associations played an important role in sustaining tourism at all levels including education which led to the creation of The Scottish Hotel School, this reviewer's old employer, initiated in 1944 and ultimately absorbed into the University of Strathclyde (closed 2009). Scottish tourism thrived reasonably well in the immediate post-war period and from the 1960s was, in policy terms, included in the national structure of tourism administration initiated by the Development of Tourism Act 1969. It was negatively affected, as elsewhere, by the growth of overseas travel possibilities facilitated by cheaper airfares. Durie is optimistic about the recent and future prospects for tourism, pointing to the success of various forms of heritage and 'nature' tourism, development of the short city break, innovative inter-city competition for tourist business (sparked to some extent by the ambitions of Glasgow as a former National Garden Festival city and European City of Culture), and continuation of hunting, shooting and fishing.

An overall evaluation of this short book is surprisingly complex to construct. It is unquestionably an easy and accessible read. In the Preface, Durie claims that prior to the 1980s the history of (Scottish) tourism was taught nowhere at university level. It may certainly be the case that little was taught, but, if memory serves, it was covered in at least one course provided by the late Dr John Heeley in the University of Strathclyde's undergraduate tourism programme. As an introductory text for such a course this book would serve well but the market is, by definition, restricted. A weakness of the text is undoubtedly the brevity with which it treats the period since 1945, and in particular the history,

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and impact, of public policy for tourism on the Scottish scene. The author avers that the history of Scottish tourism is one of (mainly) continual success and this is also the spirit of the final chapter. The evidence for this is, however, somewhat more nuanced than he asserts as reference to, for example, [MacLellan and Smith \(1998\)](#) and [Kerr \(2003\)](#) would have revealed.

Pointing to expansion in the growth of historical research in tourism, Durie notes (pp. 11–12) that: ‘as tourism has been recognized by a variety of disciplines as respectable academic territory, so it has attracted, particularly from literary and cultural theorists, far too much writing which preens itself on jargon and obscurity.’ In this he is undoubtedly correct and they are sins that he avoids. There is a great deal of original observation in the book of value to those interested in tourism both in Scotland and beyond. The clarity and enthusiasm of

Durie’s writing is inspiring and infectious and the text is a creditable and significant contribution to the academic literature of tourism.

#### References

- [Kerr, W. R. \(2003\). \*Tourism public policy and the strategic management of failure.\* , London: Routledge.](#)  
[MacLellan, R., & Smith, R. \(1998\). \*Tourism in Scotland.\* London: International Thomson Business Press.](#)

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