GAELIC SCOTLAND

The Transformation of a Culture Region

Charles W J Withers

ROUTLEDGE LIBRARY EDITIONS:
HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

ROUTLEDGE LIBRARY EDITIONS:
HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

Volume 19

GAELIC SCOTLAND

This page intentionally left blank

GAELIC SCOTLAND

The Transformation of a Culture Region

CHARLES W J WITHERS

LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published in 1988 by Routledge

This edition first published in 2016
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

and by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

© 1988 Charles W J Withers

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or reproduced or utilised in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publishers.

Trademark notice: Product or corporate names may be trademarks or registered trademarks, and are used only for identification and explanation without intent to infringe.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-138-95340-6 (Set)
ISBN: 978-1-315-65887-2 (Set) (ebk)
ISBN: 978-1-138-96303-0 (Volume 19) (hbk)
ISBN: 978-1-315-65902-2 (Volume 19) (ebk)

Publisher's Note
The publisher has gone to great lengths to ensure the quality of this reprint but points out that some imperfections in the original copies may be apparent.

Disclaimer
The publisher has made every effort to trace copyright holders and would welcome correspondence from those they have been unable to trace.

GAELIC SCOTLAND

The Transformation of a Culture Region

Charles W J Withers

ROUTLEDGE
London and New York

First Published in 1988 by
Routledge
11 New Fetter Lane, London EC4P 4EE

Published in the USA by
Routledge
in association with Routledge, Chapman & Hall, Inc.
29 West 35th Street, New York, NY 10001

© 1988 Charles W J Withers

Printed and bound in Great Britain by Mackays of Chatham PLC, Chatham, Kent

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reprinted or
reproduced or utilized in any form or by any electronic, mechanical, or
other means, now known or hereafter invented, including photocopying
and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, without
permission in writing from the publishers.

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

Withers, Charles W.J.
Gaelic Scotland: the transformation of
a culture region: — (historical
geography series).
1. Highlands (Scotland) — Civilization
I. Title
941.1'5 DA880.H7

ISBN 0-415-00459-4

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

ISBN 0-415-00459-4

CONTENTS

List of Tables viii
List of Figures ix
Preface xi
Acknowledgements xiii

1 INTRODUCTION: THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS AS CULTURE REGION 1

THE EMERGENCE OF THE HIGHLANDS 3
MODELS OF HIGHLAND TRANSFORMATION 6
Political models 6
Economic models 8
Sociological models 11
TOWARDS A MODEL OF CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION 16
Culture and cultural geography 16
Culture and class: towards a more analytic model of culture 21
Hegemony and the means of cultural transformation 27
Cultural transformation and the Scottish Highlands 33

2 CIVILISATION AND THE MOVE TO IMPROVEMENT 57

ENLIGHTENMENT, CULTURE AND IMPROVEMENT 58
Anglicisation, improvement and intellectual production 59
Enlightenment and material production 61
IMPROVEMENT AND INVENTION: 'THE HIGHLANDER DELINEATED' 64
The Highlands geographically apart 64
The Highlands socially apart 65
The Highlands 'discovered' 66
THE EXTENSION OF POLITICAL CONTROL 1609-1784 72
From regional problem to national issue 73
Clans, chiefs, and political obedience 76
The political bases to material change 79
URBANISATION AND 'COLONIES OF CIVILITY' 86
Colonisation and cultural transformation 88
Planned villages in the Highlands 91
CONCLUSION 95

3 ANGLICISATION AND THE IDEOLOGY OF TRANSFORMATION 1609-1872 110

ANGLICISATION AND AUTHORITY 110
The evolution of educational policy 1609-1709 112
POLICIES AND MEANS OF ANGLICISATION 1709-1811 121
The SSPCK as an institution of cultural hegemony 122
Highland libraries, the General Assembly and the Royal Bounty Committee 136
POLICIES AND MEANS OF ANGLICISATION 1811-1872 145
The Society for the Support of Gaelic Schools 145
General Assembly schools 155
CONCLUSION 164

4 POPULATION GROWTH AND THE TRANSFORMATION OF HIGHLAND AGRICULTURE 1650-1891 175

THE DEMOGRAPHIC FOUNDATIONS TO MATERIAL TRANSFORMATION c.1690-1891 178
Totals, rates of change, and the geography of population change 179
The mechanisms of population change 192
THE TRANSFORMATION OF HIGHLAND AGRICULTURE 1650-1886 204
First signs of change: leases, rents, and money income c.1650-1755 207
Processes of class formation and the going of the tacksman 210
Runrig, enclosures, and changes in arable agriculture c.1755-1850 216
Cattle, sheep, and changes in pastoral agriculture c.1764-1850 222
Prices, rents, and capital accumulation, 1750-1850 229
Destitution, famine, and agricultural collapse, 1836-1850 236
Recovery and legislation: Highland agriculture 1850-1886 246
CONCLUSION 255

5 INDUSTRIOUSNESS AND THE FAILURE OF INDUSTRY 272

INDUSTRY AND INDUSTRIOUSNESS: INDUSTRY AS A CIVILISING PROCESS 275

MANUFACTURES IN THE HIGHLANDS 280
The rise and fall of kelp c.1760-c.1830 281
The textile industry in the Highlands, 1727-1830 289
The fishing industry in the Highlands, 1786-1884 299
Lesser industries in the Highlands 308
LABOUR MIGRATION AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION 311
CONCLUSION 314

6 THE GAELIC REACTION TO CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION 327

LANGUAGE, RELIGION, AND GAELIC CULTURAL CONSCIOUSNESS 332
Language maintenance and Gaelic consciousness 333
Religion in Gaelic society: religious revivals and the Disruption as alternative hegemony, 1740-1843 337
GAELIC POETRY AND OPPOSITION TO TRANSFORMATION 343
Gaelic poetry and social change in the Highlands, c.1698-c.1812 344
The poetry of the clearances, c.1790-c.1880 347
The poetry of the land agitation, c.1880-c.1892 349
SOCIAL PROTEST AND COUNTER-HEGEMONY, c.1780-c.1930 351
A tradition of opposition?: resistance, riots, and protest, c.1792-1874 355
The Highland Land Wars and the wider context of protest, 1882-c.1930 371
CONCLUSION 389

7 CONCLUSION: THE TRANSFORMATION OF A CULTURAL REGION 402

THE IDEOLOGY AND INSTITUTIONS OF CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION 403
The ideology of 'improvement' 403
Anglicisation, educational institutions, and cultural-hegemony 404
Institutions of industry and industriousness 406
PROCESSES AND PATTERNS OF MATERIAL TRANSFORMATION 407
Demographic factors 407
Capitalisation and the Highland economy 408
Economic change and class formation 409
The geography of transformation 411
THE HIGHLANDS IDENTIFIED 412
The outsiders' image of the Highlands 412
Highland regional consciousness 413

Bibliography 417
Index 453

TABLES

1.1 List of parishes in study area 35

3.1 Population attending SSPCK schools in the Highlands, 1719-1825 132
3.2 Population attending SSPCK schools in the Highlands, 1719-1825 133
3.3 Population attending Edinburgh Gaelic Society Schools in the Highlands 1812-1885 152
3.4 Population attending General Assembly schools in the Highlands, 1826-1838 159

4.1 Population totals and intercensal population change (percentage change), Highland counties, 1755-1891 180
4.2 Intercensal population change in selected Highland districts and parishes, 1755-1891 183
4.3 Crude birth rates, crude death rates, and illegitimacy ratios by Highland counties, 1855-1895 195
4.4 Population statistics of the Annexed Estates, 1755-1756 199
4.5 State of rents, payments, and arrears on Lord MacDonald's estates on Skye, by parish, 1823-1824 and 1844-1845 233
4.6 Rent increases and the proportion of rent in arrears on selected farms in Lewis, 1814 to 1856-1857 237
4.7 State of rents, payments, and arrears on Lord MacDonald's estates on Skye, by parish, 1857-1858 and 1868-1869 251

5.1 Production levels, prices, and value of kelp in the Hebrides, c.1764 285
5.2 Production levels, prices and profits for Lewis kelp, 1811-1836 288

6.1 The characteristics of 'the Highland disturbance' as a four-stage challenge to landlord authority 353
6.2 Locations and types of Highland protest, 1704-1874 359
6.3 The principal events of the Highland land wars, c.1882-c.1930 373

FIGURES

1.1	Scotland and the Highland Line	2
1.2	The Highland parishes and other parishes in study area	34
1.3	The Gaidhealtachd as enumerated in 1698	38
1.4	The Gaidhealtachd in 1881	39
1.5	The Gaidhealtachd in 1981	40
1.6	Places mentioned in the text	44
2.1	'The "Ossianic" Highlands': Glencoe from Fittler's Scotia Depicta (1799)	69
2.2	'The "Lost" Highlands': Thomas Faed's The Last of the Clan	71
2.3	The distribution of the Annexed Estates in the Highlands	84
2.4	The distribution of planned villages in the Highlands	93
3.1	The location of schools in the seventeenth-century Highlands	116
3.2	SSPCK schools in the Highlands in 1755	127
3.3	SSPCK schools in the Highlands in 1774	128
3.4	SSPCK schools in the Highlands in 1792	129
3.5	SSPCK schools in the Highlands in 1825	130
3.6	Highland parishes in which Royal Bounty Committee catechists were active, 1730-1740	143
3.7	The location of Gaelic Society schools in the Highlands, 1811-1860	150
3.8	The location of the principal supporting institutions for the Gaelic Society schools in (a) 1819 and (b) 1849	156
3.9	General Assembly schools in the Highlands in 1832	162
4.1	Percentage rates of population change in the Highlands, 1755-1801	186
4.2	Percentage rates of population change in the Highlands, 1801-1851	187
4.3	Percentage rates of population change in the Highlands, 1851-1891	188
4.4	Highland migration to Paisley, 1851	191
4.5	Highland migration to Dundee, 1851	193
5.1	The principal areas of kelp and textile manufacture in the Highlands	282
5.2	SSPCK spinning schools in the Highlands, 1773-1825	297

5.3	The principal fishing villages, deer forests, and lesser industries in the Highlands	303
6.1	The location of protest and disturbance in the Highlands, 1777-1929	358
6.2	The iconography of eviction: eviction of tenantry from Ross's Real Scottish Grievances (Glasgow 1854)	366
6.3	The iconography of confrontation: the Sheriff of Stornoway reading the Riot Act at Aignish farm	382

PREFACE

This book is an essay in cultural and regional historical geography. It explores the cultural transformation of the Highlands of Scotland, the Gaidhealtchad, or Gaelic Scotland. It is written both from a feeling that a cultural perspective upon geographical change has been neglected in writings on the Highlands and in the hope that it will stimulate interest from all those involved in questions of regional identity and transformation. The main period covered is from 1609 - the Statutes of Iona - to the 1886 Crofters Act and the Highland 'Land Wars' of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries although consideration of several events and processes earlier and later has meant that discussion has ranged beyond and before these dates. But no all-embracing historical-cultural geography or cultural history of the Highlands has been attempted. Rather, in drawing upon some of the concerns of cultural geography, from a wide range of source material, and a notion of culture from Marxist cultural theory, I have sought to put an understanding of the cultural transformation of the Highlands on a more equal footing with other explanations of change. The 'transformation' of the title refers not to questions of physical landscape change (though elements of landscape change in this sense are discussed), but rather to 'the making' of the people of the region and to their transformation as a socially-constituted process or set of processes which took a certain expression over a given period of time.

The Highlands did not exist as a cultural region within Scotland until the late 1300s. Distinct in language - Gaelic - and in the prevalence of a clan-based social system, largely separate from the rest of Scotland in terms of agricultural economy and without a base in manufactures, the Highlands remained distant and to an extent unknown until the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. From that period, they were 'discovered' and subject to agrarian

change, industrial development, religious unification, anglicisation through education, and to a whole suite of policies of 'improvement' geared toward the transformation of Highland society and culture. Improvement and transformation are not just material 'things' however. They involve questions of attitude and ideology, of changes not just in language as a given attribute and in established material practices but also questions of regional identity, of consciousness. I have tried to show here how the transformation of the Highlands as a culture region has been effected intellectually and ideologically as well as materially and to show how the effects of this combined ideological and material transformation varied by class within Highland society, by place and district within the region as a whole, and over time. In so doing I have tried to understand and explain the views and values of those people experiencing the transformation - to consider their needs and capacities - as well as documenting the concerns and intent of those directing and initiating the processes of transformation. This concern itself stems from a feeling that explanations of social and cultural change in the Highlands have too often been couched in terms of an immutable progression - from clan to class, from Gaelic to English, from 'traditional' to 'modern' - a transformation without either opposition or internal contradiction. Understanding the historic Highlands has also been hindered by being too commonly represented in terms of Highlands 'versus' Lowlands with change coming only 'from outside and above' with little thought given to differences of class, of mental outlook or other distinctions within the Highlands. These criticisms are not true of all writing on the Highlands - Dodgshon, Hunter, and Richards stand as notable exceptions - but they are relevant to much that has been written about the region and its people. In considering these and other issues in what follows, questions of that varying historiography that has attached itself to the Highlands will be seen to be no less important than the actual transformation of the region.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This book owes much to many people for their advice, guidance, and patience. I have reviewed and discussed the work of a large number of people here but I am particularly indebted to Malcolm Gray, James Hunter, Annette Smith, Bob Dodgshon, Eric Richards, Anand Chitnis, and David Stevenson for allowing me to draw upon their work in the way I have. Several people have commented on earlier drafts of various chapters and have discussed with me the intriguing problems of Highland historical geography - I should like to thank Ronald Black, John Christie, David Daiches, Nick Fisher, Mike Heffernan, Lindsay Hewitt, Jean Jones, Peter Jones, Peter O'Brien, Susan O'Brien, John MacInnes, Rudiger Schreyer, and Rick Sher for their help in this way. I am particularly grateful to Bob Dodgshon and William Gillies for their scholarship and critical advice freely and warmly given, and to Robin Butlin I owe special thanks for his perceptive comments and patience as Series Editor. I acknowledge with thanks the permission granted from the Syndics of Cambridge University Press to reproduce data published in M.Flinn (ed.), Scottish Population History from the 17th Century to the 1930s, especially from Tables 5.3.1; 5.4.1; and 5.5.5 reproduced in part here as Table 4.3. For permission to reproduce illustrations, I am grateful to Annette Smith (Figure 2.3); Hugh Stevenson and Glasgow Museums and Art Galleries (for Faed's Last of the Clan (Figure 2.2); the Mitchell Library and City of Glasgow District Council (for Figure 6.2); and to The Illustrated London News Picture Library (for Figure 6.3). For sending me a list of Scottish planned villages and allowing me to draw upon his unpublished material on planned villages (shortly to appear with John Donald Publishers Ltd.), I am particularly grateful to Douglas Lockhart. My colleagues in the School of Geography and Geology have with good humour tolerated, perhaps enjoyed, my absence for periods of research on which this book is based. To them I extend my thanks. Parts of this book

have been presented in seminars at Loughborough University, Edinburgh University, Aberdeen University, and All Souls, Oxford, and I should like to record my thanks to the respective audiences. I am especially indebted to the librarians, archivists, and staff of those libraries and record offices I have worked in: the Universities of Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Dundee, Glasgow, and Oxford; the Sandeman Library, Perth; the City Archives and Local History Library, Dundee; Central Region and Grampian Region Record Offices; Strathclyde Regional Archives; the City Library and City Archives, Edinburgh; the National Library of Scotland; and, chiefly, the Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh. I am grateful to the Keeper of the Records and to the Registrar General of Scotland for permission to use and quote from documents in their care. Financial assistance has come from the British Academy, the Nuffield Foundation, the Institute of Historical Research and the College of St. Paul and St. Mary. Sheila Taylor, Erica Breuning, Mary Lailey, and Gill Hunt have all turned rough drafts of maps and text into finished copy with cheerful professionalism. Peter Sowden of Croom Helm has been tolerant and a source of much good advice. But perhaps chiefly I am grateful to my wife Anne for her support and patience and to my children who helped keep things in perspective: to them, with love, this work is dedicated.

1

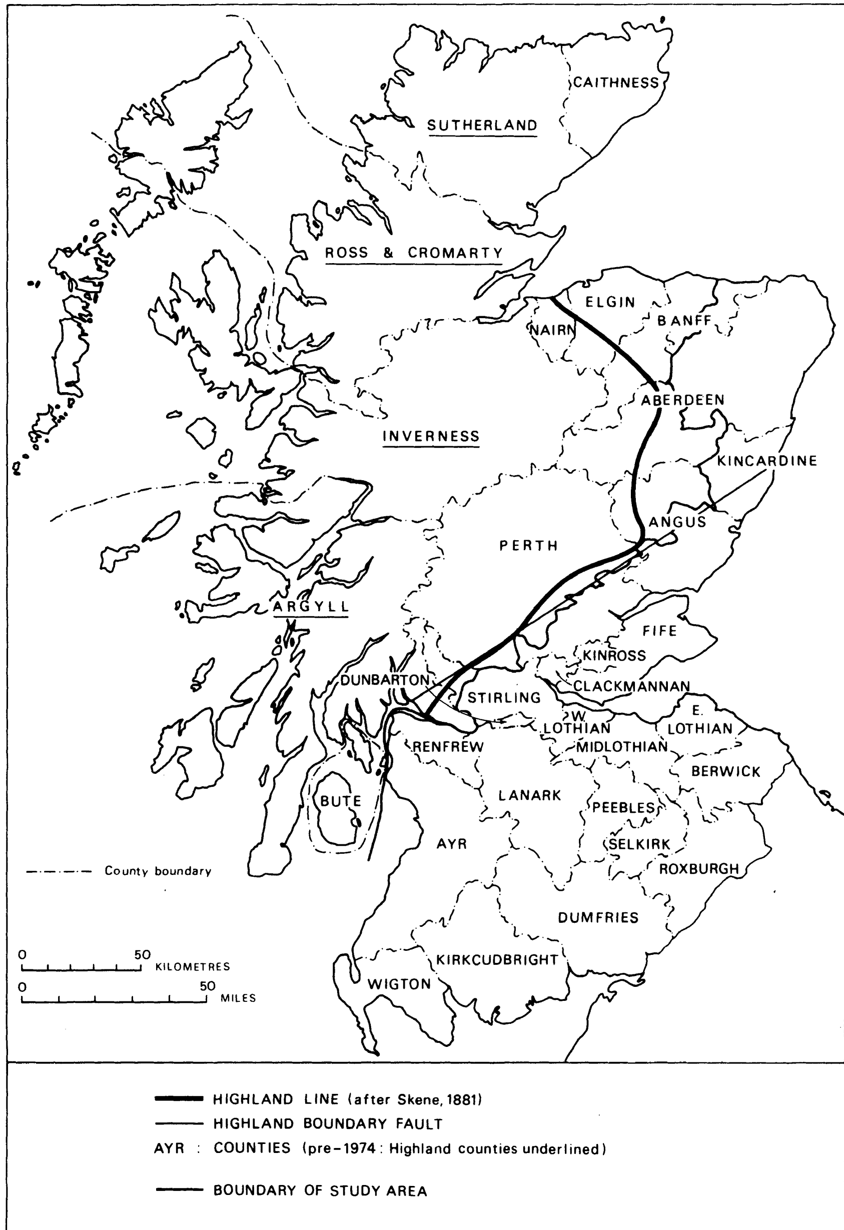
INTRODUCTION: THE SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS AS CULTURE REGION

> The Highlands is a very general name for a large tract of the Kingdom, which appears to be best defined by the boundary of the Gaelic language.1

The Highlands of Scotland, together with the outlying western islands, present a region both distinct from the Lowlands and itself characterised by areas of individuality. Geologically, the Highlands are divided from the Lowlands by the Highland Boundary Fault which runs from Stonehaven on the east coast to Helensburgh on the west and divides the Precambrian rocks of the west and north from the younger Palaeozoic sedimentary rocks of the Midland Valley to the south and east.2 To the geographer, this upland massif to the north and west is separated from the Lowlands by the 'Highland line' and represented as the 'Highland counties' - Argyll, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland, Inverness - together with parts of northern Perthshire and western Caithness (Figure 1.1). The Highlands region as a whole is seen as one whose climate is cool and wet, whose underlying geology has determined a scanty soil cover and where the incised lochs and mountainous terrain have made communication difficult, human settlement limited, and cultivation of the land an uncertain affair. Compared to the rest of Scotland, the Highlands are ill-provided with natural resources such as coal and iron. The relief, with much of the area over 250m, has limited land use largely to rough pasture and forestry.3 Population is today thinly scattered, concentrating in several towns along the coastal margins. Even in the past when numbers and distribution were different from today, Highland Scotland was never as densely populated as the Lowlands, although shifts in balance between population and resources in the rural Highlands occasioned levels of poverty and hardship more widespread and severe there than in the Lowlands.

Whilst the Highlands and Islands may be considered

Figure 1.1 Scotland and the Highland Line



distinct in a number of ways from Lowland Scotland, the region should neither be seen as uniform in its characteristics nor wholly separate. Not all to the north of the 'Highland Line' is typically Highland: the soils are not everywhere thin and unproductive nor the land everywhere dissected by narrow lochs and high ranges. The division between Highlands and Lowlands is not a simple division between north and south but much more one between the 'farming Highlands' to the south and east and the 'crofting Highlands' to the north and west. The soils of coastal eastern Ross and Cromarty and parts of eastern Sutherland, for example, are closer in type and productive capacity to those of the Lowlands than to soils in the upland west of those counties. The narrow coastal strip around Inverness, in the northern parishes of Moray, Nairn and the eastern upland areas of Aberdeen, has a richness of landscape now and an agrarian economy in the past more Lowland than Highland in nature. Discussion of the geography of Highland Scotland must needs recognise this diversity within unity; in the way people drew a living from the land, in the balance between population and resources, and in the connections different parts of the Highlands had with outside influences.

In the past the Highlands as a whole, both the hill country proper and the coastal plains, have been considered as the area within which the Gaelic language was spoken or the clan was the predominant social system. Definition of the Highlands by language, the Gaelic-speaking culture area or Gaidhealtachd is particularly important. But although it is common today to separate Highlands from Lowlands on the basis of agrarian economy, geology or even topography and climate, and, for the geography of the past more proper to distinguish between the two areas on the basis of social system and language, the terms 'Highlands' and 'Lowlands' describing two cultural provinces within Scotland have not always been in existence. Neither the terms themselves nor the division within Scottish culture and geography they denote had any meaning before the end of the fourteenth century.

THE EMERGENCE OF THE HIGHLANDS

Several reasons may be advanced to explain the social and geographical emergence of the Highlands as a distinct region within Scotland by the late 1300s. Firstly, those changes in society and on the land attendance upon the extension of feudalism in medieval Scotland were felt less in those parts north of the Forth and Clyde than in the

Lothians or the Scottish borders. In the upland north and west, such changes - the expansion of burgh economies, the role of justiciars, baronies and other feudal controls on land and society - were hardly felt. Secondly, the simple fact of distance and the remoteness from authority allowed the population in the Highlands to exist largely unaffected by events in the south. In addition the Gaelic language underwent a major decline in social and political status during the medieval period. In the eleventh century, Gaelic, known as the Scottish language by virtue of its political prestige and nationalist associations was predominant throughout Scotland and in use, to varying degrees, from the Tweed to the Pentland Firth. But by the late fourteenth century Gaelic had retreated into its Highland habitat and had lost its connotations as the Scottish language.4 At the same time as it was retreating from the Lowlands, Gaelic, was being replaced by English as the language of civility and status. As a result of its rise up the social scale and the connotations of Gaelic with geographical and social inferiority, the English language in use throughout Lowland Scotland became known as 'Scottis' or Scots; Gaelic, in losing its nationalist and political associations, became known as 'Irish' or 'Erse' in reference to its Irish origins. This paralleled the emergence of the Highlands-Lowlands division in the then Scottish consciousness. The result of these changes was, by about 1400, the appearance of a dualism in Scotland's geography between the Gaelic Highlands and the Scots or English-speaking Lowlands. The Highland-Lowland boundary line is thus a construction from a particular period in Scottish history. The terms 'Highlands' and 'Lowlands' have no place in the historical sources surviving from the period before about 1300: 'they had simply not entered the minds of men'.5

This division is, to one author, apparent throughout Scotland's literary history: 'as far back as the literature of Scotland goes, the Lowlanders regarded the Highlanders with the feelings of contempt and dislike which the representative of a higher form of civilisation (as he conceives it to be) cherishes toward the representative of a lower'.6 But it is a distinction that would not have been articulated before the 1400s, and is not one shared exactly by the Gaelic historical and literary tradition. MacInnes notes, 'although Gaels recognise more or less the same division of the country into Highland and Lowland, there are certain subtle differences in that division we are perhaps prone to ignore ... Gaidhealtachd and Galltachd (the Lowlands) are abstract terms, not ordinary place-names, and the areas they designate are not drawn with

precise boundaries'.7 Several Gaelic tradition- bearers and poets extend the idea of the Gaidhealtachd beyond the Highland line, to encompass those areas of Scotland once Gaelic but now Lowland, and to claim for Gaelic an historical heritage greater in the past and lost through outside agency. Alexander MacDonald, the eighteenth-century Gaelic poet, writing of the 'Miorun mor nan Gall' - the 'great ill-will of the Lowlanders' - pointed to the need to re-affirm Gaelic literary tradition as the bearer of a more truly Scottish culture. Assessment of literary evidence must, of course, bear in mind the selectivity of the writer and the historical context of the work, but it is nonetheless true that such evidence 'from within' - Gaelic poetry and historical tradition, native expressions of sentiment or protest - has been too often ignored by geographers and historians of Highland Scotland. As MacInnes further notes, Gaelic tradition has regarded the Highland Line not as a fixed border line between two cultures but as reflection of the earlier decline of a greater Gaelic Scotland. But to the Lowlander, when that region now known as the Highlands entered history and literature, Gaelic cultural forms and value systems no longer carried with them any sense of a lost Scottishness or even of contemporary status. Gaelic had become the language, and, in wider terms the symbol of a geographical region whose cultural forms and social order were anathema to the standards of civilised, English-speaking, Scotland.

Highland society in 'the old order' was structured in a three or four-fold division of chief, tacksman - a middle tenant, often related to the chief, who sublet land to those beneath him - and the peasantry, divided into a variety of tenants and sub-tenants. The Highland economy was founded upon the holding and working of land with the basis to agriculture lying in the working of arable for subsistence and, from the later 1600s, the export of black cattle. Cash derived from their sale was from that period important in meeting cash rents and as exchange for the import of grainstuffs. The form of agrarian organisation in the Highlands was runrig. The basic unit of agricultural organisation was the joint farm in which tenants worked the land co-operatively. Land, held through the older form of tenure, ward-holding, was allocated through the clan system. The clan system acted not only as the basis to the working and holding of land, but also provided a patriarchal bond, based on military service, between chief and tenantry. Variations in this system stemmed from local differences in soil quality or land management. The extent to which proximity to the Lowlands permitted the circulation of population, ideas, and capital and allowed

relief in times of hardship or permitted earlier adoption of change in some parts of the Highlands than in others also occasioned variations in Highland social and economic structure. Together with the decline of the language and the break up of the clan system, changes in the way the majority of the Highland population derived a living from the land have been widely recognised as crucial elements in the transformation of the Highlands.

MODELS OF HIGHLAND TRANSFORMATION

Carter (1971) identifies two explanatory models for the changes affecting Highland Scotland since about 1700: political, where explanation centres upon the consequences of single acts or events, chiefly upon Culloden and its aftermath; and economic, in which change is seen as the result of population pressure and 'impersonal economic forces' which, in combination, drew the Highlands into the sphere of influence of the English and European market economy.8 Although neither type of model is categorised as exclusive nor untouched by the other, and recent scholarship has added to and modified them, this distinction provides a useful basis to examination.

Political models

Several nineteenth-century works consider change in the Highlands to be the consequence of political acts. The concern of Gregory, Maclean, Keltie, and Mitchell was with the efforts of the Scottish monarchy in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries to establish civil control in the Highlands following the break-up of the Lordship of the Isles.9 In the late 1490s and early 1500s, steps were taken by James IV (1488-1513) for the expulsion of many of the vassals of the old Lordship from their possessions. Plans were laid to establish justiciars or sheriffs for the west Highlands.10 James VI (1567-1625) led expeditions to pacify the Highlands. Although some local government was established, plans aimed at pacifying the Highlands in this period were more statements of intent than wholly effective agencies of civil administration.11 Nor should we suppose that Highlanders were as outsiders then termed them - 'barbarous for the most parte' - where, in the words of a royal document of 1527 - '...nane of the officeris of ye law dar pass for fear of yair lyvis'.12 These early acts indicate concern within central authority over the virtual independence of Highland chiefs and the separateness of the

Highland populations and mark the beginning of a history of legislative control aimed at the Highlands from outside.

More recent work has focussed upon the evolution of political policy toward the Highlands and the role of particular institutions in directing changes in Highland affairs. Campbell has considered Highland history and the history of Gaelic in particular to be one of deliberate extirpation.13 Other writers point to 1609 and the Statutes of Iona as marking the beginning of effective political control by centralised government over the Highlands.14 The Statues sought 'to bring the Hielandis and the Iles to civilitie' through education and reform of chiefs' authority, with the intent of creating a class of English-speaking landowners above the Gaelic peasantry. Gaelic was seen as synonymous with 'barbaritie and incivilitie'.15

Difficulties in administering political control in the Highlands were compounded by the facts of geography and the nature of government. Systems of administration, modelled on the English example following the 1707 Union, supported through patronage and run by Justices of the Peace, were not suited to the Highlands.16 Clan chiefs commanded greater authority than the government until the aftermath of the 1745 Rebellion. But even before then, the structures and loyalties of the clan system might have been turned to greater advantage in securing order in the Highlands had central authority in London or Edinburgh pursued a firmer policy in the first decades of the 1700s. The Disarming Act of 1716 and the Royal Bounty Scheme of 1726 both fell short of their intended aim, for example, and General Wade's schemes for civil control were never fully realised, given 'the difficulty that attends the executive of the processes of the Law in the Highlands'.17 Several institutions were established during the eighteenth century whose purpose was to bring 'civility' to Highland affairs through a combination of industry, the English language, and agricultural improvement. The Board of Trustees for the Encouragement of Manufactures and Fisheries in Scotland was begun in 1727 with the purpose of promoting industry among 'the inhabitants of the north'.18 More influential were the schemes employed on the Forfeited Annexed Estates, set up in 1752 ' for the better civilising and improving the Highlands of Scotland'. 'Good Government, Industry, and Manufactures' went hand-in-hand with the erection of schools on the estates 'for instructing young Persons in Reading and Writing the English Language'.19 The Society in Scotland for Propagating Christian Knowledge (the SSPCK), begun in Edinburgh in 1709, was the chief agency in eighteenth-century Highland education.

A political perspective to explanation of the changes affecting Highland Scotland since the early seventeenth century is important to our overall understanding. Individual figures and institutions, single acts, the evolution of policy must all be accorded a role where necessary. But placing too great an emphasis on political factors alone as turning points in Highland affairs misrepresents the often haphazard nature of government and administration in the Highlands and places unjustified weight on the evidence of intention rather than that of result. The significance of the Jacobite rebellions in the eighteenth century, the 1746 Heritable Jurisdiction Act and other acts before and after Culloden, for example, rests more in their ideological intention than their immediate results, more in their consequences one with another and with other factors than in isolation.20

Economic models

Cregeen has pointed to the central role of the house of Argyll as motivators of both political and economic change in the south-west Highlands.21 The house of Argyll, the senior branch of clan Campbell, rose to prominence through service to the Crown. By the first decades of the 1700s, the house of Argyll was the major land-holder and controlling force in the west Highlands, the indispensable agent of central government and a staunch supporter of Prestbyterianism. Schemes for 'civilising the Highlands' prepared by the Dukes of Argyll in their role as chief of clan Campbell and feudal superiors over a large tenantry sought to unite political and economic objectives; loyalty, obedience and progress through agricultural improvement, industrial advance, and hard work: 'I'm resolved (wrote the third Duke to his chamberlain on Tiree in 1756) to keep no tenants but such as will be peaceable and apply themselves to industry'.22 The second Duke had earlier changed the whole basis of land-tenure when, in 1710 in Kintyre and 1737 in Mull, Morvern and Tiree, he offered tacks of farms not to kin or even through the tacksman but to the highest bidders, whoever they might be: 'Almost at a single stroke of the pen, clanship and vassalage ceased officially to count in the tenurial system of the largest Highland estate, and this a decade before the '45'.23 The nature and management of landholding in the south-west and the fact that political loyalty was a pre-condition of tenancy were, however, untypical of the Highlands as a whole. The south-west and eastern Highlands differed from the north and west Highlands in two further respects; in their

demographic experiences and in the rate and nature of economic change from the later eighteenth century. All part of the Highlands experienced population growth in the period 1750 to 1850, but those areas south and east of the Great Glen were characterised by moderate increase in contrast to the north and west where overall totals and rates of population increase were greater. In part, this was the result of the policies of landlords in the areas of greatest population increase who, until the second quarter of the nineteenth century, tended to retain population resources to supply labour-intensive developments such as kelp-making. Explanation also lies in the differential scale of out-migration - greater from the eastern Highlands than the north and west - which eased pressure in the eastern districts.24 The more limiting physical environment in the north-west not only meant that the balance between population and resources tipped more easily toward dearth and crisis there than in the south and east Highlands, it also meant that the economic basis for improvement was more restricted.25

Several studies point to this regional variation. Innovations in agriculture were taken up earlier and more successfully in areas on the fringes of the Highlands than in the hill country of the north and west.26 Enclosure, new patterns of rotation and longer leases were followed from the second half of the eighteenth century by the large-scale farming of Cheviot sheep. In the north and west, changes in the agricultural base to society and land-holding and the move away from a labour-intensive communal economy to a system that was land-intensive and profit-seeking were not only later in coming and, in places, more dramatic in impact than in the south and east, they also occasioned a greater hardship given the increase in population, the decline of kelp-making, and the build-up of rent arrears. Failure of the potato crop in 1837 and again in 1846-1847, precipitated further clearance and migration of population and for landlords in debt, necessitated the sale of estates for sheep farms or forestry. Richards work on Sutherland has documented the impact in the north of these processes of change.27 Increased profits to be gained from the sale of wool justified the clearance of population from interior Sutherland in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Relocation of population on the coasts led to the growth of fishing villages and, not just in Sutherland, to the emergence of that occupational pluralism - part-crofter, part-fisherman - that characterised life for many by the later 1800s.28 In other parts of the Highlands that have provided the focus to more detailed study - Morvern, the eastern areas

of Ross and Cromarty and the Black Isle, and on the Forfeited Estates - similar shifts towards a money economy, adoption of new methods of agriculture, establishment of local industry and the clearance of population and sale of estates have been noted.29

In outline, these are the 'impersonal forces' of the economic model of Highland transformation. Thus Smout and Gaskell, and, earlier, Hamilton and Gray, regard change in the Highland way of life as the result of what Gray has termed 'the total impact of the powerful individualism and economic rationalism of industrial civilisation on the weaker, semi-communal traditionalism of the recalcitrant fringe'.30 These economic models may be criticised on the grounds that they are based on the premise of a dual economy within Scotland, and, as Carter notes, on an analogy 'or more strictly a homology, between the economic history of England and that of Scotland'.31 Impersonal economic forces become the chief (if not the only) motivating agents for the change from 'traditional' to 'modern' society. Turnock has assessed these changes for Scotland as a whole in terms of Rostow's model of stages of economic growth and the move from a pre-industrial to a post-industrial society, from traditional social structures to modern social systems.32 Seen in these terms, the commercialisation of Highland agriculture from the 1730s onwards and the interpenetration of progressive methods into an economy that both contemporary and modern commentators commonly note as 'pre-industrial', 'backward', or 'primitive' comes to be regarded as 'improvement', 'modernisation', or 'development' in a way that not only denies other causal factors involved but also codifies the behaviour of Highlanders as passive respondents to outside influence without pausing to consider their role as participants and active agents. Change is unidirectional, irreversible, externally imposed. Richards has recently shown how 'the effort to understand' the Highland problem, in the past as today, has been conceived largely as an economic issue either, in the case of contemporaries, in regard to the policies chosen for Highland 'improvement', or, for modern researchers with the advantage of hindsight, the reasons for the failure of those policies.33 Regarding changes in the Highland economy as later and slower than those characterising Lowland Scotland which, in turn, were later and slower than similar events in England ignores variations in the rate and regional pattern of change, and separates those involved in the changes from the making of their own history; actual historical sequences and social relations are replaced by ideal type constructs.

In addition to work that has focussed on the political

bases to change or economic causes of regional transformation, there has been work of a broadly sociological nature.

Sociological models

Carter has considered the suitability of models of social and cultural pluralism and the ideas of domain and domination in explanation of the changing relationship between clan chief and Highland tenant as one between patron and client. The concept of a plural society, deriving largely from work in a colonial context, revolves around the existence of two or more cultural sectors within a single political unit. In the model, the integration of society depends not upon consensus but upon the domination of one sector over the other through institutions of kinship, religious, legal and educational structures and so on. Differences in land-tenure, kinship and in economy and politics are used by Carter to suggest that eighteenth-century Scotland was characterised by two distinct cultural sectors. But given the continued political ineffectiveness of central authority, the continuance of clan feuds, cattle raiding, and the autonomy of clan society until 1745, Scotland was not a plural society until the later 1700s.

Extending from this framework and also drawing upon work done in a colonial context, Hechter has considered the relationship between England, Lowland Scotland, and the Gaelic Highlands to be one between 'core' and 'periphery'. The Highlands are Scotland's and Britain's 'internal colony'.34 The concept of internal colonialism 'focuses on political conflict between core and peripheral groups as mediated by the central government'. Commercial, industrial and economic relations in trade, credit, and capital are directed through the institutions and authority of the core. In addition, membership of bodies established to facilitate the dependent development of the periphery is usually drawn from the core. The economy of the periphery rests upon a single primary export. It is characterised also by migration and mobility of peripheral workers in response to fluctuations in price of this primary good, the growth of an urban economy in the core and by the deterioration of social structures within the periphery resulting from such things as resource depletion or over-population. The socio-economic basis to internal colonialism is reinforced through juridical, political, and military measures, and within the periphery, there is discrimination on the basis of language, religion and other cultural forms. Many of these factors find expression in Highland Scotland: the erection of forts and barracks to facilitate

military control; the role of the Board of Trustees, the Forfeited Annexed Estates in stimulating economic growth; the movement of Highlanders to work in Lowland agriculture or industry; and those agencies whose end purpose was the anglicisation, 'improvement', and cultural transformation of the Highlands. Macleod has considered the policies of James VI in the early seventeenth century towards his 'Highland frontier' to parallel closely those designed to settle Ireland and America in the same period.35 And in the eighteenth century, the SSPCK produced folios on religious unity and the spread of English in which the Highlander was equated with the North American Indian.36

Colonisation, whether in Lewis, Kintyre, Ulster or Virginia, depends on the economic and political dominance of the core. For Smout, the core-periphery model is clearly relevant: 'the Highlands provided the most striking example on the British mainland of an internal periphery....the whole problem of the Highlands is a complex subset of the problem of Scotland itself as a periphery.'37 Centre-periphery relationships exist at many levels, but it is clear that as the term is used by Wallerstein and others to describe relations in the accumulation of capital and establishment of manufacturing industry within a single world-economy, Scotland lay on the fringes of a core located in the Low Countries, Northern France and England.38 Just as Scotland sought to shed its peripheral character in relation to England, particularly after 1707, so the Highlands have been increasingly subject to the core influences of Lowland Scotland.39 Those studies that have sought to explain economic and social change within Highland Scotland as the result of processes consequent upon the Lowland-centred expansion of capitalism as the dominant mode of production recognise the core-periphery model as of value, though they perhaps place too much weight on economic forces as causal processes. Dickson and Clarke consider that

> Despite the great differences between the development of the Highland economy and that of Lowland agriculture in the period 1780-1830, both were the result of essentially the same kind of forces. In both cases, a landowning class increasingly oriented to financial gain undertook a more thorough commercialization of agriculture in response to the particular constraints and market opportunities with which it was faced.

They further note

> Although class polarization was a feature of agrarian Scotland generally in this period, it assumed a particularly severe aspect in the Highlands. In part, this reflected the geographical and climatic disadvantages of the region and, in particular, its peripheral subordinate position in the British economy.40

Others likewise see the history of the Highlands in terms of regional underdevelopment, arising for one author from 'the process of articulation of modes of production, in particular the articulation of capitalism with precapitalist modes'. 41 For others, the Highland case may be comparable either with Latin American underdevelopment as a feudal periphery of metropolitan monopoly capitalism,42 or with other regional inequalities within Scotland, themselves the result of unequal social appropriation of capital in the past.43 More recent work has adopted a socio-economic welfare approach to Highland life, though not in historical explanation.44

For Carter, the emergence of class relationships within the Highlands, especially those between landlord and tenant replacing those between clan chief and tenant, may be understood in terms of an evolving patron-client relationship of domination.45 Three forms of domination, or, to use Wolf's words upon whom Carter draws, 'types of domain', may be distinguished; 'patrimonial', 'prebendal', and 'mercantile'. Patrimonial domain is control exercised through kinship; 'this control implies the right to receive tribute from the inhabitants in return for their occupance'. In prebendal domain, control is exercised through state officials who draw tribute for state purposes and for their own purposes. Prebendal domain control implies 'a much greater degree of centralizing, a much wider scope of central authority, than patrimonial domain, which exhibits a greater autonomy on the part of the various domain holders'. In mercantile domain, 'land is viewed as private property of the landowner, an entity to be bought and sold and used to obtain profit for its owner'.46 Control is exercised through rent. As Carter notes, we may regard 'the recent history of the Highlands as a change from patrimonial domain to mercantile domain. The chiefs increasingly came to define clan lands as capitalisable assets rather than as land to be handed on to their successors'. The opportunities for the controlling elite to maintain economic dominance and cultural influences were certainly much greater by the later 1700s.47 But in understanding class relationships, the assessment paid to relations between classes and between ideal-typified

notions of landlord and tenants has perhaps too often obscured relationships between individuals <u>within</u> classes and occupations.48 When questions of ideology are placed alongside shifts in relationships <u>within</u> the tenantry, the departure of the tacksman, the destruction of the joint-farm runrig system, and penetration by an externally-derived capital-intensive market economy, and considered in terms of a differing consciousness of what the Highlands represented, it is possible to advance explanations that rest more upon resistance to agencies threatening existing social relations and more upon questions of regional identity than upon externally motivated impersonal economic forces.

It is clear from even this limited exploration that a large body of literature exists upon the historic Highlands, and that this literature has drawn upon a number of models and perspectives in the search for explanation.

It is also clear that political and economic models of explanation have enjoyed an unwarranted primacy over explanations that consider the place of the Highland people, their culture and beliefs, or their reaction to change. The Highlands have suffered not only from what one author has called 'the enormous condescension of history',49 but also from a stereotype view of what that history has been. Valuable though much of the above scholarship is, it is still largely true 'that while old simplifications about Highland history have been replaced by scrupulously documented accounts of the ways in which the modern economic structure of the region was established, the people upon whom estate manangement imposed their policies have been almost completely neglected.'50 Further, the transformation of the Highlands was not just economic and political. Less often considered though no less important are the perhaps more subtle shifts in Highland life in the past - the decline of Gaelic, the expansion of schooling, the place occupied by religion, the limited efforts to establish manufactures and extend a 'spirit of industry' as a means of social change. Transformation of the Highlands has been both a material and an intellectual process. Yet little attention has been paid to the policy of school and church authorities and to the ideology and means of control employed by those agencies involved in the region's transformation. Anglicisation and urbanisation, religious unification and education, a new cultivation of mind as well as of land were all closely linked in the past though they are not so commonly linked in modern research.

It is important to understand that the region and its people have long been characterised in the eyes of outsiders and those of different values, class, and language, as

'dissenting' from established religion and by a social and geographical distance from authority. It was this sense in which the Gaelic Highlands were in Scotland but not of it (or, more crucially, held values or were believed to hold values alien to the dominant classes within Scottish society), that provided the rationale to those policies which aimed to extend Lowland influence. From the early seventeenth century onwards, cultural change as a process that was at once economic and political, material and ideological, was seen as crucial to the 'cultivation' and 'improvement' of the Gaelic Highlander and to the incorporation of the Highlands into the British political system and market economy. Anglicisation was a central element in this policy. Nicol Graham, writing of Highlanders in 1747 that 'their want of our language evidently prevents their making improvements in the affairs of common life',51 epitomises a view held by many then and one that has its origins a century or more earlier and a persistence until the later 1800s. The below quote, from a 1760 report to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, makes clear not only the disaffection felt for the Gaelic language but also hints at the ideology of, and cultural hegemony practised by, those in authority regarding the continued use of Gaelic in the context of the economic and social development of the Highlands.

> In the western Highlands and islands, the inhabitants universally speak the Gaelic language, and are generally unacquainted with that which is used in the other parts of Great Britain. This defect alone lays them under great disadvantages, both with regard to religion, and to civil life... The common people can carry on no transactions with the more southern part of Great Britain, without the intervention of their superiors, who know the English language, and are thereby kept in that undue dependence, and unacquaintance with the arts of life, which have long been the misery of these countries. Till the partition arising from different languages be removed, and the common language of Great Britain be diffused over the Highlands, the inhabitants will never enjoy, in their full extent, the benefits of religion and civil government.52

What follows is an attempt to understand the efforts made through 'the intervention of superiors' to remove ' the partition'. As we have seen, this is not a novel conception: 'Most of the interest of Highland history...

turns on the efforts that were made to close or narrow the gap between Highland and Lowland living conditions and society.'53 But what is suggested here is that anglicisation and those other means intended to civilise the Highlander - to 'close the gap' - were neither separate one from another nor peripheral to those other 'arts of life' - agricultural change, industrial development and so on - more usually considered in work on the historic Highlands. As Cregeen has rightly noted,

> What destroyed the old Highland social and political structure was its growing involvement in the general cultural influence of their neighbours to the south, that is England and the Scottish Lowlands. This influence, expressed in speech, manners, clothes, religion, political sympathies and activity, trade, seasonal migration and so on, was at work in the Highlands long before 1745 and reached its climax considerably after.54

Gaelic was a symbol of Highland culture and in some senses, anglicisation may be seen as the focus of cultural transformation but it did not occur in isolation. The formation of class relations, the adoption of new agricultural methods, the implementation of schemes of local industry, the evasion of rent, land wars, and the various geographical and social levels at which these and other changes occurred are inseparable elements in the cultural transformation of the Highlands.

TOWARDS A MODEL OF CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION

An understanding of what is meant here by cultural transformation not only raises at the outset the questions of what is meant by culture and how in particular it has been used in the historical and geographical explanation of given regions and peoples but also of allying an analytic view of culture with observed changes in Highland Scotland.

Culture and cultural geography

Introducing a variety of works whose concern was the cultural explanation of historical and geographical change, Wagner and Mikesell (1962) identified five themes - culture, culture area, cultural landscape, culture history, and cultural ecology - which constituted 'the core of cultural geography'. Culture for them drew attention to

communities of persons occupying a certain extended and visually continuous space and on the numerous features of belief and behaviour that are held in common by member [sic] of such communities'. Culture 'rests upon a geographic basis'; 'language .... is obviously a critical component of any culture': in sum, 'cultural geography studies the distribution in time and space of cultures and elements of cultures'.55 We have seen that the Highlands in the past were defined on the basis of the geographical extent of spoken Gaelic, the area over which the clan system held sway as a particular social system and cultural trait, by given material practices, and crucially (yet most indefinably), on the grounds of a separateness rooted in received belief and motivating ideologies: by, on the one hand, the perceptions of outsiders for whom the Gaidhealtachd was unknown, irreligious and uncivilised and, on the other, by the constituent beliefs and practices of Highlanders themselves whose collective regional consciousness of themselves as apart from (even above) Lowlanders was yet also underlain by internal tension between and within the constituent clans and kin groups. Given these factors, it is possible to see Highland Scotland as a 'culture region' or 'culture area', whose distinctiveness rested upon a human population sharing similar or related cultures or single related culture traits or complexes, and whose cultural history has been too often typified as the decline of inherent and 'traditional' Highland cultural forms under the influence of an externally-imposed English-speaking culture complex. The expansion and later retreat of the Gaelic language area, the spread of established religion, and the dissolution of kinship-based social structures and tenurial practices might all be used as 'cultural traits' both to identify the Highland 'culture area' and to shed light on its transformation. The association of relief, rainfall, and cultural characteristics within a given area highlight the Highlands as Scotland's 'heartland' or Gaelic 'cultural hearth', a sort of 'Pura Scotia' in the sense Fox, and later, Bowen, have considered Wales a 'Pays de Galles', with a Welsh cultural core or zone of 'cultural continuity' (Pura Wallia) and a fringe of 'cultural replacement' (Marcha Wallia).56 In both cases, the core is now relict, an 'archaic fringe' to the English-speaking 'core society' more 'modern' in its attributes. Meinig's model of core, domain, and sphere in his study of the Mormon culture region may be placed within the theme of culture area. In this model, the 'core' is that area 'displaying the greatest density of occupance, intensity of organization, strength, and homogeneity of the particular features characteristic of the culture under study'. The

'domain' is where those features are dominant over others not of that culture, and the 'sphere' is that outlying fringe where members of that culture live as a minority among those of a different culture.57 It is tempting to see the emergence of a Highland presence in lowland cities and further afield from the later eighteenth century as 'the sphere' of Gaelic culture, and change in the Highlands as the break-up of 'the core', but in so doing, emphasis is placed more upon description of patterns than explanation of causes.

In another sense, it is suggestive to consider the Highlands as a 'cultural landscape' in which the arrangement, style, and materials of such elements as field boundaries, house types, and settlement distribution together with language, dress and a given natural setting produced a distinctive way of life or 'genre de vie'. In Sauer's terms, 'the cultural landscape is fashioned from a natural landscape by a culture group. Culture is the agent, the natural landscape is the medium, the cultural landscape is the result... With the introduction of a different - that is, an alien - culture, a rejuvenation of the cultural landscape sets in, or a new landscape is superimposed on remnants of an older order'.58 Understanding the Highlands as a cultural landscape would perhaps by limited by our fragmentary knowledge on early occupying groups and 'natural' landscape,59 and the variable quality of later source material,60 but an approach that focussed on this 'interplay between a given human community, embodying certain cultural preferences and potentials, and a particular set of natural circumstances',61 might provide a general framework for study as well as insight into the distribution of cleared clachan settlements, the distribution of sculptured stones, the evolution of estate boundaries, or even the provenance of Gaelic manuscripts as indicators of given cultural landscapes.62 And consideration of landscape change over time would involve ideas of 'culture history' and 'cultural ecology'.

Three principal difficulties arise in review here: first, the distinctions are less clear in practice than in theory; second, they are predicated upon a particular and unquestioning view of culture, and third, culture is seen not only as something universally shared, but also as derivative of political and socio-economic functions. It may be true as Wagner and Mikesell note, that 'any sign of human action in a landscape implies a culture, recalls a history, and demands an ecological interpretation; the history of any people evokes its setting in a landscape, its ecological problems, and its cultural concomitants'.63 As Mikesell later observed, 'although cultural geography,

by definition, calls for explicit recognition of the concept of culture, most cultural geographers have adopted a laissez-faire attitude towards the meanings of culture'.64

The word 'culture' has enjoyed a range of meanings. In its early uses, it was a noun of process, the tending or cultivation of something. From the early sixteenth century, the sense of tending nature was extended to a process of human development, both senses remaining in use until the later eighteenth century. From that period, culture became synonymous with civilisation as a social process, with cultivation as an achieved social state.65 Although a further distinction saw culture used to describe artistic or intellectual practices, the meaning in which culture expressed the sense of civilisation, an achieved social state in contrast to barbarism and also a sense of development which implied process and progress, has been of particular significance.66 The idea of culture not as an attribute but rather as a socially-constituted process receives greater attention in what follows. It is not, however, a point made of culture in many geographical studies.

The traditional themes of cultural geography drew their inspiration from later nineteenth-century geography, particularly Ratzel and German geography, with its focus upon the moulding of a natural setting by human groups, and from social anthropologists of the later nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.67 One key influence was Tylor's Primitive Culture (1871). Tylor wrote how 'Culture... in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits required by man as a member of society'.68 The idea of culture as a complex whole or 'superorganic', an entity or pattern of behaviour irreducible to the actions of individuals yet possessed by human groups, was further outlined by the anthropologists Kroeber and Lowie, elaborated upon by White and adopted amongst geographers most notably by Sauer and others in the early twentieth century. Widespread acceptance of the idea that culture was 'a thing sui generis which can only be explained in terms of itself', and of the view that culture generates its own forms independent of men as its 'carriers' has led to the often uncritical adoption of a particular notion of culture among cultural geographers: a notion that saw man not only as passive but culture as consensual and universally shared. To treat culture in this way ignores explanation of cultural characteristics, disguises the role of individuals and fails to consider that culture is not autonomous but the result of social interaction: to

quote Duncan (1980),

> ... there is little or no discussion of social stratification, the political interests of particular groups, and the conflicts which arise from their opposing interests... there is little discussion of government and other institutional policies, or the effects of business organizations and financial institutions on the landscape.69

That there has been little discussion of these issues and only a slow departure from accepted ideas on culture in geographical analysis is perhaps understandable given the general lack of analytic precision attached to the term 'culture'.70 Kroeber and Kluckholn conclude their review of interpretations of culture by considering six categories into which all usages could be subsumed: culture is 'enumeratively descriptive' (listing artefacts, social habits); 'historical' (culture constitutes 'a particular strain of social heredity'); 'normative' (culture as a 'superorganic' entity of values and norms): 'psychological' (emphasis being placed on transmitted ways of solving ecological problems); 'structural' (in the sense that cultures can be regarded as systems or models of reality that permit 'patterned ways of behaviour' to be developed); and 'genetic' (wherein cultural symbols are transmitted over time and space).71 The last three have been considered by one author to be of greatest significance to human geography given the need for explanation of patterns of human occupance.72 For Wagner, in a partial renunciation of the earlier themes of cultural geography, culture is both 'structural' and 'genetic' - the constituted and transmitted behaviour of groups: 'It is behaviour, that is, meaningful activity, not mere activity as such, that counts, and behaviour is actively interpreted conventionally. The individual alone is not the fitting unit for description and analysis of meaningful behaviour and its consequences'. Further, 'culture has to be carried in specific, located, purposeful, rule-following, and rule-making groupings of people communicating and interacting with one another'.73 But this definition differs little from Sauer's earlier and prescriptive claim that 'culture is the learned and conventionalized activity of a group that occupies an area'.74 Other studies that have reviewed more recent developments in cultural geography have been equally reluctant to depart from the totalising view of culture as shared and learned beliefs.75

Cultural geographers have been slow to rise to the challenge in recent years 'to narrow the concept of

"culture" so that it includes less and reveals more'.76 Thus, for Mikesell, 'One may doubt that a separate geographical definition can or should be proposed and yet still assert that geographers ought to give more serious thought to how they wish to use the concept of culture'.77 As Schneider has observed, 'It may be that geographers need to move more into the upper air, where some "theory" or a bit of frankly high-flown speculation about culture may be appropriate'.78 For Duncan,

> The term culture could be saved if it were not treated as an explanatory variable in itself but used to signify contexts for action or sets of arrangements between people at various levels of aggregation. 79

These 'contexts for action' and 'sets of arrangements between people' are understood here in two senses: firstly, as the relationships people maintain between one another in the course of their daily life; and secondly, in the more general dialectic relationship between man and nature in the satisfaction of social wants and given the means available to realise them. What follows here in the use of both senses is neither to propose definitions nor advance theories; it is rather to speculate that a more critically analytic concept of culture may prove generally useful in understanding the links between people and place,80 and useful particularly in investigating the relationships between beliefs and social and material practices in the Highlands of Scotland.81

Culture and class: towards a more analytic model of culture

The conceptual model of culture here employed takes as its initial premise the view that attempts to use anthropological concepts of culture to analyse social class formations and transformations are condemned to treat culture either as a 'given', some sort of reflex attachment to more basic political-econonmic changes or as a self-determining phenomenon - a 'superorganic' - over and above the realities of social class.82 This is no new claim. Blaut has recognised that the traditional ideas of culture employed within many explorations of historical and geographical change neglect 'the fundamental, and almost universal, fact that cultures are divided into classes'.83 While the concept of class is dynamic, that of culture based only upon traditional beliefs, a shared systema of values or shared use of language, lacks a sense of process deriving

from the ties people have with one another - the social relations of production - and the political and economic bases to these social ties - the forces of material production. Material life is a collective thing, made by people as they transform their natural world and expressed in 'symbolic production'84; styles of language, dress, social conduct, architecture and so on. Culture is a central not a peripheral part of these relationships.

> Without any dynamic structure of its own, ... culture is bound to appear as epiphenomenal, secondary and derivative - as simply a superstructure to be tacked on, and ultimately responsive to, a political-economic base ... . It is a totalizing concept first because everything becomes, or is considered, 'culture'. There is material culture, symbolic culture, ritual culture, social institutions, patterned behaviour, language-as-culture, and values, beliefs, ideas, ideologies, etc. Second, not only is everything in a society 'culture', but the concept is totalizing because everyone in the society is supposed to have the same culture ... or at least to be measured by its standards ...
>
> ... Whatever the utility of this concept for understanding hunting and gathering bands, or relatively egalitarian village social systems, it is not a very effective concept for analysing class-based societies In situations of class conflict the notion of shared values provides no help in understanding either how upper-class cultural hegemony is imposed on a populace, or how oppositional cultures are formed and asserted. 85

This idea of culture serves to relate the production and reproduction of everyday needs and capacities with the dominant mode of production of a given human population in any geographical area. The relationship between a given environment - nature - and a dominant mode of production - human groups - may be seen as historical and flexible. Men and women make their own history and transform themselves as they transform their landscape; a materialist relationship recognised within the cultural geographic tradition, but not fully articulated. As Cosgrove observes, the concerns of cultural geography with human agency and environment have not recognised as they might the dialectical unity between society and nature, a unity mediated through patterns of human production grounded in a

particular natural context.86

The relationships underlying this perspective to culture were never fully elaborated by Marx as a formal cultural theory, although a useful start point to critical analysis is the formulation of 'base' and 'superstructure' which appears in outline in the Preface to his <u>A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy</u>.

> In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life conditions the social,political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness ... With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed. In considering such transformations the distinction should always be made between the material transformation of the economic conditions of production, which can be determined with the precision of natural science, and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic - in short, ideological - forms in which men become conscious of this conflict and fight it out. 87

This conception of the determining base and determined superstructure is not without difficulties. Neither 'base' nor 'superstructure' are precise concepts nor discrete and static categories capable of being employed as if they were descriptive terms for observable 'areas' of social life. Simply to see 'the base' as 'the real social existence of man' or 'the real relations of production corresponding to a stage of the development of material productive forces' disguises the fact that the base is not a state but a process: 'And we cannot ascribe to that process certain fixed properties for subsequent deduction to the variable processes of the superstructure'. 88 The framework should be seen not as determining but relational.

> According to the materialist conception of history, the ultimately determining element in history is the production and reproduction of real life. More than this neither Marx nor I have every asserted. Hence if somebody twists this into saying that the economic element is the only determining one, he transforms that proposition into a meaningless, abstract, senseless phrase. The economic situation is the basis, but the various elements of the superstructure - political forms of the class struggle and its results, to wit: constitutions established by the victorious class after a successful battle, etc., juridical forms, and even the reflexes of all these actual struggles in the brains of the participants, political, juristic, philosophical theories, religious views and their further development into systems of dogma - also exercise their influence upon the course of the historical struggles and in many cases preponderate in determining their form. 89

The conceptualisation of culture as reflexive and relational - within and across both economic 'base' and ideological and institutional 'superstructure' - avoids the distinctions made by some cultural theorists between the 'economic domain' (subsistence technology), and the 'ideational domain' (religion, law, ideology, etc.). It eschews the position whereby 'Either culture is regarded as wholly derivative from the forms of social organization ... or the forms of social organization are regarded as behavioural embodiments of cultural patterns'.90

In an attempt at further refinement of this base-superstructure model, Williams has urged that the notion of 'superstructure' move towards a related range of cultural practices and that the idea of 'the base' be considered not as a fixed abstraction but as the consequences of 'the specific activities of men in real social and economic relationships, containing fundamental contradictions and variations and therefore always in a state of dynamic process. Further, the constitutions, institutions and ideologies which provide the basis to a more flexible view of superstructure are seen to be related to but not determined by, the economic 'foundation'.

These institutions and ideologies should also be seen to operate in regard to particular classes: they 'simply have to be seen as expressing and ratifying the domination of a particular class'.91 As has been elsewhere noted, 'In class society culture is the product of class experience.

The common sense reflections of each class upon its own material experience is part of its struggle with other classes, each attempting to impose what it sees as the universal validity of that experience'. And when in class societies surplus production is appropriated by the dominant group, 'symbolic production is likewise seized as hegemonic class culture to be imposed across all classes'.92 In considering culture as a processual relationship over and above the simple categorisation of social life as a material economic base and an institutional or 'cultural' superstructure, the notion of class may be likewise understood here and in what follows in a relational sense; not only in Thompson's terms of 'the productive relations into which men are born - or enter involuntarily'93 - but also with respect to the question of class consciousness as the recognition by one group both of its own identity in opposition to the interests of another class or classes.94 The use of class as a description of divisions in social structure does not, of course, mark the beginning of those divisions in society, but the use of 'class' by the early nineteenth century in place of hitherto commonly-used terms like 'rank' or 'order' both reflected and directed the by then advanced division of society into layers or groups depending upon matters of relative economic and political domination.95 Culture as a process simultaneously economic and political may then be seen as the expression of class relationships and the imposition in various ways of the domination of one class over another. Important in this respect is the question of a dominating ideology which, for the ruling class, both 'rationalises' its position of economic and political domination and 'explains' to the subordinate class why it should accept its subordination.96

Ideology is a complex term.97 Three common connotations have been noted: a system of beliefs characteristic of a particular class or group; a system of illusory beliefs - false consciousness - in contrast to 'true' or scientific knowledge; and the general process of production of meanings and ideas. If, in class societies, all beliefs are founded on class position, the concept of ideology may be equatable with a particular self-interest. But the expression of the practical consciousness of one group or class is not independent of material relationships and social processes.98 It is bound up with them as the arena in which certain values and beliefs are fought out. If we consider ideology as that system of beliefs characteristic of a particular class or group, this is not to separate those beliefs either from a particular social situation or from the symbols and meanings through which such values are expressed and made meaningful. And in the context of

geographical explanation, the notion of ideology may not only be equatable with a particular class or group but with the continued occupance of a given area by that class or people to give what may be understood here as a regional consciousness. This is not regional consciousness imposed 'from without' - a sort of typified image or false consciousness of a region and people - but consciousness 'from within', resulting from what Marx considered that 'historically created relationship to nature and of individuals towards each other' which gave to each and every particular place 'a special character of its own'.99

This relationship between ideas and their geographical, material, and social context was central to Marx's views on cultural analysis.

> The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men, the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men, appear at this stage as the direct efflux of their material behaviour. The same applied to mental production as expressed in the language of politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc., of a people. Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc., - real, active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, up to its furthest forms. 100

'Ideas' and 'material activity' are not simple categories for analysis. Each needs to be grounded in a specific historical and geographical setting.

> In order to study the connection between intellectual and material production it is above all essential to conceive the latter in its determined historical form and not as a general category. For example, there corresponds to the capitalist mode of production a type of intellectual production quite different from that which corresponded to the medieval mode of production. 101

And within the capitalist mode of production, ideas and types of intellectual production were indissoluble from class interests.

> The ideas of the ruling class are, in every age,

> the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the dominant material force in society is at the same time its dominant intellectual force...
>
> ... The dominant ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas, and thus of the relationships which make one class the ruling one; they are consequently the ideas of its dominance. 102.

Of additional value in exploration of these ideas of domination within society of one class and its culture and ideas over others and on the means by which that ideology and culture was realised in practice is the concept of hegemony.

Hegemony and the means of cultural transformation

The notion of hegemony as a means of understanding relations between social classes, more especially the cultural dominance of one class and the means by which that class maintains its dominance, is best associated with the work of Gramsci in whose writings, however, the term is both complicated and ambivalent. Gramsci principally distinguished between 'rule', expressed in overtly political forms and in periods of crisis by direct coercion or military intervention, and 'hegemony' which sought to exert consensual relationships through intellectual, moral, economic and social forces, expressed and manipulated through institutions and practically organised by specific dominant values.103 To an extent, hegemony goes beyond the ideas of culture and ideology as here defined because it allows consideration of relations of domination and subordination as a whole lived experience and because those institutions, symbols, and values through which a culture or the culture of a particular class is identified as hegemonic are not now a 'superstructure' to the economic 'base' nor just a reflection, as dominant ideas, of the dominant forces of production: they are themselves among the processes of socio-economic formation.

> It is a whole body of practices and expectations, over the whole of living: our senses and assignments of energy, our shaping perceptions of ourselves and our world. It is a lived system of meanings and values - constitutive and constituting - which as they are experienced as practices

> appear as reciprocally confirming. It thus constitutes a sense of reality for most people in the society, a sense of absolute because experienced reality beyond which it is very difficult for most members of the society to move, in most areas of their lives. It is, that is to say, in the strongest sense a 'culture', but a culture which has also to be seen as the lived dominance and subordination of particular classes. 104

Hegemony is a process, one in which the agencies of control within civil society - the church, schools, trade unions, industrial organisations and so on - are key elements. Hegemony is more specific than questions of class identity because it relates whole social processes in which people 'define and shape their lives to specific distributions of power and influence'. It is more broadly based than ideology, for 'what is decisive is not only the conscious system of ideas and beliefs, but the whole lived social process as practically organised by dominant meanings and values'.105 And it is more precise than the notion of social control though it recognises as does that term the important place of institutions within society.106 In discussing the analytic use of the term, Billinge has noted that representation of hegemony as a 'culture', 'a lived system of meanings and values', not only allows us to go beyond the relational idea of class in political and economic terms but also 'gives us an entirely new perspective from which to view the process of acculturation and the crucial importance of culture itself in shaping social ideas and social relations'. Hegemony does not neglect the beliefs and meanings embraced by given ideologies or the economic and political relations in and between classes: rather it transforms these ideals and relationships into practice as they are lived and experienced in everyday life. At any time and as they change over time in a given area, relationships of dominance and subordination may be seen 'as in effect a saturation of the whole process of living - not only of political and economic activity, but of the whole substance of lived identities and relationships'.107

In Gramsci's terms, hegemonic domination within civil society depends upon the role of intellectuals operating within the classes exercising political and economic control. He distinguished between 'organic' and 'traditional' intellectuals. The former are closely tied to the ruling class they represent giving it 'homogeneity and awareness of its own function' on all levels or 'floors' of society. The latter group comprises, firstly,

creative artists and scholars who are traditionally regarded as intellectuals, and, secondly, the vestiges of organic intellectuals from previous social formations (for example, ecclesiastics). Femia has considered that 'While the traditional intellectuals do not necessarily share the world-view of the ruling group, they eventually effect a compromise with it, in part because of institutional pressures and financial inducements'.

> But the only ideas capable of becoming generally accepted and institutionalised in social life are those which both serve the interests and reflect the experience of either the dominant group or the class that is 'rising' ...
>
> ... While these successful ideas originate in the minds of great intellectuals, they are transmitted throughout society by lesser intellectuals - teachers, political activists, journalists, priests, etc. - working within an institutional context. 108

Intellectuals propagate and disseminate a class-based hegemony and ideology which is dominant as a consequence of a particular authoritarian structure. This structure should not, however, be seen as monolithic.

In the imposition of any culture, either in the totalising sense of a suite of cultural artefacts to be laid aside as others are adopted or in the sense in which culture is mediated through hegemonic class control, there will always be opposition to and denial of those values. Hegemony may be 'total' in the sense it saturates the consciousness of those people under its sway, but it is not held absolutely by all nor is it without internal contradictions. Hegemony is not an abstract category or even the affirmation of ideology; it is rather the variable assertion to given purposes of elite values and claims and is, therefore, continually active and adjusting.

> We have to emphasize that hegemony is not singular; indeed that its own internal structures are highly complex, and have continually to be renewed, recreated and defended; and by the same token, that they can be continually challenged and in certain respects modified. 109

In discussing opposition to the hegemony of a dominant culture, we may distinguish between alternative hegemony and counter-hegemony.110 The question of class conscious-

ness as oppositional hegemony - not merely in opposition to but as a revolutionary or at least overtly contradictory consciousness through which to overthrow the ruling class-has also been considered in this context.111 By alternative hegemony is meant the emergence and consolidation of a new hegemonic culture, associated with the rise to power of a new class. Alternative hegemonies may exist, however, only in an unrealised state; for Thompson, the idea is 'inapplicable to a subordinate class which by the nature of its situation cannot dominate the ethos of a society'.112 Counter hegemony is simply an opposition to the prevailing hegemony that may or may not be motivated by an articulated class consciousness, but is nevertheless characterised by attempts to limit or constrain the dominant hegemony. Counter hegemony may take several forms - mockery, evasion and distancing from dominant claims, or more politicised forms such as food riots, machine-breaking, land wars and refusal to pay rent. These last may initiate domination through rule - military suppression, for example. The formation of counter hegemony or any form of fully articulated oppositional hegemony may be limited by such things as the fragmented nature of existing social relations, the existence or not of a radical party or institutions of opposition, or as a result of geographical isolation: as Williams notes, 'The degree of existence of these alternative and oppositional forms is itself a matter of constant historical variation in real circumstances'.113 We may further consider the distinction between 'residual' and 'emergent' forms of oppositional culture. By 'residual' is meant those meanings, values and experiences which cannot be expressed in terms of the dominant culture yet remain lived and practised as part of the residue of some previous social formation. Such residual notions may, in time, be incorporated into dominant culture or fade from memory but certain residual values may survive within dominant culture. 'Emergent' means not only new values and practices being created within society, but also how dominant culture reacts to those new forms. Emergent cultural forms may be alternative without being oppositional. But as the claims of emergent forms extend, what was once casual disregard for dominant values may become open dissent, and the forms and institutions of dominant culture may need to defend and modify, to incorporate the oppositional claims.114

Hegemony is thus not only an active process of cultural control but a gathering together of seemingly separate and perhaps even disparate meanings and values incorporated within a dominant culture and an effective social order. Williams has considered that this process of incorporation

depends critically upon the role of 'tradition', 'institutions', and 'formations'.115 Incorporation and dominance depends also on the mediating role of language. Tradition is more than simply 'the surviving past'. Within any culture and dominant hegemony, only certain meanings and practices are selected to identify and define social structures and cultural values that are not part of the hegemony. Tradition in this sense becomes an aspect of contemporary social and cultural organisation to substantiate the dominance of a specific class. Tradition may also embrace notions of the retrospective affirmation of past practices in the face of hegemonic control, but at a deeper level, tradition is the process through which a dominant hegemony maintains the historical and cultural ratification of a contemporary order; the process of incorporating residual or emergent cultural forms into its own structures.

The establishment and maintenance of dominant hegemony depends crucially on institutions, though not alone: 'it is never only a question of formally identifiable institutions'. In rethinking the concerns of cultural geography, Wagner recognised the significance of 'the traditions embodied in institutions and perpetuated by them as effective cultural subsystems'.116 But important in this context are the personnel involved (the 'greater' and 'lesser' intellectuals), the ideology they espouse, and the hegemony they practise. Institutions mean not only the Church or school authorities, but also the family, the work-place, the community, the clan. For Anderson, Gramsci's 'listing of church and schools as instruments of hegemony within the private associations of civil society puts the application of the concept to the capitalist societies of the West beyond any doubt'.117 Further,

> The educational institutions are usually the main agencies of the transmission of an effective dominant culture, and this is now a major economic as well as cultural activity; indeed it is both in the same moment.
> ... The processes of education; the processes of a much wider social training within institutions like the family; the practical definitions and organisation of work; the selective tradition at an intellectual and theoretical level: all these forces are involved in a continual making and remaking of an effective dominant culture, and on them, as experienced, as built into our living, its reality depends.118

But an effective hegemonic culture is more than the sum of its controlling institutions. It derives its influence also from the relations individuals, institutions and ideologies have with particular formations; 'those effective movements and tendencies, in intellectual and artistic life, which have significant and sometimes decisive influences on the active development of a culture, and which have a variable and often oblique relation to formal institutions'.119 And important to these relations is the question of the language used by the dominant cultural class within and across its institutions and formations. In it simplest sense, language arises from the need to communicate but it also derives from particular social relations and a dominant mode of production: 'language like capital, is an instrument of domination a carrier of cultural power'.120

> Each class naturally attempts to turn communication into a tool for imposing its own ideas upon other classes. The class that effectively rules succeeds in presenting its particular use of language as the only correct one. But, in itself language is neither ideological nor derived: it belongs to the basis of all social relations. Endowed with a structure of its own, it does not "reflect" reality, it expresses and represents it.121

The senses in which the phrase 'particular use of language' may be used include the conflict existing between two or more languages both as expressive of certain class values and in the wider meaning of conflict between two cultures. Language is thus at one level a cultural 'given', but at other levels, it may be seen as a medium through which ideological forms establish cultural hegemony as a constitutive and incorporative element of material social practice.

The concept of culture employed here and the ideas from which it derives are not intended to be prescriptive of what culture is. In suggesting the relationships between cultural and socio-economic change to be mutual and reflexive the model allows for diversity and complexity, for variations in the scale, nature and impact of change, for contradictions, and for an understanding of cultural transformation that treats culture as a process not an attribute of more 'basic' social and political change. The crucial concept is that of hegemony. An understanding of cultural hegemony as a process requires analysis of the