A HISTORY of the SCOTTISH PEOPLE

2 REFORMATION SCOTLAND 1540 - 1603

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S·C·R·A·N

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POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS CHANGE: INTRODUCTION

The Reformation has always been the central event in Scottish history. The reformers generated a belief in its inevitability and its benefit for Scotland which successive generations of historians have elaborated in the context of subsequent historical periods. Only in the last two decades has historical analysis been refocused on the causes, nature and consequences of the reformation itself. This has taken the form of reinterpretation rather than the introduction of dramatic new information. However the attempts to see the reformation as a political, social and cultural process have raised many interesting questions about its chronological development and its nature as a historical event:

- how far had the pre-reformation church attempted to reform itself?
- why was the reformation so late in Scotland?
- how strong was Protestantism across Scotland in the decades before 1560? how comprehensive was the 'revolution' of 1560?
- in what areas of life did the reformation make the greatest initial impact?
- why did Mary Queen of Scots not attempt a counter-Reformation?
- what were the implication of the Reformation for the power of the monarchy under James VI? for social cohesion in Scotland? for court and popular culture?
- to what extent did the Reformation facilitate the union of Scotland and England?
- was the Reformation consolidated 'from above' or 'from below' and what were the means of the spread of Protestantism?
- how long did it take for Protestantism to replace the old church in Scottish society and rectify its faults and shortcomings?

If the emphasis now is on continuity as much as change, this is because historians have begun to look at the 1560s in the perspective of social habits and individual lives. Two themes have been established: that it took more than one generation to establish Protestantism and that the nature of Protestantism continued to change.

It has been argued that the reformation was not certain until 1567 and not complete until 1690. An interesting corollary of this new approach is to regard the other major developments of the later sixteenth century as having a momentum of their own to some extent independent of the religious issue.

Central among these developments is the changing nature of government under Mary and James:
*   how far had the Stewart realms - often described as ruled by 'laissez-faire kingship' - been developed into a unified Stewart state by 1603?
*   who gained power in this period - the crown or the landed classes?.
*   what challenges to that unity remained in the highlands and borders?
*   was renewed government interest in these areas a deliberate extension of state power?

Another theme is the economic and social development of the country:
*   why did the gap between rich and poor, landed and landless, widen during this period?
*   did the recovery in trade and wealth at the end of the century bring about new dimensions of prosperity and lead to the 'rise of the middling sort' which had begun by the time James inherited the throne of England?
*   why did the court still dominate so much of Scottish culture despite the reformation and the spread of printing?

POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS CHANGE : THE REFORMATION 1542 - 1568

It is rather artificial to distinguish between religious and political developments between the death of James V and his grandson's departure from Scotland. But however religious leaders might define the responsibilities of monarchs and their relationship to the church, the Stewarts still had a country to govern. The relationship of the crown and nobility was played out during two more minorities; many regents and two more strong royal personalities had the opportunity to develop the government of Scotland. During the minority of Mary, Scottish politics were split between the supporters of an English and of a French alliance.

Each regent in turn faced opposition to their policies. This lack of unity underlined the fact that Scotland was once again without the clear leadership of a mature monarch. Under the Earl of Arran, the Treaty of Greenwich of 1543 promised the infant Mary in marriage to Prince Edward of England. Yet the Scots refused to ratify it, fearing for their independence, provoking diplomatic and military aggression by Henry VIII. This ranged from a destructive raid on Edinburgh by Hertford in 1544 to an attempt to stir

up rebellion in favour of the Clan Donald Lordship of the Isles in 1545. There was also a fifth column of Scottish aristocrats receiving English royal pensions.

After the savage invasions of southern Scotland by the English known as the 'rough wooing', the Scots turned to France for financial and military support. Their young Queen Mary - with her claim to the English throne - was sent to France for safety in 1548 and a marriage treaty with France agreed. Mary's marriage to the Dauphin, Francis, eventually took place in 1558. Scotland being governed during these years by Arran and then Mary of Guise as regents. The grave international situation was dramatically changed, first by the succession in 1559 of Francis - Mary as his consort becoming Queen of France as well as Scotland - and then by the sudden death of Francis in 1560. After these dramatic changes in her fortunes Mary returned to a politically and religiously divided Scotland in 1561.

The Reformation emerged from three decades of dislocation within Scotland. Socially, the feuing movement had undermined the relative stability in the relationship between landlord and tenant and respect for the Church. The growth of an educated laity had already appeared to remove the main justification for the wealth of the Church. Theologically, new ideas from European contacts had begun to fracture the unity of the Scottish clergy. They gave an intellectual support to disrespect for the teachings, the ornaments and the wealth of the Church.

The autocratic tendencies of James V had created tensions within Scotland and there was a reaction to this at his death. One aspect of this was a sudden increase in Protestant - mainly Lutheran - activity. A parliamentary act of 1543 permitted the reading of the Bible in the vernacular. This meant Tyndale's English Bible, sent north as part of a propaganda campaign by Henry VIII.

The demand for access to the Bible in the language of the literate laity was the single dominant theme of the Reformation. The number of Protestants in Scotland at this time was still small but they included some influential lairds and magnates. Clerical leadership, however, was problematic. In the later 1530s there had been a flight of intellectuals and clergy, first to England and the circle of Thomas Cromwell and then to the continent. They included Alexander Alane (Alesius) and John Macalpine (Maccabeus) who perused academic careers in Germany and Denmark.

Among the few who returned from exile were John Knox and George Wishart, who returned to preach in 1544-5 and was burnt for heresy in 1546. England again provided an important refuge during the reign of Edward VI (1547-53) but the accession of Mary Tudor in 1553 forced Knox and others to flee, first to Frankfurt and later to Geneva. In 1552 a provincial council of the Church could claim that Protestantism was in decline. However, the position of the Church was already severely compromised. People were losing confidence in its roles as the wealthiest institution in the country, as the guardian of morals and as the teacher of doctrine. Mary of Guise's toleration of Protestantism may not have made much difference. Protestantism was kept alive in the localities by local groupings of lairds, burgesses and some magnates, usually minorities but organised and influential ones.

When protest against the Church coalesced from 1557 onwards, it was underpinned not only by religious beliefs but a growing uneasiness about French influence. With the marriage of Mary Queen of Scots to the Dauphin Francis in 1558, Scotland's alliance with France appeared to many to be dangerously strong. Political circumstances do not account for the growth of Protestantism but they do largely account for the timing of its eventual victory. This is why there is often confusion over what to call the events of 1559-60. Were they a 'revolution'? An attempted noble coup? A 'reformation\ rebellion'?

1560 saw a political victory for the Lords of the Congregation, but they were only the start of an ecclesiastical revolution. This was more about power than the faith of the Scottish people. The correlation between support for England and support for Protestantism had became sharper. John Knox's own assertion of his central place in events cannot be accepted uncritically. He had a talent for alienating the female rulers who might have supported him - Mary of Guise in 1557, Elizabeth of England in 1558 and Mary Queen of Scots in 1561.

Knox returned to Scotland in May 1559 and soon after a riot in Perth against religious houses sparked off the crisis. By July the Lords of the Congregation had 'purged' several towns in central Scotland, including Edinburgh. Their religious aims became encrusted with conservative, political ones, both to widen support and to protect the landowners' social position in their localities.

In October Mary of Guise was deposed as Regent. A provisional government asked for and eventually received English support. An English invading army arrived in April 1560 but it took the death of Mary of Guise to produce the Treaty of Edinburgh in July 1560 which provided for the removal of all English and French troops from Scotland. This Anglophile and Protestant revolution was confirmed by a parliament in August 1560 which abolished the mass, ended papal authority and adopted a Protestant Confession of Faith.

A successful new church needed various features: ministers, a doctrine, money, organization, popular support and political security. The progress of the reformed church in these areas is a measure of the speed of the Reformation after 1560. Of the thousand or so parishes in Scotland, about a quarter had Protestant ministers or substitute 'readers' by the end of 1561. Nearly all parishes had a Protestant ministry by 1574, though there was a widespread use of 'readers' as substitutes - often former Catholic priests - and much compromise with local traditions.

The quality of the new clergy improved only slowly. St. Leonard's College in St. Andrews began to turn out trained graduates under George Buchanan from 1567; these men made up the second and better qualified generation of reformers in the following decades. The doctrine of the new church was set out in the Confession of Faith, written by Knox. It was a blend of Calvin's thought and other strands of Protestant belief, which allowed a degree of consensus. The programme of the reformers was set out in the 'Book of Reformation', now known as 'The First Book of Discipline'. It concentrated on practical issues, including stipends of the new ministry, oversight and education.

But the weakness of the reformers' schemes also lay in finance for they expected to inherit the wealth and income of the old Church. This never happened. A compromise, known as the 'thirds of benefices' was arrived at in 1562. A third of parish revenues was to be shared with the Crown. In 1566, though, Mary gave the new Church the use of benefices worth less than £200 per annum. The question of organisation was to be the source of greatest conflict within the Protestant Kirk even after the victory of presbyterianism which itself was not a settled matter for 130 years.

At a parish level the first kirk session was established in more radical areas such as Dundee and St. Andrews. Elsewhere their use spread more slowly and above parish level, the Kirk's organisation remained confused, consisting of a mixture of bishops and superintendents for several decades. The General Assembly met from 1560 but its role vis-a-vis the parishes took some time to clarify. Its political function as the mouthpiece for the Kirk only developed slowly through Mary's reign. The Assembly took on a stronger voice in 1567, with the second and more radical Reformation.

Popular support for the Reformation had been slow to develop from 1559. The Lords of the Congregation had to apologise to Elizabeth's minister Cecil for the difficulties in motivating a revolution. There were few towns with a Protestant mob like the one in Perth which had sparked the revolt by attacking friaries soon after Knox's return to Scotland in May 1559. Reformers had to work against conservatism and fear of upheaval rather than active popular support for Catholicism. Acceptance of the reformed Kirk varied enormously.

The Protestant Reformation was in fact made up of many 'local reformations'. In some areas it took three generations for widespread active participation in Protestant rites to become established. Political security proved both easier to obtain and less easy to define than the Kirk might have hoped. Queen Mary returned to Scotland in August 1561 as a Catholic monarch in a country where the mass was otherwise illegal. She did not attempt a counter-Reformation out of fear of upheaval and perhaps also because her focus was on the English succession. Her problems were the traditional Stewart issues of dynasty and nobility - political rather than religious. She made a point of dealing harshly with the leading Catholic noble, the Earl of Huntly, in 1562.

Though she was more active in supporting Catholicism in the last few years of her reign, the undoing of Mary's regime was a consequence of political and personal errors of judgement rather than a religious conflict. Mary Queen of Scots is now widely seen as a successful monarch in the Stewart tradition for the period 1561-65. However the circumstances in which she returned to Scotland in 1561 were unpredictable: a long minority, war with England, exile, marriage to the dauphin - later King - of France, early widowhood, the recent religious revolution and, perhaps most importantly, a claim to the English succession. All of these except the first two were unique to her mature reign.

Mary dealt well with the challenge of the nobility which all Stewarts faced, making energetic progresses around Scotland and dealing firmly with the Earl of Huntly in 1562, as well as with Chatelherault (a Hamilton) and Moray (a Stewart and her half-brother) when they rebelled in 1565. Mary used her court effectively. The distinction

between Catholic household and Protestant council became slowly blurred. Her marriage to Darnley (a Lennox Stewart) in 1565 was celebrated by Catholic rites with full Renaissance literary and social honours. The baptism of her son in December 1566 was an opportunity for a pageant glorifying her role as a maker of peace between Catholic and Protestant and the guarantor of future stability and prosperity for Scotland.

The murder of David Rizzio on 9 March 1566 revealed darker tensions which, when Darnley was murdered in February 1567, began to eclipse Mary's achievements. Court politics and personalities provided many possible motives for these murders. Mary, however, then embarked on a disastrous series of mistakes under pressure. She married Bothwell, who had abducted her, and who was a prime suspect in Darnley's murder. She was then forced into abdicating the throne after surrendering to the Confederate Lords at Carberry in June 1567. She fled to England after escaping from imprisonment in Loch Leven Castle the following year. By the age of 25 she had both made and unmade a Stewart settlement of Scotland in more contradictory circumstances than any of her ancestors had faced.

Mary's infant son, baptised by Catholic rite in 1566, was crowned as a Protestant King in 1567, under the regency of the Protestant Earl of Moray. This encouraged a more extreme second reformation to take place. The battle lines between the faiths were by now more sharply drawn across Europe. The moderator of the General Assembly of 1567 was George Buchanan, in the absence of Knox in England. The Protestants were confident of the support of the new regime, which at last ratified the legislation of 1560, and set about confirming the Reformation. They purged schools and universities and prepared to work more closely with a supportive Protestant government.

POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS CHANGE: THE REIGN OF JAMES VI 1567 - 1603

The abdication of Mary was followed by six years of civil war, ostensibly between her supporters and those of her young son, James. Although the King's party wanted it to be a war of religion, there were Catholics and Protestants on each side. Hamiltons fought for Mary and Douglases for James but it was not just faction fighting among magnates. Regent Moray was indeed supportive of the reformed Kirk but he was assassinated in 1570. He was succeeded by Darnley's father, Lennox, who met the same fate. There were rival parliaments and rival presses, even rival town councils in Edinburgh in 1571. The accusation that Mary had been involved in the Ridolfi plot in England in the same year undermined her support in Scotland as it made it most unlikely she would return to Scotland.

By 1573 only Edinburgh Castle held out for Mary. When it was captured with English help, the government executed Kirkcaldy of Grange, the commander, and the two goldsmiths who had been minting Marian coins there..The civil war of 1567-1573 was followed by a decade of acceleration towards economic recovery and political stability. The period of Morton's regency, 1572-1580, set out issues which dominated the rest of the century: church-state and Anglo-Scottish relations, economic prosperity, increasing state interference.

The Kirk was under pressure from lack of manpower, a worsening international situation and Morton's resistance to its influence. 'The Second Book of Discipline' of 1578 set out a tighter church organisation but did not deal with the question of bishops. Improved trade brought prosperity to landowners and merchants, despite inflation and government depreciation of the coinage. Morton's commitment to an alliance with England led to legislation on English models and English pensions being paid to Scottish aristocrats. Unprecedented central taxation began in the 1570s. Law and order in the localities was re-established by central government.

In 1580 Esme Stewart, a cousin of Darnley, arrived in Scotland. He rapidly gained royal favour, becoming Duke of Lennox the following year, and Kirk disfavour, being suspected of Catholic plotting. Despite James' issue of the 'King's Confession' in 1581, the 'Ruthven raid' of 1582 - a coup endorsed by the General Assembly - resulted in the imprisonment of the teenage King. He escaped in 1583 and Parliament, under the regent Arran, re-established royal authority over Kirk, nobility and burghs.

In 1579, James VI was allowed to leave his schoolroom in Stirling Castle. But the beginning of his personal reign is usually dated to 1585. The period of his personal rule began with several years of peace, the highlight of which was his marriage to Anne of Denmark in 1589. He inherited the issues established in the regency of Morton and the increasingly powerful centralisation with which Arran had dealt with them. He also inherited the key personnel of Arran's regency, notably Maitland of Thirlestane, promoted from Secretary to Chancellor. He still ruled a country whose political and social relations were essentially feudal but he built on this inheritance to produce an unprecedentedly powerful Scottish state.

James VI established his firm hold over the realm by advancing the formation of a modernizing and centralized Scottish state. His Parliament was more active and he expanded the Privy Council; government transacted thirty times as much business in 1600 as it had in 1550. His exchequer was reorganized and taxation rocketed. Justice became more centralized. Heritable jurisdictions were undermined and feuding largely stamped out. Even before 1603 James created the institutions and the ideology of an absolute monarchy. The level of his success as a king can be tested in three areas: law and order, finance and church-state relations.

In 1592 noble rivalries disrupted the court and government with the murder of the 'bonnie Earl of Moray' and the subsequent feuding between the Stewarts, in the person of the Earl of Bothwell, and the Gordons of Huntly. The Kirk supported Bothwell, despite his being accused of involvement with the 'witches of North Berwick'. James was able only to contain the feuding as best he could. However, when the enemies decided to join sides and stage a rebellion, their direct challenge to the monarchy was more easily dealt with.

After 1595 only the Gowrie conspiracy in 1600 created major disturbance among the nobility.   Lesser crimes, formerly ruled on by local lords, were increasingly dealt with by sheriffs and central law courts. Parliamentary commissions became a further means of enforcing policy on the nation, re-enforcing the traditional work of circuit judges. In this respect Parliament was used as an instrument of government, but it

was also starting to take on a role as the mouthpiece of increasingly powerful social groups in Scotland, notably lairds and burgesses. James countered this, and the voice of the Convention of Royal Burghs, by calling conventions of nobility. Thus he was able to exercise his authority through feudal as.well as more modern institutions.

James used the court to reflect and communicate his policy. Indeed, after the death of Maitland in 1595 he acted as his own chancellor. Court propaganda flowed from the printing presses in the form of published Acts of Parliament and Privy Council, eulogies and histories. His own opinion of the exalted role of the monarch was expressed in 'Basilikon Doron' in 1598. Above all his claim to the kingship of a united Britain was assiduously publicized. The taxation of a modernized royal government was used to pay for the extravagances of a renaissance court at James' marriage in 1588 and the baptism of Prince Henry in 1594. Taxation was also needed for diplomatic missions to England - and in 1600 for a possible war of English succession.

The obligations of monarchy - especially patronage of the nobility - required an increased income. This could be provided by loans, from men such as Jinglin' Geordie - George Heriot, the Edinburgh financier, or from taxation. From 1596 the Octavians, an eight-man commission headed by Alexander Seton, reorganized royal finances by increasing customs duties, organizing the largest tax in Scotland's history and trimming royal household expenses. Though the commission did not last, the need to raise revenue remained a central part of the relationship between monarch and state.

Burgesses and lairds, along with the feuars of church lands, paid most of the money rather than nobles, though the nobles retained the greatest influence on the King through their access to him at court and Parliament. James VI's increasingly self-confident monarchy had to face an increasingly self-confident Kirk. The tensions between the 'two kingdoms' grew after 1580. Though they were often the result of the self-images of the two institutions, the political and social influence over which they struggled was real enough.

The leading spokesman for the Kirk was Andrew Melville, who returned from Europe in 1574 as Principal of Glasgow University with an international reputation as a scholar. In 1580 he moved to St. Andrews as Principal of St. Mary's College and there established a seminary for training ministers, in order to counter the shortage of manpower in the parishes. In 1596, after twenty years of confrontation, Melville still declared that the King was merely a member of the Kirk. But in reality the Kirk was another object of increasing state interference.

In the struggle between church and state, the issues which emerged in the Regency of Morton dominated the personal reign of James VI too. These were education and church organisation, in both of which the key question was the extent to which the government had control over the Kirk. In the 1570s Morton had established commissions to examine the universities and schools; Edinburgh University was established in 1583 as the 'toun's college' - neither the King's nor the Kirk's. Meanwhile in the parishes the work of spreading the gospel continued, most successfully in Lothian and Fife, largely through use of the catechism.

Genuine popular enthusiasm for Calvinism was manifest in Edinburgh at the return of the expelled minister John Durie in 1582. In church government, the Leith settlement of 1570-1 allowed for bishops to be appointed by the crown while being subject to the General Assembly in spiritual matters. Criticism of bishops however increased, being focused on the inadequacies of the two Archbishops of Glasgow and St. Andrews. Although 'The Second Book of Discipline' of 1578 did not favour a Presbyterian system, the office of bishop was declared unscriptural in 1580. Despite this hardening attitude, bishops became a significant part of the new state.

In 1600, bishops were appointed to Parliament. It seemed that the Kirk had to accept the dominance of the monarchy in practical terms..Morton in the 1570s had refused to consult the General Assembly, despite its demands for representation in Parliament. The regime of Arran in 1584 took revenge on the Kirk's support for the Ruthven kidnappers of James by passing acts subjecting the Kirk to royal authority and making ministers subscribe to them. Though the privileges of the Kirk were reaffirmed by the 1592 Parliament, the Kirk's assemblies met by permission of the King - and after 1596 the General Assembly was forced to meet outside Edinburgh. Andrew Melville's Kirk had failed to achieve its political agenda. The reformed church, while winning the support of the people of lowland Scotland, had become the victim of James VI's new political relationship with his kingdom.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGE

The population of Scotland began to rise in the course of the sixteenth century. This created economic and social tensions which outweighed the advantages of the end of foreign invasions after the 1540s and civil war after 1573. It increased dependence on cereal crops which made famine more likely; there was increased mortality from food shortages during some years in every decade from 1550-1600. Other factors worsened the situation. 'Plague' struck severely in 1568-9, 1584-8 and the years after 1597, although it was often in reality smallpox, whooping cough or other infectious diseases. From the 1580s the government depreciated the coinage, halving the value of the Scots against the English pound and worsening the price inflation already taking place. Wages rose four or five times but prices five or six.

Two measures of economic distress were the laws on vagrancy of 1574, 1579 and 1592, where wandering beggars were seen as a threat to ordered life, and the concentration of the new Kirk on poor relief as one of its responsibilities. In both cases, the parish was the local administrative unit; JPs dealt with vagrants, and poor relief was only given to those in their home parish. Society was under pressure.

Settlement patterns are clearer for historians from the sixteenth century. Groups of dwellings surrounded various nuclei in the countryside; as well as the loosely laid out fermtouns, these nuclei could include churches, castles, bridges, churches, mains or estate home farms, fishing communities or small harbours. The expansion of settlements increased in the later sixteenth century. This can be seen in place names describing newly enclosed land (hill, bog, moss, muir) or the splitting of a settlement

(nether, over, new, easter). The land was cultivated as infield, permanently dunged and cropped, and outfield, often taken more recently into cultivation and not used every year for crops, being manured by grazing animals in between. This structure was not as ancient or indeed as inefficient as has often been argued. Nor was it universal; local climatic and landholding influences led to enormous variation.

There was less infield in upland areas and less of it was cultivated; there was more wheat in the east and more regulation of outfield. The run-rig system - the periodic exchange of rigs between tenants - was not universal either; in fact it was dying out by the late sixteenth century and there were the first signs of exchange of strips to consolidate holdings. Proprietorship now tended to be hereditary which allowed more continuity in management of estates, though long leases to tenants were not common until the seventeenth century.

Crop returns were slightly above the traditional 3:1; in newly burned peat bogs or seaweed.manured machair it could be 15:1 for a year or two; rested plots of outfield could grow 7:1 at first. Bere was the commonest crop, with oats on outfield and wheat given special treatment on good land. All settlements mixed arable and pastoral farming; more sheep were kept in the east and more cattle in the west; horses were the next commonest farm animal.

In summer stock was driven beyond the head dyke daily, or to summer shielings in area with more wasteland. Seasonal transhumance only remained common in the Highlands. Cattle raised to be driven to market for meat did not need the close attention of dairy cattle, but for both the lack of winter fodder was a serious problem in pre-improvement farming. Lent was a traditional restraint on eating the thin surviving cattle. However, Scottish farming before 1600 was not as rigid or as unchanging as has been described.

Scotland's trade routes were little disrupted by the political and religious changes of the sixteenth century. The Anglo-Spanish conflict stimulated trade with Spain and the Reformation drew her closer to the Netherlands, Ulster and French Huguenots. Her exports were largely raw materials. In good years enough grain was grown and cattle reared to export. There was always trade in skins, hides, fish and wool. Lead ore, coal and salt were also exported. Manufactured goods included woollen and linen cloth; stockings were a newer product.

There was tension with England as both countries wanted to export manufactured goods but not raw materials - especially wool. The self-sufficient nature of the rural economy and the cost of shipment kept the quantity of imports low. Some basic materials were imported, notably wood from Norway and flax, hemp, pitch and tar, iron and copper from the Baltic, but in the main people produced what they required and traded locally for their other needs. Quality imports, high value foreign luxuries, were conversely much in demand by the rich and powerful: from half a million gallons of wine a year to French prunes and Dutch spices, furniture and glass, dolls and drugs, caviar and chessmen, spectacles and swords, thimbles and tobacco.

Scottish attempts to build up a manufacturing base began in earnest at the end of the century with Acts of Parliament in 1582, 1594 and 1600 encouraging foreign

craftsmen, mainly Flemish and English, to instruct Scots in cloth-making skills such as weaving, spinning, waulking and dyeing. German expertise was used to make paper, Venetian to make glass. Monopolies were also granted to Scots to encourage manufacture and ensure quality.

In the sixteenth century many towns grew rapidly, with Edinburgh having a population of around 20,000, including suburbs, by 1600. However Scotland was still a country predominantly of small towns below 3,000 inhabitants. These varied from royal burghs with the right to overseas trade to essentially rural settlements, though the range of services on offer diminished only below the 500 mark. The importance of Glasgow, Perth, Dundee and Aberdeen as regional centres reflected the fragmented geography and poor communications of the country. Even these towns could suffer from changes in demand for their limited range of products or exports.

In the later sixteenth century the Fife burghs did particularly well, though we cannot tell whether they became bigger or merely richer. The continuing foundation of burghs of barony and of market centres indicates that internal trade was also prospering; although some failed to thrive, markets and fairs were slowly growing more numerous. The new Church tended to be dominated by the 'middling groups' in society who were doing well for economic reasons. Small lairds and burgesses filled the role of an educated, godly laity and positions in kirk sessions. The radical nature of the change in religion fitted their.own social aspirations. Their influence grew as the parish gained significance in comparison to traditional local ties of kinship and lordship. It became entrenched as elders came to be appointed for life and the parish's landowners took over responsibility for church, manse and school as well as stipend and salary.

As well as responsibility for poor relief from 1597, kirk sessions took up a moral role in the local community. The state supported this by Acts against adultery in 1563, fornication in 1567, Sabbath breaking in 1579 and drunkenness in 1617. The first great persecution of witches in Scotland was a result of economic and political rather than religious stresses.

Parliament passed an Act against witches in 1563, but it did not lead to an increase in convictions. Knox preached against a witch before she was executed and the Reforming noble Erskine of Dun led a witch-hunt in Angus in 1568-9. It was James VI's visit to fetch his bride from Denmark, where both witch-hunts and demonology were well developed, which sparked off the craze of the 1590s. This was focused at first on the witches of North Berwick, who were associated with his enemy Bothwell. In 1597 James both wrote Daemonologie, his intellectual analysis of witchcraft, and revoked the standing commissions against it. Despite Kirk protests, the state ceased hunting witches thereafter...for the time being.

Whether Calvinism had a broader influence on the direction and achievements of Scottish society is part of a great historical debate. Its influence in the rise of Scottish entrepreneurial capitalism is now regarded as at best indirect, through the encouragement of education and serious-mindedness. By 1600 predestination, and the duty of demonstrable diligence in the lives of the elect, were still poorly developed as ideas. For the Reformation operated at two speeds in Scottish society at large:

national church government appeared to oscillate rapidly - episcopalian in 1584 and 1610, presbyterian in 1592 and 1638 - but these were all various forms of compromise. Meanwhile Calvinism made slow headway in a conservative society, becoming, like the institutions of the new Kirk, deeply ingrained over three or four generations.

CULTURAL CHANGE

The cultural themes of the later sixteenth century often demonstrate continuity rather than change. The removal of the court to London in 1603 and the victory of Covenanting Puritanism after 1638 proved to be more revolutionary than the reformation itself. None of these had as great an impact as the spread of printing, which began the slow spread of elite culture to a wider audience of literate laity. In each area of cultural activity, it is worth asking two questions: what was the balance between change and continuity? and what was the relationship between elite and popular culture?

By 1600 the pattern of the printing revolution in Scotland was clearer. It is possible to speak of a mass culture of the printed word. Religious works were printed for adults and catechisms and psalm books for schools. Cheap and children's bibles appeared from the 1630s. Schools also used standard Latin grammars. Histories, chronicles and works of vernacular literature made up another strand in the expanding cultural access which printing enabled.

The First Book of Discipline set out an ideal of a school in every parish in Scotland and a reorganized university system. What actually was created was carried over from pre-reformation activities. Despite excellent intentions on the part of the reformers, their ideals were only slowly fulfilled. Education became desirable for the laity rather than as a means to join the clergy. Parish schools did slowly become more common. But.pre-reformation song schools and grammar schools did not disappear after 1560; towns took over responsibility for them and indeed James VI encouraged them. Universities were radically altered.

Andrew Melville returned to Scotland as principal of the dying University of Glasgow in 1574 and started a revolution in its organization, based on specialization in teaching. His ideas were copied at the new universities of Edinburgh and Marischal College in Aberdeen, while St. Mary's College in St. Andrews specialised in the production of an educated clergy. In the early seventeenth century, however, the old Aristotelian structure of learning under the tutorship of non-specialist 'regents' returned to the universities.

Renaissance court culture was a collective enterprise. It was, however, for and in the hands of the elite, not the people at large. Nevertheless the emergence of an increasingly literate laity was, in part at least, an imitation of this new court culture. Literary fashions were encouraged at the court of Mary and particularly of James VI. James was himself both a poet and a translator. His first published work, in 1584, was a manual setting out the laws for writing poetry. At his court in the 1580s a group

of poets, led by James himself and self-consciously entitled the 'Castalian band', practiced poetry in Scots.

This fashion developed in the 1590s into a new classical and Christian iconography of kingship. James was variously described as Apollo, Solomon, Augustus, Brutus, Arthur, Constantine and David. James also encouraged translation, for example by William Fowler, of works such as Petrarch's 'Trionfi' and Machiavelli's 'The Prince'.

Among the best of the poets writing in Scots were Alexander Montgomerie, Alexander Hume and Alexander Scott. The Scots which the 'Castalian band' wrote was already more Anglicized than that of James IV's courtiers. Despite the collection of five volumes of Scottish poetry in 1568 by the lawyer George Bannatyne, the increased use of English in courtly literature had begun long before the court's removal to London. The same was true of wider urban culture: there were seven booksellers in Edinburgh in 1592, but only 380 books are known to have been printed in Scotland before 1600. In part this lack of Scottish texts was due to the censorship of the reformed Kirk, but the cultural pull of England also restricted demand. Key works, such as Calvin's Catechism and the Book of Common Order, adopted by the General Assembly in 1562, were printed in English.

Inevitably English began to dilute Scots as a distinctive language. The King James Bible of 1612 hastened the process. The first attempts to describe Scots law, by Sir John Skene and Sir Thomas Craig, reflected both the need to distinguish Scots from English law in view of a possible union, and also the replacement of local structures by more centralized legislation. Skene also edited acts of Parliament and wrote a fine legal dictionary, De Verbum Significatione; Craig analyzed feudal law and also wrote an academic treatise on the union. Though the audience for these works was limited, texts on the law, along with religious writing, provided a further reason for some to learn to read.

The writing of history also flourished, with texts reaching a wider audience. Hector Boece's 'History of Scotland' was published in a popular, abridged form in the 1590s. Vernacular accounts of the Reformation were written by John Knox and David Calderwood and a racy Chronicle of Scotland by Robert Lindsay.

The most famous intellectual of the period on a European scale was James' own tutor, George Buchanan, whose Latin style was regarded as a marvel by contemporaries. As well as poetry, he wrote a history of Scotland which, unusually, devoted much space to Gaelic culture. His purpose was to exalt the superiority of Scottish over Welsh Gaelic and to present examples of people electing their own chiefs. He went on to recognise the common origin of Celtic languages. Most of these histories had a.moral or political purpose. Objectivity was usually sacrificed to these greater ends.

The discovery of logarithms, by John Napier of Merchiston, was also incidental to a greater purpose: his prime interest was in the Book of Revelation and calculating when the Last Days would come. He was also fascinated by weapons of war, means of draining mines and alchemy. Scientific thought at the time was highly practical and landowners in particular obtained many patents for economically useful inventions.

The maps of the first Scottish cartographer, Timothy Pont, the result of an extensive survey of the country, carried out in the 1580s and 1590s, were to find their way, through the work of his successor Robert Gordon of Straloch, into the great mid-seventeenth century atlas of Blaeu of Amsterdam.

In all these areas, cultural innovation was increasingly a response to demand from below as well as patronage from above. There was continuity as well as change in Scottish music after the Reformation. At the courts of Mary of Guise and Queen Mary, and in the 1580s after the arrival of Esme Stuart, a French musical influence was predominant. Andrew Blackhall, minister of Ormiston, set Montgomerie's poem 'The Cherrie and the Slae' to a four-part harmony. By the end of the century, however, French influence was giving way to English, in the form of songs with lute accompaniment.

In church music, song schools continued to function but were overlaid by reformed traditions. These could be Lutheran, as in the 'Gude and Godlie Ballads', first published in 1565 and reprinted many times between then and the 1620s, or Calvinist, as in the psalms, which drew on the Huguenot musician Clement Marot. The Scottish Psalter of 1564, commissioned by the Assembly, drew on French and English influence and had 150 psalms, 105 of which had tunes. Some of these were set in several parts from the 1560s, though tunes like the 'Old Hundredth' were kept plain for congregational singing.

Music continued to be a part of popular religious culture. Nor was drama extinguished after 1560 in either elite or popular culture. Kirk sessions gave licences to plays. Performances for the King were frequent and royal protection was extended to travelling players from England. Indeed, folk culture in general was slow to change. Prophecy and tale telling proliferated, the late sixteenth century being a particularly fertile time for vigorous ballads such as 'Kinmont Willie' and 'The Laird o' Logie', or 'The Banks of Italy'.

Architecture is often seen as the most powerful cultural expression of the early Jacobean period. Tower houses began to be built again from the 1570s, and in Claypotts Castle the style was already being developed by the addition of more spacious living quarters on top. James himself built new ranges at Edinburgh Castle and Linlithgow and Dunfermline palaces and a new Chapel Royal at Stirling for the baptism of Prince Henry in 1594. The finest of noble imitations were the Earl's palace at Kirkwall and the extension of Huntly Castle.

Interior decorations also became more ornate, though often following continental pattern books. Churches were, as yet, normally restored and preserved rather than extended or new ones built. Early examples of new churches are Burntisland, built in an uncompromisingly Dutch style in 1590, and the more traditional looking Greyfriars in Edinburgh, which dates to 1612.

Hugh Ouston July 1999

NOTES

This is Chapter 2 of 5. Including the Overview, this set comprises 6 PDFs. The others are:

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3 1603-1689
4 1689-1760
5 1760-1840