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Towards representative resilience: the power of culture to foster local resource representation

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ABSTRACT

Community resilience policies continue to grow in popularity as a strategy to prepare for the local impact of forecasted environmental uncertainty, however, criticisms of community resilience discourse remain. This paper takes forward these criticisms, specifically addressing the issue of representative power over key natural resources, using Gaventa's [Gaventa, J. 2006. "Finding the Spaces for Change: A Power Analysis." *IDS Bulletin* 37 (6): 23–33] power cube as a conceptual framework to examine power relations. Our objective is to advance current critical community resilience literature from acknowledging local power relations as a component of any community resilience strategy to situating the devolvement of representative power over key natural resources as a **mandatory** pre-requisite before any community can be considered "resilient". The paper adopts a case study approach and draws on a grassroots-led resilience project in the Scottish Highlands that utilises traditional land practices and local cultural history to educate people on land sustainability. We explore the potential of the project to construct deeper cultural and historical understandings of local environments and whether projects like these can serve an additional purpose of motivating people to pursue greater influence in land decisions. The analysis reveals emerging links between power, culture and land representation that could foster new forms of local resilience. However, perceptions of systemic barriers such as insecure land tenancies and democratic deficits stymied the potential of this raised motivation. As normative community resilience strategies continue to devolve responsibility over resources without devolving power, a new resilient settlement is required to confront an environmentally uncertain future.

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1. Introduction

"Community Resilience" remains a highly contested concept (Davoudi, Shaw, and Haider 2012). The notion that a community should "bounce back" to its previous state after a shock, and the argument that resilience approaches exist simply as a "buffer for conserving what you have and recovering to what you were", have been critiqued as too limited (Folke et al. 2010, 25). As a result, this concept has undergone several refinements within academic and policy contexts in the last decade, namely, that communities should instead adapt by "bouncing forward", striving to "transform" into an improved set of circumstances (Manyena et al. 2011; Houston 2015; Rippon et al. 2020). The transformative,

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“bounce forward” approach has progressed resilience thinking from its ecological systems theory roots (Holling 1973), to an understanding that - when resilience thinking is applied to complex, evolutionary socio-ecological systems – returning to a previous state is neither possible nor desirable (Davoudi, Brooks, and Mahmood 2013; Darnhofer 2014). Governance requests for communities to become more resilient by “bouncing forward” however have led to academic debate as to whether communities have the necessary agency and/or capacity to meet these demands. Some academics have criticised the rise of the community resilience policy agenda as a product of neo-liberalism, acting largely as a managerialist policy tool, pre-occupied with indicator-based evaluations (Joseph 2013, Kaika 2017) while others have chosen to present alternative concepts that focus on systemic inequities, most notably the concept of “community resourcefulness” (MacKinnon and Derickson 2013; Ulug and Horlings 2019). We draw our core critique of community resilience primarily from the work of Mackinnon and Derickson who considers community resilience in its current guise as an inherently conservative concept whose apolitical nature fails to challenge dominant capitalist systems and hinders transformation. In particular, the authors criticise the negative impacts of globalisation policies and the lack of scrutiny directed towards various actors connected to these dominant systems including their role in increasing local vulnerability (Grabowski, Klos, and Monfreda 2019).

Taking forward these criticisms that community resilience is apolitical, conservative and therefore can hinder transformation, questions have subsequently been raised about the lack of prominence given to the role of power when community resilience is applied within environmental governance policy (Brown 2014): if communities are requested to, transform, evolve and *bounce forward* – where does power then reside? This paper posits a further question regarding transformative power: if substantial levers of power over key natural resources do not reside within a community’s control, can current requests for communities to become resilient be considered legitimate?

This paper addresses this last question by emphasising the enduring lack of prominence given to local power relations as a component of community resilience (Brown 2014; Ramčilović-Suominen and Kotilainen 2020) and begins to conceptualise a more representative notion of resilience. We argue that a thorough interrogation into the legitimacy of authority structures over key natural resources should be a **mandatory** pre-requisite before a community engages with environmental governance requests to become more resilient. We introduce here our notion of *representative resilience* which seeks to explicitly recognise the inherent political nature of community resilience strategies and the subsequent power struggles that emerge whenever communities seek to secure meaningful influence over key resources such as water, land, or biota. Furthermore, we rest on the assumption that systems of governance rarely relinquish power without resistance (Scott 1990). Current application of community resilience strategies instead predominantly focus on the devolvement of responsibility over resources to communities, often followed by reactive, top-down designed “empowerment initiatives” that operate to reduce dependency on authority structures to ensure citizens meet this increased responsibility (Steiner and Markantoni 2014). We offer *representative resilience* as a pro-active alternative, operationalised through communities resisting engagement and practicing non-participation with existing community resilience policy requests (May 2012). Instead, communities engage in alternative grassroots-led resilience activities, mapping forms, spaces and scales of power (Gaventa 2006) and negotiating a re-distribution of skewed representative power over key natural resources in order to secure a collaborative governance approach as representative stakeholders (Brisbois and Loë 2016). Community representative power therefore becomes a pre-requisite before any community resilience settlement is imposed upon a local place.

This paper explores the first step of representative resilience, investigating whether participation in grassroots-led cultural resilience projects can help support consciousness-raising processes by constructing deeper connections between people and their local natural resources and exploring how these processes might raise communal motivation to negotiate a fairer power settlement over key local natural resources.

To investigate potential links between community resilience and fostering representative power, this paper presents insights from a case study of a local cultural resilience project based in the Highlands of Scotland. The project encouraged participants to re-imagine how local land could be used more sustainably in the future by engaging people in past cultural methods of working the land. This included traditional farming practices, everyday upkeep of the site and excavating memories of the land through local storytelling, often utilising highland folk stories and traditional song. This research investigates whether grassroots-led cultural resilience projects like this have the potential to motivate people to pursue greater influence in future land decisions.

The remainder of the paper is divided into five sections. Building on key points raised in this introduction and situating the paper within environmental governance, we consider matters of power within community resilience discourse (Section 2), adopting the Weberian theory of power (*macht*) and authority (*Herrschaft*). Thereafter, we introduce Gaventa's Power Cube (2006) as a conceptual framework to analyse power relations between communities and relevant resilience actors. Following a summary of the methodological approach in Section 3, we use the Power Cube heuristic to structure our analysis and discussion of the empirical material (Sections 4 and 5). Finally, Section 6 offers some conclusions as to how representative resilience can improve the design of future environmental governance arrangements.

2. Environmental governance, community resilience and power

2.1. Resilience thinking within environmental governance

Governance can broadly be defined as the ways that decisions are made and actions are taken while also involving non-governmental actors (Holley, Gunningham, and Shearing 2012). Environmental governance can be described as the formal and informal, political-administrative, economic and social institutions and organisations through which power and authority are held, and user groups negotiate the use and allocation of environmental resources (Larson and Soto 2008). Community resilience thinking as a strategy of environmental governance is part of a growing wider consensus that humans must live within planetary boundaries and that this requires a fundamental transformation of social, political and economic systems (Douthwaite 2012; Chaffin et al. 2016) to service eco-system demands without jeopardising the potential to meet future needs (Walker and Salt 2012). Resilience thinking within environmental governance primarily concerns itself with how human–environment relations can be adapted to positively influence the dynamics of social-ecological systems (Walker and Salt 2006). This systems-based approach emphasises the connections and mutual dependency between societies (social systems) and nature (ecological systems) (Kotilainen 2018). Therefore, the resilience thinking approach requires us to understand the characteristics of our institutions that govern our environments, specifically the institutions that facilitate or undermine the sustainable use of environmental resources within our social-ecological system (Ostrom et al. 1999). Resilience thinking produces strategies to deal with future environmental uncertainties which results in the demand for social changes, often on the community level (Cote and Nightingale 2012). Consequently, some communities are reluctant to adopt pre-designed environmental plans that impact on their place and futures (Tilt and Gerkey 2016; Davis and Horlings 2021).

Our paper focuses on this shortcoming of the resilient approach, whereby communities are requested to adopt resilience policy plans that may be unsuitable to their local context. These plans are often legitimatised through the use of decision-making metrics that ignore some risks factors and favour others through temporal and spatial scales (Rozance et al. 2019) or are justified through presenting forms of citizen participation as “bottom-up” but instead result in increased power inequalities (Akonwi Nebasifu and Atong 2019). To address these skewed power relationships, a transformation of environmental governance arrangements is necessary.

2.2 Description of the Scottish policy context

The case study site in Scotland was chosen as a focal point for this study due to its unique land tenure and skewed distribution. Scotland currently has the most concentrated pattern of large-scale private land ownership of any country in the world and one of the most centralised systems of land ownership (McKee 2013). The latest recorded figures estimate that 432 individuals own 50% of private land in rural Scotland, resulting in half of all land in Scotland being owned by approximately 0.008% of the population (Scottish Government 2014). This pattern of distribution of land ownership can be traced back to historic political decisions and economic conditions that resulted in fewer private estates owning increasingly larger amounts of land. While the 1886 Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Act allowed for some people to own small patches of land within estates; there were still many limitations over selling rights, with landowners retaining the overwhelming majority of the best land. This resulted in a situation of “bounded liberty” (Riddoch 2013, 196). To further compound matters of representation over local resources, present-day Scotland also has one of the most centralised systems of local government in Europe, with the fewest number of elected representatives per head of population (Commission on Strengthening Local Democracy 2014). The local authority is the most local form of government. However, within the Scottish context, local authorities tend to cover very large geographical areas. For example, the Highland Council covers a large geographical area (approximately the size of Belgium) while its extensive neighbouring council – Argyll and Bute Council – would typically be served by ten councils, were it in Finland (Revell and Dinnie 2020). This indicates a democratic deficit in comparison to similarly sized European countries whereby local communities in Scotland with differing environmental challenges over a large geographical area are often represented by one centralised local authority.

The most recent major devolvement of power to Scotland over issues of land came in 1999 thanks to the political devolution from the U.K. parliament to the Scottish Parliament. Policy discussions gained traction around who has power over how land is used, owned and accessed. This led to the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 which most notably introduced community “right to buy” policy levers. The Scottish Government initiated a further review over diversification of land ownership that encouraged more opportunities for communities to secure land to address the uniquely skewed distribution. The Community Empowerment Act (Scotland) 2015 and Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016 both followed, the former extending “community right to buy” powers, granting local communities the right to buy land before it goes to market if within the public interest, while the latter created further avenues for communities to purchase land. This granted Scottish ministers the power to force the sale of private land to community bodies to further sustainable development in the absence of a willing seller. These legislative changes have opened up policy opportunities for communities to secure ownership of land that was previously unattainable.

The Scottish Government (2014) itself has declared power over land to be the key determinant of how land is used in Scotland. It acknowledges that the concentration of land ownership in rural areas continues to stifle entrepreneurial ambition, local aspirations and the ability of local communities to meet their own material needs. Furthermore, it states that the current system of land distribution results in the concentration of power in the hands of relatively few individuals; impacting the lives of local people and limiting local democracy. The recent Scottish Land Commission report (2019) regarding the scale and concentration of land ownership highlights how this skewed arrangement of land representation continues to affect the local resilience and sustainable future of Scottish communities, especially rurally:

There is no automatic link between large-scale land holdings and poor rural development outcomes but there is convincing evidence that highly-concentrated landownership can have a detrimental effect on rural development outcomes. These effects arise because landowners have the power to decide who can access land, when, for what purpose and at what price. This power is created by the current system of private property rights and is therefore directly linked to land *ownership*.

2.3 Community resilience and power

Community resilience as a concept and as an environmental policy approach is rooted in systems-based resilience theory that emerged throughout the 1970s in the fields of ecology and physics (Holling 1973; Gordon 1978). Today, the terms “social resilience” and “community resilience” are often used interchangeably to describe local adaptation in preparation for future crises or unforeseen events. Maguire and Hagan (2007) define social resilience as:

the capacity of a social entity to bounce back or respond positively to adversity. (16)

Cutter et al. (2008, 599) defined resilience within societal relations as:

the ability of a social system to respond and recover from crises and include those inherent conditions that allow the system to absorb impacts and cope with an event, post-event, and adaptive processes that facilitate the ability of the social system to reorganize, change, and learn in response to a threat.

Davis et al. (2017) developed a systems-based community resilience model based on Cutter et al.'s (2008) societal systems approach in order to investigate the adaptivity of communities for transformation. The model perceives community resilience as a complex-adaptive, evolutionary system (Davoudi, Shaw, and Haider 2012; Darnhofer 2014) and breaks down community resilience into three major processes, namely resistance, recovery and adaptivity. Adaptivity is relevant here, referring to the ability of a community to react to changes to its environment, to adapt, learn from experiences and crucially, to be able to *develop new structures based on internal, local interactions*.

As the systems model of community resilience has some limitations, more relational theories of resilience, including actor-network theory have emerged as alternative approaches (see for example West et al. 2020; Dwiartama and Rosin 2014). Furthermore some scholars have preferred to focus on environmental justice as an appropriate lens to address relations between governments and citizens (see Walker and Salt 2012; Griffin, Allen, and Johnson 2017; Baldwin 2020; Leonard 2021). We however view power and environmental governance through the lens of legitimacy. Resilience frameworks have also been developed with the aim of measuring community resilience (Cutter 2013; Reams, Lam, and Baker 2012) with some including a component of power relations analysis within their framework (Adger and Paavola 2006), others focusing on individual and collective agency (Skerrat and Steiner 2013) while others choosing to take a less human-centered approach (May 2012, 2016).

A shift within community resilience discourse towards transformative and evolutionary community resilience approaches has been witnessed (Folke et al. 2010; Manyena et al. 2011, 2019; Davoudi, Brooks, and Mehmoed 2013; Boschma 2015) including increased investigation into issues of power equity and resource distribution (Béné et al. 2012a; White and O'Hare 2014; Mackinnon and Derickson 2013; Cutter 2016; Fitzgerald 2018) with some scholars questioning the normativity of contemporary resilience thinking (Thorén and Olsson 2018; Moser et al. 2019). However, an apolitical lens still prevails when resilience approaches are then applied within civil society, resulting too often in the identification and possible treatment of symptoms rather than a sustained focus on root vulnerabilities caused by structural inequalities between social actors in society (Mackinnon and Derickson 2013). The risk of narrow, one-dimensional resilience thinking towards future environmental uncertainty based purely on technical, apolitical approaches rather than considering the necessity to structurally transform social, political and economic systems thus remains high (Béné et al. 2012a).

This article builds on these previous studies, further examining the relationship between community resilience and issues of power. Though there is increasing academic attention towards community resilience and power (Hahn and Nykvist 2017), more scholarly attention regarding how these policies are then applied is required (MacKinnon and Derickson 2013; Cretney 2014; Grabowski, Klos, and Monfreda 2019); especially in addressing questions regarding how democratic structures

“govern” relationships between public representatives, private sector interests, and communities (Joseph 2013; Fitzgerald 2018).

Grassroots initiatives are considered fundamental to the process of re-politicising community resilience (Cretney and Bond 2016) and thus conditional for securing a representative resilience settlement. Local organisation activities have the potential to motivate communities to exercise their agency and seek to secure more influence over their futures under conditions of domination, increasing their collective power as well as their ability to mobilise their members (Béné et al. 2012a; Thompson and Barrera 2019). In contrast, the socio-political and economic interests of powerful actors can limit the ability of local people to affect change in response to local challenges, including environmental risks (Brown 2014). These skewed power distributions are sometimes by design, whereby “*institutional choices by powerful groups deliberately aim to disadvantage marginal and less powerful groups*” (Agrawal 2003, 257). Therefore challenging the structural barriers for local initiatives to become effective is thus central to building a representative community resilience, which inevitably draws particular attention to issues of power (Thompson and Barrera 2019).

2.4 Towards an alternative concept: positioning power to challenge community resilience

Power can be considered a key determinant regarding the distribution of commodities and assets among and within different groups. Those who lack power may not be able to sufficiently protect themselves from future vulnerability (Collinson 2003). Literature on power can be broadly split into two perspectives (Haugaard 2012): (i) domination characterised as *power-over*; proponents of this include Weber (1948), Dahl (1957), Lukes (1974) whereby power is viewed as zero-sum and (ii) empowerment, characterised as *power to*; of which proponents include Arendt (1958), Parsons (1963), Barnes (1988) and Searle (2007).

We apply the *power over* perspective to community resilience and thus adopt the Weberian notion of power (*Macht*) whereby power is instrumented and maintained through perceptions, forms of reasoning, emotional states and a broad social ontology (Haugaard 2017) congruent with our selection of Gaventa’s “Lukes inspired” Power cube (2006) as a fitting conceptual framework to examine power relations. Weber broadly defined power as: “the probability that one actor in a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will, despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which the probability rests” (Weber 1978, p53), illustrating power as explicitly relational.

A sub-category of this power-over definition – is that which rests on authority (*Herrschaft*) – “the power to command and the duty to obey. Power that rests on authority requires an additional act of voluntary submission and/or obedience in order for that power to be wielded” (Weber 1922). Authority is relevant to our case regarding the use of land and its distribution, whereby the prevailing authority system of today is of direct consequence to the previous power relationships and structures of yesterday (e.g. feudal tenure) (Ribot 2003). “Traditional authority can be said to perpetuate the status quo and therefore is ill-suited to adaptation for social change; indeed, the idea of historical change undermines its [traditional authority’s] foundation” (Weber 1922). This “ill-suitedness” reinforces why historic power relations requires addressing before any meaningful resilience strategy can be implemented. The shared cultural values of a social collective can legitimate the power of an authority and thus transform their power into authority. Weber, therefore, posits that legitimacy of power derives from people’s belief in the legitimacy of the dominant individual or group (Beetham 1991). Without this interrogation into the legitimacy of authority structures, “obedience” to the dominant actors and systems results in patterns of inequality that become normalised over time and adopted as a collective set of values by social actors. It thus takes a radical shift in perception to intrinsically motivate

social actors such as communities to challenge seemingly “normal” structures and related systemic injustices.

This raises the question, if the shared cultural values of a social collective power were refused – can the prevailing orthodoxy then be delegitimised? To transform dominant systems of power in order to secure a more representative resilience, an interrogation into the legitimacy of social structures first needs to take place.

This view that power not only arises from economic ownership of resources, but also through political and ideological resources is reflected in post-Marxist associated schools of thought such as Lukes (1974), Laclau and Mouffe (2001); Gramsci (1971). Lukes description of “false consciousness” whereby power is applied not only through visible conflict but also through the creation of an ideological system to maintain dominant structures is key to challenging the legitimacy of traditional authority structures. Ideological power involving “conscientisation” processes (Freire 1972) can however also encourage the possibility of alternative imaginaries as a form of resistance to current systems that could lead to a demand for alternative governance arrangements. The utilisation of cultural history can be considered one mechanism of challenging normative ways of perceiving reality (Ray 1998) as the legitimacy of current social structures exist as “memory traces” embedded in social actors’ consciousness (Giddens 1984).

John Gaventa developed a conceptual framework that maps power relations between communities and authority structures from a “power over” perspective, emanating from Luke’s theory of the three faces of power (decision making power, non-decision making power and ideological power). Gaventa operationalised the three faces of power into transformative action resulting in a conceptual framework that can be used to map, challenge and strategise forms of community resistance, (e.g. active non-participation (May 2012) towards authority structures. It is the combination of Gaventa’s hidden, invisible and visible types of power, but also its focus on the arenas, spaces and levels of power which provides its suitability as a conceptual framework for representative resilience.

2.2. Conceptual framework: Gaventa’s Power Cube

The development of the Power Cube arose from Gaventa noticing a shifting rhetoric within systems of governance towards civic responsibility and participatory processes – rhetoric that is also consistently prevalent within community resilience policy discourse. This rhetoric towards participatory governance processes appears to invite engagement, consultation and local participation on a “level playing field” but can instead obscure many inequalities of resources and representation (Gaventa 2006). The rise of participatory processes utilised by systems of governance in the last twenty years has been characterised as a neo-liberal, managerialist approach of “governing through community” (MacKinnon 2002) with the majority of power within decision-making remaining largely within normative systems of governance despite the introduction of civic participation hinting otherwise. In response to these shifting perceptions of power arrangements, the “power cube” concept was developed to capture a fuller, more multi-dimensional picture of “power”, reflecting the Weberian view of relational power “by exploring how powerful actors control the agenda and the ability of less powerful actors to build their awareness and action for change” (Gaventa 2009, 8). The power cube can support social change (Braunholtz-Speight 2015), as transformation can be achieved by action in different types of spaces (Gaventa 2006). Implementing Gaventa’s Power Cube concept is not only an approach to analyse power relations but can also motivate social change, complementing the work of Braunholtz-Speight (Braunholtz-Speight 2015) who used the Power Cube to analyse Scottish Land Initiatives (SLI’s) and community buy-outs. The power cube, therefore, has been evidenced as an appropriate conceptual framework for the Scottish context to explore the understanding of local power relations and support social change.

Gaventa's power cube acknowledges three aspects of how power is used and organised. (i) Spaces of Power: demonstrating how arenas of power are created and the dynamics within them, (ii) Forms of Power: how visible, invisible, or hidden power can take shape and (iii) Scales of Power: the levels and places of engagement power takes place within.

Spaces of power can be both physical and theoretical spaces that "provide opportunity for people to potentially influence discourses, decisions, policies and relationships that affect their lives and interests" (Gaventa 2009, 15). These spaces can be closed, indicating no access for people to influence decisions taken. The spaces can be invited, whereby people are invited into a space as an opportunity to potentially affect decisions with an authority having the final say, or the spaces can be claimed where relatively powerless people claim space for themselves to carry out activities with full control over the space outside of institutional control.

Visible power manifests itself through the formal rules and procedures set by systems of governance, such as the passing of legislation through parliament. In contrast, hidden power constitutes the way in which individual or groups can influence power "behind the scenes" an example being corporate lobbying. Invisible power is more clandestine and subversive. It can be interpreted as a form of internalised power that influences peoples underlying assumptions of the world, where they attribute value and how they conceptualise meaning, associated with the Weberian theory that we accept a certain set of normative social structures of society and what is possible and impossible within existing structures of domination and subservience.

Finally, scales of power can be understood as local, national and global, but as the cube is to be considered on a continuum, it also encapsulates within it examples including power on the devolved scale and the supra-national scale (Figure 1).

The power cube informs the data analysis by providing a conceptualisation of power that maps the project participants' perceptions of relational power.

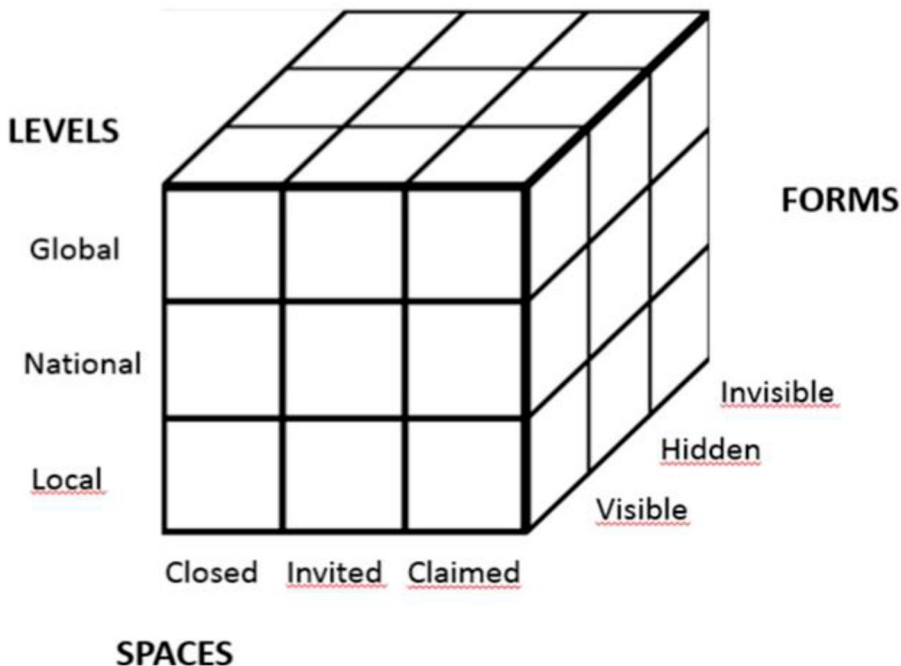


Figure 1. The Power Cube (Adapted from Gaventa 2006).

3. Research design, materials and methods

3.1. Selection of case study

This study adopts an exploratory single case study approach using the Glaser and Strauss (1967) method of proposing and building social theory through the use of case studies as an approach to social research. While critics of single-case studies from the positivistic research tradition largely focus on lack of generalisability and thus question the reliability of findings (Mariotto, Zanni, and Moraes 2014), we argue that a single case study approach is particularly suitable for the initial stages of proposing and developing new theories (in this case the concept of representative resilience). The single-case study approach offers a specificity and opportunity to provide a “thick description” of participant insights, focusing on the phenomena at hand, rather than risking dilution by focusing on linking and relating to other cases or what has already been defined in the literature (Tsoukas 2009). Indeed, identifying more ideological types of power involves moving beyond easily observable expressions and digging deeply into how, and by whom influence is exerted (Lukes 1974). While generalisation is not the goal of this research, the results produced do offer an opportunity to apply some relevant findings here to other case studies through “transferability” (Lincoln and Guba 1985) that operate under broadly similar but not exactly the same conditions – respecting the peculiarities of different cultural contexts (Mariotto, Zanni, and Moraes 2014). Critics who advocate for larger datasets nevertheless admit that single cases with smaller datasets are advantageous in the theory creation process because a researcher can fit their theory to the details of the particular case (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007).

The case study covered in this paper is one of a grassroots-led cultural resilience project situated within a large estate in the highlands of Scotland. The project is run by a live-in outdoor education professional on a small area of rented land, rented from the private estate. The project is mostly off-grid and utilises traditional highland land practices, language and culture. The project is primarily educational and practice-based with a focus on creating a hands-on, holistic learning experience around traditional ways of working the land sustainably, demonstrating viable alternatives to current land-use practices that would ensure a more resilient future for the land and the communities. The project selection criteria was satisfied as the project was set up autonomously by a member of the community, it utilised culture as an education tool and focused on a key natural resource (land) for future sustainability, while explicitly describing itself as a project to promote local resilience. More detailed information regarding this project has not been disclosed, so as to not affect the future status of the project.

3.2. Methods for data collection and analysis

Empirical evidence for this study was collected using a mixed-methods approach to qualitative social research. In the Autumn of 2019, semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted with participants on the site of the project until it was determined that data saturation had been reached. The participants were not selected at random or considered representative of the wider population, rather they were selected because of the extent of their experiences within working on the case site, ensuring suitably for thematic analysis that allow for the construction of new theoretical insights (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). The interviews were supplemented with a creative invitational method using photographs and a short mind-map visualisation activity. The decision to select semi-structured interviews as the basis for data collection was in order to seek a deeper insight and understanding of participant experiences that is harder to access through more structured data collection methods such as questionnaires (Gillham 2000; Ritchie and Lewis 2003). Each participant was involved in the project initially for a period between a minimum of one week and up to three months while one participant lived on the project-site full time. All interviewees had spent a significant period of time at the project site. The participants were recruited

firstly by contacting the project leader who disseminated my information to an initial seven individuals. While not everyone from this initial list was available for interview, the snowball sample method was used to recruit further participants. Some of the participants were also currently on site while I was attending the project.

Each participant was asked prior to interview to bring a photograph of a specific place or area of land they felt connected to. This was designed as a creative invitation to subtly demonstrate the relevance of relationship to the land for the subsequent discussion. Furthermore, it served to build initial rapport between interviewer and participant as we informally exchanged memories of land that mean something to us. This mitigated one of the weaknesses levelled at semi-structured interviewing that (Gomm 2004) describes as *demand characteristics*, whereby the participant responses are influenced by what s/he thinks the situation requires. This personal touch invited participants to share reflections based on unique their own personal memories which were not situation dependent and thus helped to set the tone of reflecting on land for the more structured parts of the interview. Each participant was asked to take part in a creative activity that involved creating a simple mind-map of power relations regarding decisions on the future of land in Scotland based on their perceptions and how this related to the project, this was incorporated into the results and subsequent analysis.

Interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed using ATLAS.ti qualitative software package. A thematic analysis approach was taken, whereby an initial open coding stage was conducted (Strauss 1987). Followed by two further stages of coding/theme grouping using an intuitive grounded approach allowing for thematic analysis to be developed to categorise participants thoughts and experiences in response to the questions asked (Braun and Clarke 2013). The results and discussion section outline and unpack these emergent themes, including quotes from anonymised participants to provide further depth and context to the analysis. References to other literature are periodically used when necessary in order to support the findings (Table 1).

4. Results

4.1 Fostering invisible power through sustainable land activities

Participants were broadly positive of the project's holistic approach, whereby practice-based activities and cultural activities were combined. Many of the participants described how this approach helped to build a deeper understanding of how the land was previously worked and lived on. It was said that the practical engagement with traditional farming methods coupled with storytelling of past cultures of the land "brought the project to life" (Daniel 1).

Participants mentioned how this combination of practical and cultural activities altered their perception of environmental issues, most notably the benefits from working the land in a sustainable manner (e.g. the potential for a more localised food system). A common example given was a

Table 1. Participant Interviewees.

Participant	Participant No.	Gender	Age Range	Occupation
Daniel	1	Male	30–39	Teacher
Diana	2	Female	60–69	Retired
Hayley	3	Female	20–29	Outdoor Education
Heather	4	Female	20–29	Student
Jess	5	Female	50–59	Teacher
Jackie	6	Female	60–69	Retired
Iona	7	Female	20–29	Ph.D. Researcher
Kelly	8	Female	30–39	Full-time Project Worker
Katie	9	Female	30–39	Park Ranger
Ross	10	Male	20–29	Outdoor Education
Sarah	11	Female	50–59	Teacher
Tony	12	Male	50–59	Business Professional

greater understanding of how transhumance methods can support land sustainability, working in tandem with the movement of the animals in order to grow seasonal food, ensuring that the soil was resting at the correct times.

A common theme that emerged was how the activities changed specific assumptions of participants as to what is really needed to live on the land and how it is possible to “live with the land and not just own it” (Heather, 4).

Participants began to imagine possibilities as to how they could apply and adjust these historic principles that fostered sustainability into relevant modern settings in order to tackle current issues within the local area, linking land use with local community needs. One participant mentioned how this project differed to other venues that engaged with cultural heritage because “... [other projects] don’t give you the feeling that old ways of life can play a role in shaping the future” (Tony, 12). Possibilities were raised in participants minds as some questioned the sustainable value of contemporary practices and whether existing practices could be adapted by utilising more sustainable past practices. Participants noted that the project highlighted how alternatives that already existed had worked before and were now considered viable sources of inspiration to begin to imagine new alternatives beyond the dominant local perception that land can only be used for commercial interests or otherwise destined to lie empty.

Participants mentioned how the project influenced their historical perception of their local landscape predominantly through learning about how people used to live and work with the land. The majority of participants had previously viewed this area of land as perpetually “empty” however, through the project they learnt how to spot ecological markings that indicated past settlements had resided in the area before being cleared from the land under previous government authorities. Learning about this aspect of cultural history of the land in a variety of experiential ways strengthened some participants’ emotional attachment to the land.

in the evening people were able to share their own views and talk freely and some would tell some kind of story or tell some facts about the history of the land. Nothing that was imposing. It would just float from one area to the next. I felt quite a lot of knowledge and the way it was given was experiential. (Daniel, 1)

Participants also learnt that local people used to have more influence over how local land was used and how this influence was eradicated before the communities were eventually cleared. Frustration was noted with some participants connecting this historic lessening of influence on the land with the large estates of today that now attempt to restrict public access and hold decision-making power over it’s use. These connections between historic and contemporary issues were seen as a continuation of historic injustice.

I definitely do think that the project has had an effect on me and I feel like a lot of people who’ve kind of come through the project have increased knowledge on some contemporary issues in Scotland, such as land ownership. And through knowledge and feeling more connected to the land and to the – what have you – an increased our passion for it, I would say. (Hayley, 3)

Through the exploration of the history of the land, participants created linkages between historic land issues and present land issues.

4.2 Fostering invisible power through rising motivation to influence use of land

The development of new imaginaries regarding land use resulted in a desire to become more involved in future land use decisions. Participants partly attributed this rising motivation to become more involved not only through the act of working the land traditionally and engaging in storytelling, but crucially through talking and comparing contemporary and past land issues with others at the project as they worked the land together. Participants described how listening to and discussing with people who were passionate about how land should be used also felt an increase of passion within themselves to influence the future of local land and a feeling of a collective will to change the future emerged. Furthermore, in some instances this heightened motivation to

influence land use started to *rub off* on people *outside* the project, participants mentioned how discussions with people outwith the project on the activities there were influenced by hearing fresh perspectives on sustainable land use possibilities. The effects of the project were described as a:

strange kind of magic. There is something incredible. I've never gone there and not met somebody who was stimulating or maybe think about things in a different way ... the project is like dropping a pebble in pond and watching the effect. (Jess, 5)

The project encouraged some to explore ways to build networks with other like-minded enterprises in the area can contribute to sustainability.

Participants explained how the project also increased their motivation and self-belief to set up similar small-scale land projects such as community orchards, school projects, bee-keeping and to explore the idea of a local, circular economy:

I felt really motivated to engage more young people on a more regular basis ... I thought about new and crazy ways making sure young people were having opportunities ... to take into account the cultural environment, the built in environment as well as the natural environment. (Jess, 5)

The project also increased motivation from participants to propose the project and like-minded projects they had networked with as future models for land sustainability across the highlands, specifically citing the combination of experiential, practice-based methods and cultural activities as key to effectively engage with land sustainability. However, participants frequently mentioned that they're motivated to influence how land can be used was stymied due to present difficulties within the area, specifically regarding owning or securing land to set up enterprises that could foster more sustainable land use. Participants expressed frustration with the financial difficulty of sustaining farming crofts on the land and the governance arrangements that make it a challenge and risky to set up a project even if the land is lying empty and unused.

4.3 Examining the visible/hidden power of landowners

Participants critically reflected on the contention between the use of land for profit compared to use of the land for social and environmental good in light of attending the project. The majority view was that profit maximisation often took precedence over social and economic sustainability for community life in rural highland areas. The most popular example given by participants was the preference of large landowners to use the land of their estates as sites for deer hunting and grouse shooting. This was described as "*scarring*" the landscape, for example the excessive deer populations needed for hunting, negatively affects the promotion of biodiversity in the area. Another participant mentioned how owners of estates often arbitrarily restrict access to land for local people. Participants shared their frustration that sustainable land use alternatives are unexplored as the owners of the large estates see hydro schemes and wind turbines as the optimal avenue for profit maximisation, often without the support of local people or in direct opposition to them, as what happened in a nearby site to the project.

they've [large estate owners] got to make the land profitable. If that's by selling rights for deer stocking or building hydro plant, or building wind turbines, there's a financial incentive to get things done even if it's not in the best interest of the community that is on the land. In that case, that's why I think it would be good for them to have slightly less influence over things (Diana, 2)

Multiple participants referenced the problem of absentee landlords, sometimes from overseas, who they feel can only conceptualise the value of land through the maximisation of profit rather than the long-term interests of the local community due to the lack of first-hand knowledge of the land and the people that reside there.

... they allow development but not controlling how the land and development is managed, so you're putting up £400,000 houses when the average income in the area is £17,000 or something daft. That's not sustainable (Jess, 6)

The participants not only described their concerns of visible power structures, but also hidden power activities. They commonly described the current lack of accountability and limited transparency over land decisions. Frustration was expressed that often land owners are allowed to remain anonymous and therefore a lack of transparency over who or how decisions over local land use are being influenced.

Participants mentioned that they have seen organisations arrive on social media platforms to defend the interests of the landowners and to promote instances of landowner benevolence, holding a perception that lobbyists and big business are behind a lot of landowner decisions but this often remains concealed. One interviewee however provided an example of a large landowner who did work proactively with the local community and voluntarily relinquished land for community development.

4.4 The invisible power of landowners within invited spaces – the landowner/tenant relationship

Participants highlighted the landowner and tenant relationship as crucial to what is allowed to take place on the land. Innovative activities relied on an agreeable landowner, therefore maintaining a good relationship was critical for a tenant to mitigate risk of losing access/tenancy to the land.

You can have this project that is creating employment, creating joy, helping people, really inspiring, trailblazing and pioneering yet someone still has the ability to click their fingers and make it all – I don't think it would necessarily go away but they might have to move. (Iona, 7)

Concern was expressed of the unequal power that existed within this space. That the project's success may become a nuisance for the landowner, with the tenancy agreement turning into a ticking time bomb. Doubt was raised whether it would be feasible to move the project somewhere else as the project is intrinsically linked to this specific piece of land for numerous years now.

I know the project is on a lease and the problem with leases is, that you don't own the land and so it just depends on the whim of the landowner and that's the problem for Scotland is, that most of Scotland is owned by anonymous landowners,. They tend to own land that they don't necessarily use it as well as smaller communities would want to. (Daniel 1)

It was further stated that the amount of energy needed to re-start a project like this if it was forced to move highlighted the risk of losing resilience-building efforts at the whim of landlord decisions with no community say.

Participants mentioned that the freedom to campaign for more sustainable use of land was limited as they were conscious not to bite the hand that feeds them. It was mentioned that large landowners often provide many services, one example cited was a park ranger service, therefore people were more cautious of how radical they would be in fear of a change of relationship with the landowner, highlighting the skewed nature of power within current governance arrangement spaces. A participant disclosed that deep down they still felt desperate for change and noted that these tensions can make it harder to get a community to "sing from the same hymn sheet". Participants mentioned feeling powerless, resulting in issues not being raised in the first place as they felt it would make little difference to the outcome. It was felt that decisions often benefit landowners and private interests disproportionately (e.g. hydro-electric plants and hunting tourism) with current participatory consultation processes with regards to local decision making was also criticised:

Communities as far as I can see have very little input. We get these trot arounds. A private firm produces it's development plan, the local authority produces its development plan, everyone goes along [to the consultation event] and say what they think about the development plan and then they hand out a rolling program. I don't like the system. (Jess, 6)

4.5 Desire for influence within invited and closed spaces

Participants mentioned that while there are limited examples of community involvement with how land is used, overall they felt the communities were hardly involved in decisions relating to the land. Participants noted that there are limited avenues for any constructive dialogue with the big decision makers some of whom are anonymous land owners.

A number of participants discussed the lack of local democratic representation. One example given was how local petitions without representation currently have little affect and suggested alternatives would not be considered – resulting in a feeling of powerless and not being heard:

You see on your way up to the project there are lots of signs up: “No wind farming” and I feel a lot of the time those petitions are unsuccessful and projects go ahead anyway even if the local community is against them. For them, more influence can be a good thing. (Diana, 2)

A participant expressed frustration that there are not any public resources allocated for people to represent their communities. Importantly, they did not believe that the current local authorities fight the corner of local people effectively and always seek a compromise.

Interviewees expressed desire for power to be devolved to the local level, mentioning that local people can campaign and petition but real representation has to be devolved locally. Kelly stated how the project affected her propensity to influence the future of land in the community:

I’m much more likely to get involved in local decisions to the land here, Definitely much more now because I’m now actually participating in the place. I think that’s where individual families fall short because they’re not participating in the place so they feel they can’t say anything about it. (Kelly, 8)

Participants mentioned how working at the project either made them more radical or view politics differently. One volunteer mentioned that their conversations have turned from being about “hardcore politics” to more environmental and community politics – less about parties and more about materially improving things at a community level.

4.6 Visible, invisible and hidden power of multi-scalar environmental governance

While not directly linked to the effects of the project, it is important to mention that participants often brought up their lack of influence on environmental governance issues at multiple scales.

Some participants felt that landowners had undue influence over local government decision making. Although, there was some sympathy for the local authorities, stating that they feel under pressure to approve large land projects such as hydro schemes, wind farms and industrial forestry, even if many local people are opposed to them. This is because of the perceived financial benefits and jobs that these projects can bring. Participants mentioned the desire for “lot more power and decision making in their local areas” (Diana, 2).

Some participants felt that the Scottish Government have made progress in terms of community land ownership, however, there was also criticism towards this governance actor for choosing not to use their devolved powers to be more radical on land reform.

Participants also referenced the U.K. Government, specifically the tension between the Scottish Government and the U.K. Government in regards to land issues. There was a feeling that the U.K. government was more distant and that the U.K. government was more supportive towards the large landowners and private estates. One participant mentioned how it solidified their views on Scottish independence, seeing further political devolution as an avenue to open up further opportunities for developing community land.

Lastly, another participant mentioned a further problem of altering land ownership on the supra-national scale, citing a legal case between a community and a private estate owner before Brexit, that was initially won in favour of the local populace within national legislation but subsequently reversed by the European Court of Human Rights that found in favour of the large landowner.

5. Discussion

5.1 *Invisible power and the double motive*

Gaventa's form of invisible power emerged during the project that influenced participant's perceptions of how they viewed local land. Crucially, this included multiple instances that changed their underlying assumptions of how land could be used sustainably in the future. This form of invisible power can be characterised as influencing the ideological framing of participants (Weber 1948; Lukes 1974; Laclau and Mouffe 2001). This invisible power was nurtured through participants gaining a deeper understanding of the historic culture of the land, and how it was used more sustainably by past local people who fostered closer connections to the land (Ray 1998). A greater intrinsic motivation to affect the future of land was further created through fruitful collective interactions and discussions within the project, while working on land-based activities. Through the holistic approach of working on practical and cultural activities together, ideas about the future of the land pollinated between participants; the reach of this invisible power eventually extended externally beyond the project as to how new sustainable land use possibilities could be developed, suggesting a potential for social movements and social innovations to take shape (Béné et al. 2012a; Thompson and Barrera 2019). These changes in how land is perceived led to the identification of two motivations of participations to influence land use in the future.

The first motivation was to develop further community land activities within the landscape of Scotland, whereby land is used not only for profit maximisation but also to maximise its ecological and social value for a more resilient future. Essentially reclaiming land as a place rather than a commodity (Hoffman 2013). These ambitions emerged in the context of a deeper understanding of the historically-derived environmental governance arrangements, specifically the feudal informed traditional authority (Weber 1948) land ownership model and its land use limits. A second motivation arose through the desire to address feelings of frustration and powerlessness by affecting change within visible power structures – firstly to secure the future of the project itself under threat due to the current land ownership model, but more generally to create more favourable conditions that encourages further “common good” activities and a more influential local voice in land decisions (Gaventa 2006). The feeling that environmental governance arrangements require significant structural reform (Mackinnon and Derickson 2013) remained even in the context of the land reform legislation changes implemented since political devolution.

5.2 *Invisible power and cultural refusal*

The double motive arose through a form of invisible power (Gaventa 2006) that primarily utilised cultural processes, namely the history of the land that aided changes in perception of how local land can be used. The act of working the land traditionally and listening and debating the stories of people who used to live and work on the same plots of land before their eventual clearance, many of the participants project felt a closer emotional attachment to the land than before participating in the project. This offered people a historically derived sense of place (Lillevoid and Haarstad 2019). Participants had access to stories that had either been forgotten, hidden or suppressed which served to highlight aspects of the land that have been marginalised or ignored in the past (Ray 1998). This resulted in everyday conversations at the project about historic land issues, but also discussions regarding new possibilities for using land more sustainably. In other words, by drawing on a historic repository of ideas and concepts, people were inspired to think about the future resilience of their communities (Van De Noort 2013). Moreover, engaging people in past practices and stories of the land can inform their present behaviour by fostering a deeper, historically-derived comprehension of present, systemic place-based injustices – in this case regarding land (Duthie-Kannikkatt et al. 2019). Invisible power also opens up opportunities to resist present day forms of power that derive from large-scale private interests and systems of governance by questioning the current

"false consciousness" regarding the legitimacy of current power structures (Lukes 1974; Freire 1972). It can also inspire alternatives to current systemic cultural orthodoxies that Weber (1948) describes as the "normatively accepted social structures of society". Building on Marcel Mauss's work on the notion of civilisation, anthropologist (Graeber 2013) refers to this as a form of creative refusal whereby emergent alternative cultures from projects like these become active political projects that act as a form of resistance towards prevailing cultural hegemonies. Therefore the first step towards representative resilience can emerge from utilising the less publicised cultural history of local resources to foster changes in perceptions, deeper emotional attachments to said local resources and an increased desire to transform existing power in the favour of community. Essentially repoliticising community resilience through grassroots-led initiatives (Cretney and Bond 2016). The result being a more informed, motivated community towards tackling enduring systemic power inequity over local resources that require attention (Brown 2014). This process can be termed as "cultural refusal" whereby communities engage in forms of resistance (Scott 1990) such as non-participation (May 2012) towards current resilience policies and instead engage in alternative grassroots resilience activities to challenge the legitimacy of current environmental governance arrangements.

5.3 Landowner/tenant relationship within the invited space

The process of securing access to unused land for local land projects was noted as very difficult; requiring protracted negotiation with powerful landowners leading to power dynamic that reflects Gaventa's understanding of an "invited space" (2006). Under current environmental governance arrangements, setting up grassroots-led projects in Scotland may appear to have characteristics of a "claimed space", with project organisers and participants having almost full control over the day-to-day running of the project, however, an analysis of prevailing power dynamics suggests otherwise. In our case, which is typical of rural projects in Scotland, it appears to be much more akin to Gaventa's notion of an "invited space", whereby communities who want to start local land projects must first secure permission privately from a large private estate owner. Meaning that communities find themselves in key political arenas where they are powerless participants rather than influential stakeholders in decisions as to how empty local land can be utilised by communities in Scotland (Fung 2006; Gaventa 2006). The results indicated that this most likely takes the form of short-term tenancy agreement and requires the acceptance of a high degree of surveillance by the landowner for the duration of the tenancy. Decisions to the land that could risk the landowner/tenant relationship are therefore often avoided, with the tenant acutely aware of the "Sword of Damocles" that hangs over the head of projects like these on rented land, suggesting a set of arrangements designed to maintain skewed power dynamics in favour of more powerful governance actors (Agrawal 2003; Brown 2014). Ironically, the success of land activities can bring existential risks to its future. Projects that become too popular or successful could result in irritation to the landowner who dislikes the greater scrutiny and loss of control over who is accessing their land and how it is being used. This demonstrates the skewed power relationships that can exist within community resilience activities and demonstrates that community resilience is inherently political (Mackinnon and Derickson 2013, Brown 2014). This also highlights the risk of normative community resilience strategies masking neo-liberal processes as communities are being asked to become resilient without any representative influence over their own access and use of local land (Joseph 2013; Mackinnon 2002).

5.4 Local scale powerlessness within visible power structures

The perception of local-scale powerlessness was felt due to difficulties communities had in influencing decisions to the land without visible representation. There was a feeling of frustration that their motivations could not be realised within existing visible power structures and negativity around the undemocratic nature of current environmental governance arrangements. Local communities

struggled to affect decision making of the land beyond supporting short-termism profit maximisation, resulting in a perception that many decisions are made through “hidden power” processes such as private interest lobbying conducted through “behind the curtain” talks with government representatives (Gaventa 2006). This indicates that when mapping local power relations, Lukes three faces of power requires a greater understanding of what political arenas hidden power is exercised within and at what scales of governance (Gaventa 2006). Despite raised motivation from the project, feelings of powerlessness limited potential for mobilization. This indicates that communities will be less likely to take responsibility for their local areas until they are content with the legitimacy of environmental arrangements that empower them to do so, thus limiting the future resilience of communities in Scotland.

6. Conclusion

This research explored whether cultural resilience projects that focus on connecting people to their local natural resources (e.g. land) not only educate but also motivate people to pursue greater influence in future local resource decisions. Our analysis of different sets of qualitative data revealed that those who participate in such projects may be motivated to seek greater influence in future land decisions. As illustrated in the discussion, two key motivations emerged – to change how land is used (a departure from profit maximisation towards “common good” land activities) and to have a greater influence in future land decisions to secure these changes. The holistic approach of using traditional farming methods and participating in cultural history activities related to the land encouraged a deeper historical understanding of the land. This resulted in perception shifts regarding its future possibilities, a deeper attachment to the land and a greater awareness of how land is distributed, leading to an increased motivation among some project participants to question the legitimacy and challenge existing authority structures of current environmental governance arrangements that restrict these possibilities from materialising.

Gaventa’s power cube offers a useful lens to conceptualise and map local power relations. More specifically, it provides opportunities to address the apolitical nature of current community resilience policy (MacKinnon and Derickson 2013), by re-politicising the concept around ideas of representation and by identifying accumulations and gaps in socially and culturally community power. Within our case, the invisible power of utilising past culture motivated people to work towards an alternative culture of sustainable land use. At the same time, invisible power demonstrated a form of resistance or “cultural refusal” against visible, invisible and hidden power structures that maintain dominant, capitalist-led systems of land ownership/use. Through this cultural refusal (Graeber 2013), stories of systemic land injustices of the past and present, influenced people’s perceptions of what is possible (Scott 1990; Freire 1972) whereby alternative imaginaries emerged to challenge the legitimacy of hegemonic material, social and cultural structures. It is important to note, however, that the utilisation of cultural history and local stories of places can also be potentially exclusionary and reinforce barriers to collective action as opposed to breaking them down (Beel et al. 2017), therefore the application of this strategy is dependent on the local cultural context. To avoid this, it is essential to have a deep understanding of the social and cultural particularities of a place and to primarily focus on the cultural memories of local people’s experiences of the land.

The research has highlighted the potential for grassroots-led cultural resilience projects to support the first step of representative resilience. It does this by harnessing a form of invisible power as a consciousness-raising process to support the motivation of people to challenge existing environmental governance arrangements and become more involved in decisions over key local natural resources. Within this case, there are only limited opportunities to influence power. community empowerment programmes and land reform legislation introduced through the devolved powers of the Scottish government open up some opportunities for people to affect land decisions locally and nationally. However, within existing environmental governance arrangements,

communities will remain distant from decisions made regarding their local ecological areas and local resilience projects will continue to occur in “invited spaces” overseen by large landowners within an existing land system of skewed visible, hidden and invisible power dynamics. Governance requests for communities to become more resilient by adapting themselves through a process of transformation/bouncing forward opens up an opportunity for communities to enter political arenas by leveraging resistance to community resilience policy requests until alternative environmental governance arrangements are negotiated that not only devolve responsibility but crucially devolve power to communities.

The policy calls for more resilient communities are likely to only increase as the concept of community resilience gains further momentum during the COVID-19 pandemic at local, national and international scales (The Highland Council 2020; Common Weal 2020; Giovannini et al. 2020). Therefore it is necessary that communities reach the second step of representative resilience and negotiate an alternative, legitimised community resilience settlement. This must be genuinely collaborative whereby communities are not agentless participants operating within an “invited” consultative space (Gaventa 2006; MacKinnon 2002, Joseph 2013) but instead are influential co-actors (Fung 2006) not passively participating but have representative influence of decision-making outcomes over key natural resources. To begin to conceptualise the second step of representative resilience and to inform further empirical and theoretical work on adaptive environmental governance arrangements, we recommend Ostrom’s research on alternative institutional arrangements for the successful management of natural resources as a useful compass and ideological framing. Particularly interesting is a focus on incorporating principles of institutional variety (Fung 2006; Dietz et al. 2003), whereby environmental governance employs a variety of institutional types that include hierarchies and markets but crucially greater community self-governance within decision-making, in order to transform and evolve authority structures. Key here is also the creation of conditions whereby decision-making and new adaptive rules/regulations can be monitored by a greater variety of civil society actors and therefore induce compliance with greater legitimacy. This approach can create an authority structure more suited to encourage transformative and evolutionary approaches much more in line with the aims of current community resilience approaches.

Speculatively this could be in the form of existing or newly set-up collaborative public institutions (e.g. citizens assemblies, citizens juries, cooperatives) that are then included in decision-making processes thus departing from the tendency to fall back on normative “command and control” strategies (Dietz et al. 2003) within current environmental governance conditions (Dietz et al. 2003). The next step toward representative resilience is to arrive at a set of institutional arrangements that can help to establish collaborative conditions that adequately address power (Brisbois and Loë 2016) to meet future environmental challenges.

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