

INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF SCOTTISH STUDIES

ISSN 1923-5755
E-ISSN 1923-5763

EDITOR

S. R. Dye, University of Guelph

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

L. Baer-Tsarfati, University of Guelph
M. Hudec, University of Guelph

REVIEW EDITORS

K. Comper, University of Guelph
P. Seale, University of Guelph
B. Clark, University of Guelph

EDITORIAL BOARD

M. Brown, University of Aberdeen
G. Carruthers, University of Glasgow
L. Davis, Simon Fraser University
E. L. Ewan, University of Guelph
D. Fischlin, University of Guelph
J. E. Fraser, University of Guelph
K. J. James, University of Guelph
L. L. Mahood, University of Guelph
A. McCarthy, University of Otago
D. Nerbas, McGill University
M. Penman, University of Stirling
R. B. Sher, New Jersey Institute of Technology

The Editors assume no responsibility for statements of fact or opinion
made by contributors.

All contents are © copyrighted by *The International Review of Scottish
Studies* and/or their author(s), 2020.

Book printing by Stewart Publishing & Printing
Markham Ontario
+1 905 294 4389
stewartbooks@outlook.com

SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION

This is a peer-reviewed, open access journal. It is listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals and is a member of the Canadian Association of Learned Journals.

Directory of Open Access Journals: <http://www.doaj.org>

Canadian Association of Learned Journals: <http://www.calj-acrs.ca>

All manuscripts, including footnotes, captions, illustrations, and supplementary information should be submitted electronically through the journal's website: <http://www.irss.uoguelph.ca>.

Submission guidelines and stylistic conventions are also to be found there, along with previous issues of the journal.

Manuscripts should be a maximum of 8,000 words in length, although shorter papers will be considered. Contributors are requested to provide their title, institutional affiliation, and current appointment.

Book Reviews and Review Essays should be submitted electronically through the website above.

To contact the Editor:

The Editor, *International Review of Scottish Studies*
Centre for Scottish Studies
Department of History
University of Guelph
MCKN 1008
50 Stone Road East
Guelph, Ontario, Canada
N1G 2W1

scottish@uoguelph.ca

THE SCOTTISH STUDIES FOUNDATION

The *International Review of Scottish Studies* is jointly published by the Centre for Scottish Studies at the University of Guelph and the Scottish Studies Foundation. Individuals interested in the history and culture of Scotland, and the decisive influence of the Scots in North America, are encouraged to join the educational charity, The Scottish Studies Foundation. Membership is CAD \$30.00 per annum.

Payment may be made online at <http://www.scottishstudies.com> or by cheque or money order, payable in Canadian funds, to *The Scottish Studies Foundation*. Please send cheques and money orders to:

Membership Secretary
The Scottish Studies Foundation
P.O. Box 45069
2482 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
M4P 3E3

The Scottish Studies Foundation:
<http://www.scottishstudies.com>

Centre for Scottish Studies at the University of Guelph
<http://www.uoguelph.ca/scottish>

Facebook: ScottishStudies
Twitter: @ScottishStudies
Instagram: @UoGCSS

The International Review of Scottish Studies
<http://www.irss.uoguelph.ca>

IRSS Volume 45: 2020

CONTENTS

ARTICLES

- The Use of Lockhart's *Memoirs* (1714) in the Writings
of Eighteenth-Century Whig Historians of the Anglo-
Scottish Union (1707) 1
Yannick Deschamps
- Women, Gender, and the Kirk Before the Covenant 27
Jason Cameron White
- Witchcraft Against Royal Danish Ships in 1589 and
the Transnational Transfer of Ideas 54
Liv Helene Willumsen

RESEARCH NOTES

- John Campbell's "Short Papers" for Lord Bute in the
London Evening Post 100
Matthew Binney

REVIEWS

- Eva von Contzen. *The Scottish Legendary: Towards a
Poetics of Hagiographic Narration.* 116
Marian Toledo Candelaria
- Virginia Blankenhorn. *Tradition, Transmission,
Transformation: Essays on Scottish Gaelic Poetry and
Song.* 119
Michael Newton
- Scott Hames. *The Literary Politics of Scottish
Devolution: Voice, Class, Nation.* 123
Arianna Introna

David Torrance. <i>Ruth Davidson's Conservatives: The Scottish Tory Party, 2011–19.</i> <i>Taym Saleh</i>	126
The Frank Watson Book Prize in Scottish History	129

**THE USE OF LOCKHART'S *MEMOIRS* (1714)
IN THE WRITINGS OF EIGHTEENTH-
CENTURY WHIG HISTORIANS OF THE
ANGLO-SCOTTISH UNION (1707)**

Yannick Deschamps, Université Paris-Est Créteil

ABSTRACT

Eighteenth-century Whig historians of the Union (1707) reacted to Lockhart's Tory-Jacobite Memoirs in different ways. While John Oldmixon (1672-1742) incorporated passages from them into his account of the Union for the sake of confuting them, Abel Boyer (1667-1729) and Nicholas Tindal (1687-1774) endorsed them to a large degree, borrowing from them extensively. Then, several historians writing in the mid- to late eighteenth century such as Thomas Somerville (1740-1830) or Malcolm Laing (1762-1818) approached them with an open mind, but also some critical distance, revealing an evolution in British historiography towards a more scholarly approach to historical sources.

Except for Oldmixon's accounts, all those historians' expositions of the Union were to some extent impacted by Lockhart's Memoirs. Far from using the latter only as a storehouse of information on the Union, they were all in some measure influenced by Lockhart's vision of that event and, as a result, ideologically hybrid

Keywords: Scotland, Anglo-Scottish Union, Whig history, George Lockhart of Carwarth, John Oldmixon, Abel Boyer, Nicholas Tindal, Malcolm Laing

Introduction

No historian of the Anglo-Scottish Union (1707) writing after 1714 could afford to overlook George Lockhart of Carwarth's *Memoirs*

Concerning the Affairs of Scotland (1714).¹ His treatment of the passing of the Union was quite different from the first accounts devoted to that transaction by Daniel Defoe and Gilbert Burnet.² While the two Whig historians praised the Union, which they presented as the outcome of God's benign Providence and a source of many benefits for both England and Scotland, the Tory-Jacobite memorialist castigated that measure, which he attributed to bribery and blamed for causing "Scotland's ruine."

In their article entitled "Contesting Interpretations of the Union of 1707: The Abuse and Use of George Lockhart of Carnwath's *Memoirs*" (2007), Christopher A. Whatley and Derek J. Patrick endeavoured to prove that historians such as the revisionists William Ferguson and Patrick Riley or the Scottish Nationalist P. H. Scott did not handle Lockhart's *Memoirs* with the required circumspection.³ My aim in this paper is very different. It is not concerned with assessing the veracity of Lockhart's *Memoirs* or that of the historical interpretations of the Union which, from the 1960s onwards,

¹ George Lockhart of Carnwath, *Memoirs Concerning the Affairs of Scotland, from Queen Anne's Accession to the Throne, to the Commencement of the Union of the Two Kingdoms of Scotland and England, in May 1707* (London, 1714). For the purpose of this paper, I shall use Daniel Szechi's edition of Lockhart's *Memoirs: 'Scotland's Ruine': Lockhart of Carnwath's Memoirs of the Union* (Aberdeen: The Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 1997). It will henceforth be abbreviated to "Lockhart."

² Daniel Defoe, *The History of the Union of Great Britain* (Edinburgh, 1709); Gilbert Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of his own Time*, vol. 2 (London, 1734).

³ Christopher A. Whatley and Derek J. Patrick, "Contesting Interpretations of the Union of 1707: The Abuse and Use of George Lockhart of Carnwath's *Memoirs*," *Journal of Scottish Studies* 27, no. 1 (2007): 24–47. See also William Ferguson, "The Making of the Treaty of Union of 1707," *The Scottish Historical Review* 43, no. 136, part 2 (Oct. 1964): 89–110; W. Ferguson, *Scotland's Relations with England: A Survey to 1707* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1977), 180–277; P. W. J. Riley, *The Union of England and Scotland: A Study in Anglo-Scottish Politics of the Eighteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978); P. H. Scott, *Andrew Fletcher and the Treaty of Union* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1992).

endorsed them with few or no reservations. Instead, my purpose is to investigate how eighteenth-century Whig historians used those *Memoirs* and in what ways their accounts of the Union were influenced by them.

I shall show that those Whig historians exploited Lockhart's Tory-Jacobite *Memoirs* in very different ways. Thus, John Oldmixon (1672/3–1742) incorporated passages from them into his accounts of the Union for the sake of confuting them. On the other hand, Abel Boyer (1667–1729) and Nicholas Tindal (1687–1774) endorsed Lockhart's *Memoirs* to a large degree, borrowing from them extensively, sometimes quoting from them, sometimes unashamedly plagiarising them. Finally, several historians writing in the mid- to late eighteenth century such as William Guthrie (1708–1770), Thomas Somerville (1740–1830), Robert Heron (1764–1807), Ebenezer Marshal (*d.*1813), or Malcolm Laing (1762–1818) used them with an open mind, but also some critical distance and caution.⁴ The authors I have included in my analysis may not quite conform to our definition of what a historian is and might, to some extent, be described as polemicists; but they all saw themselves as historians. I have discarded from my corpus authors who defined themselves exclusively as journalists or controversialists. Besides, I have only considered works in which Lockhart's *Memoirs* were extensively quoted and discussed.⁵

⁴ The Scottish “philosophical”—also called “sociological” or “conjectural”—historians paid little attention to the Union and passed Lockhart's *Memoirs* over in silence. For the lesser known historians mentioned here, see, for instance, Thomas Preston Peardon, *The Transition in English Historical Writing, 1760–1830* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1933); Laird Okie, *Augustan Historical Writing: Histories of England in the English Enlightenment* (Lanham/New York/London: University Press of America, 1991); Colin Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig Historians and the Creation of an Anglo-British Identity, 1689–c. 1830* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); David Allan, *Virtue, Learning and the Scottish Enlightenment: Ideas of Scholarship in Early Modern History* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993).

⁵ So I have not included in my body of texts John Clerk of Penicuik's “De Imperio Britannico,” which was written and revised in the first part of the eighteenth century and was only recently translated and published as

As I go along, it will appear that these different uses of Lockhart's *Memoirs* reflect an evolution in British historiography towards a more scholarly approach to historical sources and a move away from compilations to explanatory narratives. Concerning the historiography of the Union proper, I shall first show that by mounting an onslaught on Lockhart's *Memoirs*, Oldmixon harnessed a polemical kind of history in the service of a purely Whig interpretation of the Union from which all Tory elements were purged. Then, I shall argue that by deferentially incorporating many passages from Lockhart's *magnum opus* into their own accounts of the Union, Abel Boyer and Nicholas Tindal concocted ideologically hybrid versions of that transaction. Finally, I shall contend that by adopting an open and unprejudiced attitude to Lockhart's *Memoirs*, the mid- to late eighteenth-century Whig historians of the Union worked out critical unionist, proto-academic, semi-hybrid interpretations of that measure. Their achievements were encouraged by a general change in attitudes towards the Union. In the second half of the eighteenth century, the Scots came to accept it "as part of the barely noticed but enduring backdrop of British politics."⁶ Banal unionism prevailed.⁷ As a result, historians were able to take a more relaxed view of the Union.

John Oldmixon's Onslaught on Lockhart's Memoirs: A Polemical Kind of History in the Service of a Purely Whig

History of the Union of Scotland and England (1993). Admittedly, Clerk declared in his "Memorandums" that he had composed that work to undeceive those who believed that the Union had been "brought about by corruption and compulsion," as claimed by Lockhart. But in his *History*, Clerk makes very scant use of Lockhart's *Memoirs*: John Clerk of Penicuik, *History of the Union of Scotland and England*, trans. and ed. Douglas Duncan (Edinburgh: Scottish History Society, 1993). For a detailed discussion of Lockhart's *Memoirs* by Clerk, see his annotated copy of that work in the National Archives of Scotland: NRS, GD 18/6080. See also Whatley and Patrick, "Contesting Interpretations," 33–47.

⁶ Colin Kidd, *Union and Unionisms: Political Thought in Scotland, 1500–2000* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 22.

⁷ The concept of "banal unionism" was coined by Colin Kidd. See Kidd, *Union and Unionisms*, 23–31.

Interpretation of the Union

The English historian and polemicist John Oldmixon provided detailed accounts of the Union in *Memoirs of North-Britain* (1715) and *The History of England, During the Reigns of King William and Queen Mary, Queen Anne, King George I* (1735).⁸ If he incorporated into those works many passages from *Lockhart's Memoirs*, it was primarily for the sake of confuting them. He accused their author of misrepresenting facts⁹ and committing “a Thousand Errors, both of Will and Judgment.”¹⁰ The *Memoirs* were so spoilt by mistakes that “no use [could] be made of them for Information.”¹¹ Among other things, Lockhart got several of his dates wrong and superstitiously made “wonderful Remarks on the *Act of Union* as so many [providential] Judgments attending it.”¹² The Union, Oldmixon argued, was not a punishment inflicted by God on the Scots, as Lockhart credulously believed. It was essentially a human affair. Lockhart was also incorrect about the immediate causes of the Union. It was not the product of the English Court's intrigues to secure Sydney Godolphin's position as Lord Treasurer and prevent his being called to account by the Tories for advising Queen Anne to give her assent to the Scottish Act of Security (1704),¹³ as claimed by the Jacobite memorialist, but the effect of the English ministers' sincere efforts to settle the Protestant succession in Scotland on the same basis as in England, since, as was well known, the Scots would not adopt it unless it was incorporated into an act of union with England.¹⁴

⁸ John Oldmixon, *Memoirs of North-Britain* (London, 1715); J. Oldmixon, *The History of England, During the Reigns of King William and Queen Mary, Queen Anne King George I* (London, 1735).

⁹ Oldmixon, *Memoirs*, 204.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 234.

¹¹ Oldmixon, *History*, 375.

¹² Oldmixon, *Memoirs*, 204.

¹³ The Scottish Act of Security (1704) provided that the Scots would not agree to the Hanoverian succession and choose their own successor to Queen Anne unless the English agreed to some conditions concerning various economic, political, and religious issues.

¹⁴ Oldmixon, *History*, 358.

Besides, Oldmixon rejected Lockhart's view that the negotiations which gave rise to the Treaty of Union were a masquerade and that the Scottish Commissioners were in collusion with their English counterparts: "The *Memoir-Writer* represents the whole Progress of the Treaty as a Combination between the *English* and *Scotch* Commissioners; and yet cou'd any Thing be carry'd on with more Solemnity, more Order, and more Impartiality?"¹⁵ The members of the Scottish Commission did their best to defend their country's interests. Lockhart's accusation that they "betray'd the Liberty of their Country, in agreeing to an incorporating Union" was "groundless."¹⁶ Indeed, the laws securing Scottish liberties were preserved by the Union and, as a result of that transaction, Scotland was less dependent on England than formerly.¹⁷ Besides, contrary to Lockhart's claims, the financial and fiscal arrangements of the Treaty of Union were generous to the Scots and greatly benefited them.¹⁸ The Equivalent—the sum of £400,000 negotiated by the Scottish Commissioners in return for taking on a share of the English national debt¹⁹—was a real gift to them, although by no means a bribe, as suggested by Lockhart.²⁰

The Jacobite memorialist was just as wrong when it came to discussing the number of representatives granted to the Scots by Article XXII of the Treaty of Union. He complained that it was too small, "Sixteen Lords, and Forty-five Commoners, not being an equal Proportion to that of *England*."²¹ But the Commissioners settled on the right number. On the basis of its taxable value, Scotland would have had too few representatives, while on that of its population, it would have had too many. Therefore, quite appropriately, the two criteria were combined—some extra weight being given to the first one, which was the more suitable of the two.²²

¹⁵ Oldmixon, *Memoirs*, 176.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 175.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 177.

¹⁹ Christopher A. Whatley, *The Scots and the Union: Then and Now*, 2d ed. (2006; Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), 16.

²⁰ Oldmixon, *History*, 376.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 378.

²² *Ibid.*

Oldmixon also blamed Lockhart for exaggerating the popular opposition to the Union and painting it in favourable colours. The Scots were not hostile to the Union initially. If some of them eventually stood up against it, it was only because they were manipulated by the Jacobites, who misrepresented the contents of the Treaty to them.²³ Unlike Lockhart, Oldmixon failed to see any virtue in the behaviour of the anti-unionist petitioners, who were not to be compared with the illustrious Kentish petitioners—who were sent to prison in 1701 for protesting against the House of Commons’ refusal to allow the creation of a standing army : “The Gentlemen of *Kent* [were sent] to Goal for Petitioning in a much more mannerly and submissive way than the *Scotch* Burghs address’d their Parliament, for which the Author of the *Memoirs* so highly extolls their Courage and Wisdom.”²⁴ Neither did Oldmixon share Lockhart’s sympathy for the anti-unionist rioters: those in Edinburgh only consisted of “Mob and Boys,”²⁵ while those in Glasgow were no better than plunderers.²⁶ The two historians’ views of the role and performances of anti-unionist Scottish MPs were just as far apart. Unlike Lockhart, Oldmixon had no kind words to spare for the Duke of Hamilton, the leader of the opposition, in whom he saw a rebel, who relied more on the power of arms than on the strength of reasoning.²⁷ On the other hand, Oldmixon kept praising Scottish unionist MPs. He sharply contested Lockhart’s accusation that they were bribed into passing the Act of Union. The sum of £20,000 which was sent to Scotland by the English Treasury, as the Commission of Accounts—of which Lockhart was a member²⁸—found out in 1711, was only a loan, which was payed back to England.²⁹

Whether it be in his *Memoirs of North-Britain* or his *History of England*, Oldmixon conceived his account of the Union as a running

²³ Ibid., 377.

²⁴ Oldmixon, *Memoirs*, 183–184.

²⁵ Oldmixon, *History*, 377.

²⁶ Oldmixon, *Memoirs*, 185–186.

²⁷ Oldmixon, *History*, 377.

²⁸ For Lockhart’s role in the Commission of Accounts, see Daniel Szechi, *George Lockhart of Carnwath, 1689–1727: A Study in Jacobitism* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2002), 89, 90–91.

²⁹ Oldmixon, *Memoirs*, 265.

commentary on Lockhart's exposition of that transaction in his *Memoirs Concerning Scotland*. The Whig historian disagreed with the Jacobite memorialist on practically all points and expressed his dissent rather unceremoniously. He went as far as to resort to some *ad hominem* attacks against the "Jacobite libeller,"³⁰ that "Vile Author," whom he accused of failing to keep his word and being treasonable.³¹ This imparted a markedly polemical tone to Oldmixon's account of the Union. The historiographical debate he held with Lockhart on this transaction read more like a dispute than a scholarly exchange, which was not unusual in the early eighteenth century, when history books sometimes looked like vitriolic pamphlets. Oldmixon's highly critical attitude to Lockhart's treatment of the Union can easily be explained if one bears in mind that Oldmixon was an extremely committed Whig. Most Whig authors were in favour of the Union since it ratified the Protestant succession to which they were deeply attached. But Oldmixon was an exceptionally dedicated Whig writer, which made his support of the Union and his condemnation of its opponents all the more vigorous. His devoted Whiggism led him to contest unambiguously Lockhart's Tory Jacobite interpretation of the Union not only on political, but also on historiographical grounds.

When he described the Union as the effect of the English ministers' sincere efforts to settle the Protestant succession in Scotland, Oldmixon subscribed to the Whig historians' belief that historical agents were moved by principles and ideals. This belief also underpinned his statement that the Scottish Commissioners acted an honest, artless part in the union negotiations, that they were not in collusion with their English counterparts. On the other hand, Lockhart's view that the Union was the product of the English Court's intrigues to secure Sydney Godolphin's position as Lord Treasurer and that the negotiations which gave rise to the Treaty of Union were a masquerade clearly fell within the category of Tory history.³² It was this kind of history that Oldmixon denounced when

³⁰ Oldmixon, *Memoirs*, "Preface," iv.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 208–210.

³² For tory history, see A. J. P. Taylor, "Tory History," in *Essays in English History* (1950; Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1976), 17–22; Marks Knights, "The Tory Interpretation of History in the Rage of

he percipiently observed that “the *Memoir* Writer [tended] to resolve all the Proceedings in *Scotland*, for the Support of their Religion and Liberty into the Intrigues of ambitious, designing Men, for their own Advancement or Interest.”³³ This was history as Sir Lewis Namier and his disciples were to conceive it, insofar as they claimed that “men involved in political action engage in it solely out of a desire to acquire and exercise power” and that “political agents invoke political ideas and principles simply in order to disguise their personal ambition and to dignify their quest for domination.”³⁴ Oldmixon had no patience with that proto-Namierite kind of history. This was one of the reasons why he fought so hard to discredit Lockhart’s account of the Union. The Whig compilers Abel Boyer and Nicholas Tindal were much more accommodating when it came to dealing with the Jacobite memorialist’s exposition of that transaction.

Abel Boyer’s and Nicholas Tindal’s Deference to Lockhart’s Memoirs : Compiling as a Way of Concocting Ideologically Hybrid Interpretations of the Union

In his *History of the Reign of Queen Anne, Digested into Annals. Year the Fifth* (1707), Abel Boyer, a Huguenot who became a naturalized English subject in 1705, wrote an account of the Union that was thoroughly Whig,³⁵ just like Daniel Defoe’s in *A History of the Union of Great Britain* published two years later. However, in *The History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne* (1722), Boyer, besides borrowing huge extracts from his own *Annals*, incorporated into his portrayal of the Union many passages from Lockhart’s *Memoirs* dealing with that transaction.³⁶ In his preface, he

Parties,” in *The Uses of History in Early Modern England*, ed. Paulina Kewes (San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 2006), 347–366.

³³ Oldmixon, *History*, 358.

³⁴ H. T. Dickinson, *Liberty and Property: Political Ideology in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1977), 2.

³⁵ Abel Boyer, *The History of the Reign of Queen Anne, Digested into Annals Year the Fifth* (London, 1707).

³⁶ Abel Boyer, *The History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne* (London, 1722).

incidentally acknowledged his debt to the Scottish memorialist: "In relation to the Affairs of *Scotland*, I must own my self singularly obliged to Mr *Lockhart's Memoirs*, which, bating some passionate Reflections, the natural Result of *Party-Prejudice*, are universally allowed to be excellent, in their Kind."³⁷ However, in the rest of his work, he did not always recognize his borrowings from Lockhart with the same care. Sometimes he did, sometimes he did not; sometimes he quoted from Lockhart's *Memoirs*, sometimes he plagiarized them offhandedly. Plagiarism was the option that the English Whig compiler Nicholas Tindal chose most of the time. In *The History of England* (vol. 3, 1744),³⁸ he borrowed extensive passages from Lockhart's *Memoirs* to draft his account of the Union without duly acknowledging it—even though his main source was Gilbert Burnet's *History of my own Time* (vol. 2, 1734). On occasion, he plagiarized Lockhart's *Memoirs* directly, but most of the time, he did so indirectly, being content to plagiarize extracts from Boyer's *History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne*, which were themselves plagiarisms from Lockhart's *Memoirs*.

In *The History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne*, Boyer, unlike Oldmixon, did not reject Lockhart's view that the Union was, to a large extent, a maneuver orchestrated by Godolphin to divert people's attention from the fact that he had advised the Queen to give her assent to the Scottish Act of Security—which was construed as a threat to the Union of the Crowns (1603).³⁹ Neither did Boyer absolutely certify that this view was correct. He referred to it as a set of "Reflections and Conjectures," which he opposed to "Matters of Fact."⁴⁰ His position was apparently a non-committal one, as he shied away from totally endorsing Lockhart's version of the origins of the Union. But his long—occasionally inaccurate—italicized quotation from Lockhart's account certainly had more visibility than his short caveat. Tindal also borrowed this passage on the causes of

³⁷ *Ibid.*, "Preface," iv.

³⁸ Nicholas Tindal, *The History of England, by Mr Rapin de Thoyras. Continued from the Revolution to the Accession of King George II*, vol. 3 (London, 1744).

³⁹ Boyer, *History*, 231–232. See also Lockhart, 119, 121.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 232.

the Union,⁴¹ which was indeed one of the few which he acknowledged to be derived from Lockhart's *Memoirs*—even though he somehow downgraded it by consigning it to a note, a place to which he avowedly assigned material whose veracity was not firmly established: “In all affairs of importance, as well where the Authors agree as where they differ, those accounts that appear the best and most impartial are inserted in the History, and the others thrown into the Notes.”⁴²

Unlike Oldmixon as well, Boyer incorporated into *The History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne* Lockhart's argument that the Union was not inevitable: the history of the relations between England and Scotland could have taken another course. In 1705, if the Jacobites, instead of wasting time on minor subjects, had managed to place the issue of the Union Treaty on the agenda of the Scottish Parliament early in the session, when the Duke of Queensberry's friends still sided with them, they might have been able to nip this project in the bud.⁴³ Boyer did not quite know what “Stress may be laid on this conjecture,”⁴⁴ but he found it pertinent enough to be integrated into his exposition of the Union. While Boyer duly quoted the relevant passage from Lockhart's *Memoirs*—even though he brought a few minor changes to it—Tindal, who also assimilated it into his own account,⁴⁵ did not even bother to mention his source—which seemed to be Boyer's *History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne* rather than Lockhart's *Memoirs*—thus qualifying for outright plagiarism.

Boyer also departed from Oldmixon by incorporating into *The History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne* passages from the *Memoirs* in which Lockhart presented the popular opposition to the Union as representative of the spirit of the Scottish nation as a whole and showed sympathy for its various manifestations. The Scots, he pointed out, were initially well disposed to it insofar as the government gave a reassuring description of its contents, but they changed their mind when they discovered that the Treaty provided

⁴¹ Tindal, 738. See also Boyer, *History*, 231–232; Lockhart, 119–123.

⁴² Tindal, “To the Reader.”

⁴³ Boyer, *History*, 184; see also Lockhart, 90.

⁴⁴ Boyer, *History*, 184; see also Lockhart, 90.

⁴⁵ Tindal, 690–691.

for an incorporating union and the suppression of the Scottish Parliament.⁴⁶ Among other means, the Scots expressed their disapprobation of that transaction by sending addresses against it to the Edinburgh Parliament. Following Lockhart almost *verbatim*, Boyer stressed the vastness as well as the representativeness of the anti-unionist address movement:

Besides a multitude of Addresses from most of the Shires, Stewarties, Boroughs, Towns and Parishes of the Kingdom, which were a pregnant Indication of the Nations's Aversion to the *Union* in general, there were some others more particularly remarkable, such as one from the Commissioners of the *Royal Boroughs*, in Relation to Trade . . . and another from the Council General of the Company trading to the *East* and *West Indies*, in relation to their Concerns.⁴⁷

The popular hostility to the Union also vented itself in various disorders. In *The History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne*, Boyer reproduced, often word for word, much of what Lockhart wrote—with some obvious satisfaction—on the tumults that broke out in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dumfries, and, more generally, the South-West of Scotland, which seemed on the brink of insurrection:

By this Time, the common People were so enraged, that they threatned to come up, in a Body, to *Edinburgh*, to dissolve the Parliament. The First that made any formal Appearance, were the Inhabitants of *Glasgow*, where the Provost and Town-Council opposing the subscribing of an Address against the *Union*, great Numbers betook themselves to Arms About the same Time, the Shires of *Dumfries*, *Kircudbright*, *Lanerk*, *Galloway*, *Air*, and *Clyesdale*, were all ready to rise, and about Two or Three Thousand of the Commoners came in Arms to *Dumfries*, where they

⁴⁶ Boyer, *History*, 248; see also Lockhart, 134–136.

⁴⁷ Boyer, *History*, 255; see also Lockhart, 147, 150, 151.

publicly burnt the Articles of *Union*.⁴⁸

The above passages from Lockhart's *Memoirs* on the popular opposition to the Union which Boyer incorporated into *The History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne* at times sat rather oddly with other passages of that work on the same subject which Boyer borrowed from his own Whig *Annals*, which expressed somewhat critical views of the anti-unionist popular manifestations. This was particularly true of some of his comments on the address movement, which, at some point, he endeavoured to minimize and present as unrepresentative of the Scottish nation as a whole:

It is remarkable, That of Thirty Four Shires of *Scotland*, only Thirteen addressed, and of all these, the better and more substantial Part, of the Gentlemen, refus'd to join with the rest, that of Sixty Six Burrows, only Seventeen sent up Addresses, and most of these not absolutely against the Union, but only for Rectification of the Articles, That of Sixty Eight *Presbyteries*, Three only, viz. Those of *Hamilton, Lanerk, and Dumblain*, and of Nine Hundred Thirty Eight Kirks, and Parishes, only Sixty address'd against an *Union*, by the visible Influence of the great Men that thwarted it in the Senate-House.⁴⁹

Thus, the inclusion of some extracts from Lockhart's Tory Jacobite anti-unionist *Memoirs* into Boyer's supposedly Whig unionist *History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne* occasionally led to some inconsistencies. Inconsistencies were also to be found in Boyer's portrayal of the main protagonists of the Union debate. Most of his sketches were borrowed from Lockhart's *Memoirs*. They were very colourful and true to life, since Lockhart knew the men he portrayed well. They were also sharply contrasted. While his portraits of Country, anti-unionist political men verged on the

⁴⁸ Boyer, *History*, 261; see also Lockhart, 177, 179, 180, 181, 182–183.

⁴⁹ Boyer, *History*, 271; *Annals*, 380. Boyer plagiarised this passage from Defoe's *Review*: Daniel Defoe, *Defoe's Review*, ed. Arthur W. Secord, vol. 3, bk. 8 (New York: AMS Press, 1965), 658.

hagiographic, those of their Court, unionist opponents were vitriolic. For instance, the Duke of Hamilton, who led the Country party, “was Master of an heroick and undaunted Courage, a clear, ready, and penetrating Conception.”⁵⁰ Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun, for his part, “was bless’d with a Spirit that hated and despised whatever was mean, and unbecoming a Gentleman, and was so steadfast to what he thought right, that no Hazard, nor Advantage, no, not the universal Empire, could tempt him to yield or desert it,” as befitted “the Patriot.”⁵¹ Unionist figures received a very different treatment. For example, the Duke of Queensberry, Queen Anne’s Lord High Commissioner, was “*the Ruin and Bane of his Country, and the Aversion of all Loyal and true Scotch Men.*”⁵² The Earl—later Duke—of Roxburgh, one of the leading figures of the *Squadrone Volante*⁵³, who eventually rallied the Court, fared no better: he proved “the very Bane of his Country, by being extremely false and disingenuous, and so regardless of the Ties of Honour, Friendship, Vows and Justice, that he sacrificed them all, and the Interest of his Country, to his Designs, viz Revenge and Ambition.”⁵⁴ As for the Earl of Stair and his family, they were “the most dreaded and detested of any in the Kingdom . . . he was false and cruel, covetous and imperious, altogether destitute of the sacred Ties of Honour, Loyalty, Justice, and Gratitude.”⁵⁵

Boyer, who acknowledged that he had taken those sketches from Lockhart, somehow distanced himself from them, especially those of unionist leaders. He warned his readers that they “must be perused

⁵⁰ Boyer, *History*, 56; see also Lockhart, 21.

⁵¹ Boyer, *History*, 59; see also Lockhart, 44.

⁵² Boyer, *History*, 22 ; see also Lockhart, 11–12.

⁵³ “*Squadrone Volante*”—“Flying Squadron” in English—was the Italian name given in 1705 to the twenty MPs or so from the New Party (founded in 1704) who sided sometimes with the opposition, sometimes with the Court. These MPs subscribed to the principles of the Revolution of 1688–1689 and to those of the Presbyterian Church of Scotland. After initially opposing the Union, they finally embraced it in 1706, thus ensuring its success. Besides Roxburgh, the main figures of the *Squadrone Volante* were Tweeddale, Haddington, Marchmont, Montrose, and Baillie of Jerviswood.

⁵⁴ Boyer, *History*, 130; see also Lockhart, 64.

⁵⁵ Boyer, *History*, 128; see also Lockhart, 59.

with this Caution, that [Lockhart] was a great Stickler for, and therefore partial to the *Jacobite*, which he calls the *Loyal Party*.”⁵⁶ But he added that they had been “drawn, with great Applause,”⁵⁷ which was a way of advertising them. Yet, some of them contradicted remarks Boyer made about the political men represented in those sketches in other passages from *The History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne* which he borrowed from his own Whig unionist *Annals*. Indeed, in those other passages, Boyer was able to praise unionist leaders. For instance, he pointed out that Queensberry was “a Person of good Parts, easy Address, and Affability,”⁵⁸ who “surmounted all the Difficulties he met in his Way” and was duly rewarded by Queen Anne for “his great Services” to the unionist cause.⁵⁹ Similarly, Boyer was glad to report that “the Lord *Roxburgh* shew’d the same Zeal, and made his pregnant Parts shine, throughout the whole Session of this Parliament, which contributed very much to the happy Conclusion of it.”⁶⁰ Besides, he denied that Stair was detested by all Scots, stressing that he was “generally lamented by all the Well affected to the Revolution, and Protestant Succession, for both which he shew’d a distinguish’d Zeal, on all Occasions.”⁶¹

Thus, it was no easy matter for the readers of Boyer’s *History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne* to know who the architects of the Union really were; whether they were the abominable, venal and immoral politicians portrayed in the sketches reproduced from Lockhart’s *Memoirs* or the valuable and honourable servants of the State described in the remarks borrowed from Boyer’s Whig *Annals*. Boyer’s position on the role of bribery in the passing of the Treaty of Union in *The History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne* seemed—to a certain extent at least—to bear out the first hypothesis.

While in his *Annals*, Boyer, like Daniel Defoe, totally overlooked the issue of bribery, in *The History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne*, he thoroughly endorsed Lockhart’s view that it

⁵⁶ Boyer, *History*, 55; see also Lockhart, 11–12.

⁵⁷ Boyer, *History*, 55; Lockhart, 11–12.

⁵⁸ Boyer, *History*, 22.

⁵⁹ Boyer, *History*, 271; *Annals*, 424.

⁶⁰ Boyer, *History*, 251; *Annals*, 344.

⁶¹ Boyer, *History*, 266; *Annals*, 411–412.

played a major part in the success of the Union. Money from the English Treasury was distributed to Scottish MPs by the Earl of Glasgow to influence their votes. That the money was sent to pay arrears due to those MPs did not mean that corruption was not intended. The time when the operation took place and the secrecy with which it was conducted made it clear that it was an act of bribery.⁶² The view that corruption played a part in the achievement of union also found its way into Tindal's *History of England*.⁶³ But Tindal failed to reproduce the passage in which Boyer, following Lockhart, rejected the unionists' argument that paying arrears was not bribery, which ensured that his indictment of corruption was more subdued. Besides, Tindal consigned his observations on the role of bribery in the success of the Union to a note, showing that he did not wish to bring the subject into quite as much prominence as Boyer did.

In spite of some slight divergences in their handling of Lockhart's *Memoirs*, Boyer and Tindal generally endorsed them in *The History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne* and *The History of England* respectively—albeit on occasion with some caveats. In this, they radically differed from Oldmixon, who could not find anything positive to say about them and used them as a target for his sarcasms. While Oldmixon quoted passages from Lockhart's *Memoirs* only to confute them, Boyer and Tindal usually did so to express their approval of them. In fact, they often failed to cite them properly, being content, in many cases, to plagiarize them. This was particularly true of Tindal, who was even less inclined to indicate his sources than Boyer. Indeed, historical plagiarism was quite widespread in Britain in the first half of the eighteenth century.⁶⁴ Its position differed from that of literary plagiarism, which was relentlessly tracked down and gave rise to public accusations, such as those levelled at Richard Bentley or Alexander Pope.⁶⁵ No serious

⁶² Boyer, *History*, 262–263; Lockhart, *Annals*, 252–253, 258.

⁶³ Tindal, 777.

⁶⁴ See Henry Snyder, "David Jones, Augustan Historian and Pioneer English Annalist," *Huntingdon Library Quarterly* 44, no. 1 (Winter 1980): 11; Okie, *Augustan Historical Writing*, 9.

⁶⁵ Richard Terry, *The Plagiarism Allegation in English Literature from Butler to Sterne* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 69–72, 80–97.

effort was made to disclose or denounce the plagiarism of historical works insofar as they did not seem worth it in view of the low status they enjoyed at the time and their inability to qualify as works of art whose originality would have to be vindicated. Historical plagiarism was still tolerated, although it was increasingly felt that some sort of acknowledgement was due to the historians whose works were plagiarised, as Boyer testified: “I know ‘tis impossible either to compile, or write History, without borrowing from others. But then, in such a Case, the *Borrower* can do no less, than to pay an Acknowledgement to the *Lender*.”⁶⁶

Besides, by borrowing extracts from Lockhart’s *Memoirs*, Boyer and Tindal—unlike Oldmixon—incorporated some Tory historiographical elements into their accounts of the Union. As a result, their portrayals of that transaction in *The History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne* and *The History of England* respectively lacked ideological coherence and read more like politically hybrid expositions than strictly Whig ones. In the case of Boyer’s *History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne*, that want of ideological coherence was compounded by some factual inconsistencies concerning, among other things, the importance of the address movement and the personality of the main Scottish political leaders.

Oldmixon blamed Boyer for integrating so many passages from Lockhart’s Tory-Jacobite *Memoirs* into his *History of the Life and Reign of Queen Anne*, but he put his fellow Whig’s decision down to a lack of discernment rather than to a conversion to Lockhart’s views: “*Boyer* in his *Reign of Queen Anne*, has been so stupid as to take his *Memoirs*, and even his *Characters for Scottish History* . . . but [it] is full of Lies, which that most excellent *Historographer* was not sensible of, otherwise he would not have made so much use of the Book, the Man’s Heart being in this Case better than his Head.”⁶⁷ Be that as it may, what is certain is that Oldmixon was a much more committed Whig than Boyer and that he was more conversant with the niceties of Whig ideology than the latter. But Boyer was certainly less dogmatic, less partisan, and more open-minded. He and Tindal were the first historians who incorporated passages from Lockhart’s *Memoirs* into their works—even the English High Tory historian

⁶⁶ Boyer, *History*, “The Preface,” iv.

⁶⁷ Oldmixon, *History*, 304.

Thomas Salmon had kept clear of them, probably for fear of being accused of Jacobitism. By doing so, they increased the visibility of those *Memoirs* and may have contributed to their partial legitimization and de-demonization. At any rate, in the second half of the eighteenth century, Lockhart's *Memoirs* no longer seemed to suffer from the opprobrium to which they had been subjected formerly and were routinely used by historians of the Union, albeit with more critical distance than by Boyer and Tindal. Although the latter broke some fresh ground by incorporating many elements from Lockhart's *Memoirs* into their accounts of the Union, they were only compilers and, as such, they belonged to an outdated historiographical tradition. In the second half of the eighteenth century, compilations gave way to "continuous narratives that were based upon rationalistic and critical methods of scholarship."⁶⁸

The Mid- to Late Eighteenth-Century Whig Historians' Unprejudiced Attitude to Lockhart's Memoirs: Working Out Critical Unionist, Proto-Academic, Semi-Hybrid Interpretations of the Union

Between 1750 and 1800, most of the Whig unionist historians that dealt with the Union at some length, including the Scottish authors William Guthrie, Thomas Somerville, Robert Heron, Ebenezer Marshal, and Malcolm Laing, were largely indebted to Lockhart's *Memoirs*—although they did not plagiarize them as Boyer and Tindal had done. They recognized that Lockhart was quite conversant with the political situation of Scotland at the time of the Union and that his *Memoirs* constituted a valuable, if at times biased, source of historical knowledge. William Guthrie observed with satisfaction that "Mr Lockhart . . . certainly had very good opportunities of information,"⁶⁹ while Malcolm Laing noted approvingly that, contrary to several "late historians," Lockhart was "still careful to discriminate the Jacobites from the country party."⁷⁰ Most of those

⁶⁸ Okie, *Augustan Historical Writing*, 216.

⁶⁹ William Guthrie, *A General History of Scotland, from the Earliest Accounts to the Present Time*, vol. 10 (London, 1768), 363.

⁷⁰ Malcolm Laing, *The History of Scotland, from the Union of the Crowns on the Accession of James VI to the Throne of England, to the Union of*

historians used Lockhart's *Memoirs* to build their accounts of the proceedings of the Scottish Parliament related to the Treaty of Union. It was on those *Memoirs* that Thomas Somerville avowedly based his version of the coup de théâtre which, at the end of the 1705 session, saw the Duke of Hamilton propose to entrust the nomination of the Scottish Union Commissioners to Queen Anne: that is to say, to her English ministers.⁷¹ Malcolm Laing and Robert Heron also used Lockhart's *Memoirs* to construct their accounts of that dramatic episode, even though they resorted to other sources as well. Laing equally relied on the Minutes of the Scottish Parliament, John Clerk of Penicuik's manuscript memoirs, and Alexander Cunningham's *History of Great Britain* (1787),⁷² while Gilbert Burnet's *History of my own Time* (1715, 1734), James Macpherson's *Original Papers, containing the Secret History of Great Britain from the Restoration to the Accession of the House of Hanover* (1775), and Daniel Defoe's *History of the Union between England and Scotland* (2d ed., 1786) were likewise consulted by Heron.⁷³ Besides Hamilton's 1705 coup de théâtre, both Laing and Heron depended on Lockhart's *Memoirs*, together with a few other sources, to forge their accounts of the debates that took place in the 1706 session of the Scottish Parliament.⁷⁴ But unlike Boyer and Tindal, they never indulged in

the Kingdoms in the Reign of Queen Anne, vol. 2 (London, 1800), 268, note 10.

⁷¹ Thomas Somerville, *The History of Britain during the Reign of Queen Anne* (London, 1798), 201.

⁷² Laing, *The History of Scotland*, 291–292. John Clerk of Penicuik's manuscript memoirs would be published later as *Memoirs of the Life of Sir John Clerk of Penicuik, Baronet, Baron of the Exchequer/Extracted by himself from his own Journals, 1676–1755*, ed. J. M. Gray (1892; London, 1895). As for Alexander Cunningham's *History of Great Britain from the Revolution in 1688 to the Accession of George the First* (1788), it was based on an early eighteenth-century Latin manuscript discovered by Thomas Hollingbery and translated into English by the Rev. Dr. William Thomson.

⁷³ Robert Heron, *History of Scotland from the Earliest Times to the Æra of the Abolition of the Hereditary Jurisdiction of Subjects in the Year 1748*, vol. 5 (Edinburgh, 1799), 788–789.

⁷⁴ Laing, *The History of Scotland*, 318–322; Heron, *History of Scotland*, 812–813, 841.

word-for-word plagiarism.

Along with Somerville, Laing and Heron also used Lockhart's *Memoirs*, usually in combination with some other sources, to assemble their accounts of popular manifestations of hostility to the Union. They resorted to those *Memoirs* to evoke the state of Scottish public opinion, the anti-unionist address movement, the various disorders that broke out in Scotland, especially in the South-West, the implication of some influential people in the tumults, and the plans for insurrection, including the prospect of an alliance between Cameronians and Jacobites to prevent the ratification of the Treaty of Union. Thus, like Lockhart—but without using his words—Somerville noted that “by the multitude, or great body of the people, the idea of an union was held in abhorrence.”⁷⁵ Similarly, according to Heron, “every successive day appeared to combine the loudly lifted voices of the whole nation, with new force and unanimity, against a measure which they regarded as about to put an end to their national existence for ever.” He also mentioned addresses “of which the language was vehement and furious,” “tumults and menaced insurrections,” and “rumours of the march of armed multitudes to interrupt [parliamentary] proceedings.”⁷⁶ Laing was likewise indebted to Lockhart's *Memoirs*—together with Nathaniel Hooke's *Secret History of Colonel Hooke's Negotiations in Scotland in Favour of the Pretender ; in 1707 (1760)*—when he reported that “in the western counties the Cameronians and peasants . . . held frequent nocturnal meetings The Presbyterians were about to take arms with the Jacobites, and, if we may believe their authors, to declare for their king.”⁷⁷

Besides, Laing relied on Lockhart's *Memoirs* to draw his own sketches of the main Scottish political leaders—although, unlike Boyer, he did not plagiarize them. This applied to his description of Hamilton—which was, incidentally, also indebted to John Clerk of Penicuik's annotations to his manuscript copy of Lockhart's *Memoirs*—⁷⁸ as well as to his depiction of Andrew Fletcher, of whom he wrote that “his spirit was proverbially brave as the sword

⁷⁵ Somerville, *The History of Britain*, 208.

⁷⁶ Heron, *History of Scotland*, 817.

⁷⁷ Laing, *The History of Scotland*, 330–331.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 258–259.

he wore,” an expression which he avowedly borrowed from Lockhart and John Macky, who had, so it seemed, coined it independently and unbeknown to each other.⁷⁹

More importantly, all the Whig unionist historians of the Union who wrote in the second half of the eighteenth century agreed with Lockhart that bribery had played a role in the success of the Union—even though they used softer words than the Jacobite memorialist’s to discuss it. Although a fervent unionist, the moderate Presbyterian minister Ebenezer Marshal conceded that Godolphin, the English Lord of the Treasury, “remitted a sum of money to Scotland, to be employed in confirming the friends of the ministry, and in softening the asperity of their opponents.”⁸⁰ Similarly, Somerville admitted that “the services of the friends to this important measure [the Union] were stimulated, and the opposition of its adversaries restrained, by liberal douceurs paid out of the English treasury.”⁸¹ Heron, for his part, reproduced the list of the beneficiaries of the controversial £20,000 which had first been published in the Appendix to Lockhart’s *Memoirs*.⁸² In his view, the fact that the money they received was used to pay arrears due to them did not mean that corruption was not involved.⁸³ Laing made the same point: “It is not whether the arrears were due, but whether they would have been advanced unless to purchase votes . . . arrears never paid till then, to create influence, are not the less bribes that they were justly due.”⁸⁴

However, Laing and his fellow mid- to late eighteenth-century Whig historians did not follow Lockhart all the way through and maintained a critical distance towards his *Memoirs*. They sometimes openly differed from him, as did Guthrie, who noted that “Mr Lockhart of Carnwath [presumed] a great deal upon his own

⁷⁹ Ibid., 276.

⁸⁰ Ebenezer Marshal, *The History of the Union of Scotland and England: Stating the Circumstances which brought it to a Conclusion, and the Advantages Resulting from it to the Scots* (Edinburgh/London: 1799), 104–105.

⁸¹ Somerville, *The History of Britain*, 222.

⁸² Ibid., 853–854; see also Lockhart, 257.

⁸³ Heron, *History of Scotland*, 855.

⁸⁴ Laing, *The History of Scotland*, 374.

authority”⁸⁵ and was not “fortunate in his account of the Duke of Queensberry’s conduct.”⁸⁶

Besides, they occasionally had some quibbles with Lockhart’s account of anti-unionist popular protests. Such was the case of Somerville, who, on the strength of John Clerk of Penicuik’s annotations to his copy of the *Memoirs*, noted that Lockhart’s treatment of the plans for insurrection was incomplete: “Lockhart mentions the fact of the duke of Queensberry’s having engaged some of the Cameronian clergy to act as spies for the court . . . but was himself ignorant of the treachery of major Cunningham . . . who also was in concert with the duke of Queensberry, and put himself at the head of the Cameronians in the west.”⁸⁷

Moreover, those historians sometimes expressed disagreements with Lockhart’s sketches of the protagonists of the Union debate, as did Guthrie about Lockhart’s portrait of Andrew Fletcher: “Mr. Lockhart thinks, that even Fletcher of Salton would have turned Jacobite upon this occasion [the so-called Scots Plot (1704)], but we must attribute this credulity to the unhappy characteristic of his party, which was to believe that every man of whose virtue and understanding they had a good opinion [of], was, in his heart, a Jacobite.”⁸⁸

Finally, the Whig historians of the second half of the eighteenth century did not usually bring the issue of corruption into as great a prominence as Lockhart and were on the whole less radical in their denunciations. Thus, Guthrie argued that Queensberry had no choice but to bribe MPs if the Treaty of Union was to be adopted, which was a way of condoning his act of corruption: “The duke of Queensberry, the commissioner, found himself under a kind of necessity to oil the wheels of his administration, by applying to the earl of Godolphin, lord high treasurer of England, for twenty thousand pounds sterling, to be discretionally distributed among the friends of the government.”⁸⁹ Somerville was also inclined to leniency. Although he agreed with Lockhart that bribery played a

⁸⁵ Guthrie, *A General History of Scotland*, 349–350.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 350.

⁸⁷ Somerville, *The History of Britain*, 219, note 31.

⁸⁸ Guthrie, *A General History of Scotland*, 357.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 383–384.

part in the success of the Union, he was willing to concede some extenuating circumstances to those involved in that deed of corruption:

The public money was not given for the purpose of influence, to such extent, as represented by the authors above cited [the Commissioners of Accounts] . . . 1st, As the sum of twenty thousand pounds was borrowed by the ministers in Scotland from the English treasury, under the pretext of discharging the arrears of official salaries, and of pensions, so a part of it was actually disbursed for that purpose . . . 2dly, The persons, who were active in promoting the union, incurred considerable expense . . . 3dly, The pecuniary opposition which the union encountered from foreign states imposed upon the ministers a necessity for employing the counteracting influence of the same expedient.⁹⁰

Thus, whereas Oldmixon disagreed with Lockhart on all points and, conversely, Boyer and Tindal never contradicted him, the mid- to late eighteenth-century Whig historians of the Union usually adopted a middle way between those two extremes. They looked upon Lockhart's *Memoirs* as a precious, often reliable, source of information on that transaction, but they were also able to express dissent from that work in a dispassionate way. They left polemics, on the one hand, and plagiarism, on the other, to adopt a moderately critical attitude. Their writings on the Union were on the whole more balanced than those of their predecessors. They were also more thorough and meticulous. This was especially true of Somerville's and Laing's proto-academic writings, which relied on a wide range of sources and used them with precision and rigour, as their copious footnotes testified.

Although Whig elements predictably predominated in those Whig unionist historians' accounts of the Union, some Tory items derived from Lockhart's *Memoirs* found their way into them as well, which introduced a dose of ideological hybridity into them—even

⁹⁰ Somerville, *The History of Britain*, 222–223.

though it was obviously less pronounced than in Boyer's and Tindal's expositions of that transaction, in which Tory elements were more numerous and more closely integrated. Among those Tory items, the one that had the most significant impact on the Whig unionist accounts of the Union published in the second half of the eighteenth century was undoubtedly the bribery of Scottish MPs. Those Whig unionist accounts praised the Union as a good measure, with a host of beneficent effects, but they admitted that it was achieved by devious means, a fact which had been overlooked by Defoe and Clerk of Penicuik and had been contested by Oldmixon.

Conclusion

Eighteenth-century Whig unionist historians of the Union used Lockhart's *Memoirs* in three main ways. First, Oldmixon incorporated many extracts from them into his accounts of that transaction for the sake of rebutting them. I have shown that he harnessed a polemical kind of history in the service of a purely Whig interpretation of the Union freed of all Tory elements. Oldmixon was writing at a time when English historiography was "bound up with the political parties."⁹¹ It was also a period in which the future of the Union was still uncertain, which conferred a special intensity and polemical edge to the historiographical debates sparked by that event.

Then, Abel Boyer and Nicholas Tindal endorsed Lockhart's *Memoirs* to a large degree, borrowing from them extensively, sometimes quoting from them, sometimes unabashedly plagiarizing them. I have demonstrated that by deferentially incorporating many passages from Lockhart's *magnum opus* into their own accounts of the Union, those Whig historians manufactured ideologically hybrid versions of that transaction. Boyer and Tindal were the first historians who incorporated passages from Lockhart's *Memoirs* into their works. By doing so, they increased the visibility of those *Memoirs* and may have contributed to their partial legitimization and de-demonization. In this, they broke fresh ground, although their compilations belonged to an obsolescent historiographical tradition.

⁹¹ Okie, *Augustan Historical Writing*, 209.

Finally, as “banal unionism” prevailed in Scotland, several mid-to late eighteenth century Whig historians of the Union such as William Guthrie, Thomas Somerville, Robert Heron, Ebenezer Marshal, or Malcolm Laing used Lockhart’s *Memoirs* in a more dispassionate way. I have contended that by adopting an open and unprejudiced attitude to Lockhart’s *Memoirs*, they worked out critical unionist, proto-academic, semi-hybrid interpretations of that transaction. Their writings on the Union were on the whole more balanced than those of their predecessors. They were also more thorough and meticulous. This was especially true of Somerville’s and Laing’s proto-academic writings, which relied on a wide range of sources and used them with precision and rigour, as evidenced by their copious footnotes. Their works reflected a general historiographical shift from compilations to continuous, explanatory narratives.⁹² Although Whig elements predictably predominated in those Whig unionist historians’ accounts of the Union, some Tory items derived from Lockhart’s *Memoirs* found their way into them as well. As Okie pointed out, “historical writing gradually freed itself from the trammels of party politics.”⁹³

Thus, although the English Whig unionist interpretation of the Union first elaborated by Daniel Defoe finally prevailed in eighteenth-century Britain, Lockhart’s Scottish Tory-Jacobite anti-unionist version of that transaction was discussed by all eighteenth-century Whig historians of the Union after 1714, whether they approved of it or not. I have shown that except for Oldmixon’s accounts, all those historians’ expositions of the Union were to some extent impacted by Lockhart’s *Memoirs*. Far from using the latter only as a storehouse of information on the Union, they were all in some measure influenced by Lockhart’s vision of that event and, as a result, ideologically hybrid. Later on, in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Whig historians were far less inclined to accept hybridity and endeavoured to silence Lockhart’s voice. James Mackinnon blamed him for being partisan and complained that he

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid.

was “not the most reliable source of information.”⁹⁴ According to that historian, Lockhart’s accusation that Scottish MPS had been bribed into passing the Act of Union rested on no evidence and was a piece of sophistry.⁹⁵ Similarly, G. M. Trevelyan deplored that “Lockhart took refuge in the theory that the Union had been passed by wholesale bribery” and denounced his “prejudices.”⁹⁶ As for G. S. Pryde, he labelled Lockhart a “disgruntled and mischief-making Jacobite” and was adamant that “no historian, English or Scottish, Whig or Tory, Unionist or Nationalist, who has examined the records has endorsed Lockhart’s judgment.”⁹⁷ From the mid-1960s onwards, revisionist historians were more willing than their Whig counterparts to take Lockhart’s *Memoirs* seriously. According to William Ferguson, Lockhart’s accusations of bribery should not “be lightly brushed aside.”⁹⁸ Likewise, P. W. J. Riley pointed out that Lockhart’s remarks about the Union negotiations had “the ring of truth.”⁹⁹ However, as we have seen, the post-revisionist historian Christopher Whatley was more doubtful about the validity of Lockhart’s account of the Union and urged his fellow historians to handle it with caution. The way contemporary historians have used or misused Lockhart’s *Memoirs* certainly requires further investigation.

⁹⁴ James Mackinnon, *The Union of England and Scotland: A Study of International History* (London/New York/Bombay: Longmans/Green, 1896), 342.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 347.

⁹⁶ G. M. Trevelyan, *England under Queen Anne*, 3 vols. (London/New York/Toronto: Longmans/Green, 1930–1934) ; G. M. Trevelyan, *England under Queen Anne : Ramillies and the Union with Scotland*, vol. 2 (1932), 282–283.

⁹⁷ G. S. Pryde, ed., “Introduction,” in *The Treaty of Union of Scotland and England, 1707* (London/Edinburgh/Paris/Melbourne/Toronto/New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1950), 31–32.

⁹⁸ Ferguson, *Scotland’s Relations with England*, 247.

⁹⁹ Riley, *The Union of England and Scotland*, 186.

WOMEN, GENDER, AND THE KIRK BEFORE THE COVENANT

Jason Cameron White, Appalachian State University

ABSTRACT

This article explores the ways women interacted with the Scottish kirk in the decades prior to the National Covenant of 1638, mainly focusing on urban areas especially Edinburgh and environs. The written records, especially those of the kirk session, are skewed toward punishing women who engaged in sin, especially sexual sins such as adultery and fornication. Indeed, these records show that while women's behavior and speech was highly restricted and women were punished more frequently than men for their sexual behavior or for speaking out of turn, there were moments when women had a significant public voice, albeit one that was highly restricted and required male sanctioning. For example, women were often called on to testify before kirk sessions against those who had committed sins, even if the accused sinners were male or social superiors or both. Perhaps the most important moment where women used their male-sanctioned voice to speak out in public came at the Edinburgh Prayer Book Riots of 1637, which was led by women. This article argues that women were given the opportunity to act in public because the church had been characterized by many Scottish male preachers in gendered language – they called the church a “harlot mother” and a “whore” that needed correction. Therefore, the women of the Prayer Book Riot were sanctioned to speak out against a licentious sinner, much in the way women were called on to testify against sinners in front of kirk sessions.

Keywords: Scotland, women, gender, Scottish Kirk, National Covenant, 17th century

Introduction

Perhaps the most significant and well-known instance of women taking a public and political role in early seventeenth century Scotland was the Edinburgh Prayer Book Riot of 1637, in which female voices, sanctioned by male authority, called out the perceived sins of the kirk and shamed their social superiors for their role in facilitating these sins. This was a seminal moment in Scottish history as these female-led riots led to a series of events that culminated in the drafting and signing of the National Covenant in early 1638, thereby initiating a lengthy period of civil war in the Stuart kingdoms. This article uses kirk session records and sermons to analyze various aspects of Scottish society and religious life leading to this unusual and important moment. This study mainly focuses on the parishes of Edinburgh and its environs (with a few other urban Lowland parishes included to broaden the source base) in order to gain a deeper sense of women's place within the social, communal, and religious concerns of Edinburgh and urban Lowland Scotland before the Prayer Book Riot of 1637 and the National Covenant of 1638.

These regional sources reveal three things that contributed to female participation in the Riots. First, there was deep concern about female sexual behavior that was intensified by the presence of soldiers from all over Scotland gathering in Lowland towns and cities, such as Edinburgh, on their way to fight on the Continent in the Thirty Years' War. Second, these concerns coincided with another important aspect of women's public role in early modern Scotland—women's voices were constrained, their speech often punished, but there were moments when women could speak publicly with male sanctioning. These moments typically came when women testified in kirk sessions to the sins of others, even if those they accused were above them in the social and gender hierarchy. Third, the obsession with sexual transgressions can be seen in the language of male critics of the Jacobean and Carline changes to the Scottish kirk. This language of “whoredom” and “harlotry,” when combined with common Biblical tropes, created a sharp language of criticism that was gendered in its nature. The combined analysis of these three things—a heightened concern over sexual sins caused by

societal disruption, male-sanctioning of female voices under certain circumstances, and a gendered language of criticism leveled at changes in the kirk—can lead to a better understanding of why and how women were at the forefront of the 1637 Edinburgh Prayer Book Riots, one of the most important events of seventeenth-century Scotland.

This article will build on several important studies about women in early modern Scottish society and, more specifically, women and kirk sessions. Much work has been done in this field, including pioneering work by Elizabeth Ewan, Michael Graham, David Mullan, and others.¹ However, there have been some differing conclusions on the topic. Some scholars have argued that kirk sessions were mostly concerned with individual cases and therefore gender was not always a main concern in how sessions approached each case. Michael Graham has argued that because sessions held individuals responsible for their behavior, this “militated against the maintenance of any double standard in the area of sexual ethics.”² Gordon DesBrisay disagrees, remarking that there was indeed a sexual double standard in cases before kirk sessions and that the “war

¹ See for example: Elizabeth Ewan, “A New Trumpet? The History of Women in Scotland 1300–1700,” *History Compass* 7, no. 2 (March 2009): 431–46; Elizabeth Ewan, “Disorderly Damsels? Women and Interpersonal Violence in Pre-Reformation Scotland,” *The Scottish Historical Review* 89, no. 228 (2010): 153–71; Sarah Dunnigan and Elizabeth Ewan, “Introduction: A Century of Disorder and Transformation – Scotland 1550–1650” *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance Et Réforme* 30, no. 4 (2007): 3–12; Michael Graham, *The Uses of Reform: Godly Discipline and Popular Behaviour in Scotland and Beyond, 1560–1610* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), Ch. 8; D. Mullan, “Women in Scottish Divinity, c. 1590–c.1640,” in *Women in Scotland, c. 1100–c.1750*, eds. E. Ewan and M. Meikle (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999), 32; D. Mullan, “Scottish Women’s Religious Narrative, 1660–1720: Constructing the Evangelical Self,” in *Women and the Feminine in Medieval and Early Modern Scottish Writing*, eds. Sarah M. Dunnigan, C. Marie Harker, and Evelyn S. Newlyn (New York: Palgrave, 2004), 178–194; D. Mullan, *Narratives of the Religious Self in Early-Modern Scotland* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010).

² M. Graham, “Women and the Church Courts in Reformation-Era Scotland” in *Women in Scotland c. 1100–1750*, eds. E. Ewan and M. Meikle (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999), 196.

on sin was foremost a war on women.”³ More recently, Alice Glaze has provided a more nuanced picture of women and kirk sessions in her study of the Canongate kirk session. Glaze argues that women’s relationship with the kirk session in Canongate was “multifaceted, contradictory, and shifting” and that there were often wider cultural factors at work that could make a woman vulnerable or that she could conversely use to her advantage.⁴ This article builds on Glaze’s analysis of Canongate by bringing in other parishes from the Edinburgh region in order to show the complexity of women’s interactions with kirk sessions in the 1620s and 1630s and culminating with the Prayer Book Riots of 1637. Social upheaval caused by soldiers led to concerns about women’s sexual interactions with these soldiers. Women ended up in front of kirk sessions for their liaisons with soldiers more frequently and were punished more harshly than the soldiers, mainly because the soldiers were often gone and the women left with their illegitimate children. Nevertheless, women in these decades played an important role in testifying against the sins of others.

Section I: Women, Soldiers, and Kirk Sessions Before the Covenant

Kirk sessions were a standard feature of the post-Reformation parish in Lowland Scotland. They were church courts at the parochial level, tasked with monitoring the behavior of everyone within the bounds of the parish, and, when sinners were “discovered,” fining them, admonishing them to repent, and sometimes handing them over to secular authorities for corporal punishment (and often the secular authorities were the same as those who sat on the session). Ferreting out sin and punishing the transgressors was not the session’s only responsibility, as it also, among several other duties, oversaw poor

³ G. DesBrisay, “Twisted by Definition: Women Under Godly Discipline in Seventeenth Century Scottish Towns,” in *Twisted Sisters: Women, Crime, and Deviance in Scotland Since 1400*, eds. Y. Brown and R. Ferguson (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2002), 138.

⁴ A. Glaze, “Women and Kirk Discipline: Prosecution, Negotiation, and the Limits of Control,” *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* 36.2 (2016): 126, 128.

relief, declared days of fasting and prayer, took care of the physical structure of the parish kirk, registered births, marriages, and deaths, and was responsible for bringing in new ministers.⁵ Unpaid laymen known as elders controlled kirk sessions and there were typically a dozen to twenty or more of them in each session. Yearly elections ensured frequent turnover of membership, and only very rarely did anyone refuse the honor of being made an elder, as the position granted a great deal of social prestige and authority.⁶ While the parish minister also sat on the session, his vote did not count any more than the other members. Membership of the session, while typically dominated by the wealthy and prominent, embraced a broad cross-section of Scottish society and included merchants, the landed, and craftsmen alike. These were male-dominated courts, as women were excluded from the role of kirk elder. Nevertheless, women played an important role in the sessions' duties, as their testimony was accepted and relied on exclusively in certain situations, especially in cases of adultery, fornication, and unwed mothers.⁷

Kirk sessions were vitally important to solidifying the connection between the laity and the post-Reformation Calvinist church in Scotland. As Margo Todd has argued, kirk sessions provided "social services" that worked toward creating "peace and orderliness" in Scottish society and built "a base of community support for a system that otherwise might have been construed as distastefully invasive and innovative."⁸ Since the sessions were filled with laymen from a broad cross-section of Scottish society, and the sessions' membership, which provided a degree of prestige and authority to their members, was frequently turned over, it can be

⁵ For more on post-reformation kirk sessions see: Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), Ch. 1; John McCallum, *Reforming the Scottish Parish: the Reformation in Fife, 1560–1640* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2010), 153–188; Walter Makey, *The Church of the Covenant, 1637–1651* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1979); Graham, *The Uses of Reform*, Ch. 2, 3, 6; D. Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism, 1590–1638* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

⁶ Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, 8–13.

⁷ M. Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, 8–13.

⁸ Todd, *Culture of Protestantism*, 23.

assumed that the concerns of the session reflected the broader concerns of the middle-ranking male householders that dominated session membership.

While sexual sin was always a major concern of kirk sessions, it is clear from the kirk session records in the years immediately preceding the Prayer Book Riots that there was an especial concern about a perceived increase in sexual sin due to the presence, in many Edinburgh parishes, of soldiers levied to serve in the armies of Denmark and Sweden in the ongoing Thirty Years' War.⁹ Between 1618 and 1648, an estimated 50,000 Scots were recruited into foreign armies, mostly those of Denmark and Sweden. The period 1625 to 1627 alone saw 12,400 recruited. These men passed through towns where they would gather to await transportation to the Continent and were mainly vagabonds and criminals and other individuals on the margins of society. Masterless men and vagabonds were frequently a source of concern and target for punishment by kirk sessions, but masterless men who became soldiers were given a special status, as they were essentially protected by the state from punishment or the collection of debts. The presence of these soldiers had a tremendous social impact and had the effect of disrupting local authority and autonomy and upsetting social harmony. Sometimes the soldiers were mere nuisances, engaging in petty theft and other minor transgressions. Other times they engaged in violence, either attacking the citizens of towns or inserting themselves into pre-existing feuds.¹⁰

Beyond disrupting good order in localities, the presence of soldiers also increased anxieties about sexual transgressions, which particularly impacted women in the communities. The kirk session records, especially those in Edinburgh and its environs, from the several years prior to the Covenant show that women were frequently brought before the sessions for transgressions with soldiers such as fornicating, committing adultery, giving birth to bastards, and prostitution. The women who appeared before the kirk session in this

⁹ Steve Murdoch, "Introduction," in *Scotland and the Thirty Years War*, ed. S. Murdoch (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 11–14; A. Grosjean, *An Unofficial Alliance: Scotland and Sweden, 1569–1654* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 15.

¹⁰ Jason White, "State Power, Local Authority, and War in Scotland, 1625–9," *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 32.6 (2016): 82–8.

period can be placed in several categories. The first group included married women whose husbands had left the country to serve as soldiers, and who were typically brought before sessions when they took up with a new man. Secondly, there were women accused of fornication or adultery with soldiers, many of whom had departed for the Continent, leaving the women to face the kirk session alone. Next were the prostitutes who serviced soldiers. And lastly, there were the women who gave birth to illegitimate children, often after a soldier had left the country.

Women whose husbands left to fight on the Continent frequently caught the attention of the kirk session when they entered new relationships. For example, in the St. Nicholas parish in Aberdeen, Margaret Smith was accused of adultery with David Anderson. Smith's husband, Robert Davidson, was said to be "past out of this countrie as ane sojor." She had to pay a 40 pound fine and give penance for eight days in sackcloth.¹¹ Many soldier's wives accused of adultery often protested that their husbands were dead. When accused of adultery before the Trinity College (Edinburgh) kirk session, Katherine Pearson protested that her husband was dead and that she was only guilty of fornication. She was either pregnant or had a child and the session was eager to find the father.¹² On some occasions, a woman had proof that her husband was dead on the Continent and sought permission to marry someone new. For example, in the parish of Strathbogie in Aberdeenshire, Elspet Wilson asked for the benefit of marriage to a new man and showed proof that her husband had died eight years before in Germany.¹³ The sessions typically allowed the wives of soldiers accused of adultery to provide proof that their husbands were dead. For example, Elspeth Anderson's husband had gone to the wars and she was accused of adultery with one Captain Blair. She obtained proof that her husband

¹¹ "Aberdeen St. Nicholas Session Records," 22 July 1638, NRS CH2/448/4, fo. 208.

¹² "Minute Book Trinity College Kirk (NE Edinburgh Parish), 1626–1638," 29 July 1630, NRS CH2/141/1, fo. 49.

¹³ John Stuart, ed., *Extracts from the Presbytery Book of Strathbogie* (Aberdeen: Spalding Club, 1843), 1.

had died in the wars and her charge was reduced to fornication.¹⁴ Sessions often seemed open to reducing charges of adultery to fornication with proper documentation. Adam Gib and Margaret Fairbairn were accused of adultery by the Trinity College kirk session in Edinburgh in March of 1629. Gib was able to obtain a testimonial from a gentleman soldier in Colonel MacKay's regiment in Germany that Fairbairn's husband, Alexander Alexander, had died and was buried in the winter of 1627 in Hamburg. Therefore Gib and Fairbairn were guilty of fornication, not adultery, and the charges were reduced to fornication. However, Fairbairn was still jailed because she could not pay her fine.¹⁵

Fornication with soldiers was a bigger problem than adultery. Women frequently appear in kirk session registers for fornication with men listed in the session records as having titles like colonel or captain. In the Trinity College kirk session, Isobel Graham was brought in for fornicating with Colonel Alexander Hamilton, Alesone Staig for fornication with Captain Forbes (who confessed to being the father of her child), and Margaret Johnston for fornication with Captain Thomas Lindsay.¹⁶ Sometimes the men were listed anonymously as "ane sojor," perhaps indicating that the woman did not know his name, while other times the woman might have known the name but claimed that the man had left the kingdom. For example, in the Trinity College session, Katherine Henry, a relapsed fornicator, was put in the house of correction and banished from the town for fornicating "filthily" with "ane sojor," while Margaret Weir was accused of fornication with Andrew Oswald who was said to be "presentlie furth of this kingdome," and Helene Lindsay was accused of adultery with, among others, a "sojor."¹⁷ In Kirkcaldy, Margaret Jameson confessed to fornication with Alexander Garline under

¹⁴ "North Leith Kirk Session Records," 15 March 1633, NRS CH2 621/1 (no pagination).

¹⁵ "Minute Book of the Trinity College Kirk," 9 July 1629, NRS CH2/141/1, fos. 39, 41, 43v.

¹⁶ "Minute Book of the Trinity College Kirk," 31 December 1629, 6 October 1631, 14 December 1631, NRS CH2/141/1, fos. 45v, 57v, 58v. NRS CH2 621/1 27 December 1640.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 19 September 1633, 26 April 1632, 20 September 1632, fos. 74, 61v, 64v.

promise of marriage. Her punishment was continued until he “come home”¹⁸—suggesting that he was probably abroad as a soldier.

Women were more frequently subjected to punishment than men, which was at least in part because the men often left for the wars without satisfying the kirk for their sins. In Kirkcaldy in southern Fife, both Janet Davison and Allison Smyth were punished for fornication with men who had left town for the wars.¹⁹ In South Leith in 1629, Margaret Hill had a child in fornication with Alexander Forbes, “a souldier” who was nowhere to be found. She was instructed to produce a testification from him or else leave town.²⁰ Janet Thomsonsone in South Leith was pregnant with the child of Alexander Wilands who was “absent of ye cuntrie,” presumably as a soldier. She produced a letter in which he confessed to being the baby’s father, but she was the only who could stand trial for the transgression.²¹ Margaret Chisholm was brought before the Canongate session and confessed to fornication under promise of marriage with Henry Boyd “now in Bohemia as she alleges.”²² In the North Leith kirk session, women accused of adultery with absent men had to pay public repentance until the men came home, which was essentially a sentence to repentance in perpetuity if the man never returned.²³ There was a similar situation in South Leith, where Isobel Perry confessed to fornication with Minge Williamson; she was to pay penance until “his home coming from the sea.”²⁴ Therefore, women were more likely to be punished for fornication than men, simply because many male fornicators left the country to go fight in wars on the Continent.

¹⁸ “Kirkcaldy Kirk Session Minutes,” 30 June 1640, NRS CH2/636/34, fo. 420.

¹⁹ “Kirkcaldy Kirk Session Minutes,” 22 November 1626, NRS CH2/636/34, fo. 167.

²⁰ “South Leith Kirk Session Minutes,” 20 August 1629, NRS CH2/716/3 (no pagination).

²¹ *Ibid.*, 7 February 1630.

²² “Canongate Kirk Session Minutes,” 1 September 1620, NRS CH2/122/2, (no pagination).

²³ “North Leith Kirk Session Records,” NRS CH2/621/1, fo. 777, 13 October 1626, 3 April 1628 (pagination ends after folio 777).

²⁴ “South Leith Kirk Session Minutes,” 15 July 1630, NRS CH2/716/3.

Prostitution was a major concern for sessions because soldiers provided ample demand for their services. Pandars, or bawds—women who facilitated encounters between prostitutes and their clients—were of equal concern to sessions as prostitutes themselves. In Canongate in April 1624, Marion Crawford confessed to fornicating twice with the Laird of Lochinvar (Robert Gordon, who was involved in military matters in Scotland) in both Leith and Edinburgh. Marion confessed that Margaret Reid was her pandar. Margaret was brought in one week later when they discovered that she had written to Lochinvar requesting that he send her some money to get her out of ward. The session found her to be an “impenitent person” and put her in the jogs (a hinged collar put around the offender’s neck and attached to a post) with a paper on her head. She was then banished from the congregation forever.²⁵ However, this case also reveals that sessions could show leniency to those who manifested contrition for their actions. One week after being put in the jogs, Margaret came before the session to confess her sin in encouraging Marion to “whoredom and harlotry with the Laird of Lochinvar.” She avoided being banished from the parish by doing so, and instead she was warned that if she were found engaging in pandary again she would be scourged and banished. Marion also appeared the same day and proclaimed herself a “new woman” who wanted to amend her life. She likewise got off with a warning not to do the same or face possible scourging.²⁶ Margaret was brought in a year later for still keeping company with Lochinvar, at which point she voluntarily left the town for good.²⁷

In the winter of 1630/1631, the Canongate kirk session uncovered a prostitution ring involving Lord Spynie, the kingdom’s muster master in charge of organizing “wappenshawings” or yearly musters of able-bodied men. A woman named Jonat Neilson was brought before the session for fornication, where she confessed that Lord Spynie asked her to “bring some whore or women to him.” Neilson confessed that she sent Helen Jackson, a servant, to Spynie, and that another time she sent Bessie Robertson to another man that

²⁵ “Canongate Kirk Session Minutes,” 16 April 1624; 23 April 1624, NRS CH2/122/2.

²⁶ “Canongate Kirk Session Minutes,” 20 April 1624, NRS CH2/122/2.

²⁷ “Canongate Kirk Session Minutes,” 22 April 1625, NRS CH2/122/2.

she did not know. Neilson begged for forgiveness on her knees and the session sentenced her to spend a quarter of a year in a haircloth, warning that if she “be found abusing her own body or seducing any other to filthiness” she would be scourged and banished from the town and congregation forever.²⁸ Neither the Laird of Lochinvar nor Lord Spynie were brought before the session for their parts in the prostitution ring, revealing how social status, and perhaps even gender, could shield offenders from the justice of the session.

Soldiers often stayed in boarding houses, which were often already under suspicion because of the number of people who came in and out of them, which could lead to accusations of fornication and adultery for the women who ran them. For example, Helen Lindsay, a married woman in Edinburgh, was accused of committing adultery with several men and also of receiving slanderous people into her house. One of these was a soldier “who was known to have lyne with her in bed...at night.”²⁹ In Canongate, during a period in 1620 when several women were brought before the session for fornicating with and being impregnated by soldiers who had left for Bohemia (indicating that there were a number of soldiers in the parish at the time), John Moffet and his wife Margaret Howmed were charged with resetting (receiving, harboring, or giving shelter to) “diverse persons infamous and suspected of whoredom.” It is probable that the couple allowed prostitutes to use their boarding house at a time when soldiers would have made their services in high demand.³⁰ One of the prostitutes the couple was alleged to have harbored, Grissell Short, “a notorious whore and thief and stealer of purses,” was put in the jogs for eight hours and was burned on the cheek with the town seal.³¹

Boarding houses were a concern even if soldiers were not involved. In North Leith, Essie Donaldson was fined five pounds for receiving two fornicators, William White and Kirsten Guthry, into

²⁸ “Canongate Kirk Session Minutes, 1629–1649,” NRS CH2/122/3, 48.

²⁹ “Minute Book of the Trinity College Kirk, 1626–1628,” 26 April 1632, NRS CH2/141/1, fo. 61v.

³⁰ “Canongate Kirk Session Minutes,” 8 September 1620, NRS CH2/122/2.

³¹ “Canongate Kirk Session Minutes,” 21 September 1621, NRS CH2/122/2.

her house. She was instructed to remove them or face double the penalty.³² Katherine Guillaume was accused of resetting “slanderous persons suspect of hures and thieves” and put to ward for four days and warned that if she received any more “strangers or suspicious persons” in her home she would be banished from the parish and her property confiscated to the kirk’s use. Isobell McGill was fined for resetting an adulterous couple in her house.³³ Resetting was such a problem in Canongate that in March 1623 the session enacted a ten pound fine for taking in any “slanderous person nor a woman or harlot or whore within their houses.”³⁴ Over the next year or so the session brought in several people for resetting. While both men and women were charged with the sin, there was a clear gendered aspect to the charge as almost all of those who were resetted were women, many of whom gave birth in the house of the person charged. For example, in March 1624 Hendrie Rea had to pay the 10 pound fine for resetting Jeanne Murray, who gave birth to a child in Rea’s home.³⁵

While both men and women were subjected to public punishment for their sexual sins—typically in the form of wearing sackcloth (or haircloth) or sitting on the stool of repentance in front of the congregation—women faced an extra layer of public humiliation in the form of carting (being pulled in a cart through town while others chastised them for their sins) and scourging or flogging. In many cases, women caught committing sexual sins (usually because they had given birth to a child with no father to be found) were banished from town and merely threatened with carting or scourging. In the Trinity College session, Katherine McKay confessed to giving birth to a child in adultery. She was banished from the town until she could verify her child’s father, and she was threatened with carting should she return without it.³⁶ In South Leith

³² “North Leith Kirk Session Records,” 20 April 1621, NRS CH2/621/1, fo. 775.

³³ “North Leith Kirk Session Records,” 7 February 1623, 11 April 1623, NRS CH2/621/1, fos. 794, 797.

³⁴ “Canongate Kirk Session Minutes,” 23 March 1623, NRS CH2/122/2.

³⁵ “Canongate Kirk Session Minutes,” 5 March 1624, NRS CH2/122/2.

³⁶ “Minute Book of the Trinity College Kirk, 1626–1638,” 3 May 1627, NRS CH2/141/1, fo. 17.

Agnes Fewer could not produce the father of her child, Patrick Ramsey, who she said was out of the country. She was banished from the parish under the threat of branding her cheek and being scourged through town.³⁷ Also in the Trinity College session, Jonet Murray, accused of being “trelapsed” in fornication (meaning having committed fornication three times with three different men), was banished from town and threatened with scourging should she return.³⁸ Women who had sexual relations with soldiers were subjected to similar public scorn. Marjorie Tod in the St. Nicholas kirk in Aberdeen confessed to fornication with a soldier and as a result was carted through town with a paper on her head, banished, and anyone found harboring her was to be fined.³⁹ In Canongate four women, described as “common, scourged, banished louns and common resetors, frequenters, and haunTERS with all other debauched persons” were put in the jogs and conveyed through town with papers on their heads and breasts.⁴⁰ Ritualistic shaming events, such as cartings, provided moments where the community, male and female alike, could come together to publicly decry sinners and reinforce traditional morals.

Section II: Women’s Testimony and Role in Punishment of Sins

While women, especially servant women, were brought before kirk sessions and punished more than men, women could also play an important role testifying before sessions and helping them find and punish sinners.⁴¹ An example from Trinity College shows how a servant woman could play an important role testifying against her social superior. On 24 May 1638, a servant woman named Margaret Dowrat was brought before the session and accused of committing adultery with her master John Stewart. She confessed to having

³⁷ “South Leith Kirk Session Minutes,” 27 July 1637, NRS CH2/716/3.

³⁸ “Minute Book of the Trinity College Kirk,” NRS CH2/141/1, fo. 22.

³⁹ NRS CH2/448/4, 209, 29 July 1638. Christian Andro received a similar penalty on 18 November 1638 for fornication with Andrew Bart who was “aff the countrie.”

⁴⁰ “Canongate Kirk Session Minutes,” 2 April 1624, NRS CH2/122/2.

⁴¹ John Harrison, “Women and the Branks in Stirling, c. 1600 to c. 1730,” *Scottish Economic and Social History* 18, no. 2 (1998): 114–131

“carnal copulation” with him and to becoming pregnant from the encounter. She claimed that when she told Stewart of the situation he “desired her to be silent, for if she would reveal it he would deny it and manswear (i.e. swear falsely against) her before all the sessions in Edinburgh.” Margaret further claimed that Stewart’s wife, Alisone Miller, asked her to go to the Canongate to obtain a drink “that the child should never come to perfection and so should never be known.” The session instructed Margaret to pay the civil penalty, verify her child’s father, and do penance to the kirk for adultery.⁴²

However, the saga did not end there. Margaret claimed that another one of Stewart’s servants, Janet Baxter, had attempted to facilitate her abortion. The session brought Baxter in to see what she knew about the alleged adultery. Interestingly enough, the session was not concerned about the alleged attempted abortion (perhaps because it did not happen), but they were more concerned about catching Stewart as an adulterer. Janet testified that she and Stewart’s wife, Alisone Miller, had asked Margaret whether she were pregnant or not, to which Margaret answered she did not know. Janet and Alisone then examined Margaret’s “paip heads” (nipples) and then “knew it assuredly and said to her you are as sure with child as ever we were.” Janet further testified that she heard Stewart say several times that he would deny that he was the father of Margaret’s child “before all the judges in the world.” Janet also claimed that she heard Stewart say he would give Margaret money and transport her out of the town.⁴³

A week later Stewart himself was brought before the session where he “constantly denied” committing adultery with Margaret. When the session asked him why he had sent Margaret away from his house, he said “she was here one day and she is now gone away, I know not.” Eight days later the session brought Janet back in for further testimony. Janet then provided the whole story as she knew it. On the night before Whitsunday (Pentecost, the seventh Sunday after Easter), Stewart’s wife Alesone was out of the house with their daughter Elspet, when Stewart called Margaret to his room to help him with his boots before he went to bed. Margaret was in the room with Stewart for a half hour before she came out and offered Janet

⁴² “Minute Book Trinity College Kirk,” NRS CH2/141/1, fo. 98v.

⁴³ “Minute Book of the Trinity College Kirk,” NRS CH2/141/1, fo. 99.

“sweeties from her purse and desired her to stay silent.” The next morning Stewart came down and found Margaret “sitting very melanchiously,” which she claimed was due to “evil speeches” she had with Janet. This must have been an attempt by Margaret to manipulate Stewart into reprimanding Janet, as he then told her that if she ever “by word or deed spoke of a particular that might disgrace his name he should cause scourge her from the Castle Hill to the Abbey [Edinburgh’s High Street].” Janet then testified that on Whitsunday she and Margaret were sharing a bed when she woke in the middle of the night to find Margaret gone and that she heard the couple engaged “in the act of carnal copulation.” Janet then confronted Margaret, who confessed to her sins.⁴⁴ In this case the testimony of a servant woman against her master and social superior was welcomed and taken seriously by the male-dominated kirk session. Janet’s testimony was male-sanctioned and deemed appropriate even though she was speaking against a man who was also her master. The case reveals that women’s voices, under the right circumstances, had an important role to play in the calling out and punishing of sins deemed especially reprehensible like adultery.

A common woman’s testimony was often important for finding sinners. In Kirkcaldy after Margaret Masterstone denied committing adultery with a “Northland gentleman,” her servant Janet Brown was brought in to testify. Janet said that the gentleman came to the door of their house around 9:00 or 10:00 at night and when Janet asked her mistress where the man had gone she said, “he is away long since.” However, the next morning Janet saw the gentleman leaving her mistress’s chamber. Janet further testified that Margaret offered her a new “walicot” (a woman’s petticoat or undergarment) for her silence. The kirk session decided rather than punishing Margaret immediately they would wait until her husband “came over the water,” perhaps an indication that he too had left to fight on the Continent.⁴⁵

Women often played a key role in identifying other women who were of suspect morals. Sometimes this involved gossip, shaming, and flyting (quarreling or using abusive language). These disorderly

⁴⁴ “Minute Book of the Trinity College Kirk,” NRS CH2/141/1, fo. 99v.

⁴⁵ “Kirkcaldy Kirk Session Minutes,” 19 March 1639, NRS CH2/636/34, fo. 394.

words caught the attention of kirk sessions and town councils when either the spreading of gossip was countered, usually through a bill of complaint brought to the session or if the flyting ended up taking a violent turn, and there are many instances of women brought before authorities for “flyting and bluiding” after insults of “debauched, scourged loune” or “whore” were leveled. Women could also get into trouble for cursing and scolding men.⁴⁶ For example, Agnes Smith was brought before the Canongate session for telling John Bartilmo that she would “rip up his gutis with ane knyff” for slandering her by accusing her of committing adultery.⁴⁷ Even worse was a woman using physical violence against a man. Agnes Dunlap of North Leith was brought in for striking a man with a knife “to the effusion of his blood in great quantity.” Since she had done this kind of thing before she was carted through the parish with the branks (a bridle used to punish scolds) on her head and warned that if she was ever caught within the bounds of the parish again she would be scourged.⁴⁸ Also in North Leith Margaret Lockert was put in ward for eight days for striking Alexander Anderson with a staff on the waponshawing (muster) day.⁴⁹

In Canongate in 1630 Marie Campbell brought a bill of complaint against Jonet Fowlar for calling her a “highland whore,” “highland mere vagbond,” “harlot whores midwife,” and “other injurious words and wild slanders.” Campbell brought witnesses to

⁴⁶ E. Ewan: “‘Tongue You Lied’: The Role of the Tongue in Rituals of Public Penance in Late Medieval Scotland,” in *The Hands of the Tongue: Essays on Deviant Speech*, ed. E. D. Craun (Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications, 2007), 115–36; E. Ewan, “‘Divers Injurious Words’: Defamation and Gender in Late Medieval Scotland,” in *History, Literature and Music in Medieval Scotland*, ed. R. A. McDonald (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 63–86; E. Ewan, “Crime or Culture? Women and Daily Life in Late Medieval Scotland,” in *Twisted Sisters: Women, Crime and Deviance in Scotland Since 1400*, ed. Y. Brown and R. Ferguson (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2002), 117–36.

⁴⁷ “Canongate Kirk Session Minutes,” 7 January 1631, NRS CH2/122/3, fo. 48.

⁴⁸ “North Leith Kirk Session Records,” 4 May 1621, NRS CH2/621/1, fo. 776.

⁴⁹ “North Leith Kirk Session Records,” 13 August 1619, NRS CH2/621/1, fo. 748.

testify to her good behavior and that they had heard Fowlar and her husband say these things. Fowlar and her husband brought several witnesses of their own. In the end the session told the two women to stay away from each other, pay a small fine, and ask on their knees for God's forgiveness.⁵⁰ In North Leith, Allison Gravei was accused of calling Margaret Clark a "harlet hure" in front of witnesses. She was instructed to confess her sin on her knees, beg forgiveness from Margaret, and promise never to do it again "under the pain of severe punishment."⁵¹ Claire Hon accused Janet Riddell of being pregnant. When Claire could not prove it was true, she was instructed to pay a fine and ask Janet's forgiveness.⁵²

Sessions typically had little patience for women who had developed reputations for flyting in public. In North Leith, Katherine Lawson and Essie Donaldson were brought before the kirk session complaining against one another. Katherine claimed that Essie called her "pyper's hure" (meaning a bagpiper, associated with the Highlands) while Essie claimed Katherine had called her a "common scourged piper's hure and would prove her to be a thief and a whore and a receiver of thieves." Both women had three witnesses confirming that each had said these words to the other. The session then considered how both of them had been "oft found flyting and scolding with their neighbors," so they were both put to ward for several days and warned that if they were found flyting with their neighbors again they would be put in the branks.⁵³

Therefore, women's public voices were frequently constrained by male sanctioning. Women could play an important role in testifying against sinners before the session, even when those they were testifying against were their social and gender superiors. Women could participate in the public shaming of prostitutes and

⁵⁰ "Canongate Kirk Session Minutes," 20 July 1630, NRS CH2/122/3, fo. 30v.

⁵¹ "North Leith Kirk Session Records," 27 June 1623, NRS CH2/621/1, fo. 801.

⁵² "North Leith Kirk Session Records," 6 May 1625, NRS CH2/621/1, fo. 826.

⁵³ "North Leith Kirk Session Records," 8 January 1619, NRS CH2/621/1, fo. 740.

other notorious sinners, as in cases of cartings. However, when female voices were unsanctioned, as in cases of flyting and gossiping, women could be subjected to harsh punishments. Beyond this, there was a clear concern amongst male kirk session authorities for an increase in sexual sins caused by the presence of soldiers, for which women took the brunt of the punishment. As will be shown below, the concern about prostitution and sexual sin was easily transferred by male Presbyterian authorities to concerns about English-style changes to the Scottish kirk imposed by the Stuart monarchs, James VI and Charles I.

Section III: The “Harlot Mother”—Gendered Language and the Kirk

Like other churches in Europe, the language used in Scotland by ministers and laymen alike to describe the church was often gendered female, and the church was understood to be the bride of Christ. This was not unique to Scotland, as it was a Biblical metaphor. However, the use of this language in Scotland took a sharper edge as it was turned against the kirk and used to justify rebellion in the form of the Covenant. David Calderwood, a prominent critic of the doctrinal changes to the Scottish liturgy brought about by the Perth Articles, described the kirk as “our mother kirk.” He used this metaphor in many of his printed polemics against the liturgical changes. For example, in 1624 he wrote that “our mother kirk, and her mother, the truth, are forsaken.” He went on to describe how in the past the “mother kirk” was appareled in her finest dress—its doctrine, which was firmly rooted in the prophets and apostles (meaning that it was Biblically ordained). However, recent innovations, the “unsavory mixture of man’s learning,” had changed this, and now the firm Biblical foundation of the kirk had given way to the “sandy heaps of human wisdom.”⁵⁴

Calderwood’s gendered rhetoric was rather less vitriolic than many others. The gendering of the church female, and the belief that it had been corrupted from a formerly pure state, led to the use of many sexual metaphors. David Mullan has shown that preachers in

⁵⁴ David Calderwood, *An Epistle of a Christian Brother* (Amsterdam: Successors of G. Thorp, 1624), 2, 8.

Scotland began to gender their language after the reintroduction of episcopacy and introduction of the Five Articles of Perth in the early seventeenth century. They saw these things as the reintroduction of popish impurity, and began to refer to the kirk as a “scarlet whore” or a “harlot.”⁵⁵ Samuel Rutherford, a prodigious letter-writer and vocal critic of the Jacobean and Caroline changes to the Scottish kirk, spent most of the 1630s writing letters, many of them to upper-class women, expressing dismay that the Scottish kirk had transformed from a “pure bride” to a “harlot mother.”⁵⁶ For Rutherford and many others, the “leprous strumpet” that the Scottish kirk had become needed to be purified for Christ, the bridegroom’s, ultimate return. Calderwood even compared what he described as the idolatry of the Jacobean kirk to fornication, because idolatry, not unlike fornication, often comes about due to “allurements and provocations.”⁵⁷ During the time of the Covenant, Archibald Johnston of Wariston ruminated in his diary on the twenty-third chapter of Ezekiel, how the Scottish kirk had, like Aholah and Aholibah, “play(ed) the harlot in times bygone,” but was now journeying out of its “Egyptian” captivity of human invention.⁵⁸ Old Testament prophets, who often equated idolatry and adultery, provided many of the metaphors that supporters of the Covenant used to support their movement.

The framers and promoters of the 1638 National Covenant saw it as an opportunity to bring the kirk back from its sinful and idolatrous ways. For many, the most apt metaphor for the kirk’s journey from purity, to corruption, and back to purity was the harlot turning from her sexual promiscuity. Johnston, the main author of the Covenant, recorded his experience listening to a sermon promoting the Covenant delivered by Henry Rollock, a minister in Edinburgh, in April 1638 just two months after the Covenant was signed. Rollo read the Covenant in its entirety and then read from

⁵⁵ Mullan, “Women in Scottish Divinity,” 32.

⁵⁶ Bonar, ed., *Letters of Samuel Rutherford* (Edinburgh, 1891), 382.

⁵⁷ David Calderwood, *The Reexamination of the Two Articles Abridged: to wit, of the communicants gesture in the act of receiving, eating and drinking and the observation of festival days* (Holland: s.n., 1636), 26.

⁵⁸ Archibald Johnston, *Diary of Johnston of Wariston, 1632–1639*, ed. George Morrison Paul (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1911), 343.

Jeremiah 3:1, which discusses how a man, even when he turns his wife away and she “play(s) the harlot with many lovers” and becomes “polluted,” should still take her back. Rollo admonished his parishioners that “the Lord was recalling and reclaiming his people, especially this city of Edinburgh, fra their former whoredomes and idolatries, as on our backs and bellies, of authority in breaking the Sabbath by feasting, by receiving first the Perth Articles, and giving the examples to others.”⁵⁹ Johnston noted that the sermon was greeted with widespread acclaim from the parishioners who held up their hands, called out, and wept (with a “heavenly harmony of sighs and sobs”). He went on to describe how “the spirit of the lord so filled the sanctuary, warmed the affections, melted the hearts, dissolved the eyes of all the people, men and women, poor and noble, as for an long time they stood still up with their hands up unto the Lord.”⁶⁰ His description of the sermon reveals two important things about the Covenant. First, that it was conceptualized in gendered terms, and in a way that most Scottish laymen would have been familiar with—the admonition of a harlot to turn from her sinful ways and return to purity. This concept was constantly reinforced by kirk sessions and the public displays of repentance that had become an important part of the fabric of day-to-day life in post-Reformation Scotland. Second, Johnston noted how the Covenant brought class and sex together—all equally participated in the public cry for the rehabilitation of the kirk.

Alexander Henderson, a leading Scottish theologian and co-author (with Wariston) of the National Covenant, gave several sermons in the first few months of 1638 to support the National Covenant. One of his favorite biblical metaphors in this period was Rahab, the “harlot” from the book of Joshua who assisted Israelite spies in the city of Jericho. In a sermon preached in early 1638 on Hebrews 11:31, Henderson remarked that harlotry covered a wide variety of terms, “whether bodily, or spiritual, or idolatrous, or whether it be fornication, or adultery”⁶¹ In other words, a harlot

⁵⁹ Johnston, *Diary, 1632–1639*, 330.

⁶⁰ Johnston, *Diary, 1632–1639*, 331.

⁶¹ A. Henderson, *Sermons, Prayers, and Pulpit Addresses*, eds. C. M. McMahon and T. B. McMahon (Coconut Creek, FL: Puritan Publications, 2012), 246.

was a convenient metaphor for the perceived spiritual decay of the Scottish church. Nevertheless, a harlot, like Rahab, could repent and assist the bringing in of the kingdom of God.

The use of harlot rhetoric to criticize the Scottish kirk only lasted from the Perth Articles to the immediate aftermath of the signing of the Covenant. Following the Covenant, especially during the period of the Bishops' Wars and the alliance with Parliament during the civil war period, the rhetoric of Scottish preachers shifted to justifications of the use of the sword, resistance to authority, and admonitions of steadfastness in the face of adversity. This is born out in a collection of sermons gathered by David Lindsay that ran from 1639 to 1643. Many of these sermons were given by preachers, such as Henry Rollo, who earlier preached in support of the Covenant using gendered language. Nowhere in any of these sermons do the words "harlot," "whore," or even references to the kirk as the pure bride of Christ, appear to be found.⁶² Therefore, it is clear that the moment of calling out the kirk for its transgressions, a moment when women were given a degree of agency to participate, was fleeting. Once the concern moved beyond the naming and shaming of the "harlot mother," more traditionally male-dominated concerns, such as war and politics, took over, and women returned to their more traditional gender roles where their voices were constrained. Just as the planners of the riots had intended, while women made the initial move of calling out and shaming the "harlot mother," men quickly took over and the gendered norm was restored.

The pre-Covenanting period culminated in a large, female-led, riot against the introduction of an English-style prayer book in Scotland. Historians of the Covenanting period, beyond recognizing that women played a significant role in leading the Prayer Book Riot, have not typically explored the social context or agency behind female leadership of the riots.⁶³ However, more recently, Laura

⁶² "Sermons of David Lindsay," National Library of Scotland, Woodrow Folio vol. XL VIII.

⁶³ David Stevenson recognizes that women took the lead on 23 July, that the riots were planned, and that "there was no shortage of women willing to take part," but makes no attempt to analyze why women took the lead, or what message this was meant to convey, D. Stevenson, *The Scottish Revolution, 1637–1644* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1973), 58–63. Maurice

Stewart has provided the most thorough analysis of women's role and agency in the riots.⁶⁴ Women taking an active role in public in patriarchal early modern societies, such as Scotland, was seen as a monstrous inversion of the gender norm. Men were to be the head of the body politic and women were to be their helpers and avoid speaking out of turn, especially in public. Women were expected to be humble, quiet, and submissive. However, there were moments when the voice of women could be a powerful tool, a way of using concepts of "misrule" and turning the world upside down to expose corruption and give voice to dissent.⁶⁵ To be sure, as Stewart shows, the symbolism behind female leadership of the riot was complex and variegated. Women may have been at the forefront of the riots because it was believed that authorities would have been less prone to attack or arrest women. Furthermore, having women lead the demonstrations against the Prayer Book may have been a way of showing that the riots were simply protests and not an attempt at rebellion or revolution, which is how they may have been interpreted by authorities had men led the way. Finally, while women were shut out of positions of authority within the kirk—there were no female bishops, ministers, elders, or members of kirk sessions—they nevertheless were "invested heavily in the rituals and practices of the kirk" and were prominent participants in private Bible-reading and prayer meetings. Therefore, the women of 23 July were acting in defence of a style of worship they were deeply invested in.⁶⁶

The ecclesiastical controversy in Scotland that led to the 1637 riots can be traced to the reign of Charles I's father, James VI (James I of England), who slowly introduced changes to the Scottish kirk to make it more compatible with England. In 1618 James VI oversaw the implementation of the Five Articles of Perth, which, among other things, called for kneeling during communion, as was done in the

Lee does not go beyond recognizing that women participated in the riots, M. Lee, *The Road to Revolution: Scotland under Charles I, 1625–37* (Urbana, IL, 1985), 209–213.

⁶⁴ Laura Stewart, *Rethinking the Scottish Revolution: Covenanted Scotland, 1637–1651* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 56–62.

⁶⁵ Natalie Davis, "Women on Top" in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1975), 146–51.

⁶⁶ Stewart, *Rethinking*, 56–62.

English church. Women played a role in resisting the changes brought about by the Perth Articles. For example, Easter communion in Edinburgh in 1619 saw a great deal of confusion over whether members of the congregation were to kneel or stand to receive the elements. When one minister attempted to scold those who would not kneel, a “sillie handmaid” stopped his mouth.⁶⁷ In 1622 several women “of the base sort” in Edinburgh refused to kneel for communion and received it sitting, contrary to the Perth Articles.⁶⁸ The evidence of these two incidents, though fragmentary, reveals two things. First, that women were involved in resisting Stuart religious policy well before 1637. Second, both observers noted the lower social status of the women involved. This is a theme that would continue in the accounts from contemporaries who witnessed the 1637 riot.

There are several accounts from contemporaries that describe the 1637 Prayer Book Riots. These sources vary in perspective from pro-Covenanters, to anti-Covenanters, to more neutral parties. The sources agree on four basic things. First, women were prominent in the riots, if not the leaders. Second, the women threw projectiles, probably stools and maybe stones, both inside and outside the High Kirk. Third, the women shouted curses and invectives at the bishop and dean, including accusations of bringing “popery” into the kirk. Fourth, the mob attacked, and maybe nearly killed, the Bishop of Edinburgh, who then escaped with his life in the coach of the Earl of Roxburgh.⁶⁹

But who were these women? Disparate sources, from Covenanters themselves to their opponents, agree that they were commoners. The Covenanters’ opponents, such as John Spalding and

⁶⁷ David Calderwood, *History of the Kirk of Scotland*, vol. vii (Wodrow Society, 1842–1849), 359–60.

⁶⁸ D. Laing, ed., *Original Letters Relating to the Ecclesiastical Affairs of Scotland* (2 Vol., Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1851), II, 712.

⁶⁹ Nearly every source, from anti-Covenanters such as John Spalding and Walter Balcanquhall, to Covenanters such as John Row, Robert Baillie, Archibald Johnston, and the Earl of Rothes generally agree on these things. See for example John Row, *The History of the Kirk of Scotland from the Year 1558 to August 1637* (Edinburgh: Wodrow Society, 1842), 409.

Walter Balcanquhall alleged that the women were “rascall serving women” from the bottom rung of Scottish society.⁷⁰ Balcanquhall, who was responsible for composing the king’s “official” response to the riots and the Covenant, went on to allege that these were the “meaner sort” of women who kept places for their social superiors in the kirk, were a “base multitude,” and the “scum and froth of the people” bent on overthrowing royal authority under the pretense of religion while profaning the Lord’s day and the Lord’s house. Balcanquhall’s invective fit with the broader narrative that the regime of Charles I was attempting to establish about the Covenanters for propaganda purposes—that the women had been goaded into the riot by their social betters who were revolting against monarchical authority under the guise of religion.

Having women who were possibly servants but definitely commoners lead the demonstration against the new Prayer Book opened the Covenanters to the accusation that they were subverting not only the political hierarchy, but also, perhaps more dangerously, the gendered hierarchy as well. Even before the riots began, James Balfour of Denmilne, a staunch Presbyterian who nevertheless remained loyal to the king, warned an unnamed woman, who was in all probability part of the planning of the riots, that her behavior was “unwomanlike” and a “monstrous” subversion of the natural state of the body politic.⁷¹ Robert Baillie, a Covenanter, worried that leadership of the riots by female commoners would undermine “our good cause.”⁷² Servants, male or female, causing disturbances in church over the placement of stools was a serious enough problem in Edinburgh’s Trinity College parish in February 1636 that the kirk session ordered that the preacher make it clear from the pulpit that any servant disturbing the peace over stools would be forced to make public penance for their “great offense of God and slander of his

⁷⁰ John Spalding, *Memorials of the Trubels in Scotland and England: AD 1624–AD 1649* (Edinburgh: Spalding Club, 1850), vol. I, 79; Walter Balcanquhall, *A Large Declaration Concerning the Late Tumults in Scotland* (London: Robert Young, 1639), 23–6.

⁷¹ Stewart, *Rethinking*, 56.

⁷² Robert Baillie, *The Letters and Journals of Robert Baillie, 1637–1662*, vol. 1 (Edinburgh: Ballantyne Club, 1841), 7–10.

Christian church.”⁷³ Therefore, it is clear that many in Scotland were uncomfortable with both women and servants speaking or behaving out of turn.

Therefore, it is not surprising that some Covenanters were reluctant to mention that the riots were led by women in their public and private statements about the riot. The Earl of Rothes, whose work “Historical Information” was intended to be read by elite politicians, simply noted that the bishops, through their intention to use the new Prayer Book, “provoked a number of the commons.”⁷⁴ He made no mention of women or their social status. Archibald Johnston did not remark on either the gender or social status of the rioters. He simply noted in his diary that on that “black, doleful Sunday” there was “such an outcrying what be the people’s murmuring, mourning, railing, stool casting, as the like was never seen in Scotland.”⁷⁵ When Covenanters did mention the gender and social status of the rioters, they typically did not go into much detail. John Row, a long-time opponent to bishops and a committed Covenanter, described the rioters as common women but did not elaborate.⁷⁶ Robert Baillie, who in 1637 was still on the fence about the burgeoning Covenanting movement before fully committing to it later on, described the women as “serving maids” who began a tumult “as was never heard of since the Reformation of the nation.”⁷⁷

One particularly illuminating source comes from Henry Guthrie, a moderate who signed the National Covenant in 1638, but who would eventually be at odds with more radical Presbyterians over the issue of conventicles (private prayer meetings), which he saw as incompatible with Presbyterianism. Guthrie described the participants as a “multitude of wives and serving women” who rose up and began the riot. This is one of the only sources in which the women were described as “wives” and not just “servants” or “commoners.” He went on to elaborate that the decision to have

⁷³ “Minute Book of the Trinity College Kirk, 1626–1638,” 2 February 1636, NRS CH2/141/1, fo. 93v.

⁷⁴ John, Earl of Rothes, *A Relation of Proceedings Concerning the Affairs of the Kirk of Scotland* (Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1830), 3.

⁷⁵ Johnston of Wariston, *Diary*, vol I, 265.

⁷⁶ Row, *History*, 409.

⁷⁷ Baillie, *Letters and Journals*, vol. I, 18–9.

women lead the riots had been reached at a conspiratorial meeting held in the Cowgate of Edinburgh in which prominent future Covenanters like Alexander Henderson and David Dickson along with their wives “and several other matrons” met and “recommended to them that they and their adherents might give the first affront to the Book, assuring them that men should afterwards take the business out of their hands.”⁷⁸ Guthrie’s description of the planning and implementation of the anti-Prayer Book agitation stands apart from other contemporary descriptions of the riots. First, unlike Balcanquhall and Spalding, he was not opposed to the Covenant and therefore was not disposed to portraying it in a way that was intended to undermine it. Second, while he was a supporter of the Covenant, as a bishop who did not support conventicles, he was more of an outsider who had fewer reasons to obscure that the riots were intentionally led by common women. Third, his account was written several years after the event, and, unlike the Covenanted leadership such as Rothes and Johnston, he did not have an immediate political reason to downplay the role of women in the riots.

Since there is fragmentary evidence that corroborates much of Guthrie’s description of the riots, scholars have typically followed his lead when analyzing the event.⁷⁹ Therefore, the scholarly consensus is this: the riots were planned well in advance in secret meetings, where those in attendance conspired to make a public show against the implementation of the English-style prayer book in Scotland when there had been no recourse to either a National Assembly of the kirk or a Scottish Parliament. The leaders of the riots were common women, probably the wives of prominent devout Presbyterians and other citizens of Edinburgh mixed in with servants. No matter their employment or laboring status, it can be assumed that these women were connected to the Edinburgh community of zealous Presbyterians who attended the conventicles

⁷⁸ Henry Guthrie, *Memoirs of Henry Guthrie, Late Bishop of Dunkeld in Scotland* (London: Printed for WB and Sold by J. Nutt, 1702), 20.

⁷⁹ J. M. Henderson, “An ‘Advertisement’ about the Service Book, 1637,” *Scottish Historical Review*, 23 (1925–6), 199–204; Stevenson, “Conventicles in the Kirk, 1619–1637: The Emergence of a Radical Party,” *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, 18 (1973): 99–114.

where the riots were planned. Finally, the planners of the riots intended for women to start the agitation against the Prayer Book after which the men would take over.⁸⁰

Therefore, women's behavior and public voices were severely constrained before the Covenant. Women were more frequently punished for sexual sins or for their language in public. Nevertheless, there were moments, with the sanctioning of male authority, where women could speak out. This typically came when the men of the kirk session needed the testimony of a woman to punish a sinner—even if this sinner were male or of a higher social status than the women testifying against them. In the meantime, male Scottish preachers in the years before the riot and Covenant began to attach sexual sins such as harlotry and sexual license to the kirk, making it ripe for public shaming and sanction. This provided a moment where, with the sanctioning of male authority, women could publicly speak out against the sins of the kirk—something they did in force in the Edinburgh Prayer Book Riots.

⁸⁰ Tim Harris, *Rebellion: Britain's First Stuart Kings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 369; Stevenson, *Scottish Revolution*, 56–61; L. Stewart, *Urban Politics and the British Civil Wars: Edinburgh, 1617–53* (Leiden: Brill, 2006), 216–218.

WITCHCRAFT AGAINST ROYAL DANISH SHIPS IN 1589 AND THE TRANSNATIONAL TRANSFER OF IDEAS

Liv Helene Willumsen, University of Tromsø

ABSTRACT

This article deals with transnational transfer of ideas about witchcraft at the end of the sixteenth century. The outset is alleged witchcraft performed against a royal Danish fleet that was to carry Princess Anne across the North Sea to her husband, King James VI of Scotland, autumn 1589, and following trials in Copenhagen. These include court records from witchcraft trials and diplomatic correspondence between Denmark, England and Scotland. By close-readings of these texts, a multi-layered narrative emerges. The article sheds light on the routes for transmission of witchcraft ideas, as well as the contemporary context for interpreting witchcraft notions.

Keywords: Scotland, Denmark, witchcraft, history of ideas

Introduction

This article deals with alleged witchcraft practiced in the late 1500s and the transnational transfer of ideas about witchcraft. It is based on primary sources from Denmark, Scotland and England, such as court records and diplomatic correspondence, including material which has not been studied previously in witchcraft research.¹ In addition,

¹ Due to several countries and languages involved, the article includes an assortment of quotes in the Older Scottish Tongue and Early Modern English as well as translations from the Danish. All work with primary sources was performed during a research stay at The Institute of Advanced Studies in the Humanities, IASH, University of Edinburgh, 2017, and research stays in Copenhagen in 2016 and 2017, where I have been ‘stipendiat’ at Schæffergaarden, financed by the Funding for Danish-

the link across the North Sea based on original historical documents has not been made before. Thus, novel light will be shed on the witchcraft itself, the communication between individuals who were part of the royal circles in those countries, and transnational transfer of ideas about witchcraft. While the sources are of international origin, the content, however, has a clear thematic core: alleged witchcraft performed against a royal Danish fleet that was to carry Princess Anne across the sea to her husband, King James VI of Scotland, in the autumn of 1589, and the subsequent trials in Copenhagen 1590 and Edinburgh 1590–91, the latter called the North Berwick trials.

I would like to raise two research questions. First: In which way did the transfer of news about the unsuccessful voyage of the Danish fleet in 1589 take place? Second: How can court records from witchcraft trials in Denmark and Scotland give information about the transnational transfer of ideas about witchcraft across the North Sea?

To answer the first research question, this article utilizes state papers as source material. The transfer of ideas about witchcraft are traced through diplomatic correspondence relating the incident. The article presents letters from English, Scottish, and Danish archives, which have not comprehensively been used in this context.² Knowledge about witchcraft against the Danish fleet was communicated back and forth between Denmark, Scotland, and England, and shows the interest for this dramatic event in diplomatic circles.

To answer the second research question, primary sources from courtroom proceedings in Denmark as well as Scotland have been used. As for Scotland, the North Berwick trials of 1590–91 have previously been studied by Scottish historians.³ As for Denmark, this

Norwegian cooperation. I would like to thank Diane Baptie for help with transcription of the Scottish and English sources.

² Jenny Wormald has a few references to state papers in her article “The witches, the devil and the king,” in *Freedom and Authority. Scotland c.1050-c.1650*, ed. Terry Brotherstone and David Ditchburn (East Linton, 2000), 165-180,

³ The most comprehensive work on the Scottish trials of 1590–91, is Lawrence Normand and Gareth Roberts, *Witchcraft in Early Modern*

article references the original Danish court records from the witchcraft trials in Copenhagen 1590 for the first time, due to a peculiar pre-history of the archival process of this source material.⁴ While Henrik Carl Bering Liisberg's book *Vesten for Sø and Østen for Hav. Trolddom i København og Edinburgh*, published in 1909, contains a narrative about the royal fleet's voyage and the trials in both countries, the book does not have any exact references to archival sources. Since documentation is missing, the reliability of this book as historical research may be questioned. The trials in Copenhagen have otherwise been just briefly mentioned by Danish historians.⁵ The reason for the lack of Danish research is probably that the court records from the 1590 Copenhagen trials have been incorrectly archived in the National Archives of Denmark. One might expect that they would be archived under proceedings of the Copenhagen central court, but instead they are archived under Sjællandske Tegnelse, denoting local trials. This is clearly misleading.⁶ The cover of the folder of the court records refers to sorcery and witchcraft performed by the minister and inhabitants of the island Fæø prior to 1590, suggesting that this might be why these

Scotland. James VI's Demonology and the North Berwick Witches (Exeter, 2000).

⁴ Rigsarkivet, Copenhagen [National Archives of Denmark], A232, Danske Kancelli 1572–1660, Sjællandske Tegnelse 1588–1590.

⁵ Leif Ljungberg and Einar Bager, *Malmø tingbøger 1577–83 og 1588–90* (Copenhagen, 1968); Niels M. Pedersen, "Dokumenter til en Trolddomssag under Christian III," *Danske Magazin*, 3 Række, I, 1843, 52–67; Thomas Riis, *Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot. . . : Scottish-Danish relations c. 1450–1707*, 2 vols (Odense, 1988), i, 267; Louise Nyholm Kallestrup, "When Hell Became too Small," in *Cultural Histories of Crime in Denmark, 1500–2000*, eds. Tyge Krogh, Louise Nyholm Kallestrup og Claus Bundgård Christensen (New York, 2017), 25; Louise Nyholm Kallestrup: "'Kind in Words and Deeds, but False in Their Hearts': Fear of Evil Conspiracy in Late Sixteenth-Century Denmark," in *Cultures of Witchcraft in Europe from the Middle Ages to the Present*, eds. Jonathan Barry, Owen Davies, and Cornelia Osborne (Cham, 2018), 139–140.

⁶ A232, Danske Kancelli 1572–1660 RAD, Sjællandske Tegnelse 1588–1590, fos. 288v ff. Danske Kancelli is a part of Danish Governmental archives.

records of national significance are stored with local trial records.⁷ I rediscovered these court records by chance in 2016.⁸ The records are the only known sources that document the first instance of the Copenhagen witchcraft trials of 1590. Written in the Gothic hand, these court records are transcribed by me and used in quotations.⁹ To this author's knowledge, it is the first time these records are analysed in an academic setting.

My methodological approach is to go to original sources in the countries concerned and arrive at an interpretation by linking these documents together. Such an approach involves narrative structures: it combines listening to and bringing out the voices of the various actors, establishing an exact timeline of events, and assessing linguistic instruments in the written and oral fields. My interpretation is characterized by cross-disciplinary methods of analysis and close-reading of texts, focusing primarily on narrative discourse—a perspective to the source material as a grand narrative.¹⁰

These documents and analysis will shed new light on the debate over the possible influence of Danish witchcraft trials on the North

⁷ On the cover of the documents: "Fæøes Præst og Indbyggere, som er beskyldt for Signeri og Trolddoms Kunster, derom Landstingsdom." Ref. RAD, A232, Danske Kancelli 1572–1660, Sjællandske Tegnelse 1588–1590; Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 5.

⁸ I informed at once my Danish colleague, Louise Nyholm Kallestrup, who could not find these documents.

⁹ The trial documents are not paginated, therefore references use date of trial and name of accused person. Other records elucidate the Danish witchcraft trials in 1590. The case of one of the women accused, namely Margrete, the wife of Jakob the Scribe (Jakob Skrivers), was brought to the Court of Appeal. The proceedings are preserved. Rigsarkivet, Copenhagen [National Archives of Denmark], A232, Danske Kancelli 1572–1660, Sjællandske Tegnelse 1588–1590. Document marked: "Sag imod: Margrethe Jacob Skriivers for Trolddom 2 Stk. Dokumenter 1590 13 Juli. Oktbr.

¹⁰ In terms of methodology, I use the works of Gérard Genette, *Narrative Discourse. An Essay in Method* (Paris, 1983), *Narrative Discourse Revisited* (Ithaca, 1988) and *Fiction & Diction* (Ithaca, 1993) as the basis for my close reading of the documents. See also Liv Helene Willumsen, "A narratological approach to witchcraft trial: a Scottish case," *Journal of Early Modern History*, 15 (2011): 531–60.

Berwick trials. While Danish historians thus far have not performed in-depth studies of the relation between the trials on both sides of the North Sea, the idea has been discussed among Scottish scholars, though on a superficial level.¹¹ Christina Lerner was the first to argue that there was a connection between James' trip to Denmark and the introduction of demonological beliefs to Scotland, while P. G. Maxwell-Stuart and Jenny Wormald disagree, pointing to earlier instances of the demonic pact known in Scotland before this trip occurred. Brian P. Levack, Julian Goodare, and Thomas Riis have also weighed in on this debate, which is discussed further in this article.¹² However, none of these authors appear to have utilized the Danish records extensively, particularly the state papers and court records.

In my view, Lerner is right in pointing to a connection between Denmark and Scotland, but she did not have the sources to underpin her thesis. I argue that King James encountered new knowledge from ongoing witchcraft trials in Copenhagen before he left Denmark in the spring of 1590, information that was sensational and permeated royal and diplomatic circles. By using newly discovered primary sources in addition to the sources previously referenced by historians, I argue that King James in fact was exposed to new ideas in Denmark. He learned about collective witchcraft and demonic witches' gatherings, about witches raising storm and personal demons. These ideas were of demonological nature, and they were retold and surfaced during the interrogation at Holyrood at the beginning of the North Berwick trials, where the king acted as

¹¹ Christina Lerner, "James VI and I and Witchcraft," in *Witchcraft and Religion: The Politics of Popular Belief* (Oxford, 1984), 3–22; P. G. Maxwell-Stuart, "'The fear of the King is death': James VI and the witches of East Lothian," in *Fear in Early Modern Society*, eds. W. G. Naphy and P. Roberts (Manchester, 1997); See e.g. Jenny Wormald, "The Witches, the Devil and the King," in *Freedom and Authority*, eds. T. Brotherstone and D. Ditchburn (East Linton, 2000), 165–180.

¹² Brian P. Levack, "King James VI and Witchcraft," in *Witch-Hunting in Scotland: Law, Politics and Religion* (London, 2008), 41–42; Julian Goodare, "Witchcraft in Scotland," in *The Oxford Handbook of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe and Colonial America*, ed. Brian P. Levack (Oxford 2013), 303–305; Riis, *Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot*, i, 266–69.

interrogator. The king himself was a carrier of demonological ideas over the North Sea.

This study thus clearly adds to the existing knowledge by using primary sources as fundamental for interpretation. The article expands upon the basic information already known and gives a detailed, well-researched view of factual trials and the transfer of ideas about witchcraft.

PART I: Storms and Witchcraft in International Correspondence

The Danish Naval Fleet Turns Back

The alleged witchcraft against the King's ships in 1589 is remarkable. Here is the pre-history:

On 20 August 1589, Princess Anne, the second eldest daughter of Frederik II, married King James VI of Scotland *per procura* at Kronborg Castle in Denmark. The Scottish Lord Marischal stood in for King James. On 1 September 1589, Princess Anne left her homeland to travel to Scotland. Her ship, the Gideon, was part of the Danish naval fleet.¹³ Admiral Peder Munk was in command of the fleet, which immediately encountered problems. The first misfortune was that two artillerymen lost their lives when the canons were to fire a salute. One of the passengers on board, Peder Christensen, assistant to the doctor accompanying Princess Anne, kept a diary and wrote about the incident: "Two artillerymen were shot to death at Skansen."¹⁴ On 3 September, gales, headwinds, and leaking ships forced the fleet to put into port in Arendal. Then, after several attempts to cross the North Sea, they had again to turn back on 29 September and put into port in Flekkerø on the southwestern coast of Norway. According to an entry in Peder Christiansen's diary, on 28, 29 and 30 September the ships were halfway between Scotland and Norway.¹⁵ It was then decided that the fleet's ships would part ways. The Gideon would sail to Oslo with Princess Anne, two ships would sail to Copenhagen with a letter to the government councils,

¹³ Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 9.

¹⁴ Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 9.

¹⁵ Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 30.

and one ship would sail to Scotland. However, a Scottish ship arrived at Flekkerø before the ship bound for Scotland had begun its voyage, with King James' messenger, William Stuart, carrying love letters from the Scottish King to his bride.¹⁶ The ships bound for Copenhagen arrived there on 14 October. One ship sailed to Edinburgh, where the Danish messenger, Sten Bille, travelled to King James with news and love letters from his fiancée.¹⁷ Bille also brought with him official letters stating that the Danish ships had been "60 nautical miles" from the Scottish coast when they had to turn back, which is more than halfway.¹⁸ A ship brought Princess Anne to Norway's capital; she should stay there over the winter.

Disappointment in Scotland

The messenger from Princess Anne's ship, Sten Bille, arrived in Leith on 10 October, and went directly to Craigmillar Castle for a meeting with King James VI. William Asheby, the English Ambassador to the Scottish royal court, wrote to Lord Burghley, Queen Elizabeth I's chief minister,¹⁹ the same day: "This morning arrived a gentleman of Denmark, with message from the Princess, and is to have audience in the afternoon at one o'clock [at Craigmillar]. In his company is a Scottish gentleman of the Earl Marishal's train, Andrew Synk[l]er by name, who says that the Princess is in good health, and her company, but sorely beaten with

¹⁶ Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 15; Rune Blix Hagen, "James I, konge i Tåkeland: en rystende fortelling om utsøkt djevleskap rundt et fyrstebryllup i Oslo 1589," *Skepsis* (Oslo, 2008), <https://www.skepsis.no/james-1-konge-i-takeland-en-rystende-fortelling-om-utsøkt-djevleskap-rundt-et-fyrstebryllup-i-oslo-1589/>

¹⁷ For copies of the letters from Anne to King James VI, see J.T. Gibson Craig, *Papers relative to the marriage of king James the sixth of Scotland, with the Princess Anna of Denmark; A.D. MDLXXXIX* (Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1828), xx.

¹⁸ Thomas Fowler to Lord Burghley. 20 October 1589. Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 22.

¹⁹ Lord Burghley (1520–1598) was Queen Elizabeth I's closest adviser and had an enormous influence on many levels. He was in favour of an alliance between Scotland and England. In addition, his approval played a crucial role in the execution of Mary, Queen of Scots.

the seas. She put out twice for this coast, but both times *driven back by contrary winds*.” [Author’s italics.]²⁰ Similar wording appears in a letter from Thomas Fowler²¹ to Lord Burghley on 20 October which states that “Steven Beale” (Sten Bille), a Dane, had arrived in Edinburgh with news about the storms that the future Queen had endured: “The Danish ships had been 60 miles from the Scottish coast, but were *driven back* and had to seek refuge in one of the Norwegian inlets.” [Author’s italics.]²² Here we see emphasized powerful elements at play. Just one day after the Danish messenger’s arrival, William Asheby wrote again to Lord Burghley:

Be the report of the gentlemen of Scotland quhilk arrived upon the x day in the morning, it is understand that the Quene and all the flete has bene in greit payne and dangier, having at five severall tymes bene *drevin bak* be storme and *contrarious wyndis*, sundrie of the schippis being lek, and specialie that quhairin the Quene wes. [Author’s italics.]²³

We see from these letters that a significant amount of attention was focused on the storm that prevented Anne from reaching Scotland. The Scottish government correspondence mentions numerous times that the powerful storm occurred on Michaelmas, i.e. 29 September. However, even if there was no explicit mention of witchcraft in the first weeks after the Danish fleet was forced to turn back, there might nonetheless have been a feeling within the royal court that the storms could have been caused by witchcraft and sorcery. Two tragedies at sea, one in Scotland and one related to the Danish fleet in the North Sea, contributed to strengthen this feeling.

The Denmark-related accident happened during the royal fleet’s voyage to bring Princess Anne to Scotland, during which several

²⁰ William Asheby to Burghley. CSPS, vol. 10 (Edinburgh, 1936), no. 236. 10 October 1589.

²¹ Thomas Fowler (1540–1590) was an English lawyer, diplomat, adviser to King James VI and Scottish Ambassador to London.

²² Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 22.

²³ Asheby to Lord Burghley. CSPS, vol. 10 (Edinburgh, 1936), no. 238. 11 October 1589.

sailors died in a series of storm-related misfortunes, culminating in the storm around Michaelmas.²⁴As King James VI prepared to welcome his bride in Scotland, his mother's friends were working hectically in the royal court. Then an accident happened. Lady Kennedy—Queen Mary's lady-in-waiting, who had already made most of the preparations to receive Princess Anne—drowned in a ferry accident in the Firth of Forth in September 1589: only two people survived the accident. King James' adviser, Sir James Melville of Halhill, wrote in his memoirs that Scottish and Norwegian witches raised a storm in order to take the life of the innocent Princess, but it was her lady-in-waiting who ended up as the victim.²⁵

The ferry accident occurred soon after the Danish fleet had set sail. A ferry on its way from Fife to Leith collided with a sailing vessel on 7 September in the middle of the firth during a powerful storm. The two accidents on either side of the North Sea, both of which affected King James, were being linked in Scottish government circles by early October. On 8 October 1589, just one week after the Danish fleet turned back, William Asheby wrote to Francis Walsingham, principal secretary to Queen Elizabeth I:²⁶

th' on upon her embarking a greate pece in the admiral's ship brake in shoting, and killed two or three of the gonners; th'other chance was here in the Firth, a boote passing the 7th of Sept. from Burntisland, in Fiffe, towards Lythe, *in the midwaie being under saile* and the tempest growing great caried the boote with such force upon a ship which was under seale as the boote sunke presentlie, and almost all the passengers

²⁴ Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 9–13.

²⁵ James Melville, *Memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill 1535–1617*. Edited, with an Introduction, by A. Francis Steuart (London, 1929), 327–328.

²⁶ Francis Walsingham (1532–1590) was the principal secretary to Queen Elizabeth I from 1573 until his death in 1590.

drowned, emongest whom was Madam Kenedie which was with the late Quene in England. [Author's italics.]²⁷

The same day, William Asheby wrote to Lord Burghley:

The wind has continued south and south-west since the princess's first embarking, which are flat contrary, and have been so strong as no vessel could come to bring news. This long uncertainty brings *fear of some disaster*, that is increased by *two ominous chances*, as they are here interpreted. The [one] upon her embarking a great pe[ce in the] amiralles ship brake in shoting and killed tow o[r thre] of the gonners. Th'other chance hapened h[ere] in the Firth: a boote passing from Bru[nt] Island in Fiffe the 8 of Sept. towards [Lythe], *in the midwaie being under saile*, and the tempest growing verie great caried th[em] with such force upon a ship under saile as the boote presentlie suncke, and almost a[ll the] passengers drowned; *emongest whom was [Madam] Kenedie, who was with the late Quene in Eng[land]*, and divers gentlewomen and marcha[nts] of Edenbrowghe, *to the nomber of fourtie that per[ished], with plate and hangings brought hither f[or] the mariage, which was all lost.* [Author's italics.]²⁸

The letters cited above show that the connection between the two accidents was regarded as fact just one month after the ferry sank and only one week after the Danish fleet was forced to turn back. The news was sent from Edinburgh to London. The accidents in the two countries and the connection between them must have been viewed in both countries as important news that must be shared immediately. The fact that both of these letters from William Asheby were addressed to members of the English Queen's inner circle suggests

²⁷ Asheby to Walsingham. CSPS, vol. 10 (Edinburgh, 1936), no. 233. 8 October 1589.

²⁸ Asheby to Lod Burghley. CSPS, vol. 10 (Edinburgh, 1936), no. 234. 8 October 1589.

that she was concerned about what was happening with King James and keeping a close eye on his marriage plans.²⁹

On 14 October, two weeks after the fleet had turned back, two of the Danish ships that had been stranded in Norway reached Copenhagen. On the same day, Thomas Tenneker³⁰ wrote from Copenhagen to Walsingham in London: “I have no good newes at the present too wryt of . . . by contrary wyndes the kings shippes w[i]th the lady anna skotse queen are returned clld not recover skotland being allso loath too send {page damaged} ther great shippes on that dangerous coast so late in the year w[hi]ch must nede be a great greeff on boath syds.”³¹ Due to the high risk, the letter notes, the squadron with Princess Anne would not sail to Scotland that autumn, which would cause sorrow in the Scottish people.

Two months after the Danish fleet had to turn back, the bad omens were again commented on. On 28 November, William Asheby wrote to Michael Throckmorton: “Doubts not but the storm will be overblown and hopes to see *those make shipwreck that have by their enchantments raised the tempest.*” [Author’s italics.]³² It is also possible to read Asheby’s expression as a metaphor since weather magic was a common concept in England and the Nordic countries since medieval times.³³ Such an interpretation might connect to his conflict with other persons. However, this letter is

²⁹ Colonel Stuart was an intermediary between the Danish and Scottish royal houses regarding the issue of marriage. Melville, *Memoirs*, 322, 326.

³⁰ Thomas Tenneker was the English Ambassador to Denmark in 1589. *List and Analysis of State Papers, Foreign Series Elizabeth I: August 1589–June 1590*, ed. Richard Bruce Wernham (London, Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1964), 458.

³¹ National Archives London, State Papers Denmark, State Papers 75, II, D7.

³² Asheby to Throckmorton. CSPS, vol. 10 (Edinburgh, 1936), no. 299. 28 November 1589. Michael Throckmorton was the son of George Throckmorton and his second wife, Mary Brydges. “Throckmorton Family,” *Welcome to My Tudor Court* (accessed 24/05/2018), www.tudorplace.com.ar/THROCKMORTON1.htm.

³³ Francis Young, *Magic as a Political Crime in Medieval and Early Modern England: A History of Sorcery and Treason* (London, 2017), 39, 107; Stephen A. Mitchell, *Witchcraft and Magic in the Nordic Middle Ages* (Philadelphia, 2011), 65–66.

dated at the end of November 1590, when two women, Geillis Duncan and Agnes Sampson, already were imprisoned in Edinburgh for alleged witchcraft, and interrogation had started. Sensational witchcraft trials were sailing up, and the word witchcraft must have been everywhere in Scottish and English court circles. Thus, I think it is likely that in Asheby's mind, the words 'shipwreck,' 'enchantments,' and 'tempest' had connotations to storm raised by witches.

The letters mentioned above reveal a feeling of discomfort related to several misfortunes that had struck the royal circles around the same time. In general, this might point to providence, a view shared by Protestants: God might be giving human beings a forewarning or showing His displeasure with some actions. God might seek to punish or cause repentance and remorse. For example, James Melville suggested that the destroyed harvest and raging pestilence in the year 1585 occurred when "the Lord send sic tempest of wather and rean, that all began to cry."³⁴ Each person should therefore take the responsibility of becoming a better Christian. This thinking is centred round individuals. However, I argue that this thinking centred not around providence, but witchcraft. I argue that factual witchcraft trials as well as diplomatic correspondence between Denmark-Scotland-England during the entire year of 1590 point to the influence of specific learned ideas about witchcraft across the North Sea, ideas that became imperative to the persecution of alleged witches in Scotland. The fear expressed in the letters mentioned above is not directed to individual persons' conscience. Instead there is an impending fear connected to concrete incidents, that there might be someone causing these incidents. The answer could be witches. Looking for witches meant finding scapegoats to blame for frightening and unexpected accidents. Thus the focus on each individual's conscience is missing.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth century, the explanation of accidents at sea, that witches collectively raised storms, gained foothold. Their power to perform evil was derived from the devil when they entered into allegiance with him. When reasons for an accident could not be found, witchcraft as an explanation was easy

³⁴ Robert Pitcairn, ed., *The autobiography and diary of Mr. James Melvill, with a continuation of the diary* (Edinburgh, 1842), 222.

at hand. These ideas came strongly to the fore within court, church, and state in Scotland from the 1590s onwards, and had a strong impact on what became one of the most intense witch-hunts in Europe.³⁵ During this persecution, the accused persons confessed due to torture, not repentance. The emphasis on witchcraft in the minds of learned as well as lay people at the time in question is the reason why I have chosen to heed the witchcraft context in the analyses performed in this article.

“I am a trew prince”

In the early autumn months of 1589, King James VI stayed primarily at Craigmillar Castle. He felt that he had experienced a great misfortune, and he turned to God and announced a public fast and prayers. But this could not solve everything. The people waited for their new Queen. King James VI was rumoured to like young, male companions, and now it was important for him to show in the long run that he could produce an heir to the throne. He had to show decisiveness in the critical situation and was taking events into his own hands.³⁶ Therefore, he decided to travel to Norway and leave his home country for an unknown period of time:

These reasons, and innumerable others howerlie objected, moved me to hasten the treatie of my mariage: for as to my owne nature, God is my witnesse I could have abstained longer nor the weill of my patrie could have permitted This treatie then beinge perfited, and the Quene my bedfellow cuming on hir journey, how the contrarious windes stayed hir and where she was driven it is more then notorious to all men The word then comminge to me that *she was stayed from cuming through the notorious tempestes of windes . . . I, upon the instant, yea verie moment, resolved to make possible on my part that which was impossible on hers . . .* The place where I resolved this in was Cragmillar,

³⁵ Julian Goodare, *The European Witch-Hunt* (New York: Routledge, 2016), 28.

³⁶ Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland*, 32.

not one of the whole Counsell being present their. And as I take this resolution onelie of my self, *as I am a trew prince, so advised with my self onelie what way to follow fourth the same.* [Author's italics.]³⁷

The final remark that he is a “trew prince” and that he took this decision on his own, without advisers present, suggests that it was all-important for him to give a public demonstration of independent action and decisiveness. This same understanding prevails in church circles, as formulated in the parish council in Perth, stating that the King “took a sudden secret Resolution of goeing thither himself.”³⁸

William Asheby attempted to downplay this in a letter of 21 October: “This resolucion, if you go foreward with it, will greatlie amase your good and faithfull subjectes, and make the wourld judge your grace rather a passionate lover then a circumspect prince.”³⁹ King James, however, provided a detailed description of how the country should be governed in his absence and placed his relative Lord Bothwell in a position of authority. The document, which contained 16 points, bore the heading “order set down by the Kingis Majestie, to be observed upon his return to Scotland.”⁴⁰ However, the King had great confidence that an emotional letter could have a positive impact on public opinion in Scotland.

On 24 October 1589, King James left the Scottish port of Leith “in the night” and was driven back the next day by a sudden storm at Pittenweem, where he stayed until the morning of 25 October.⁴¹ He “arryvitt att Fleckra [Flekkerø] the 29 of the same” writes William Hunter to William Asheby on 3 November. Hunter makes the point

³⁷ *The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland*, vol. IV (His Majesty Register House, Edinburgh, 1902), 427–429.

³⁸ National Library of Scotland, Special Collection, Adv. Ms. 31.1.1. Some Extracts from the 1st volume extant of the Register of the Kirk Session of Perth. 28 October 1589, p. 60.

³⁹ Asheby to King James. CSPS, vol. 10 (Edinburgh, 1936), no. 251. 21 October 1589.

⁴⁰ Craig, *Papers relative to the marriage of king James the sixth of Scotland*, 27–34.

⁴¹ Asheby to Lord Burgley. CSPS, vol. 10 (Edinburgh, 1936), no. 262. 30 October 1589.

that “The Kingis majestie was never sick.”⁴² After Flekkerø meetings, James travelled to Norway’s capital, and on 21 November, he ratified the marriage contract. Two days later, on 23 November, a formal wedding ceremony took place in the Bishop’s Palace in Oslo, led by a Scottish clergyman and with Scottish representatives present.⁴³

On 22 December, the couple travelled to Elsinore, where they remained at court for about four months, during which King James had conversations with two well-known Danes. One was Niels Hemmingsen, a professor first of Greek and then of theology, who had been dismissed from the University of Copenhagen. Born in 1513, Hemmingsen was an old man in 1590 and lived in Roskilde.⁴⁴ The other was the astronomer Tycho Brahe. The conversations with these men illustrate some of James’ areas of interest. He was interested in learned demonology, and Hemmingsen had published a demonological work in 1575, which was familiar to the Scottish King. However, what is known from the conversations between Niels Hemmingsen and King James is that they talked about the doctrine of predestination.⁴⁵ Related to the North Berwick trials, Niels Hemmingsen, like Martin Luther, disagreed with ideas about gatherings of witches, shapeshifting and flights through the air.⁴⁶ A major element of the North Berwick trials focused precisely on witches’ conventions.⁴⁷

A fleet dispatched by the Danish King left Copenhagen for the second time on 21 April 1590, nine months after the first attempt. Once again Admiral Peder Munk was in command. After arrival in Leith on 1 May 1590, Anne was crowned Queen of Scotland on 17

⁴² The British Library, London, Egerton Manuscript 2,598, fol. 190.

⁴³ Davis Stevenson, *Scotland’s Last Royal Wedding* (Edinburgh, 1997), 34–39.

⁴⁴ Niels Hemmingsen was dismissed from his professorship in theology at the University of Copenhagen because his view of the Eucharist deviated from the Lutheran understanding. Hemmingsen is known in part for the publication of his book *Admonitio de superstitionibus magicis vitandis* (Copenhagen 1575), which was widely read.

⁴⁵ Stevenson, *Scotland’s Last*, 49.

⁴⁶ J. Haustein, *Martin Luthers Stellung zum Zauberwesen und Hexenwesen* (Stuttgart, 1990), 56–67.

⁴⁷ Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland*.

May 1590 during a magnificent coronation ceremony which was also attended by Peder Munk. Two days later the Queen's arrival in Edinburgh took place, also a grand affair.⁴⁸

PART II: Witchcraft Trials in Denmark and Scotland

Witchcraft Trials in Copenhagen

Before King James and his bride left Denmark, some highly unusual court cases came up in Copenhagen.⁴⁹ During the spring of 1590, several women in Copenhagen had been accused of witchcraft and brought to trial at the city court. Admiral Peder Munk played an active role in bringing these cases to court.⁵⁰

There was a legal precedence for trying witches of weather magic before 1590; the notion of witches raising storm at sea was already known in Denmark as the result of two catastrophes. The first was in 1543, when several alleged witches outside of Elsinore were thought to have bewitched a fleet of 24 ships that were to be used in the ongoing war against the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V (1500–58). The second was in 1566, when it was believed that witches in Copenhagen raised a storm that sank the best ships in the fleet off the coast of Gotland.⁵¹

The first woman to be charged in Copenhagen in the spring of 1590 was Ane Koldings, known as 'the Devil's mother.'⁵² Her case came before the court in April 1590, and it must have garnered tremendous attention within royal circles. Interrogated under torture, she confessed that Jakob the Scribe [Jakob Skrivers] had asked her

⁴⁸ Craig, *Papers relative*, 47–55.

⁴⁹ Riis, *Should Auld*, 267.

⁵⁰ A232, Danske Kancelli 1572–1660 RAD, Sjællandske Tegnelse 1588–1590.

⁵¹ Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 21.

⁵² She may be the same as Anne Judequinde, called 'Dywels moder' who was accused during witchcraft trials in Malmø in 1579, and mentioned again in Malmø trials 1590. Ref. Leif Ljungberg and Einar Bager, eds., *Malmø tingbøger 1577–83 og 1588–90* (København, 1968), 80; 336.

and her accomplices to bewitch the royal fleet.⁵³ Demonological ideas were referenced during the trial—among others, the use of Apostles, personal demons given to a witch by the Evil One when entering the devil’s pact. This idea is also found in other countries.⁵⁴ Ane Koldings confessed that she had performed witchcraft so that “the Lady would not reach Scotland *on the first attempt*.” [Author’s italics].⁵⁵ This formulation, which is repeatedly used in the Danish trials, refers to the Danish naval fleet’s voyage in the autumn of 1589. Participation in collective witchcraft is clearly a demonological idea. Ane Koldings implicated nine Copenhagen women, thus ensuring the continuation of the trials.⁵⁶ She was sentenced to death on 20 May and burnt at the stake in Copenhagen on 15 or 17 June.⁵⁷

King James thus knew before he left Denmark about witchcraft against his person. News quickly reached London. A message about the execution of Ane Koldings was sent just one week after the execution: “The xvijth [17th] of this moneth thair was an wytch burnt at Copemanhaven convinced to have bewitched the Queenes voyage towards Scotland this last year, and at her death she confessed divers others and some chif women to have ben partakers of this Sorcery, the w[hi]ch be apprehended, and like to be punished.”⁵⁸ It was ‘hot stuff’; part of a dangerous conspiracy that went to the heart of government authority. The year was 1590, no more than three years

⁵³ A232, Danske Kancelli 1572–1660 RAD, Sjællandske Tegnelser 1588–1590.

⁵⁴ Personal demons are found in Finnmark County, Norway’s northernmost region, which suffered harsh witchcraft trials in the 1600s. Demonological ideas are documented in minutes of court proceedings from 1620 onward. In England, animals called familiars had the same function as a personal demon.

⁵⁵ A232, Danske Kancelli 1572–1660 RAD, Sjællandske Tegnelser 1588–1590.

⁵⁶ Of these, six were imprisoned and three were released on bail. Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 53.

⁵⁷ In a letter sent from Denmark to the English royal court, the date set was 17 June, while Peder Christensen writes in his diary that she was executed on 15 June. Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 29–30.

⁵⁸ The National Archives of Britain, London. State Papers Denmark 1590, June 25, Dr. Parkins to Burghley, dated Rødby.

since Elizabeth I had approved the execution of King James' mother, Mary, Queen of Scots. Politically it was unclear what would happen with the English throne when Elizabeth I died without an heir. As a result of these circumstances, the witchcraft was regarded as a highly political attack.

In Copenhagen, after the execution of Ane Koldings in June 1590, the trials of the other accused women continued. The interrogations took place from 13–16 July 1590.⁵⁹ Peder Munk was back to Denmark and took active part. The first was Karen Vævers. She confessed that Kirsten Søndags, Margrete Skrivers, and a farmer's wife⁶⁰ had come to Margrete and asked her to send her Apostle, Langinus,⁶¹ with their Apostles to the King's ships, in order to destroy them. Vævers also confessed that she had spoken with the farmer's wife and admonished her three times, for the sake of Christ's death and suffering, that she should not harm the King's ships because her [Karen's] husband, son, and son-in-law were on board. In addition, Karen confessed that Kirsten Søndags took her Apostle from her and put him in an empty beer barrel, which was sent to the fleet at sea. The farmer's wife later approached Karen and responded on Karen's query that the Apostle was with the fleet. Then Karen said that if she had known that they would use him for that purpose, she would never have lent him out. The farmer's wife had also told her that the Lady would not reach Scotland on the first attempt. She confessed that she had sent her Apostle, Langinus, to the farmer's wife twice, and admonished the demon to pester the wife with pestilence and sickness so that she would have a quick death and thus prevent her from harming the King's ships or causing someone's death, since her relatives were on board the ships.

⁵⁹ A232, Danske Kancelli 1572–1660 RAD, Sjællandske Tegnelser 1588–1590.

⁶⁰ Orig. 'en bondekone,' could be the same as Bente Bondequinde, accused during the Malmø trials on 6 July 1590, was sentenced to execution on 27 July, and as accused and interrogated in July 1590, and mentioned as burnt on 17 August. Ref. Ljungberg and Bager, *Malmø Tingbøger*, 335, 350.

⁶¹ The name 'Langinus' is sometimes written as 'Longinus' in the primary sources.

Two days later, on 15 July, Maren Mads Bryggers [Maren, the wife of Mads the Brewer] was interrogated. She confessed to having engaged with the other women “in counsel and deed” at Karen Vævers’ house. Asked what art they intended to perform with the aid of some clay vessels, she responded that she believed they were to bewitch the ships to make sure they would never reach Scotland. Maren swore on her soul and salvation that Ane Koldings told her it was all about performing witchcraft against the ships.

At this point there may well have been a break in the proceedings, during which it is likely that the torture rack was put to use. This is not recorded in the sources, as it was illegal to apply torture prior to conviction in Denmark-Norway.⁶² However, when the examination continued, Maren was very willing to confess and to denounce more women: she confessed that Anne Jespers, Kirsten Søndags, Ane Koldings, Karen Vævers, and herself had gathered in Karen Vævers’ house. There were clay vessels on the table, and they did not want the ships to reach Scotland on the first attempt. She swore to this, on her soul and salvation.

The following day, 16 July, Maren Mogens [Maren, the wife of Mogens] was questioned. She was reputed to be practicing witchcraft and accused ten years earlier, in 1578, but was found not guilty.⁶³ She started by implicating Margrete, confessing that Margrete Jakob Skriver [Margrete, the wife of Jacob the Scribe] took part in performing witchcraft against the King’s ships, and that Margrete was as well versed in witchcraft as the others and indeed herself. She then confessed that Margrete, Anne Jespers, Ane Koldings, Kirsten Søndags, the farmer’s wife, Karen Vævers, and herself had been gathered in Karen Vævers’ house in order to bewitch the King’s ships, and she swore on her life, soul, and salvation that this was true. Moreover, Maren Mogens confessed that it was Jakob Skrivers who had asked her to perform witchcraft against the King’s ship; he was behind the operation and had set it all in motion.

⁶² Kolderup-Rosenvinge, *Samling av gamle danske love*, Bd. 4 (København, 1924), 219, 224; Liv Helene Willumsen, *Witches of the North: Scotland and Finnmark* (Leiden, 2013a), 233; Liv Helene Willumsen, *Dømt til ild og bål* (Stamsund, 2013b), 251.

⁶³ Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 32.

Again, the torture rack may well have been used during an interval. The next question to Maren Mogens concerned the timing of the gathering. She responded that it was the previous year, around Michaelmas, “om Sonstj mickelßdags thidt,”⁶⁴ which is 29 September. The date is highly significant, as will be seen.

Maren Mogens confessed and swore on her wish to be a child of God that Ane Koldings had approached her and asked if she would let her demon *Pilhestskou*⁶⁵ accompany Ane Koldings’ Apostle Smuck⁶⁶ to the King’s ships to see what state they were in. This was carried out on the bequest of Jakob Skriver because Jakob had promised her that she would be paid handsomely for the service, which she was, as were the others. She further confessed that Kirsten Søndags had borrowed Karen Vævers’ demon *Langinus* and put him in an empty beer barrel, after which she had commanded him to proceed to the ships. This took place, and the Apostles arrived at the fleet at the same time.

The women interrogated so far had been imprisoned. On 22 July, the Danish King wrote a letter to ensure that efforts were made to retain the three women who had been bailed, to make sure the proceedings continued. Meanwhile, Peder Munk was forced to preoccupy himself with other matters on his return to Denmark. Before he sailed for Scotland, he had accused Treasurer⁶⁷ Christoffer Walkendorf of being responsible for the leaky naval ships in the autumn of 1589. The proceedings against Walkendorf were heard on 27 July. Peder Munk lost the case on 4 August.⁶⁸

News about the continuing Danish witchcraft trials reached Edinburgh on 23 July, just over a week after the proceedings had started in Copenhagen: “It is advertised from Denmark, that the admirall there hathe caused five or six witches to be taken in Coupnahaven, upon suspicion that by their witche craft they had staid the Queen of Scottes voiage into Scotland, and sought to have

⁶⁴ RAD, A232, Danske Kancelli 1572–1660, Sjællandske Tegnelser 1588–1590.

⁶⁵ Literally Arrow Horse Shoe.

⁶⁶ Literally Beautiful.

⁶⁷ The Treasurer (*rentemester*) was head of the Treasury.

⁶⁸ Although Walkendorf won his case against Peder Munk, he was demoted.

staid likewise the King's returne."⁶⁹ It is clear from the wording that the Admiral is a well-known person in Edinburgh; there was no need to mention his name. It should also be noted that the 'first embarking' for Scotland in 1589, when Princess Anne was due to cross, has now been extended to also include the King's return journey, in the spring of 1590.

The Copenhagen women, except Margrete, were sentenced to death in July and executed same autumn. On 4 September two alleged witches were burnt on the stake, probably Maren Mogens and Karen Vævers.⁷⁰ Margrete and her husband, Jakob the Scribe, were next in line. The confessions given in July had described the witchcraft as having been ordered by Jakob the Scribe.

Margrete was denounced by both Karen Vævers and Maren Mogens and had endured a reputation for witchcraft for 20 years. She confessed to taking part in the Michaelmas gathering in 1589. Her Apostles were Longinus and Pilhesteskou: the former name carrying biblical connotations, the latter meaning 'arrow horse shoe.' She confessed that they had been using clay vessels and beer barrels, and that "they wished that the ships would not reach Scotland on their first attempt."⁷¹ The Apostles were referred to as demons. Margrete's husband, Jakob the Scribe, had previously been mayor and head of the town council, mentioned in English and Scots as 'bailiff' or 'bailie.' Previously, he had been involved in a dispute with Peder Munk, who had hit him. News dispatched to England therefore suggest an explanation that involves Jakob the Scribe seeking revenge on Munk, so much so that he ordered the witches to take action.

The case against Margrete must have started in August 1590. On 3 September 1590, a learned gentleman in Copenhagen, Dr. Paul Knibbe, wrote to Daniel Rogers in London. Dr. Knibbe was a

⁶⁹ Robert Bowes to Lord Burghley. CSPS, vol. 10 (Edinburgh, 1936), no. 454. 23 July 1590. Robert Bowes was an English diplomat, stationed as Ambassador to Scotland 1577–1583. He was appointed Ambassador after Asheby. Bowes was also Ambassador to Scotland while the North Berwick trials were going on in 1590–1591.

⁷⁰ Peder Christensen's diary, ref. Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 65–66.

⁷¹ RAD, A232, Danske Kancelli 1572–1660, Sjællandske Tegnelser 1588–1590.

Dutchman, and one of the travelling companions of Princess Anne autumn 1589.⁷² The letter was received on 13 October 1590:

Our admiral [Peter Monck] has been made an inquisitor of the depravity of witches. Last year, when we were about to sail to Scotland, several wicked women conspired to drown⁷³ him, like some of them had freely confessed—having since been burnt. But as the entire ship was to be destroyed, and the Queen of Scotland was likewise on board, they were not able to agree amongst themselves for a long time. Yet through the urging on of the wife of Jakob Skriver, consul of Copenhagen, they finally attempted it, and witnessed the powerful hand of God, which kept the most excellent sovereign and all of us in the same ship safe from the snares and follies of the Devil. When the consul [Jakob Skriver], having been returned here [to Kolding] after fleeing, furthermore sought to break his thread of life by a noose in prison—brought about by the most apparent marks of his bad conscience—the nobles sent [him] to Copenhagen, along with his wife, to be examined there more thoroughly and submitted to due punishment. Travelling with them was the admiral—out of hatred for whom the very clear confessions [state] these sorceries to have been prepared—so that he might urge on the delaying magistrates.⁷⁴

Jakob the Scribe escaped from prison but was later arrested and brought back to Copenhagen on 22 August. Moreover, in his despair, he tried to take his own life in prison, which was put down to his

⁷² Liv Helene Willumsen, “Trolddom mot kongens skibe 1589 og transnasjonal overføring av idéer,” *Historisk Tidsskrift* (Denmark 2019): 309–44.

⁷³ Orig. Lat. ‘Obriendo.’

⁷⁴ National Archives of Britain, London. State Papers, vol. 75, II, Danish Domestic Affairs, HH4. Paul Knibbe [Knibbius] to Dr. Daniel Rogers, letter dated Kolding 3 September. Orig in Latin.

guilty conscience. Given that Jakob the Scribe's wife, Margrete, is also mentioned in the letter, and given that both spouses were to be examined and appropriately punished, this takes us a step further from the first stages of the witchcraft trials. We are now closer to the main characters who set the witchcraft operation in motion.

On 29 September, the house of Jakob the Scribe was searched for evidence in the case against Margrete. Many witnesses were called. On 19 October, Margrete was sentenced to death in fire at the stake. Death sentences in witchcraft trials in Denmark had to be referred to the Landsting as the supreme court of appeal.⁷⁵ Margrete's nephew tried to have the sentence commuted, but in vain.⁷⁶ Margrete was burnt on 17 February 1591. Her husband, Jakob the Scribe, had all his belongings sold on 8 June 1591.⁷⁷ He lived out his days in a poor house.

Witchcraft Trials in Scotland

The reported witchcraft against the naval fleet of the Danish King and the witchcraft trials that followed in Copenhagen pre-empted the North Berwick trials in Scotland 1590–1591.⁷⁸ The North Berwick witch-hunt has been extensively studied, and both text-critical editions of the court records and analyses of the trials have appeared.⁷⁹ During the North Berwick proceedings, the accused confessed that witches in Denmark and Scotland had colluded in performing sorcery to harm the Scottish King and his bride. These trials have become famous because King James himself took part in the interrogation of the defendants and because their confessions included fantastical stories of a witchcraft convention in the North Berwick Church on the night of Hallowe'en 1590, with the devil himself on the pulpit and other elaborate details. Demonological ideas were heard for the first time during the Scottish witch-hunt.

⁷⁵ V. A. Secher, *Forordninger, Recesser og andre Kongelige Breve 1558–1660*, Bd. 2 (København, 1887), 33.

⁷⁶ Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 68–79.

⁷⁷ Bering Liisberg, *Vesten for sø*, 89.

⁷⁸ Riis, *Should Auld*, 267–69.

⁷⁹ See the bibliography in Julian Goodare, ed., *Scottish Witches and Witch-Hunters* (Basingstoke, 2013), 234–45.

The first preliminary hearings took place in late November. Two local women from East Lothian were questioned: Geillis Duncan and Agnes Sampson. This is the first documentation we have of interrogation in the North Berwick trials. Sampson lived in Keith in East Lothian and was previously imprisoned before the Presbytery in Haddington; however, she was brought to Edinburgh before the North Berwick trials started.⁸⁰ Likewise Duncan, who was questioned by David Seaton, her master, lived in East Lothian. Geillis Duncan was working as a maid at Seaton's house, and Agnes Sampson was a widow with a regional reputation as a 'wise wife.' Geillis confessed that "in the midst of the firth they met with the [] of Coppenhown, where after they had gotten her name they commoned together."⁸¹ This is one of the first sentences recorded in the trial documents. It is obvious that the collusion between Scottish and Danish witches is given priority.

Agnes Sampson was questioned on the same day. She had given a letter to another woman: "She confesses the bill [letter] was to raise the storm for staying the queen's coming home."⁸² This means that the idea of a storm stopping the Queen's arrival in Scotland was active from the very start of interrogations. A link has been construed between sorcery, storm, and an attack on the royals.

During the continued questioning of Agnes Sampson, the topic of the storm recurs, as does the Michaelmas date: "She confesses that the devil told her about the Michaelmas storm and that it would do mickle scathe [much harm] both at sea and at land . . . She confesses that the devil said it should be hard for the king to come home and that the queen should never come except the king fetched her."⁸³ The

⁸⁰ Agnes Sampson had been in the searchlight for witchcraft and accused before the presbytery of Haddington before the secular trial in Edinburgh started at the end of 1590. Berit Veierud Busch, *'They shipped all in at North Berwick in a boat like a chimney': Forestillinger om samlinger knyttet til de hekseanklagede i North Berwick-prosessene* (Master thesis, University of Tromsø, 2018) 70; David M. Robertson, *Goodnight my servants all: The Sourcebook of East Lothian Witchcraft* (Glasgow, 2008), 65.

⁸¹ Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft*, 136.

⁸² Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft*, 151.

⁸³ Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft*, 135, 239.

obstacles that had been put in the way of the royals were confessed to be the same as in Denmark. However, an additional creature has now entered the arena: the devil. It was the devil that told Agnes about the storm; it was the devil that predicted that the Queen would not come home unless the King fetched her. Introducing the devil may have been the result of a leading question. Agnes was tortured during the trial, and the same was the case with Geillis Duncan.⁸⁴

The examination of Agnes Sampson continued on 4 and 5 December. On the latter of these dates, she confessed “that the devil foretold her of the Michaelmas storm and that great scathe would be done both by sea and land. . . . She confesses there was a bill written by John Fian and delivered to Gillie Duncan to bear to Leith to Janet Fairlie She confesses that the devil said to her the king should hardly come home, but that the queen should never come except he fetched her with him.”⁸⁵ There is yet again a confession from Agnes that features a storm intended to stop the royal crossing. The devil is referred to in association with herself as well as the storm. As opposed to the Danish trials, the Scottish trials see the devil appear as an independent character, more powerful than the personal Apostles to which the Danish women confessed.

The topic of the storm was repeatedly raised during the earliest stages of the North Berwick trials, and was referred to in Agnes Sampson’s dittay, dated 27 January 1591, in items 13 and 14: “Item fylit that sche wes maid foirknawin of the devill of the last michelmas storne and that thair wald be grit skayth baith be see and land Item fylit that sche wes maid foirknawin be the spreit that the quenis maiestie wald nevir cum in this country except the king fetcht hir.”⁸⁶ In the dittay, items expressed during pre-trial examinations, are compiled, and with only minor linguistic variations.

On 7 December, after James VI had questioned Agnes Sampson about Michaelmas and the storm, the North Berwick trials received

⁸⁴ Torture of Geillis Duncan and Agnes Sampson is stated in the pamphlet ‘Newes from Scotland.’ King James I *Dæmonologie in Forme of a Dialogue* 1597. *Newes from Scotland* 1591 (London, 1924), 9, 12.

⁸⁵ Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft*, 213–46.

⁸⁶ National Records of Scotland, JC 2/2, fol. 202a.

their first mention in state papers in Edinburgh. The King's contribution was highlighted. Robert Bowes wrote to Burghley:

The King "by his owne especiall travell" has drawn Sampson, the great witch, to confess her wicked doings, and to discover sundry things touching his own life, and how the witches sought to have his shirt or other linen for the execution of their charms. In this Lord Claud and other noblemen are evil spoken of. The witches known number over thirty, and many others accused. Their actes are filthy, lewde, and phantasticall.⁸⁷

The reference to 'his shirt' stems from the confession of a woman who admitted that she tried to get hold of a piece of the King's shirt so that she could use it for sorcerous purposes. The King's 'especiall travel' may be associated with the King as interrogator, but it may also suggest torture. The same day Roger Aston wrote to James Hudson: "We are now busy examining witches, who confess many strange things."⁸⁸ There is no doubt that the recently commenced witchcraft trials attracted great attention.

PART III: Narratological Analysis and the Transfer of Ideas

One of the main arguments of this article is that there is a link between the Copenhagen witchcraft trials of 1590 and the North Berwick trials of 1590–91. I would like in the following to reintroduce some of the quotes mentioned above and connect them more clearly to the transfer of ideas, to get the language and the analysis in close proximity to one another. In doing so, prominent demonological witchcraft ideas come to the fore: collective witchcraft, witchcraft gatherings, witches' ability to raise storms, witches' relation to their gods, and the use of objects when performing witchcraft. The voices of the various actors determine the linguistic instruments.

⁸⁷ Bowes to Lord Burghley. CSPS, vol. 10 (Edinburgh, 1936), no. 505. 7 December 1590.

⁸⁸ Roger Aston to James Hudson. CSPS, vol. 10 (Edinburgh, 1936), no. 507. 7 December 1590.

There are several layers to the links. In both countries, collective witchcraft is presented through the women's confessions. This is a clear demonological feature: several persons gather to perform witchcraft. The women's confessions create a coherent story, a collective narrative. The confessions complement one another. In the Danish trials, the confessions of the individual defendants confirm or elaborate on a narrative that someone else has commenced. Similarly, we see from the Scottish North Berwick trials that as a growing number of suspects were brought before the court to plead their guilt, their various contributions make up a grand narrative. Gradually, the witchcraft against the King's ships and the collusion between witches in two countries become increasingly detailed; in the end, a causal chain becomes manifest.

There is a link made between the ferry accident in Scotland and the bad omen in the North Sea. On 8 October 1589, Asheby wrote to the principal secretary of Queen Elizabeth I, mentioning the two bad omens: The ferry was "*in the midwaie being under saile* and the tempest growing great" when the accident happened. [Author's italics.]⁸⁹ The same day, William Asheby wrote to Lord Burghley, underlining the uncertain situation and the danger ahead, plus indicating a link between the two disasters: "This long uncertainty brings *fear of some disaster*, that is increased by *two ominous chances*, as they are here interpreted . . . killed tow o[r] thre] of the gonners . . . a boote passing from Bru[nt] Island in Fiffe the 8 of Sept. towards [Lythe], *in the midwaie being under saile* . . . and almost a[ll the] passengers drowned; *emongest whom was [Madam] Kenedie, who was with the late Quene in Eng[land].*" [Author's italics.]⁹⁰

In Asheby's letters, the accidents signal something evil on its way, and now, not only had the Danish fleet had to turn midways in the North Sea; the ferry accident also happened 'midwaie' between Fife and Leith. This choice of words show similarity regarding the position of the ships and links the two bad omens. The speed of this information from Scotland to England becomes clear when we see

⁸⁹ Asheby to Walsingham. CSPS, vol. 10 (Edinburgh, 1936), no. 233. 8 October 1589.

⁹⁰ Asheby to Lord Burghley. CSPS, vol. 10 (Edinburgh, 1936), no. 234. 8 October 1589.

that it took still another week for a letter to be sent from Copenhagen by Thomas Tenneker to Walsingham in London, telling that “contrary wyndes” had forced the queen to return.⁹¹

A couple of weeks later, before leaving for Norway, King James addressed his farewell letter to the Privy Council of Scotland, emphasizing that the queen “*was stayed from cuming through the notorious tempestes of windes.*” [Author’s italics.]⁹² King James’ own reflections penned in this letter suggest his forebodings were clearly influenced by the anxiety that spread around the royal court in Edinburgh. He worries about the Queen’s exposed position, and an undertone created by the word ‘notorious’ might suggest that there is an ominous aspect to the weather. It should be noted that ‘notorious’ could also be used in a neutral sense at the time, meaning “common or well known.”⁹³ However, considering the context of documents in question, where the strength of the storm has been a recurrent issue, it is reasonable to believe that King James has used ‘notorious’ in the word’s strongest meaning.

Later historical works also make a connection between witches making storms and the return of the Danish fleet in 1589. Patrick Anderson’s continuation of Hector Boece’s *Chronicles of Scotland*⁹⁴ highlights the way that the ideas of witchcraft were transmitted: the storms were raised by magicians and witches because they were different from storms coming from natural causes.

{*written in margin* – Tempests raised by magicians}

Many there were that thought *these tempests were raised by the Sorceries of Magicians and Witches* for the winds were more blustering, the seas more rough and loftie, the gusts more schort and frequent then those which proceed of naturall causes; and that the devills

⁹¹ National Archives London, State Papers Denmark, State Papers 75, II, D7.

⁹² *The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland*, vol. IV (His Majesty Register House, Edinburgh, 1902), 427–29.

⁹³ *Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue*, sub notorious.

⁹⁴ Hector Boece (1465–1536) published a chronicle of Scotland in 1527. It was written in Latin and covered the period to the death of James I. The book was published in Scots by John Bellenden in 1536.

the princes of the ayre do raige more licenciously
amongest the Northern Nations which are Barbarously
simpell. [Author's italics.]⁹⁵

In addition, the memoirs of Sir James Melville of Halhill demonstrate how the ideas surrounding the sorcery against the Danish naval fleet were interpreted in Scotland. He tried to summarize his views on what had happened and why it happened. His account provides clear causal connections, and he construes a consistent explanation. Revenge is considered to be the motive, associated with a quarrel between Peder Munk and Jakob the Scribe. I will return to Melville's memoirs towards the end of this article.

The complexity of ideas and images displayed above throws light on this article's first research question. Through diplomatic correspondence across the North Sea, ideas about witches raising the North Sea storm in 1589, and ominous accidents occurring simultaneously in Denmark and Scotland, are effectively disseminated in contemporary state papers. The speed of spreading this news is amazing. The transfer of these ideas would certainly influence the North Berwick trials, which started late autumn in 1590.

The second research question dealt with the information in court records. A very good example of the link between the Danish witchcraft trials of summer 1590 and the Scottish North Berwick trials can be found during the very first interrogation in Edinburgh, undated, but prior to 4 December 1590. It is remarkable that the very first sentence, the initiation to the whole trials, deals with witches in Copenhagen. During this interrogation, where King James took part, Geillis Duncan was questioned together with Agnes Sampson. And the first sentence of the records is: "Gillie [Geillis] confesses that *in the midst of the firth they met with the [] of Coppenhown*, where after they had gotten her name they commoned together[r]." [Author's italics.]⁹⁶ The Scottish witches had cooperated with the Danish witches, and they met in the middle of the firth, which might be interpreted as in the middle of the North Sea. Wording used in correspondence in royal circles of Edinburgh from the previous year

⁹⁵ National Library of Scotland, Special Collections, Adv. Ms. 35.5.3.

⁹⁶ Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland*, 136.

were activated once again under interrogation. It is also clear that King James was probably the one person, or one of very few in Scotland, who knew that Danish witches were connected to the storm against the Danish Kings' ships. There might have been others who knew of the Copenhagen witchcraft trials, most likely Robert Bowes and Melville of Halhill; however, only one of these acted as interrogator and thereby had the opportunity to pose leading questions, and that was the king himself. King James was also best positioned to introduce such an issue initially in a courtroom. It could be no coincidence that this famous incident had clear connections with the threat he had experienced one year previously. He feared the witches, and believed they were capable of causing accidents.

The ideas about witchcraft transferred from Denmark to Scotland in 1590 were generally demonological in focus: relation with the devil, witches' meetings, performance of collective witchcraft, plus the use of witchcraft objects to raise storms. As for Scotland, these ideas were central for the further development of intense Scottish witchcraft panics throughout the seventeenth century.

Relation with the devil is a core element in the demonological doctrine. The first accused woman in Copenhagen, Ane Kolding, was known under the name 'The Devil's Mother,' clearly pointing to her relation with The Evil One. The same name comes to the fore during the previous Danish witchcraft trials in 1543 and 1566. Also of interest for the 1590 Copenhagen cases, are two witchcraft panics taking place in Malmø.⁹⁷ In the first one, 1578–1579, one accused was also called The Devil's Mother.⁹⁸ The confessions show that formulas were used: witchcraft was thrown in 'thousand devils' name,' and soil was thrown when performing witchcraft.⁹⁹ Also a wax figure of a child was used to perform witchcraft. All seven trials resulted in death sentences.¹⁰⁰ In the second Malmø panic—which took place from July until November 1590,¹⁰¹ overlapping with the

⁹⁷ Leif Ljungberg and Einar Bager: *Malmø tingbøger 1577–83 og 1588–90*, København, 1968.

⁹⁸ This was Anne Judequinde, called 'Dyuels moder'.

⁹⁹ Ljungberg and Bager, *Malmø tingbøger*, 30.

¹⁰⁰ Ljungberg and Bager, *Malmø tingbøger*, 80.

¹⁰¹ Ljungberg and Bager, *Malmø tingbøger*, 335–81.

1590 Copenhagen trials—ideas like the devil’s pact, the devil’s mark, a personal devil, witches’ gatherings, and the water ordeal came to the fore. There were seven death sentences during these trials. Some links exist between the trials in Malmö and the Copenhagen trials of 1590 with regard to the use of the expression ‘The Devil’s mother,’ raising storm against ships, and name-given helpers, ‘Apostles,’ when performing witchcraft.¹⁰²

We have thus seen that the image of witches raising storm and the devil was established in Denmark and adjacent Swedish areas well before 1590.¹⁰³ In the confessions given by the accused women in Copenhagen 1590, the relation to the devil is explained in the way that the women have been awarded a personal devil, an ‘Apostle,’ that helps them to perform evil deeds, an element known in Nordic countries and paralleled in England.¹⁰⁴ The named demon is given to a woman when she enters the devil’s pact.¹⁰⁵ The diabolic nature of the ‘Apostle’ is clear; we are talking about the devil’s prolonged hand, given as a favour to witches in alliance with the Evil One. The Danish witchcraft trials centred around the devilish power, and King James was acquainted with these thoughts in spring 1590. In the North Berwick trials, the devil himself appears, in various shapes, even like a “rick of hay.”¹⁰⁶ He is the one in command in the North Berwick church gathering, on the night of Hallowe’en 1590, and he is the witches’ ally. The transfer of this core demonological idea—

¹⁰² Ljungberg and Bager, *Malmö tingböcker*, 336.

¹⁰³ Gotland was Swedish until 1361, the invaded by the Danish, and again Swedish in 1645, the conclusion of piece in Brömsebro.

¹⁰⁴ See Liv Helene Willumsen, *Witches of the North*, 254, 326 for the ‘Apostles’ in the Finnmark sources. In England, the ‘familiar’ owned by alleged witches, is supposed to be a personal demon, see Charlotte-Rose Millar, “Dangers of the Night: The Witch, the Devil, and the ‘Nightmare’ in Early Modern England,” *Preternature: Critical and Historical Studies on the Preternatural*, vol. 7, no. 2 (2018): 154–81, on pp. 154–155.

¹⁰⁵ Willumsen, *Witches of the North*, 255; Liv Helene Willumsen, “Board Games, Dancing, and Lost Shoes: Ideas about Witches’ Gatherings in the Finnmark Witchcraft Trials,” in *Demonology and Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Julian Goodare, Rita Voltmer and Liv Helene Willumsen (London, 2020), 270, 271.

¹⁰⁶ Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland*, 149.

that devilish power in the form of witches' gathering is vital in performance of witchcraft—is crucial for the North Berwick trials.

The idea of witches' meetings is central during the witchcraft trials in question in Denmark as well in Scotland. The fact that accused persons in both countries confess to having taken part in gatherings, is important. In Denmark, both Maren Mads the Brewer's and Maren Mogens confessed to meetings in the house of Karen Vævers. This collective aspect is magnified in the confessions of the North Berwick trials, with detailed descriptions of the conventions in North Berwick and in Acheson's Haven, both with the devil present.¹⁰⁷ When the idea of witches' meetings is such a powerful one in witchcraft persecution, it is because it encourages and requires further denunciations, particularly of those who had allegedly participated in such a gathering. The witches' meetings in Copenhagen came to be influential during the North Berwick trials: witches' conventions were dangerous and efficient.

In Copenhagen, the women in the house of Karen Vævers managed together to raise storms to prevent Princess Anne from coming 'the first time to Scotland,' when they sent out one of the demons 'in the middle' of the North Sea. This idea is re-found in the North Berwick trials not only as a performance to destroy a ship, 'The Grace of God,' but also traced in the location 'in the midst' at the opening of the North Berwick trials, with links to Copenhagen. The location itself, 'in the midst,' is an image that plays a role—told and retold. The same goes for Michaelmas. As collective witchcraft differs fundamentally from individual witchcraft due to the diabolic nature of the first mentioned, the transfer of the collective aspect of witchcraft is a feature of profound influence across the North Sea. Mighty powers are at work when witches' storms are launched, and the fear for disasters and tragedies is lurking round every corner and puts its stamp on the mentality.

The use of objects to perform witchcraft vary from case to case in early modern witchcraft confessions. In Denmark, clay vessels in water were used to cause shipwrecks, while in other Nordic countries, knots on a rope and eggshells were used.¹⁰⁸ In Scotland, a similar idea is found. In a witchcraft case from 1618, involving

¹⁰⁷ Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland*, 158–59.

¹⁰⁸ Liv Helene Willumsen, *Trollkvinne i nord*, 32, 36.

Isobell Inch and John Stewart, the idea of sinking a ship is documented. Both clay vessels and a creature with a face like an ape is involved.¹⁰⁹ The idea of using objects to perform witchcraft on an individual basis, was known in Scotland before 1590.¹¹⁰ We see this idea activated when Agnes Sampson confessed that several of the accused, on the devil's order, had made and used wax figures and a kind of liquid produced from a dead toad to harm his Royal Highness. Also, the use of cats to raise storms is confessed to by Agnes Sampson.¹¹¹ Cats are mentioned in many countries in connection with performance of witchcraft.¹¹² The use of objects to create storm appears in confessions in the Danish witchcraft trials as well. This signals that even the forces of nature's elements bow before witchcraft. We see the same in the North Berwick confessions: witchcraft is a very strong power. This truth is believed by the court officials in Copenhagen, in the letters of diplomatic correspondence, and by the judiciary of the North Berwick trials. Nowhere in the court records mentioned above, nor in the state papers, do we find any doubt about this power of the witches to manipulate even nature's own elements. Weather magic is believed possible, particularly with the help of the devil and witchcraft objects.

The question whether King James brought the devil's pact with him from Denmark to Scotland, is referred to above. However, I think it is more appropriate and more fruitful to pose the question: What *kind* of demonological ideas did King James bring with him from Denmark to Scotland? From the analyses of Danish court records above, it is obvious that in the spring of 1590 King James

¹⁰⁹ *Trial, confession & execution of Isobell Inch, John Stewart, Margaret Barclay, and Isobell Crawford, for witchcraft, at Irvine, anno 1618* (Ardrossan, 1855).

¹¹⁰ In Scotland, the use of small bags with 'witcheries' to place in certain places, but also other objects, were common. See Liv Helene Willumsen, *Dømt til ild og bål*, 16, 26–27.

¹¹¹ Normand and Robert, *Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland*, 240.

¹¹² Christian IV met a cat which was connected to witchcraft on his voyage to Finnmark and Kola peninsula in 1599. Rune Blix Hagen, "Den sorte kats forbandelse - Christian 4.s møde med samisk trolddomskunst," *Siden Saxo*, vol. 22, no. 2 (2005): 4–15.

was acquainted with the ideas of witches' meetings, witches' ability to raise storm, witchcraft performance 'in the middle' of the North Sea, and the diabolical nature of witchcraft. He had heard the name 'The Devil's Mother' used to refer to Ane Koldings. King James took part in the interrogation at Holyrood pre-December and onwards 1590, and he was the only one in the courtroom who could question about the witches of Copenhagen and combine the image 'in the middle' of the North Sea for the witches of Copenhagen with the image of the Scottish ferry 'in the midst' of the firth, so that it ended with co-operation between Scottish and Danish witches, now 'in the midst of the firth.' Even if the word 'betwixt' is once used in the interrogation of Agnes Sampson,¹¹³ the wording 'in the midst of the firth' is used in the early interrogation of Geillis Duncan.¹¹⁴ As a whole, the emphasis on 'in the midst' makes it a marked rhetoric expression due to frequency.

Furthermore, the fear of witches and 'ominous chances' in the countries involved, expressed in diplomatic correspondence, was also a fear shared by King James, who must have read the state papers. Thus, King James brought back from Denmark to Scotland ideas and fear that certainly put a stamp on the North Berwick trials

Linguistic Devices

In looking at linguistic devices prominent in this transfer of ideas, interesting linguistic features appear. As we are in an oral tradition when looking at the confessions of the alleged witches, one of the devices available for transferring ideas about witchcraft is imagery. The women who stood accused in witchcraft trials were living in oral societies, and pregnant images facilitate the transfer of ideas. This type of oral transmission can be traced in the minutes of the court proceedings, which provide a transcript of the defendants' verbal statements. The distinct expressions 'in the midwaie' and 'in the midst' have repeatedly occurred in the documents referenced above. It was used when the Danish fleet was forced to turn back. It was used to describe the Scottish ferry accident. It was used to describe the convention of Scottish and Danish witches who were purported

¹¹³ Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland*, 144.

¹¹⁴ Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland*, 136.

to be in collusion. By focusing on ‘in the midwaie/midst,’ attention is drawn to a meeting place where witches from two different countries retain authority over their own territory yet are in a position to communicate with one another. According to the Scottish witches, the Danish fleet never reached Scottish territory. This type of midpoint conjures up a strong image, which is easy to remember.

This evidence highlights the transfer of ideas by written as well as oral means. All diplomatic correspondence, and the ideas revealed in these letters, are rumours that circulated in the royal courts—rumours of dangerous things afoot that might harm James VI and his bride. The letters firstly show that they believed in witchcraft. They believed it was possible for witches to cause accidents and tragedies. Secondly, the correspondence shows the immediacy of the delivery of the news of witchcraft; top government officials in other countries were informed as soon as the news broke. Thirdly, the state papers disclose an interesting linguistic characteristic: words and phrases are repeated, while minor changes are frequently introduced from one letter to the next. This means that slight modifications were introduced to the witchcraft narrative along the way. These may relate to whoever was involved, the timeline of events, or other narrative devices. Fourthly, the state papers show that it was important to pass the news on, not only to one foreign country, but to many.

Written sources about the transfer of witchcraft ideas are linked to the learned elite: people who could write and compose, who were knowledgeable and educated, and who were familiar with Europe’s scholarly concept of demonological witchcraft. They believed it was possible for witches and sorcerers to manipulate powers, and they held the opinion that the devil might appear in this scenario. This made witchcraft dangerous. The written exchanges that are presented above reveal notions found in a segment of society that held significant influence. The correspondence involved people at the very summit of state power and helped to convey a fear of what witches could achieve against the nations’ monarchs.

Amongst the oral sources, the confessions in particular demonstrate transmission. The majority of those accused were commoners and had no formal education. Stories passed on by word of mouth were the vehicles they used to convey thoughts and notions. This affected the form and content of their confessions. *Maleficium*

was coupled with ideas of a demonological nature. Elements of malevolent sorcery, such as the use of objects or spells, can be seen merged with a demonic aspect. The Danish defendants confessed to having personal Apostles. In the Scottish confessions, the devil incarnate appears. In both countries it is likely that demonizing was introduced by leading question, and as a consequence of torture. The result was serious indeed.

The oral character of witchcraft trials highlights the scribe's attempt to be accurate when transcribing the spoken word. Oral markers include coordinate clauses, superfluous words, the establishment of a timeline, proximity to the real world, causal relationships, and features taken from folklore and the vernacular.¹¹⁵ Similar attributes are found in the confessions. A down-to-earth perception of witchcraft is demonstrated in Denmark during the congregation in Maren Vævers' house. The alleged witches in Scotland were down-to-earth in that they rarely involved unrealistic particulars. They provided detailed descriptions of the places they met, how the witchcraft operations were planned, and how certain physical artefacts, whether letters or objects, were employed.

Repetition is a frequently used device in oral delivery. It may work as a volume-based mnemonic: it is easier to remember things that are repeated many times over. It is also interesting to note that in the minutes of the Danish court proceedings, there is a level of accuracy included in the frequently repeated phrases. For example, a recurring statement is that witchcraft was performed as the Miss sat out for Scotland on her 'first attempt' in 1589.¹¹⁶ When this level of accuracy is provided by word of mouth, it is included as a safeguard.

Another specifically linguistic aspect that originates from oral tradition is the Michaelmas festival: in the vernacular traditions of both Denmark and Scotland, a day when evil spirits are afoot. Michaelmas is mentioned in both countries in connection with performed witchcraft, thereby providing another link between the countries. Weather magic is also an element found in both countries. Using clay vessels—in many other countries eggshells were

¹¹⁵ Walter Ong, *Orality and Literacy. The Technologizing of the Word* (London, 1988), 36–75.

¹¹⁶ Orig. 'Frøken'. From Karen Vævers' confession. RAD, A232, Danske Kancelli 1572–1660, Sjællandske Tegnelse 1588–1590.

favoured—to cause shipwrecks is a common procedure in descriptions of malevolent sorcery. It is worth noting that the sources show how notions of folk belief get assimilated with demonological ideas in confessions in witchcraft trials. This is common all over Europe and exemplified in this article. Popular belief is a knowledge that people in a local community possess. The fusing together of popular belief and learned demonological ideas is a precondition for the demonizing of ideas existing within folk belief and *maleficium* that often is seen unfolding in the courtroom during witchcraft trials, as well as in the mentality sphere of early modern villages.¹¹⁷

If we leave behind the legal documents and their documentation of orality and instead ask what else might have provided an opportunity to transfer ideas, an obvious answer would be voyages and the personal meetings that these voyages facilitated. There were a great many of them. Sten Bille travelled to Scotland to advise the King that the naval fleet had turned back. Another messenger travelled to Denmark with the same missive. Princess Anne travelled with her entourage to Oslo. King James travelled from Edinburgh to Flekkerø and onwards to Oslo. Scotsmen travelled to Oslo to attend the wedding ceremony. The royal couple travelled to Elsinore. Admiral Peder Munk met with many people from James' inner circles and attended the solemnities in connection with Anne's coronation. Staff at the royal courts not only wrote letters; they also travelled to visit each other in person. All these would have carried with them notions as mental baggage. They will have encountered people they had an opportunity to influence. They will have been able to talk to influential people in the countries they visited. These travellers, who had first-hand knowledge of the witchcraft performed against the King's ships, contributed through their oral disseminations to the transnational transfer of ideas. It is likely that they also contributed to the transmission of fear of witchcraft. But the most important carrier of ideas, and the mightiest, was King James himself.

¹¹⁷ Gustav Henningsen and Bengt Ankarloo uses the term acculturation about this process of change that took place in the villages. Ankarloo and Henningsen, "Introduction," in *Early Modern Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries*, eds. Ankarloo and Henningsen (Oxford, 1993), 14–15.

Debate on Transfer of Demonological Ideas

So far, I have presented my own research, my answers to the two research questions posed initially, based on primary sources: state papers and court records. However, the question of potential influence on the North Berwick trials from Denmark has occupied several scholars working with research on witchcraft and cultural transfer, and viewpoints have come to the fore during several decades. Christina Larner, Jenny Wormald, P. G. Maxwell-Stuart, Brian P. Levack, Julian Goodare and Thomas Riis have all taken part in this debate. I would therefore like to present the main points of this historiographical line in order to show how my own research has interacted with previous scholarship and added to this pool of research by providing explanations on the transfer of demonological ideas from Denmark to Scotland prior to the North Berwick trials.

In 1973, Christina Larner argued that new ideas appeared around 1590 in the prosecution of Scottish witches, particularly “the demonic pact and the witches’ meetings to worship the devil; and those became central point in many later Scottish prosecutions.”¹¹⁸ She says that King James’ rapid move from being indifferent to becoming an ardent prosecutor in the North Berwick trials “cannot be stated categorically.”¹¹⁹ However, Larner finds two explanations to be convincing: One explanation is that King James was “introduced to demonology and titillated by it in Denmark, and returned to Scotland suggestible and ready to see witchcraft where he had seen none before.”¹²⁰ Larner argues that King James got to know the demonological ideas in meetings with two learned Danish persons, the astronomer Tycho Brahe and the theologian Niels Hemmingsen. Larner’s interest in King James’ changing attitude to witchcraft is interesting and shows that she weighted demonological ideas and King James learning of the same. Larner had already, in her PhD in 1962, an idea that King James’ stay in Denmark spring

¹¹⁸ Christina Larner, “James VI and witchcraft,” in *The Reign of James VI and I*, ed. A. G. R. Smith (London, 1973), 74–90. The article is reprinted in Larner, *Witchcraft and Religion*, 3–22; Christina Larner, *Witchcraft and Religion* (Oxford, 1985), 10. Orig. publ. 1984.

¹¹⁹ Larner, *Witchcraft and Religion*, 13.

¹²⁰ Larner, *Witchcraft and Religion*, 13.

1590 influenced what later happened in Scotland.¹²¹ This point is still true today when it comes to the North Berwick trials, as the new ideas about witchcraft coming to the fore during these trials represent a watershed in the content of Scottish witchcraft trials. Larner's thought that King James learned demonological ideas from Brahe and Hemmingsen, however, has not been supported later. According to what is known from the king's meeting with the two famous Danes, it is not clear that the topic of demonology was brought up during their conversations.¹²²

Larner's other explanation is that "when rumours of treasonable sorcery started, he [King James] was receptive rather than sceptical."¹²³ It was the idea of an assault on his kingly person that convinced him about the reality of 'the sorcery threat.' Eight years later, in 1981, Larner maintains in *Enemies of God* that the witch-hunt of 1590–1591 "was stirred up to express Scoto-Danish Protestant solidarity."¹²⁴ The witchcraft trials in Edinburgh and Copenhagen, she argues, were generated to account for the naval misfortunes in bringing Anne of Denmark to Leith: "For James they were an opportunity to identify his enemies and stir up support."¹²⁵ This argument has to do with King James' political situation, but does not say anything about the new content of witchcraft trials that we see during the North Berwick trials, and it does not throw light on the king's crucial interrogation of alleged witches at the end of 1590, where he posed questions of demonological nature and assumed a cooperation between Danish and Scottish witches. This explanation cannot account for where the king learned demonological ideas and cannot answer my research questions, wherein the history of mentalities plays a significant role. It is to be noted that Larner knew that there were witchcraft trials going on in Copenhagen, but she had no access to these court records, and she did not know the Danish language. Therefore, she did not have the

¹²¹ Christina Larner (née Ross), "Scottish Demonology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries and its Theological Background" (University of Edinburgh PhD thesis, 1962), 110.

¹²² Willumsen, *Witches of the North*, 236, n 74.

¹²³ Larner, *Witchcraft and Religion*, 13.

¹²⁴ Christian Larner, *Enemies of God* (Oxford, 1983), 83. Orig. publ. 1981.

¹²⁵ Larner, *Enemies of God*, 83.

sources to underpin her thesis, which is where my research comes in. Larner also believed that in the closing stages of the North Berwick panic, a general commission for trying witches was established, and that the commission continued until 1597.¹²⁶

P. G. Maxwell-Stuart contests Larner's theory.¹²⁷ He states that King James did not take any interest in witchcraft before 1590, so the question is posed whether the king's trip to Scandinavia 1589–90 could have changed this. However, he correctly concludes that the king's conversations with Tycho Brahe and Niels Hemmingsen do not give any support for transfer of demonology. Further, Maxwell-Stuart argues that "Danish trials almost invariably concerned themselves with specific offences committed by sorcery, and they scarcely bothered with the notion either of the *Sabbat* or of the Satanic pact."¹²⁸ This does not correspond with my research, as witches' meetings were known in Danish witchcraft trials prior to 1590, and the devil's pact is seen implicitly in the occurrence of Apostles, a personal demon given to a woman when she entered a pact with the devil. When it comes to Scotland, Maxwell-Stuart argues that the Satanic pact was known in Scotland as early as 1532, mentioned in a catechism.¹²⁹ However, to what degree this had impact on secular witchcraft trials before 1590 is unclear. He also maintains that papers relating to the East Lothian witches do not suggest that they were "attending anything like a Continental *Sabbat* or that they travelled thither by flying through the air."¹³⁰ However, the entire North Berwick trials were dealing with witches' conventions: among others, the North Berwick convention and the witches' meeting in Acheson's Haven. In addition, there is the element of spirit flight which might be connected to the North Berwick trials. King James discusses in his witchcraft treatise, *Daemonologie* (1597), both body flight and spirit flight, the latter

¹²⁶ Goodare, "Witchcraft in Scotland," 304; Larner, *Enemies of God*, 35.

¹²⁷ Maxwell-Stuart, "James VI and the witches," 209–25.

¹²⁸ Maxwell-Stuart, "James VI and the witches," 212.

¹²⁹ Maxwell-Stuart, "James VI and the witches," 212.

¹³⁰ Maxwell-Stuart, "James VI and the witches," 212.

denoting the spirit taken out of the body and carried away. This is echoing the North Berwick trial of John Fian.¹³¹

Jenny Wormald's findings support Maxwell-Stuart's conclusion, although arriving at her conclusions separately. Wormald doubts that the king's meetings with Tycho Brahe and Niels Hemmingsen included diabolical witchcraft,¹³² and claims that there were demonological witchcraft trials in Scotland prior to 1590, documented by Larner's own *Source-Book of Scottish Witchcraft*.¹³³ This argument is also supported by the pamphlet *Newes from Scotland*, which states that a Scotsman, the bailie depute in Tranent, David Seaton, knew about the demonic pact before 1590. Wormald finds no rational explanation of why the king changed his mind about the danger of the North Berwick witches, and maintains that here "one might speculate about the possible role of that shadowy group, the Danish witches, or Agnes' acquaintance among those who served the king."¹³⁴ Thus, Wormald here brings up a possible connection to Danish witches, which is a continuation of Larner's thinking; however, she does not have material to support this path. At this point, my research adds considerably to the picture of a cooperation among witches across the North Sea.

Neither Maxwell-Stuart nor Wormald manages to explain why there was a turning point for King James with regard to witchcraft in 1590. They argue that the Denmark stay was not the reason for the devil's pact to appear in the North Berwick trials. Like Larner, they see the devil's pact as the key to understanding the king's change of mind and his involvement in the North Berwick trials. However, focusing on the devil's pact may be misleading, as long as other demonological ideas might have had a strong impact: the most important element brought from Denmark to Scotland by the king was exactly the idea of witches' gatherings, in addition to the demonic element included by the personal demons.

¹³¹ Julian Goodare, "Witches Flight in Scottish Demonology," in *Demonology and Witch-Hunting in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Julian Goodare, Rita Voltmer and Liv Helene Willumsen (London, 2020), 151; Normand and Roberts, *Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland*, 329.

¹³² Wormald, "The Witches, the Devil and the King," 166.

¹³³ Wormald, "The Witches, the Devil and the King," 170.

¹³⁴ Wormald, "The Witches, the Devil and the King," 175.

Thomas Riis is another participant in the debate. He argues against a Danish-Scottish connection influencing to the North Berwick trials. He refuses Larner's speculation that a discussion on demonology took place "between King James and Tycho Brahe and the Danish divines during their conversations," as the king's contacts with Danish intellectuals do not support this assertion.¹³⁵ One of Riis' arguments is that the devil's pact and "the witches' worship of him" were features that did not appear at all in the parallel Danish trials.¹³⁶ As for the Copenhagen trials 1590, Riis refers to Bering Liisberg, not to primary sources. For Danish trials in general, his reference is a study from Jutland 1614–38, which does not take into account trials prior to 1590.¹³⁷ Still, it should be noted that this study in fact documents both the devil's pact, shapeshifting, and witches' gatherings.¹³⁸

Julian Goodare has taken part in the debate on several points. Regarding knowledge of demonological ideas in Scotland before 1590, he has argued that the Protestant Minister John Knox, leader of Scotland's Reformation 1560, was aware of the demonic pact.¹³⁹ As for legal procedure, he has shown that the general commission for trying witches from 1591 until 1597, assumed first by Larner, and later by Norman, Roberts, and Wormald, was illusory: no such commission had existed. Procedures for trying witches remained constant throughout the Scottish witch-hunt, with trials kept either in the justiciary court in Edinburgh or in the locality by the authority of a commission of justiciary.¹⁴⁰ Further, Goodare mentions that Wormald rightly gave James a more nuanced role than traditional accounts when it came to the responsibility for the prosecutions of the 1590–91 and 1597 panics. However, Wormald argued that King

¹³⁵ Riis, *Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot*, i, 121–30; 268.

¹³⁶ Riis, *Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot*, i, 268–69.

¹³⁷ Merete Birkelund, *Troldkvinden og hendes anklagere: danske hekseprocesser i det 16. og 17. århundrede* (Århus, 1983), 118.

¹³⁸ Birkelund, *Troldkvinden og hendes anklagere*, 80–85.

¹³⁹ Julian Goodare, "John Knox on Demonology and Witchcraft," *Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte*, 96 (2005): 221–245

¹⁴⁰ Julian Goodare, "The framework of Scottish Witch-Hunting in the 1590s," *Scottish Historical Review* 81 (2002): 240–50; Goodare, "Witchcraft in Scotland," 304–5.

James became a ‘sceptic’ before or during the 1597 panic, and that James’ doubts were evident in his treatise *Daemonologie* (1597). Goodare has argued against this, saying that the order of August 1597, which revoked recent witchcraft trial commissions, was not only a ‘sceptical’ measure but could also be supported by witch-hunting enthusiasts. There was evidence in September 1597 of the king’s keenness to prosecute witches, something the genuine ‘sceptics’ criticized him for. In addition, Goodare maintains that it was not credible to suggest that *Daemonologie* was a ‘sceptical’ work.¹⁴¹ This view has been supported by Brian P. Levack, who states that it fits his broader interpretation of James. The most important aspect of James’ involvement in 1590–91 and in 1597 was that it politicized Scottish witchcraft.¹⁴² This is a sound argument, which clearly relates to the Danish-Scottish witchcraft connection.

Another issue which has been debated between Lerner, Goodare and Levack, is the degree of central control in witchcraft trials. While Lerner argued for a strong concern of central government, Levack stressed that the original impetus for prosecution came mainly from the localities rather than from the centre, and that most Scottish trials were held by local lairds using commissions of justiciary, who were not accountable centrally for their decisions.¹⁴³ To this, Goodare in his answer held forth that commissions to try witches were granted centrally by the Privy Council, which demanded a detailed written case against the suspect.¹⁴⁴ Finally, Levack and Goodare agreed that authorizing local elites to hold trials represented a lower degree of

¹⁴¹ Julian Goodare, “The Scottish Witchcraft Panic of 1597,” in *The Scottish Witch-Hunt in Context*, ed. Julian Goodare (Manchester, 2002), 60–6; Goodare, “Witchcraft in Scotland,” 305.

¹⁴² Levack, “King James VI,” 41–2; Goodare, “Witchcraft in Scotland,” 305.

¹⁴³ Brian P. Levack, “State-building and Witch Hunting in Early Modern Europe,” in *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe: Studies in Culture and Belief*, eds. Jonathan Barry, Marianne hester, and Gareth Roberts (Cambridge, 1996), 96–115.

¹⁴⁴ Julian Goodare, “Witch-Hunting and the Scottish State,” in Goodare, *The Scottish Witch-Hunt*, 122–45.

central control than holding trials in courts directly organized from the centre.¹⁴⁵

To the discussion above, my answer is that the king brought with him demonological ideas from Denmark, not least the idea of witches' gatherings. He also was exposed to other demonological ideas from the ongoing witchcraft trials. I have taken into account how features of the mentality sphere may contribute to explain not only why witchcraft trials took place, but also the way witchcraft trials unfolded. When a series of linked witchcraft trials developed, as the North Berwick trials did, the idea of witches' gatherings underpins the process. My novel research adds to the existing knowledge of King James' baggage when coming back to his home country in May 1590. The new ideas may also have influenced the writing of King James' demonological treatise, partly written in the aftermath of the North Berwick trials, which had an immense impact on Scottish witch-hunting practice thereafter.

Conclusion

This article has described a specific transmission of ideas. By cross-cutting letters and documents, a timeline has been established that clarifies the train of events, within each of the countries involved, as well as transnationally. A multitude of voices have emerged from legal documents and state papers, creating a multi-layered tale. By closely examining the linguistic—and very often narrative—practices that the sources give access to, it is possible to follow both the written and oral routes travelled by ideas about witchcraft. In this multitude of situations where people sail, meet, and marry, are imprisoned, interrogated, tortured, and convicted, there were early intimations in Denmark about the reason for the naval fleet's blunder, and people were looking for answers. This is where witchcraft, and women enter the stage. An explanation is construed to reduce the ineptitude of powerful men, unable to carry out their plan. Responsibility is shifted away from men with power to women who allegedly wield another type of power: they are purported to be

¹⁴⁵ Brian P. Levack, "Absolutism, State-building and Witchcraft," in *Witch-Hunting in Scotland*, 101, 108–113; Goodare, "Witchcraft in Scotland," 306.

adept in the art of witchcraft. They became the scapegoats blamed for the fleet's bad fortune. But this is not enough. There is even talk of an attack against the highest ranking royals, the Danish King, and the King and Queen of Scotland.

The stories that crossed the North Sea did not fall on stony ground. The women's wicked deeds formed the starting point for the North Berwick trials. The parallel threat was clear: yet again there were sorcerous plans for an attack against the King. When we examine the re-narrations and reconstructions found in the correspondence of state officials, court documents, and oral accounts, we see a coherent narrative emerge. This narrative is about fear. It is about the manipulation of evil forces through supernatural powers. It is about a world view that explains unexpected disasters, not by resorting to reasoning, but to magic. It is also about perfectly prosaic matters that see a cause-and-effect relationship end up with blaming the powerless. It is about gender relations and women's vulnerability. It is also about royal vulnerability. It is the many layers of the narrative about witchcraft performed against the King's ship, and how these ideas are transferred to Scotland, that reveal the political dimensions to the fleet's turnaround in the North Sea and the implications with respect to the history of mentality. While the fleet was struggling in the North Sea, reportedly surrounded by devilish Apostles, a political drama was unfolding in parallel; backstage we catch a glimpse of wounded vanity, loss of honour, and stately intrigue personified, here in Melville's words: "Quhilk storm and wind was alleged to have been raisit by the witches of Denmark What moved them was a cuff, or blow, quhilk the Admiral of Denmark gave to ane [one] of the baillies of Copenhagen, whose wife being a notable witch, consulted her cummers [fellows], and raised the said storm to be revengit upon the said Admiral."¹⁴⁶

The same come to the fore in the aftermath of the North Berwick witchcraft trials, and I will give Patrick Anderson the last words: "*And indeed these mens opinions are confirmed by certane Magicians and Witches taken after th[a]t in Scotland, who confessed oppenly at there tryalls, that they had raised these stormes to dryve the Queene frome the coasts of Scotland and th[a]t the Earle of*

¹⁴⁶ Melville, *Memoirs*, 327.

Bothwell had consulted with them concerning the kings end.”
[Author’s italics.]¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁷ National Library of Scotland, Special Collections, Adv. Ms. 35.5.3.

**JOHN CAMPBELL'S "SHORT PAPERS"
FOR LORD BUTE IN THE
*LONDON EVENING POST***

Matthew Binney, Eastern Washington University

ABSTRACT

John Campbell's (1708-1775) biographer, Guido Abbattista, has argued that Campbell sought to publish a pamphlet, *Thoughts on Public Affairs*, in 1761. However, a review of Campbell's private correspondence in 1761 with the future prime minister, John Stuart, 3rd earl of Lord Bute (1713-1792), indicates that the historian sought not to publish a pamphlet, but newspaper articles that promote the king's new reign and his administration. Six of these articles have been found in the *London Evening Post*, and they use ideas and language from Henry St. John, 1st viscount Bolingbroke to represent George III as a Patriot King, to advance the Tory policies of Bute's future administration, and to encourage a prospective peace to the Seven Years' War (1756-1763). These six, new attributions to Campbell not only expand his extensive canon, but also portray his significant role in offering the rhetoric and depicting the ideas of George III's early reign and Bute's ascendancy to premiership.

Keywords: Scotland, England, politics, John Campbell, earl of Bute, 18th century

John Campbell (1708–1775), born in Edinburgh and educated in Windsor, was one of the most celebrated historians of the mid-eighteenth century.¹ His most popular work, *Present State of Europe* (1750), attracted attention not only from the tsarina of the Russian Empire, Catherine the Great, who presented Campbell with her

¹ James Boswell refers to Campbell as “the celebrated” multiple times in *The Life of Samuel Johnson*, ed. George Birkbeck Hill (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1887), 1:418, 2:146–7.

picture,² but also from the Whig statesman, Henry Fox, 1st Baron Holland (1705–1774), and the future prime minister and fellow Scot, John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute (1713–1792).³ Beginning in the late 1750s, Bute’s communication with John Campbell increased as the peer ostensibly recognized how he could use the historian’s skills, literary connections, and reputation to support his rise to power and political ambitions.⁴ Campbell wanted to assist his countryman not only because of Bute’s title and influence in the royal family but also their shared Tory, Bolingbrokean political philosophy.⁵

In late 1760, Prince George was crowned King George III and sought to style himself as a “Patriot King,” Bolingbroke’s notion of a sovereign who is independent from faction or interest group and committed to his people and original constitution.⁶ The king quickly selected Bute for the Privy Council, and by January 1761, Campbell signaled his willingness and intention to assist Bute and the king by writing articles in newspapers that supported the king and his administration by promoting the idea of the Patriot King,

² *Biographia Britannica*, ed. Andrew Kippis et al. (London, 1778), 3:209–15.

³ For Campbell’s correspondence with Lord Holland, see British Library, Add MS 51407; for a list of his correspondence with Lord Bute, see British Library, Add MS 36796, and see the Bute Archive at Mount Stuart, Scotland.

⁴ J. A. Lovat-Fraser, *John Stuart Earl of Bute* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1912), 8. Bute was elevated to the powerful position of Groom of the Stole and made head of Prince George’s (1738–1820) household in 1756; Lovat-Fraser, *John Stuart*, 30. By 1761 Bute noted that the “best authors” were devoted to him.

⁵ Boswell, *Life of Samuel Johnson*, 1:418, mentions that Campbell cultivated relations with other Scots, observing “the shoals of Scotchmen who flocked about him.”

⁶ Lovat-Fraser, *John Stuart*, 12–14, notes how George III “proposed to act the part of the Patriot King.” See also Grayson Ditchfield, *George III: An Essay in Monarchy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 138, and Max Skjonsberg, “Lord Bolingbroke’s Theory of Party and Opposition,” *The Historical Journal* 59 (2016): 947–973.

underscoring the connection between the monarch, people, and constitution.⁷

John Campbell's biographer, Guido Abbattista, examined Campbell's letters to Bute from January 1761 and indicated that Campbell had drafted a "pamphlet," *Thoughts on Public Affairs*, which did not appear in print, in which Campbell defines "the Voice of the People," clarifies the sovereign's role as the guardian of the constitution and defender of common interest, and finally critiques factions, indicating how they increased debts and tax burdens.⁸ This "pamphlet," according to Abbattista, appears in Campbell's letter to Bute, which Abbattista cites as "Campbell to Bute, 19th January 1761, Bute MSS 1/161/ ff. 1-3." Currently, however, this letter is listed as BU/118/1, 171, 19 January 1761 in the Bute Archive at Mount Stuart, Rothesay, Scotland.⁹ Instead of writing a pamphlet, however, Campbell states that he will "publish in short Papers such Thoughts on Public Affairs." He provides a summary of these prospective newspaper articles:

In the first place I shew the real use & Importance of what is called the Voice of the People and by what Limits it ought to be circumscribed. I then shew that the greatest Blessing Britain can enjoy is a King well inclined to & well acquainted with her Constitution. I proceed to prove that this is no vague or unfounded Idea but that our wisest & best Princes were really such. That such of our Princes as either had despotic Views or were unhappy had the folly to attempt governing by or were so unlucky as to fall under the Dominion of Factions. That Henry the Seventh really restored our Constitution by taking excessive Power from the Barons and by giving Independence to the Commons. That his Successors overset the Constitution again by gaining an undue Influence over the Commons. That in Modern

⁷ See Lovat-Fraser, *John Stuart*, 11, for the prince's training by Bute in Bolingbroke's philosophy.

⁸ Guido Abbattista, *Commercio, Colonia e Impero alla Vigilia della Rivoluzione Americana* (Florence: Olschki, 1990), 202.

⁹ The archival research for this article was conducted in August 2018.

Times there might possibly be a necessity of balancing of factions But that this was continued out of Policy when that necessity ceased. That the increase of our Debts & the load of our Taxes were the fruits of this Policy. That the Interest of the King & his People must be ever the same. That this Doctrine well established and steadily pursued is the only means by which the Evils can be removed. That Oeconomy will effectually do this and that in order to this blessed Effect the Administration must mean well and the People for their own sakes cordially support its Measures.¹⁰

Campbell did not seek to publish a pamphlet on “Public Affairs,” but instead sought to publish articles in newspapers that promote the king’s and Bute’s Tory politics. Some of these topics from the list above appear in short articles in the *London Evening Post*, which published five of Campbell’s “Papers” in winter and spring, and a probable sixth in the fall of 1761. Campbell published his first “short Paper” on “the Voice of the People” in the edition from Thursday 26 February to Saturday 28 February; his next from Saturday 28 February to Tuesday 3 March was on the king and constitution; his next from Thursday 5 March to Saturday 7 March demonstrates how “our wisest & best Princes were really such”; his next from Thursday 9 April to Saturday 11 April departs from his original plan, expanding upon benefits that “Individuals” enjoy “from the Conduct of . . . great Monarchs”; and his final short paper of winter/spring from Thursday 16 April to Saturday 18 April continues the previous by indicating the “Conduct” of “Princes” and “true Policy.” The sixth paper was published 27 October to 29 October, five days before the signing of the preliminaries of a peace treaty at Fontainebleau on 3 November 1761; it uses similar language from the previous papers, while promoting the prospective peace settlement for the Seven Years’ War (1756–1763).

Even though the articles are not signed by Campbell, the date of their appearance, article titles, inter-referentiality, and the substance of the letters directly match or are similar to his summary in letter

¹⁰ Correspondence from John Campbell to Lord Bute, BU/118/1, 171, Bute Archive at Mount Stuart, Rothesay, Scotland.

171 to Bute on 19 January 1761 and are similar to Campbell's moderate Tory political philosophy,¹¹ indicating a strong probability that the first five articles belong to the historian and a probability that the sixth belongs to him too.

The first article appears in the *London Evening Post* on 26–28 February, five weeks after his letter to Bute on 19 January. The 26–28 February article echoes Campbell's letter to Bute with the title, "The Voice of the Public defined," and with the content: he explains the importance and limits of "the Voice of the People."¹² In the newspaper article, Campbell distinguishes "the Voice of the People" from "Clamour": the first "is founded in Reason; it corresponds with the Truth; and is uttered with Perspicuity, and in a proper Manner," whereas the second creates "Discord" and "Confusion" as a "few artful and designing Men, by scattering plausible Propositions, and giving a Colour to them, by either feigned or exaggerated Facts, may easily excite Jealousies . . . and raise Murmurs against the wisest and best concerted Measures." The "Voice of the People" aligns with "Reason," while "Clamour" creates confusion by exaggerating facts and exciting passions. Campbell admonishes: an "Administration would be very unhappy indeed, in which these Murmurs should be mistaken for the Voice of the People."

Campbell's distinction between the "Voice of the People" and "Clamour" imitates a similar distinction in Bolingbroke's *The Idea of a Patriot King* (1749).¹³ Bolingbroke states that a Patriot King will "distinguish the voice of his people from the clamour of a faction."¹⁴ Bolingbroke's differentiation between the people and faction will become a common trope in the rhetoric of both parties, but

¹¹ See Matthew W. Binney, "John Campbell's *Present State of Europe* (1750): Toryism and balance of power," *History of European Ideas*, 44, no. 5 (2018): 543–558, DOI: 10.1080/01916599.2018.1483837.

¹² *London Evening Post*, 26–28 February 1761, *17th-18th Century Burney Collection*.

¹³ For Campbell's connections to Bolingbroke, see Abbattista, *Commercio*, Chap. 1, and see Binney, "Interest, Trade and 'Character and Circumstances'," 519–522.

¹⁴ Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, in *The Works of Lord Bolingbroke* (Philadelphia: Carey and Hart, 1841), 2:404.

particularly for Tories in the early to mid-eighteenth century, as the people represent the “common interest” of all within the state,¹⁵ rather than the private interest of a favorite, group, minister, or party.¹⁶ Citizens who ignore public interest sow discord and foster corruption by pursuing private interest. Bolingbroke’s distinction between public and private interest is echoed in Campbell’s own distinction in the *London Evening Post*, when Campbell states that “the Voice of the People” involves “The People” who elect “Representatives” and “The Nobility, who by their high Birth and great Property have so great a Weigh with, and so large a Stake in the Public.” These “Representatives” and “Nobility” represent the true interest of the state.¹⁷ Instead of representing the state’s interest, faction, however, represents private interest and gain, which is contrived by what Campbell describes as, a “few artful and designing Men.” The first article not only reflects Campbell’s wording, “Voice of the People,” and topic from his letter, but also reflects the Bolingbrokean political philosophy that undergirds *The Idea of a Patriot King*: the sovereign fosters independence by focusing on public rather than private interest.

Public interest is then related to the constitution in Campbell’s next newspaper article from Saturday 28 February to Tuesday 3 March. The article’s title, “The Happiness of the Subject in having a Monarch who loves the CONSTITUTION,”¹⁸ closely follows the description in his letter to Bute: the “Blessing Britain can enjoy is a King well inclined to & well acquainted with her Constitution.” As the title indicates, Campbell stresses the monarch’s relation to the constitution, which in Bolingbroke’s political philosophy provides

¹⁵ Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 401.

¹⁶ For the negative use of “faction,” see W. Gunn, *Factions No More: Attitudes to Party in Government and Opposition in Eighteenth-Century England* (London: Frank Cass, 1972); for Tory use of “faction,” see Peter N. Miller, *Defining the Common Good: Empire, Religion and Philosophy in Eighteenth Century Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 98.

¹⁷ Campbell’s emphasis upon the “nobility” reflects Bolingbroke’s focus on “Country” ideology. See Skjonsberg, “Lord Bolingbroke’s Theory of Party and Opposition,” 958 & 973.

¹⁸ *London Evening Post*, 28 February–3 March 1761, *17th-18th Century Burney Collection*.

stability and order to the state. Bolingbroke emphasizes that the “constitution will be revered by him [the Patriot King] as the law of God and of man.”¹⁹ This “constitution” should be revered because it secures the public good and provides the people with “liberty.” The “old constitution” promotes liberty rather than “betray[s]” it because the monarch upholds the “most important interests of their country,” rather than subordinates the country’s interest “to their own interest and humor, or to those of a party.”²⁰ The “interests of their country” originate, for Bolingbroke, from a nation’s “common interest” and “common spirit,”²¹ which is expressed in the “old constitution,” or, as he states in *Remarks on the History of England* (1731) in its “first principles” in the “original constitution.”²² Those who pursue this “common” public interest align themselves with the original constitution; those who pursue private interest depart from it. As such, “liberty” relates to the interest of all rather than the interest of the few.

This distinction between public and private interest, which Campbell outlined in the 26–28 February article, appears again in the 28 February–3 March article, as the historian draws upon Bolingbroke’s account of the constitution. Campbell states that the “greatest Blessing divine Providence can bestow upon this Country is, a King well acquainted with, and well inclined to our excellent Constitution.” A sovereign who is “well acquainted with” the constitution “will be more jealous for the Vigour of the Constitution, than of his own Prerogative.” The sovereign will be more “jealous” for the constitution, rather than his own interest or “Prerogative,” because, as Bolingbroke indicates, the constitution reflects the country’s “interest,” rather than private interest. Common interest, rather than private interest, points to the “good of the people,” which should be the “true end of government.”²³ Bolingbroke’s “good of the people” is echoed in Campbell’s the “Voice of the People” from

¹⁹ Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 392.

²⁰ Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 388.

²¹ Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 401.

²² Henry Bolingbroke, *Remarks on the History of England*, in *The Works of Lord Bolingbroke*, (Philadelphia, PA: Carey and Hart, 1841), 1:292–455, 302.

²³ Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 391.

the historian's previous article and is reinforced in the current article through the king's familiarity with the constitution. For Bolingbroke, the king's reverence for the constitution will promote common interest or "the Good of the People," and for Campbell the king's attachment to the constitution will produce "private Satisfaction" in his "Pursuit . . . of Public Felicity."

The monarch's relation to the "Constitution" reappears in Campbell's next article of 5–7 March as the historian offers historical examples of monarchs' policies that have aligned with the constitution in "Instances of constitutional Monarchs from the English History."²⁴ These "Instances" provide historical examples of policy, particularly in the reigns of Henry I (r. 1100–1135), Edward I (r. 1272–1307), and Edward III (r. 1327–1377), and they mirror Campbell's original plan to discuss leaders who were attentive to the constitution in his letter to Bute: "I proceed to prove that this is no vague or unfounded Idea but that our wisest & best Princes were really such." Campbell's method of describing previous kings' policies follows a model of history that was articulated by Bolingbroke: i.e., historical degeneration.²⁵ Historical degeneration relates to political theory because a state's original constitution, according to Bolingbroke, becomes corrupted over time. The original constitution derives from a nation's distinct circumstances, its "common spirit," which originates from a country's distinct geography and the "spirit and character of the people."²⁶ Over time this constitution can be corrupted as ambitious princes, ministers, favorites and/or factions create policies, as already indicated, that serve their own interest rather than the people's interest. In *Remarks on the History of England*, he states: "There must be some good in

²⁴ *London Evening Post*, 5–7 March 1761, *17th-18th Century Burney Collection*.

²⁵ For an explanation of historical degeneration, see William Fenton and Elizabeth Moore, eds., introduction to Joseph François Lafitau, *Customs of the American Indians Compared with the Customs of Primitive Times* (Toronto: Champlain Society, 1974–77), 1:xlvii–xlviii; Isaac Kramnick has identified this degeneration in *Bolingbroke and His Circle: The Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968; repr. 1992), 33.

²⁶ Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 393.

the first principles of every government But this good degenerates . . . and governments . . . tend to dissolution.”²⁷ Since the “good in the first principles” degenerates over time, threatening the stability of the state, then succeeding reigns and administrations must mend these corruptions by passing laws that re-align with the principles in the original constitution. Indeed a constitution that a “wise” people were “happy enough to establish” must be defended and maintained by a Patriot King,²⁸ and a Patriot King will defend and maintain that constitution by seeking “the re-establishment of a free constitution, when it has been shook by the iniquity of former administrations.”²⁹

Campbell observes the significance of repairing degeneration of the English constitution in “Henry the First.”³⁰ Henry I “promised to relieve [his subjects] from all their harsh Laws that had been made by his Predecessor.” Campbell implies that William II (r. 1087–1100) was not sufficiently “acquainted with the Saxon Laws and with the Import of his Peoples Wishes.” William II’s corruptions in the original Saxon constitution were recognized by Henry I, according to Campbell, and the monarch corrects them by reviving “the old and mild Mode of Government,” creating “new Laws [that] were in favour of Liberty and of his Subjects.” Henry I appears as a Patriot King, for Campbell since he acknowledged corruptions and rectified them by re-establishing original principles and the corresponding liberty of his people. Campbell then recounts the policies of Edward I and Edward III: the first “placed the Purse effectually in the Power of the People” and the second “had recourse to his Parliament, never questioned their Power.” For Campbell, these actions indicate how both monarchs “fixed and established our

²⁷ Bolingbroke, *Remarks on the History of England*, 302.

²⁸ Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 391.

²⁹ Bolingbroke, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, 388.

³⁰ We see similar ideas about degeneration and corruption in Campbell’s previous works: for instance, in Campbell’s *Lives of the Admirals* (London, 1742) 2:227, he warns about the “Miseries flowing from the Ruin of our old Constitution”; in his *Present State of Europe* (Dublin, 1750), 464, he identifies the “Ambition of Princes, the Desire of aggrandizing certain august Families, the pernicious Inclination of pursuing private and particular views.”

Constitution” as well as “promoted its Perfection.” Their attention to the constitution “enabled them to triumph over all their Enemies” and made them “beloved and admired.” Campbell’s historical examples reinforce the connection between the sovereign and constitution, indicating how past reigns and administrations may corrupt, but future reigns and administrations may correct by passing laws that fix and establish “our Constitution.”

Campbell’s article of 9–11 April departs from the summary in his letter by expanding upon these corrections, indicating how they benefit a people: “The Benefits resulting to Individuals from the Conduct of these great MONARCHS.”³¹ Campbell stresses that the previous article from 5–7 March connects directly to his current one of 9–11 April: “[See our Paper of Saturday the 7th of the last Month].” From the former article, the “Princes who fixed and established our Constitution,” then advance, in the latter article, the “Ease, Safety, and Welfare of their Subjects.” Ease, safety, and welfare increase in the “three Reigns” of Henry I, Edward I, and Edward III, as Campbell again demonstrates by using historical examples that exhibit the “Prudence and Goodness of these Princes.” The princes’ prudence repaired corruptions in the original constitution, which was caused, for instance, by the “Norman Conquest”: “the Consequences of it had shaken at least, if not subverted the very Foundation of the State.” The three kings corrected this dangerous degeneration and stabilized the state by ensuring that lands were “settled and improved,” which produced “Profits.” Henry I restored “the Saxon Mode of maintaining public Tranquillity”; Edward I “mitigated Punishments”; and Edward III enacted “many new Writs” that offered “Relief” for his subjects. Campbell insists that these monarchs’ policies assisted “Private Persons of every Degree” and provided their subjects with ease and safety, which ultimately—as he suggests will be explained in his next paper—allows citizens to exert their “Industry, for the improving their own Concerns and in making Provision for their Posterity.”

“Industry” occupies Campbell’s thoughts in his newspaper article of 16–18 April, in which he alludes to his previous article of

³¹ *London Evening Post*, 9–11 April 1761, *17th-18th Century Burney Collection*.

9–11 April: “[See our Paper of Saturday last.]” The title of his current article refers to the same monarchs, Henry I, Edward I, and Edward III: “The political Conduct of these Princes particularly considered.”³² This time Campbell provides historical examples of these monarchs’ policies, indicating how they encourage “Industry” as well as “Trade and Commerce,” while limiting “exorbitant Power.” Regarding industry and commerce, Henry I, for example, “removed all Impediments to Navigation in the great Rivers throughout the Kingdom” and “enacted that the same Weights, Measures, and Money, should be used throughout his Dominions”; Edward I “put a Stop to Theft and Robbery” and “made the Statute of Acton Burnel [Burnell] . . . for the Ease of Merchants”; Edward III “put the price of Provision and of Labour, both under the Care of the Magistrate, and thereby made them both cheap, preventing Monopolies” and “fixed Staples as he judged most proper for the Convenience of Commerce.” Apart from industry and commerce, Campbell underscores how they limited excessive power. For instance, Henry I “punished the Instruments of his Predecessor’s Exactions, and restrained the Power of his Clergy and Barons”; Edward I “made the Statute of Mortmain, to prevent excessive Donations to the Church”; and Edward III “passed a Law for the Redress of Ecclesiastical Grievances, and for preventing the Pope and Cardinals making Spoil of his Subjects.” Campbell ends by insisting that these examples at once demonstrate that “true Policy” requires that monarchs attend to “the general Welfare of those who were its Subjects” and also demonstrate that we should “look up with Reverence to our Ancestors, and free us in a great Measure from those Prepossessions we are too apt to entertain of the Barbarity of past Times.” Campbell’s concern with the past reflects his Tory, Bolingbrokean political philosophy: past reigns and administrations passed laws that corrected corruptions to the original constitution and as such offer insights and instruction for the current monarch and his ministers.³³ These past examples point to the necessity and

³² *London Evening Post*, 16–18 April 1761, *17th-18th Century Burney Collection*.

³³ That degeneration and corruption offer a Tory perspective, see Mark Knights, “The Tory Interpretation of History in the Rage of Parties,” *The Huntington Quarterly* 68, no. 1/2 (2005): 353–373, 359: “rather than

urgency for a modern Patriot King, like George III, who holds an eye towards the past to act confidently and independently in the present. Such a Patriot King will defend the original constitution by upholding public interest and rejecting the clamour of factions while encouraging industry and commerce, thereby bringing about prosperity.

In the article of 27–29 October, Campbell appears to have neglected the rest of his original plan, particularly when political affairs changed, as William Pitt the Elder (1708–1778) resigned on 5 October and prospects for peace increased. That this “Paper” belongs to Campbell remains less assured than the previous five since his private letters do not contain direct references to it.³⁴ Yet the phrases, ideas, and concerns reflect Campbell’s previous “Papers,” his political philosophy, and his pressing apprehensions after Pitt’s resignation.³⁵ In his letters 172 through 175 to Bute, Campbell indicates that he strives to publish if not daily, at least weekly upon the political situation. He indicates his concerns in his letter to Bute on 6 November: “This Resignation and the Clamour it has occasioned has loosened the whole Frame of our Constitution but a few vigorous Steps an apparent Firmness in the King’s Ministers

progress, the Tory interpretation emphasized the prevalence of decay and corruption.”

³⁴ Besides Campbell, Bute had several other pensioned writers: Philip Francis (1708–1773), Edward Richardson, William Guthrie (1708?–1770), Arthur Murphy (1727–1805), and James Ralph (d. 1762). See John Brewer, *Party Ideology and Party Politics at the Accession of George III* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 223.

³⁵ Not only do the ideas indicate Campbell’s authorship, but also the style too. Two types of stylometry software, JStylo and JGAAP, were used on this article and repeatedly indicated, in comparison to similar articles in *London Evening Post* and to writings by Guthrie, Ralph, Murphy, Francis, that the article reflects Campbell’s writing style. Instead of maintaining that stylometry proves the article belongs to Campbell, I maintain that it and similarities to Campbell’s thought indicate a higher probability that it is his as well as indicate the need for future analysis. See JStylo: Andrew McDonald, Sadia Afroz, Aylin Caliskan, Ariel Stolerman, and Rachel Greenstadt, “Use Fewer Instances of the Letter ‘I’: Toward Writing Style Anonymization.” PETS 2012. Drexel University; and see JGAAP, Evaluating Variations in Language Labs, Duquesne University.

and a strict Connection amongst themselves will very quickly recover every thing and fix the Government upon a sound bottom.”³⁶ Campbell sees the commotion that accompanies Pitt’s resignation as a threat not only to the state but also the possibility for peace: “All calm & considerate People seem to wish for a good Peace & regret that the opportunity was lost when we were so near it and I verily believe would be glad to see it recovered which that I may be and that the King may enjoy the Satisfaction of giving Peace to Europe & Security to his Subjects.”³⁷ Indeed the prospective peace is the focus and theme of the article of 27–29 October. The peace is promoted by the writer by indicating how it, a Patriot King, and his competent administration will secure the constitution and place the “Government upon a sound bottom.” The writer draws from phrases and ideas in Campbell’s previous papers, such as “Voice of the People” and “Industry,” security of property, even ostensibly alluding to those publications, while stressing the increase of commerce, and the writer echoes Campbell’s 19 January letter to Bute by calling for a “Reduction of Debts and Taxes.”³⁸

The writer presumably alludes to Campbell’s earlier papers in the *London Evening Post* when he obliquely refers to “the Principles mentioned in a former Paper, and which ought ever to be remembered.” He adds that these “Principles, enforced by the Voice of the People” show that the war was “prosecuted with Effect”: pointedly, Canada “has been reduced,” the “Sugar Islands [Martinique] might be conquered,” the “Conquest of Guadalupe has been effected,” and the French in the Neutral Islands “have been driven out.” Indeed “Reason,” which “corresponds with the Truth” rather than “Clamour,” shows that the war has been sufficiently prosecuted by accomplishing significant goals. Not only does the article’s language, “Voice of the People,” reflect Campbell’s earlier articles, but also it reflects his private approval of Bute’s and the administration’s actions in Martinique. Indeed the day after the published article appears, Campbell praises Bute and the administration for sending additional troops in his letter of 30

³⁶ Mount Stuart Archive, BU/98/6, 632, November 6th, 1761.

³⁷ Mount Stuart Archive, BU/98/6, 632, November 6th, 1761.

³⁸ *London Evening Post*, 27–29 October 1761, *17th-18th Century Borney Collection*.

October 1761: “I lay hold of this Opportunity to congratulate your Lordship on the Wisdom of the Administration in sending additional Force from Europe to support the Enterprize against Martinico.”³⁹ Campbell applauds Bute on the deployment of Admiral George Rodney from Portsmouth earlier in October, whose presence and forces strengthen the “Enterprize” in Martinique, showing that it “might be conquered.”⁴⁰ Campbell’s ideas about “the Voice of the People” and his private correspondence with Bute indicate how the 27–29 newspaper article directly aligns with Campbell’s concerns about Pitt’s resignation and the corrections that a prospective peace—in the hands of the right minister—will deliver to the “loosened . . . Frame of our Constitution.”

The corrections that a “Peace” will produce include “lasting Tranquility” in which “Subjects of the Crown of Great Britain . . . may occupy their Possessions undisturbed and reap the Fruits of their Industry and Labour.” The writer’s reference to “Tranquility” and “Possessions” reiterates Campbell’s argument about settled possessions, or property, and industry from his paper of 9–11 April: “The Benefits resulting to Individuals from the Conduct of these great Monarchs.” Indeed, tranquility produces security for one’s property, and security encourages industry, and industry, as the writer adds in the article of 27–29 October, promotes commerce: “the reciprocal Commerce between the Colonies and their Mother Country” will offer most telling “Fruits of a War.” This connection between the colonies, the “Mother Country,” commerce, and prosperity reiterates what Campbell stated earlier in his career, for instance, in his Preface to the second volume of *Navigantium Atque Intinerantium Bibliotheca* (1748): “The great Point with respect to Plantations, is to shew, that the Riches, Power, and Happiness of the Mother-Country, depends, in a great Measure, upon them; and that, on the other Hand, this Connection is so far from being grievous, burthensome, or prejudicial to the Colonies, that, on the contrary, their Peace, Welfare, and Prosperity, are dependant upon this only; so that the Benefits and Advantages of Settlements and their Mother-

³⁹ Mount Stuart Archive, BU/118/1, 173.

⁴⁰ See Julian Corbett, *England in the Seven Years’ War, A Study in Combined Strategy* (London: Longmans, Green, & Co, 1907), 2:210–211.

Countries are always reciprocal.”⁴¹ The reciprocal connection—especially through commerce and trade—between the “Mother Country” and her “Settlements” promotes the prosperity of both, and this prosperity, as indicated in this last paper, can increase with an earnest peace that secures property and encourages industry.

This prosperity represents a correction to the constitution as it will reduce taxes and debt. Campbell indicates in his letter of 19 January to Bute that he wishes to write upon “the increase of our Debts & the load of our Taxes,” yet after Pitt’s resignation, the writer does the opposite in the article of 27–29 October—thereby promoting Bute’s political objectives for peace—by insisting that a successful peace will produce a “Reduction of Debts and Taxes.” This argument upon debt originates from, for instance, “Old Whig” positions, argued by Charles Davenant,⁴² and reflects Campbell’s earlier writings, such as *Navigantium* and *Present State of Europe*. In the first, he indicates how the Genovese state suffers because they deal “in Money instead of Goods” and “Funds and negotiable Debts to Manufactures.”⁴³ In the second, he indicates how Louis XIV’s large army is “burdensome and ruinous to the Kingdom” as “heavy taxes are raised upon the laborious and industrious part of the People.”⁴⁴ Debts and excessive taxes, which accompany an improperly managed war, prevent people from securing property, encouraging industry, dealing in manufactures, increasing commerce, promoting trade, and ultimately achieving prosperity. As such, this focus upon reducing debt and taxes, this use of similar phrases and ideas (such as “Voice of the People” and stability of property), this reference to earlier articles in the *London Evening Post*, this similarity between the article and Campbell’s apprehensions about the constitution and peace, which he mentioned in his letters to Bute, and this similarity between the article and his moderate Tory political philosophy, indicate that this article from 27–29 October was probably written by Campbell.

⁴¹ *Navigantium Atque Intinerantium Bibliotheca* (London, 1748), 2:n.pag.

⁴² See Abbattista, *Commercio*, Chap. 1, and see Binney, “Interest, Trade and ‘Character and Circumstances,’” 527–530.

⁴³ Campbell, *Navigantium*, 1:xvi.

⁴⁴ Campbell, *The Present State of Europe*, 290.

Nonetheless all articles that Campbell published in the *London Evening Post* in 1761 reflect his role as a propagandist for Bute and George III, as peer and monarch sought to depict the new reign in words and ideas that reproduce Bolingbrokean political philosophy. The attribution of these newspaper articles to Campbell not only expands Campbell's already significant canon, but also identifies more specifically the historian's direct contributions to representing the ideas, rhetoric, and policy of George III's early reign and Bute's rise to power. George III will indeed be a Patriot King: an independent monarch, attentive to the constitution and public good, who reigns in private interest, secures property, promotes industry and commerce, which ultimately produces a prosperous state and formidable empire.

REVIEW

Eva von Contzen. *The Scottish Legendary: Towards a Poetics of Hagiographic Narration*. Manchester Medieval Literature and Culture. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016. Pp. x, 268. ISBN: 9780719095962. £80.00.

The *Scottish Legendary* is a compilation of saints' lives based on Jacobus de Voragine's *Legenda aurea* (c. 1260s) written in Scotland in the last quarter of the fourteenth century. As an Older Scots oeuvre, it is roughly contemporary with John Barbour's *The Brus* (1370s), the earliest historical account written in Scotland in the vernacular and in verse form. Despite its status as one of the oldest extant literary works in Older Scots, the *Scottish Legendary* has received limited scholarly attention, with the exception of Melissa Coll-Smith's doctoral dissertation (University of Oxford, 2012). Eva von Contzen's *The Scottish Legendary* is a crucial addition to the study of medieval Scottish hagiography and Older Scots literature: narrativity can be used to further explore how the poetics of narration in other Older Scots works create a uniquely distinct "Scottish voice" in late medieval works.

Von Contzen's overarching thesis is that when narrativity is applied as an analytical framework to the study of the *Scottish Legendary*, it shows how the poet-narrator strikes a careful balance between didactics and entertainment. Contrary to rhetoric, which is the "eloquent and persuasive use of language," narrativity in the *Scottish Legendary* is an "implicit programme" that, through regular and consistent use of forms, permits the poet to perform instruction and hagiographical discourse (p. 32). The Introduction and Chapter 1 provide the theoretical rationale that underpins the study and expands on how the *Scottish Legendary* differs from other hagiographical texts, in particular from the *South English Legendary*. The monograph's main argument, which is examined in the rest of the chapters, investigates the use of narrative for this dual purpose from the perspective of various textual elements. The monograph carefully considers the duality of the narration's secular and hagiographical aims in each of the six chapters, and it is precisely

this narrative secularization that makes the *Scottish Legendary* so distinctive and so effective at instructing its audience.

In Chapter 1, von Contzen analyzes the poet-narrator's digressions from the original source, the *Legenda aurea*, arguing that they encapsulate the poet's focus on the function of specific passages over the fidelity of a literal translation. Chapter 2 examines the duality of the role of the poet as a teacher and narrator, and how these roles are conflated in the text. The author's voice is attuned to his lay audience: in the text, the poet-narrator serves as a "guiding device" that minimizes narrative confusion while it ensures that the audience can enjoy the text (p. 66). The "thin line between instruction and entertainment" is apparent in the poet-narrator's methodology, and it follows the desire to provide a guide to improved moral behaviour (p. 81). Chapter 3 examines the *Legendary's* use of direct discourse as a dramatic and gendering device, which is a result of the poet-narrator's use of tropes associated with secular literary genres. Direct discourse connects with secular audiences better, and it attributes gendered dialogue to each legend: female saints' actions do not exceed the power of their words (authority), while male saints display both powerful and extraordinary actions (authority and power). Gendering the discourse allowed the poet to dramatize the narrative, using the saints to educate the audience about proper Christian behaviour.

Chapter 4 analyses the role of *auctoritas* in the *Scottish Legendary* and its narrative usefulness. *Auctoritas* is found in the text in the use of Christian scripture and authors, becoming another example of how the *Legendary* blends hagiographical and secular narrative devices to both educate and entertain its audience. Chapter 5 examines the narrative representation of consciousness and interiority in the legends, a representation that allows the audience to empathize more directly with the inner workings of each saint. The narrative often relies on the use of romantic and other secular literary tropes to represent the saints' interiority to make their lives more accessible to the audience. It is clear from von Contzen's analysis that the poet-narrator has a strong command of the function of literary tropes and genres to elicit specific responses from the reader.

Chapter 6 is one of the most important chapters in the book, particularly for Older Scots literary scholars. It examines the intersection of time, space, and Scottishness in the *Legendary*,

particularly its lack of an overt sense of nationalism that often characterizes other Older Scots works. Nationalism shapes the political discourse in Barbour's *Brus* and in Andrew of Wyntoun's *Orygynale Cronykil*; however, the *Scottish Legendary* is devoid of political narrative. Instead, the *Legendary* expresses Scottishness in a more subtle manner. For example, miracle accounts for St Ninian and St Machar, the two Scottish saints included in the *Legendary*, include the specific names of witnesses and their place of origin, providing a perspective into everyday life in Scotland (pp. 195-6). Both legends cast English characters in a negative light while highlighting their potential for salvation: "not all is lost for the English—they are certainly deserving of receiving divine grace, but they have to make an extra effort" (p. 196). Anglo-Scottish relationships are peripheral in the *Scottish Legendary*, yet they are present enough to hint at how the animosity between these two kingdoms permeated these relationships with local saints. However, the *Legendary's* Scottishness is found more in its use of the vernacular and how it caters to local audiences rather than in an explicit articulation of anti-English nationalism.

Narrativity permits von Contzen to examine how the *Scottish Legendary* differs not only from the *South English Legendary*, but also from other Older Scots literary works. This is why Chapter 6 is, to this reviewer, one of the most valuable in the monograph: the *Scottish Legendary's* tangential engagement with Scottishness and Anglo-Scottish relations contrasts sharply with the treatment of Scottish identity in works such as *The Brus* and the *Orygynale Cronykil*. Von Contzen's monograph is further enhanced by the inclusion of an appendix that examines questions of authorship, content arrangement, and language in the *Legendary*, offering a more thorough look at the technical aspects of its composition. This book is an important and highly recommended contribution to the field of medieval Scottish vernacular literature.

Marian Toledo Candelaria
University of Waterloo

REVIEW

Virginia Blankenhorn. *Tradition, Transmission, Transformation: Essays on Scottish Gaelic Poetry and Song. Studies in the History and Culture of Scotland Monograph Series. Oxford: Peter Lang, 2019. Pp. 528. ISBN 978-1788745529. £50.00.*

The accomplished American ethnomusicologist Alan Lomax famously characterized the Scottish Gaelic song tradition as “the finest flower of Western Europe.” There is a massive repertoire of material and it can be enjoyed at a purely aesthetic level, whether in the form of archival recordings of fieldwork amongst native Gaels in rural settings, or in the form of arranged and polished musical products for the global market. Virginia Blankenhorn’s massive volume on the Gaelic song tradition should put to rest any assumption that it represents merely the “rude speech of a barbarous people, who had few thoughts to express,” as Samuel Johnson claimed, or that it lacks the sophistication, diversity, expressiveness, or unsolved puzzles of any other well-developed form of cultural expression.

The eight chapters of this volume—most of which have appeared previously as articles but are here elaborated and interconnected—are arranged consecutively by the themes of tradition, transmission, and transformation, although these topics recur throughout all of the chapters. The dominant mode of presenting, teaching, and analyzing Gaelic song-poetry in the academy (when it is recognized at all) is as silent texts on the printed page. Blankenhorn brings her musical skills and performance experience, informed by deep engagement with both Scottish Gaelic and Irish traditions, to these materials to explore how each of these dimensions can shed light on the others. The results greatly enhance our knowledge and appreciation of their artistic, emotional, and social significance.

The first chapter contains a fresh analysis of song metres, categorizing patterns at different levels of granularity: syllabic rhythm, line types, and verse structures. Blankenhorn originally developed this approach for vernacular Irish (Gaelic) song poetry in a previous volume devoted to that topic, allowing her to demonstrate

the surprising degree of divergence between these two sibling traditions and to speculate on the reasons for these differences.

Gaelic song tradition contains items of many different origins, styles, and functions, and the second chapter demonstrates how a genre classification scheme can shed light on the diversity and functions of the songs from the vantage point of those who sang them in the past.

The vernacular tradition is not confined solely to the cultural expressions made by and pertaining to the Highland peasantry but also contains elements of the high-register versification of the professional classes who were driven to extinction in the eighteenth century with the last vestiges of the patronage system as the native aristocracy were assimilated into Anglo-British society. The third chapter investigates the syllabic metres used by the medieval literati and apparently sung, in some fashion, to the accompaniment of the *clàrsach* (wire-strung harp). Her analysis incorporating linguistic, metrical, musical, and performative considerations, informed by experimentation with representative pieces, comes to original and creative conclusions, such as the probability that some metres were defined intentionally to place emphasis on syllables not stressed in speech, thus adding to the obfuscation of poetic utterances as noted by medieval commentators. In the fourth chapter, Blankenhorn subjects William Matheson's reconstruction of the performance of "strophic metre" to careful scrutiny, confirming his working principles.

One of the oldest and most celebrated song-poems in the Gaelic repertoire is the lament composed by Mòr (often anglicized as "Marion") Chaimbeul for her husband Gregor Ruadh MacGregor, executed by her own family in 1570. The song was recorded from a range of tradition-bearers over the last several decades and the fifth chapter examines not just the textual record (since 1813) but also the musical manifestation of the lament, enabling Blankenhorn to propose distinct lines of transmission of the tradition. This offers an effective model of investigation for other such iconic song-poems in the Gaelic canon.

Keening has been investigated in a number of important studies in recent years, although these have tended to focus on Irish and/or medieval sources. Blankenhorn devotes a chapter to this important channel for the female voice in Scottish Gaelic tradition, including

complementary Irish sources, teasing apart the strands of available materials and identifying nuances of its musical dimension, its use to convey and regulate emotional trauma, and its intersections with male-dominant modes of literary expression. Here again juxtaposing text, music, and performance contexts facilitates revelations in this and other female-specific genres.

The interface between Gaelic oral tradition and print-based literature in Gaelic and English is a permeable one, enabling “fakelore” to enter into the repertoire. The seventh chapter traces the evolution and infiltration of one such item, “Cumha MhicCruimein” (“MacCrimmon’s Lament”). Although the chorus is based on a traditional *piobaireachd* song, Walter Scott composed stanzas in English that were later translated into Gaelic, which were then given the semblance of authenticity by being tied to a falsely interpreted episode from the 1745 Jacobite Rising. It is a cautionary tale of the influence of print media and of the myriad ways in which oral tradition can be reinterpreted and reshaped by the expectations of audience and performer.

The final chapter is a re-evaluation of the legacy of Marjory Kennedy-Fraser, who gained notoriety in the early twentieth century for her art-music adaptations of Gaelic songs. Blankenhorn argues that Kennedy-Fraser has been unfairly reviled for her interventions and unappreciated for her valuable ethnographic efforts. There is much ensuing discussion about issues of authenticity and appropriation, demonstrating that they have a longer history in the Gaelic context than might be expected.

This volume marks the slow but continued maturation of Scottish Gaelic ethnomusicology and offers guidance for future work. Blankenhorn is a thorough researcher who has been engaged in this field since the 1970s, so there are few faults worth mentioning. Her critique of James Ross’s classification scheme for Gaelic song (pp. 69–77) is based on the assumption that it is a flat taxonomy rather than a faceted classification system. Although he did not provide exemplars of its application to clarify such ambiguities, he stated his intentions in such statements as “Because of the several important facets of song, the possibility of a plurality of criteria

which takes due account of each of them has to be considered.”³⁷¹ His approach of applying independent, multiple criteria remains relevant given the near ubiquity of faceted classification schemes in modern database-driven query systems.

Questions of authenticity, ownership, and appropriation recur in the volume, which is unsurprising given the commodification of culture in the global marketplace and the asymmetric relations between the gaelophone and anglophone worlds. Song-poetry is a crucial cultural resource in current Gaelic revitalization efforts in both Scotland and Nova Scotia, and many of those involved are making a serious and earnest effort to understand and reanimate songs, regardless of the transformation of social and material contexts since their composition. Some of Blankenhorn’s more trenchant remarks about modern singing styles and performance contexts (pp. 147–52, 404–07, 477–79)—not uncommon amongst the “old guard”—may serve to discourage those doing their best on behalf of a highly endangered language whose support systems are strained, at best.

I wonder if beginning the volume with technical aspects of analysis—metres and structures in particular—may overwhelm the non-specialist and if changing the order of topics so as to begin with discussion of the genres, functions, and social contexts for Gaelic song-poetry might have created a less intimidating text.

In any case, *Tradition, Transmission, Transformation* provides compelling case studies of the most important form of Scottish Highland cultural expression, one that deserves to be scrutinized by anyone interested in gaining a deeper understanding of Scottish tradition in its fulness. It would be a real boon if such work could finally draw proper attention to fieldwork recordings of Gaelic immigrant singers scattered in North American archives.

Michael Newton
Independent Researcher

³⁷¹ James Ross, “A Classification of Gaelic Folk-Song,” *Scottish Studies* 1 (1957): 96.

REVIEW

Scott Hames. *The Literary Politics of Scottish Devolution: Voice, Class, Nation*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019. Pp. 352. ISBN: 9781474418140 (Paperback); ISBN: 9781474418133 (Hardback). £24.99/£80.00.

Scott Hames' *The Literary Politics of Scottish Devolution: Voice, Class, Nation* undertakes the ambitious project of providing a meticulously researched and contextualised, yet theoretically complex and sophisticated, critical exploration of cultural devolution as historical account of Scotland's constitutional development and as a phenomenon that connects Scottish politics, culture, and literature. Hames invites us to read the interaction between the cultural and political through the tension between "the Dream," namely "a story of cultural vanguardism in which writers and artists play the starring role in the recuperation of national identity, cultural confidence and democratic agency," and "the Grind," or the "history of devolution as a shrewd and sometimes grubby saga of electoral expediency" (p. xii). Hames' concern is not to assess the truth-value of the assumptions built into the paradigm of cultural devolution but to delineate a critical history of its emergence and "reality-shaping" powers (p. 4).

In the Introduction, Hames frames the cross-fertilization between Scottish culture and politics that developed between the 1970s and 1999 in relation to the tensions and alignments that crystallized out of the encounter between cultural and party politics. On the one hand, "the Dream" was legible in the political sphere only inasmuch as it played out within the frame constituted by machine politics of "the Grind." On the other hand, the radical force of "the Dream" was limited by the pursuit of identarian empowerment that was central to the rhetoric of cultural and political devolution in Scottish literature and politics alike. Hames draws on nationalism studies and the work of political theorists Wendy Brown and Nancy Fraser to explore this relationship.

The seven main chapters of *The Literary Politics of Scottish Devolution* trace these dynamics as they play out in the decades preceding devolution. Chapters 1 and 2 respectively explore the

literary nationalism of small magazines published between 1967 and 1979 and the governmental processes, Bills, and Papers, through which self-government was discussed in the same years. Chapter 3 addresses the emergence of the assertion of a Scottish dimension out of party politics and the work of cultural and political magazines between 1979 and 1987. Chapter 4 traces the ideas of self-determination expressed in the pages of the *Edinburgh Review* and the “Self-Determination and Power” conference (1990) on the one hand, and animating the initiatives of the organized movement for self-government on the other, most notably the publication of *A Claim of Right for Scotland* and the organization of the “A Day for Scotland” event (1990). Chapter 5 is devoted to James Robertson’s *And the Land Lay Still* (2010) as the most important conscious literary representation of the journey to devolution. Chapter 6 connects the development of a vernacular literary space, and the associated centrality of working-class speech, to the search for pre-political bases in which to root the assertion of national distinctiveness besides and beneath the civic institutionalism enshrined in the *Claim of Right*. Chapter 7 engages with the vernacular literary politics that underpin the spectacle, and limits, of representation in parliamentary discourse and in the writing of Irvine Welsh, A. L. Kennedy, and James Kelman. The Conclusion reflects on the legacies of the rhetorical strategies through which devolution was achieved and the possibilities for critique that these open up.

The Literary Politics of Scottish Devolution offers a series of challenges for practitioners of Scottish Literature to grapple with. First of all, Hames encourages us to look beyond any “illusory divide between culture and politics, and towards their reintegration” (p. 39). Connected to this is Hames’ persistent concern with the need for Scot Lit to self-reflectively address the constraints generated by its fetishization of identarian empowerment and “familiar display-identities” (p. 306). It is imperative that we exit the cul-de-sac represented by the positioning of nationhood and identity as the “meta-tropes of all Scottish writing” (p. 305) if we want to be able to attend to “other forms and stakes of ‘the political’ in literature and culture” (p. 306), which for Hames constitutes the direction the field should be moving in. *The Literary Politics of Scottish Devolution* crucially develops a methodology through which this can be

achieved by drawing on nationalism studies and critical and political theory to frame and theorise in-depth historical and archival research into Scottish cultural, literary, and political contexts.

Ultimately, by owning up to the political constitution of Scottish literature and exploiting the heuristic potential this move affords, Hames' study embodies a form of literary criticism that points the way forward for what might be termed "post-Indyref Scot Lit criticism." *The Literary Politics of Scottish Devolution* evinces the maturity of the field, in which old binaries between theoretical and contextualist or recuperative approaches, nationalist and non-nationalist perspectives may well be overcome—once their encounter is craftily staged in the way Hames does.

Arianna Introna
Independent Researcher

REVIEW

David Torrance. *Ruth Davidson's Conservatives: The Scottish Tory Party, 2011-19.* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020. Pp. 244. ISBN: 9781474455657 (ePub). £19.99 (PBK/ePub); £90.00 (HC/PDF).

With *Ruth Davidson's Conservatives: The Scottish Tory Party, 2011-19*, David Torrance has perpetuated an immense publishing run on contemporary Scottish politics. With biographies of Nicola Sturgeon, Alex Salmond, David Steel, and George Younger, and a bevy of books on Scotland's constitutional dilemmas since 2014, it has become hard for Scottish politicians to do anything without him writing a book about it. This collection of essays, covering its subject from almost every possible angle, only strengthens the feeling that Scottish political debate has had since 2014: that, as P. G. Wodehouse would have put it, meditations upon the constitution are so plentiful that it is almost impossible to fling a brick in any public place without damaging some seminar on the independence question.

The most striking thing about this collection, both its strength and its weakness, is the disparity between the official subject matter of the book and its real focus—between Ruth Davidson's tenure of the Scottish Conservatives and the development of Scottish unionism during and after the referendum on independence. The consolidation of anti-independence opinion behind the formerly moribund party is plainly what makes this topic worth writing about, and this is confirmed by the dearth of any meaningful comment on the other parts of the title topic—namely, the first three years of Ruth Davidson's leadership preceding the independence referendum, and Davidson herself. On the latter point, what is there really to say? Aside, I mean, from what Torrance himself states in the first chapter, “Davidson had not contributed ‘any coherent or significant ideas to the intellectual or substantive case for the union’” (p. 30). That is one way of putting it.

The chapters in this book, then, which actually get to the heart of the matter, are those by Mark Diffley, Richard Hayton, Alan Convery, and Gerry Hassan. Diffley shows that the resurgence in

Scottish Conservative fortunes can be firmly dated to the early months of 2016 and the Scottish Parliament elections of May that year. In other words, there was no rallying of unionist opinion immediately after the referendum in September 2014, as there undoubtedly was of nationalist supporters. This is unsurprising—the aggravation of defeat is a far better political mobilizer than the relief of victory. The opening for unionist consolidation came instead after the Scottish National Party had become utterly dominant after the May 2015 British general election, when it was the turn of unionists to feel embattled.

Richard Hayton, meanwhile, reacquaints us with the eminent political scientist Jim Bulpitt's concept of "central autonomy" as the Conservative party's perennial objective—that is, the maximizing of the British government's room for manoeuvre in affairs of state, with the fewest restrictions possible placed on it by other actors. Although Bulpitt did not live to see the introduction of devolution for Scotland and Wales in 1999, his theorizing of "territoriality" is plainly relevant here. As Hayton correctly says, devolution has brought mixed blessings from this point of view. Of course, the establishment of new representative institutions created new agents who could interfere with Downing Street's prerogatives, but conversely those institutions had their remits restricted mostly to questions of "low politics" (administration of public services, for instance), rather than the more exhilarating highs of foreign policy, the constitution, and the big questions of fiscal and monetary policy. On this reading, the problem with Brexit is that it has wrecked this distinction between high and low. It is simultaneously a "high" constitutional and diplomatic issue and immersed in the "low" politics of agricultural subsidies, commercial regulation, and fisheries.

Alan Convery surveys the strands in the Conservatives' unionist ideology over the past twenty years. Both his and Gerry Hassan's contribution chart the decline of a Scottish unionism that once "celebrated its Scottish credentials and traditions" (p. 183), down into the miasma of Thatcherite intransigence. The question then becomes how far the party's recovery under Ruth Davidson's leadership represents a genuine ideological recovery for unionism as a whole. Here, I think, we come to a problem. It comes naturally to the Scottish intelligentsia to chide Conservatives for "their reluctance to concede any ground to the SNP having prevented them

from thinking imaginatively about the future of the Union” (p. 143). But it is not clear what “thinking imaginatively” about devolution really means (besides devolving ever more powers to Holyrood), nor what good that will really do the union. The 2016 Scotland Act is a case in point—a significant expansion of the Scottish government’s autonomy was swallowed whole by the SNP and then forgotten about. The point, of course, is that the SNP has no interest in being mollified, only in being aggrieved. As long as the nationalists keep the mantle of “standing up for Scotland,” there will be little getting around that. That is why Davidson’s strongest moments in her leadership were not when she was engaged in “thinking creatively” about the union, but when she lambasted the SNP for being obsessed with the independence question to the detriment of the public services that they were supposed to be running.

In other words, if the union is to survive, it is likelier to do so by the independence question going away than by unionists thinking up a way to sell the concept of the UK to Scottish voters. One possibility, unexplored in this collection, is that it is simply not possible to reconstruct the old unionist consensus by rhetoric or reform alone. Perhaps the post-war dispensation did not just go away because Thatcherites decided it should, but because the social institutions it represented—the trade union movement for Scottish Labour, and the Church of Scotland for Scottish Tories—withered away. Both of these rooted their respective parties in Scottish society *and* within a wider ideological framework of British politics.

This book starts with a proviso that it was completed before the British general election of December 2019. And of course, the proviso itself was made before the enormity of the coronavirus pandemic hit us all. Both events seem to have strengthened the SNP’s command of Scottish politics. If that holds true to the Scottish parliament election due in May 2021, the questions this book grapples with will only become more urgent for unionists.

Taym Saleh
Queen’s College
University of Cambridge

THE FRANK WATSON BOOK PRIZE IN SCOTTISH HISTORY

The Frank Watson Book Prize for the best book or monograph published on Scottish History in 2017 and 2018 has been awarded to:

Timothy J. Shannon, *Indian Captive, Indian King: Peter Williamson in America and Britain* (Harvard University Press, 2018). ISBN: 9780674976320.

We are delighted to honour Dr. Shannon's work alongside the many esteemed recipients of this prestigious prize.

Impressed with the range and quality of the submissions last year, the Judging Committee would also like to congratulate Dr. Aaron Allen as "honorary mention" for the Frank Watson Prize, and Dr. Valerie Wallace for the "best first book" published in 2017/2018.

Aaron Allen, *Building Early Modern Edinburgh: A Social History of Craftwork and Incorporation* (Edinburgh University Press, 2018).

Valerie Wallace, *Scottish Presbyterianism and Settler Colonial Politics: Empire of Dissent*, Cambridge Imperial & Post-Colonial Studies Series (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018)

The judges of the Frank Watson Book Prize wish to thank all those who entered the competition.

* * *

The Guelph Centre for Scottish Studies is currently accepting submissions for the Frank Watson Book Prize for the best monograph and/or original work on Scottish History published in 2019 or 2020. We welcome all submissions of monographs, edited collections, and/or book-length original works on Scottish History published between 1 January 2019 and 31 December 2020. The Prize consists of a cash award, an invitation to present a plenary lecture, and permission to advertise success in the competition.

Authors, publishers, or other sponsors should submit three copies of books for consideration by 30 June 2021 to:

Professor Kevin James
Scottish Studies Foundation Chair
The Centre for Scottish Studies
Department of History
University of Guelph, Guelph, ON, Canada
N1G 2W1