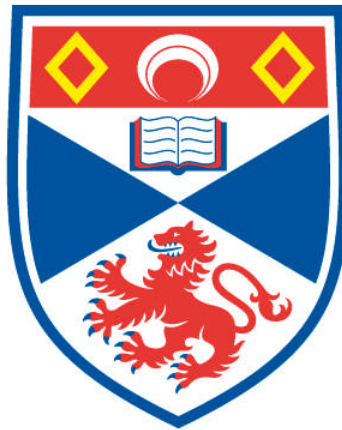


PROPAGANDA AND PERSUASION IN THE EARLY SCOTTISH REFORMATION, c.1527-1557

Elizabeth Leona Tapscott

**A Thesis Submitted for the Degree of PhD
at the
University of St Andrews**



2013

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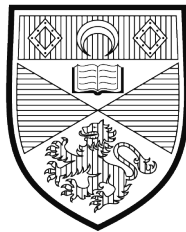
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Elizabeth Leona Tapscott



University of
St Andrews

Thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D. at the University of St Andrews

July 2013

DECLARATIONS

1. Candidate's declarations:

I, Elizabeth Leona Tapscott, hereby certify that this thesis, which is approximately 80,000 words in length, has been written by me, that it is the record of work carried out by me and that it has not been submitted in any previous application for a higher degree.

I was admitted as a research student in September 2008 and as a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in June 2009; the higher study for which this is a record was carried out in the University of St Andrews between 2008 and 2013.

Date: Signature of candidate:

2. Supervisor's declaration:

I hereby certify that the candidate has fulfilled the conditions of the Resolution and Regulations appropriate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the University of St Andrews and that the candidate is qualified to submit this thesis in application for that degree.

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ABSTRACT

The decades before the Scottish Reformation Parliament of 1560 witnessed the unprecedented use of a range of different media to disseminate the Protestant message and to shape beliefs and attitudes. By placing these works within their historical context, this thesis explores the ways in which various media – academic discourse, courtly entertainments, printed poetry, public performances, preaching and pedagogical tools – were employed by evangelical and Protestant reformers to persuade and/or educate different audiences within sixteenth-century Scottish society. The thematic approach examines not only how the reformist message was packaged, but how the movement itself and its persuasive agenda developed, revealing the ways in which it appealed to ever broader circles of Scottish society.

In their efforts to bring about religious change, the reformers capitalised on a number of traditional media, while using different media to address different audiences. Hoping to initiate reform from within Church institutions, the reformers first addressed their appeals to the kingdom's educated elite. When their attempts at reasoned academic discourse met with resistance, they turned their attention to the monarch, James V, and the royal court. Reformers within the court utilised courtly entertainments intended to amuse the royal circle and to influence the young king to oversee the reformation of religion within his realm. When, following James's untimely death in 1542, the throne passed to his infant daughter, the reformers took advantage of the period of uncertainty that accompanied the minority. Through the relatively new technology of print, David Lindsay's poetry and English propaganda presented the reformist message to audiences beyond the kingdom's elite. Lindsay and other reformers also exploited the oral media of religious theatre in public spaces, while preaching was one of the most theologically significant, though under-researched, means of disseminating the reformist message. In addition to works intended to convert, the reformers also recognised the need for literature to edify the already converted. To this end, they produced pedagogical tools for use in individual and group devotions. Through the examination of these various media of persuasion, this study contributes to our understanding of the means by which reformed ideas were disseminated in Scotland, as well as the development of the reformist movement before 1560.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On an adventure such as this, one accrues a number of debts – some professional, some personal, all significant. It is with great pleasure that I acknowledge them here. First of all, I wish to express my deepest thanks and gratitude to Professor Roger A. Mason for his guidance, sage advice, critical eye and seemingly endless patience. Further thanks are extended to my thesis examiners, Professor Alec Ryrie (Durham) and Professor Andrew Pettegree (St Andrews), for their invaluable insight and counsel. I have also profited from the support of the community of scholars within the St Andrews Reformation Studies Institute and the Institute for Scottish Historical Research, most notably Professor Andrew Pettegree, Professor Steve Murdoch, Dr. Malcolm Walsby and Dr. Emily Michelson. Special thanks are owed to fellow RSI/ISHR postgraduate Adam Marks for proof-reading, venison stew and five years of commiseration. I would also like to thank the staff at the University of St Andrews Library (especially Lynda Kinloch in St. Mary's), the National Archives of Scotland, the National Library of Scotland, the British Library and the Folger Shakespeare Library (Washington, DC). The support staff in the St Andrews School of History have also been invaluable, especially Elsie Johnstone, Dorothy Christie and Audrey Wishart. A number of conversations at various conferences have provided interesting insight into various aspects of this thesis, and for that I gratefully acknowledge Professor A. A. MacDonald and Dr. Jamie Reid Baxter. All errors, however, remain my own.

To my friends and family, who put up with me throughout this journey, are owed a further debt of thanks. Bess Rhodes and Sophie Mullins, in addition to making the office a pleasant and rewarding place to work, have become treasured friends. Ginger Steele and Birgit Poopuu endured my historical babbling with grace and good humour. Claire Hawes, Martyna Mirecka and Wayne Cuthbertson offered sanctuary in a moment of need. Additional thanks to Claire, for helping me take care of thesis logistics from over 3000 miles away. Special thanks go to the wonderful staff at Costa, St Andrews for coffee, writing utensils and encouraging smiles. My Scottish family, the Plenderleiths, provided me with a home-away-from-home, while Jerry and Linda-Anne Beaulier have cared for me and mine as their own. David Williams was willing to be a sounding board, and for that I say 'diolch yn fawr'. Bill Anderson kept me well supplied with books and cheerful conversation. He was also far too kind to turn down a

plea to proof-read. The Carslaw Family took me into their kitchen – Anna’s and Olivia’s laughter, creativity and sweetness sustained me through many a rainy Monday. The McLoughlin Family and Granny Bonnar have often provided refuge for a weary researcher, while Lucy Hampton, Agnes Burdette, Bill Bryan, Paul and Janet Childress, and Kay and Ernie Owens have encouraged me from afar. Andy Drinnon has been a dear friend and encouraging colleague since we met in our first week at St Andrews, while Hannah Mitchell has made Roman history almost as interesting as the sixteenth century. Heidi Sexton pushed me like a mom and wee Kara restored my faith in miracles. Katherine Cooper-Wyma supplied much-needed laughter and insight over countless pots of tea. Joanna and Jared Lamb provided a most congenial place to live, not to mention pleasant company, for weeks at a time while I was working in Washington, DC. Amber Wackford, my oldest friend, shared her valuable writing space, encouraging words and intelligent conversation. She also allowed herself to be roped into proofreading one last time. Through it all, Claire McLoughlin has been a true friend, even in bog-factors of $9\frac{3}{4}$. She has continually gone above and beyond the call of duty. For that I am truly grateful.

The members of my immediate family have endured my historical obsession the longest and, therefore, deserve recognition for not defenestrating me years ago. My younger sister Megan has been my hero and an inspiration since she was two. Matt and Jesse have kept me from taking myself too seriously, while my nephew Noah has been a source of delight and motivation. But perhaps my greatest debt is owed to my parents. Without their unconditional love and unwavering support, as well as their innumerable sacrifices, I would never have had the chance or the courage to pursue a subject I love.

ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

Abbreviations

<i>BL</i>	British Library, London
<i>FB</i>	Andrew Pettigree, Malcolm Walsby and Alexander Wilkinson (eds), <i>French Vernacular Books. Books Published in the French Language before 1601</i> (Leiden, 2007).
<i>LP</i>	J. Gardiner and R.H. Brodie, et al. (eds), <i>Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII</i> , (21 Vols, London, 1864-1920) (<i>State Papers Online</i> : http://gale.cengage.co.uk/state-papers-online-15091714.aspx).
<i>LW</i>	J. Pelikan, H. T. Lehmann, et al. (eds and trans), <i>Luther's Works</i> , (55 vols, St. Louis and Philadelphia, 1955-1986).
<i>NAS</i>	National Archives of Scotland, Edinburgh
<i>NB</i>	Andrew Pettegree and Malcolm Walsby (eds), <i>Netherlandish Books</i> , (2 vols, Lieden, 2010)
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> , (Oxford, 2004) (www.oxforddnb.com).
<i>RSCHS</i>	<i>Records of the Scottish Church History Society</i>
<i>RPS</i>	Keith M. Brown, et al. (eds), <i>The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707</i> (St Andrews, 2007-2011) (www.rps.ac.uk).
<i>SHR</i>	<i>Scottish Historical Review</i>
<i>SP</i>	<i>State Papers</i> (Manuscripts available online at <i>State Papers Online</i> : http://gale.cengage.co.uk/state-papers-online-15091714.aspx).
<i>STC</i>	A.W. Pollard and G.R. Redgrave (eds), <i>A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland, & Ireland and of English books printed abroad 1475–1640</i> (2nd edn, 3 vols, London, 1986–91).
<i>TAMO</i>	<i>The Unabridged Acts and Monuments Online</i> or <i>TAMO</i> (HRI Online Publications, Sheffield, 2011). (www.johnfoxe.org).
<i>USTC</i>	<i>Universal Short Title Catalogue</i> (St Andrews, 2011-). (www.ustc.ac.uk).
<i>VD 16</i>	<i>Verzeichnis der im deutschen Sprachbereich erschienenen Drucke des 16. Jahrhunderts</i> (25 vols, Stuttgart, 1983-2000).
<i>WK</i>	David Laing (ed.), <i>The Works of John Knox</i> (6 vols, Edinburgh, 1895).

Conventions

All dates have been given assuming the new year to begin on 1 January, unless otherwise indicated. All quotations from primary sources have retained original spellings, while silently expanding contractions and abbreviations. The title ‘Sir’ is used to designate a man of noble standing, while ‘sir’ is used as a title for priests.

INTRODUCTION

In the first half of the sixteenth century, Scots seeking religious reform faced a considerable challenge. Not only was the Scottish ecclesiastical establishment reluctant to reform itself, but theirs was also a society generally wary of change, suspicious of innovation and struggling for stability. While Martin Luther and his followers were inciting religious rebellion on the Continent, Scotland was still recovering from the disastrous Flodden campaign of 1513 and the turbulent royal minority that followed. Although the country experienced a degree of relative stability during the personal rule of James V (1528-1542), it was plunged back into uncertainty by his untimely death and yet another long royal minority. As a result of the succession of an infant female, the kingdom became a focus, and sometimes a battlefield, for Franco-English imperial and religious aspirations. In this climate of domestic tension and international pressure, the reformers proposed nothing short of spiritual and cultural revolution. Their radical theology did more than challenge the doctrines and practices of the Church: it struck at the very core of human understanding and experience in the late medieval world. The changes wrought by reformed faith would permeate all levels of society and culture, radically reshaping aspects of everyday life – from who was fit to govern to the naming of children, from the re-alignment of diplomatic alliances to what was permissible to eat on a Friday. The spiritual challenges issued by the reformers carried very immediate, tangible consequences that were disconcerting to many.

Consequently, evangelical and Protestant reformers recognised that those in positions of authority – princes, noblemen, churchmen and academics – would require persuading to adopt or permit reform, while the broader laity would also need to be convinced of the validity of new beliefs. Furthermore, those who converted would need to be educated in the unfamiliar doctrines. Indeed, in their attempts to encourage others to abandon tradition and to embrace religious revolution, reformers throughout Europe found it necessary to package their radical messages in familiar, albeit modified, wrappings. At the same time, they also took advantage of the new technology of print. In all of these respects, the Scottish reformers were no different than their Continental counterparts, and in the decades preceding the Reformation Parliament of 1560, produced propaganda and persuasive literature for their countrymen. By placing these works within their historical contexts, this thesis explores the ways in which various

media – academic discourse, courtly entertainments, printed poetry and polemic, public performances, preaching and pedagogical tools – were employed by reformers in their attempts to persuade and/or educate different audiences within sixteenth-century Scottish society.

Appeals on behalf of religious reform were tailored to specific audiences, and although some of these works were later redirected to a different or a wider audience, awareness of their original target audiences is essential to understanding the development of reform in early sixteenth-century Scotland. As with similar movements on the Continent, the Reformation in Scotland began in the universities. Early reformers, like Patrick Hamilton (1504?-1528) and Alexander Alesius (1500-1565), hoped to convince the kingdom's intelligentsia to support reform by means of reasoned analysis and argument through the medium of academic discourse. When these efforts were rebuffed by the conservative universities, an increasing number of appeals were directed to the king and the temporal elite. However, this time, reformers, including the courtier-poet Sir David Lindsay of the Mount (1486-1555), turned to the more playful vehicle of courtly entertainments. The unexpected death of James V and the instability that followed ushered in another shift in focus, this time to the nobility and beyond. Subsequently, as we shall see, the reformist message was presented to ever-widening audiences through the use of oral presentations, such as sermons and plays, as well as through print. Through an examination of these sources, this thesis traces the evolution of the reformist movement and its persuasive agenda before 1558. When faced with each successive failure or obstacle, the reformers cast their nets a little wider, with the result that appeals were addressed to radiating circles of Scottish society.

Historiography

Compared to the Continental and English Reformations, the amount of reforming material produced in pre-1560 Scotland was limited (or at least little has survived), so most of the sources under investigation in this study are familiar, if not well-known, to scholars of the Scottish Reformation. Although frequently referred to in studies of the period, analysis is usually confined to individual texts and/or authors. And these sources have never been brought together with the specific purpose of examining them systematically as an interconnected corpus of material. Moreover, bringing these works

together and grouping them by media provides fresh insight into the development of persuasive appeals in the early Scottish Reformation. Studies of a similar nature have been conducted on the literature of reform in various European countries as well as the Reformation period as a whole. The most notable are Robert Scribner's ground-breaking *For the Sake of the Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (1981) and Andrew Pettegree's *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (2005).¹ Both books explore the various means by which the doctrinal messages of the Protestant Reformation were packaged and presented.

Although Pettegree provides an impressive survey of persuasive materials employed throughout Europe during the Reformation Era, Scotland receives only cursory mention. This is perhaps due to the paucity of Scottish materials. But it is also indicative of a trend within general Reformation studies of grouping Scotland together with England, usually giving priority to the southern neighbour.² Among the general Reformation histories that do make mention of Scotland, most focus on the post-1560 years, most notably concentrating on the Reformation Parliament, John Knox, the overthrow of Mary Queen of Scots, and the rise of militantly Calvinist Scotland.³ A noteworthy exception is Euan Cameron's treatment of 'Reformations Delayed: France and Scotland before 1559' in his survey of *The European Reformation*.⁴

In general, the German Reformation has received the most historical attention in regard to its propaganda. This emphasis is due to the survival of vast quantities of persuasive material from the period, as well as the region's central role in the reforming movement in general. Since the publication of Scribner's ground-breaking work many monographs and essay collections have been written on various aspects of German

¹ R.W. Scribner, *For the Sake of the Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation* (Cambridge, 1981); A. Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion* (Cambridge, 2005).

² Examples include D. MacCulloch, *Reformation: Europe's House Divided* (London, 2004) and C. Lindberg, *The European Reformations* (Oxford, 1996). Within the context of histories of the British Reformations, A. Ryrie's *The Age of Reformation: The Tudor and Stewart Realms 1485-1603* (Harlow, 2009) is also heavily weighted towards the English experience.

³ An example of this is M.F. Graham's chapter 'Scotland' in *Reformation World*, ed. A. Pettegree (Oxford, 2000), 410-432. The chapter provides a brief discussion of the pre-1560 reform years, mostly focusing on the late fifteenth-century Lollards of Kyle, with fleeting mention Arran's 'Godly Fit' and the Catholic reforms of Archbishop John Hamilton. However, it focuses on Calvinist Scotland.

⁴ E. Cameron, *The European Reformation* (Oxford, 1991). The section provides a clear, albeit very brief, summary of the development of Scottish religious reform leading up to the Reformation Crisis of 1558-1560. However, the portrayal of James V as 'uniformly hostile to heresy' (p.289) is challenged in this thesis. A later section of Cameron's work presents the English and Scottish Reformations after 1560, analysing the kingdoms independently, except where contemporary interests overlapped.

Reformation propaganda. Notable among these is Mark U. Edwards's seminal study on Luther's dominance of the printed literature of the period – *Printing, Propaganda and Martin Luther*. Also of note is a collection of essays on *The Transmission of Ideas in the Lutheran Reformation*, which examines the reformers' need to package and disseminate the Protestant message to a primarily illiterate laity through drama, music, and preaching.⁵

The various individual media of persuasion employed across Reformation Europe also have received considerable academic attention. A number of scholars have conducted regional studies on the use of music and drama.⁶ An extremely useful volume on *Preachers and People in the Reformation and Early Modern Period*, provides insight into not only the various preaching traditions of the Catholic, Lutheran and Reformed churches, but also regional aspects.⁷ Greg Walker and John King have made contributions to the study of various literary forms – including poetry, performance and print – within the context of the English Reformation.⁸ In 1979 Elizabeth Eisenstein's *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* sparked renewed scholarship on the subject of print media in general.⁹ Since then, pamphlets and other print media have been the focus for numerous scholars.¹⁰ Furthermore, the history of the book in the Renaissance and Reformation has received special attention in recent years, with Andrew Pettegree's *The Book in the Renaissance* providing one of the most significant contributions.¹¹

⁵ M.U. Edwards, *Printing, Propaganda and Martin Luther* (Minneapolis, 2005); H. Robinson-Hammerstein (ed.), *The Transmission of Ideas in the Lutheran Reformation* (Dublin, 1989).

⁶ Contributions to the study of music include R. Wagner Oettinger, *Music as Propaganda in the German Reformation* (Aldershot, 2001); R. Leaver, *Luther's Liturgical Music: Principles and Implications* (Grand Rapids, 2007); 'Goostly psalmes and spirituall songes': *English and Dutch metrical psalms from Coverdale to Utenhove, 1535-1566* (Oxford, 1991); and 'Metrical psalms and canticles, the Book of Common Prayer, and Thomas Cranmer' in *The Serious Business of Worship: Essays in Honour of Bryan D. Spinks*, eds. M.C. Ross and S. Jones (London, 2010), 101-116. Academic studies of drama in the Reformation include G.K. Waite, *Reformers on Stage: Popular Religious Drama and Religious Propaganda in the Low Countries of Charles V, 1515-1556* (Toronto, 2000); G. Walker, *The Politics of Performance in Early Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge, 1998).

⁷ L. Taylor (ed.), *Preachers and People in the Reformation and Early Modern Period* (Leiden, 2003).

⁸ G. Walker, *Writing Under Tyranny: English Literature and the Henrician Reformation* (Oxford, 2005); J.N. King, *English Reformation Literature: The Tudor Origins of the Protestant Tradition* (Princeton, 1982); *Foxe's Book of Martyrs and Early Modern Print Culture* (Cambridge, 2006).

⁹ E. Eisenstein, *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change* (2 vols, Cambridge, 1979).

¹⁰ T. Watt, *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640* (Cambridge, 1991); P.A. Russell, *Lay Theology in the Reformation: Popular Pamphleteers in Southwest Germany, 1521-1525* (Cambridge, 1986); F. Higman, *Piety and the People: Religious Printing in French, 1511-1551* (Aldershot, 1996).

¹¹ J. Gilmont (ed.), *The Reformation and the Book* (Aldershot, 1998) is just one example. A. Pettegree, *The Book in the Renaissance* (New Haven, 2010).

The above are only a few examples of the wide array of scholarship available on literature and persuasion in the age of the European Reformations.¹² However, while the religious propaganda of the Continental and the English Reformations has received considerable attention, there exists no comprehensive study of its role in the early Scottish Reformation. Such studies as there are tend to focus on one medium or, more often, on one specific source or author. Alasdair A. MacDonald has conducted substantial research on the poetry of the period, as well as the *Gude and Godlie Ballatis* – one of the earliest Protestant song collections in Scots to survive from this period. His forthcoming edition of *The Ballatis* will be the first major critical edition in fifty years. A recent project, led by Jane Dawson, focused on the Wode Psalter (or St Andrews Psalter), a collection of Protestant Partbooks produced by Thomas Wode in St Andrews in the 1560s, thus alerting Scottish historians to the importance of music in promoting and disseminating the reformed message.¹³ Of course the works of John Knox and Sir David Lindsay of the Mount have received considerable attention. Notable studies of Knox include works by Richard Greaves, Roger Mason, Kenneth Farrow and Jane Dawson.¹⁴ The works of Sir David Lindsay have also been the subject of numerous studies. However, these tend to view the texts for their own sake, often outside of their historical contexts. Carol Edington's and Greg Walker's studies are notable exceptions. By examining Lindsay's oeuvre in light of the courts of James IV and James V, Edington is able to analyse the religious and political culture of sixteenth-century Scotland.¹⁵ Walker's research on Lindsay's *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* pays special attention to the political context of the play.¹⁶

¹² For a more extensive reading list, see the bibliography in Pettegree, *Reformation and the Culture of Persuasion*.

¹³ In addition to scholarly publications, the project also incorporated exhibitions, concerts and musical recordings, as well as interactive digital applications. More information on the Wode Psalter Project can be found at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/divinity/research/projects/wode-psalter>.

¹⁴ R.L. Greaves, *Theology and Revolution in the Scottish Reformation: Studies in the Thought of John Knox* (Grand Rapids, 1980); R.A. Mason (ed.), *John Knox and the British Reformations*; K.D. Farrow, *John Knox: Reformation Rhetoric and the Traditions of Scots Prose 1490-1570* (Oxford, 2004); and J. Dawson, 'The Two John Knoxes: England, Scotland and the 1558 Tracts', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 42 (1991), 555-576.

¹⁵ C. Edington, *Court and Culture in Renaissance Scotland: Sir David Lindsay of the Mount (1486-1555)* (East Linton, 1994).

¹⁶ Walker's studies include 'Sir David Lindsay's *Ane satire of the Thrie Estaitis* and the politics of reformation' in *Scottish Literary Journal*, 16 (1989), 5-17; 'Flytyng in the Face of Convention: Protest and Innovation in Lindsay's *Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*' in *Interludes and early modern society: studies in gender, power and theatricality*, eds P. Happé and W. Hüsken (Amsterdam, 2007), 211-38; and a

Even so, all of these distinct sources and studies have yet to be examined together. The closest we come to a more comprehensive study of the literature of the early Scottish Reformation is a collection of minutely focused essays edited by Crawford Gribben and David George Mullan entitled *Literature and the Scottish Reformation*.¹⁷ Containing stand-alone articles on some of the major authors and texts from the Reformation period, the purpose of the collection is to emphasise the literary value of the reformist literature, in contrast to the political/theological focus which has dominated their scholarly interpretations for centuries. However, the articles concentrate on individual texts or authors, analysing them in relative isolation from one another, without setting them within a larger historical context or drawing any overarching conclusions. Furthermore, the collection is heavily weighted towards the years of the Reformation Rebellion (1558-1560) and the post-1560 period, continuing a trend of paying only cursory attention to the preceding decades.

The early period of Scottish reform is often treated as simply a preface for studies focusing on 1558/9 and after.¹⁸ To date, the most authoritative survey of the early decades of Scottish reform is Alec Ryrie's *The Origins of the Scottish Reformation*.¹⁹ Placing events in Scotland within the context of the wider European stage, as well as focusing on violence and the fear of violence, Ryrie outlines a theory of the Scottish Reformation as a revolution. His study is a significant contribution to the growing historical recognition that the ultimate success of the Protestant cause in sixteenth-century Scotland was far from a foregone conclusion. In saying this, Ryrie builds upon the work of previous scholars, like Gordon Donaldson, Ian Cowan and David McRoberts.²⁰ Their efforts to present a more balanced interpretation stood in

chapter on 'Acting government: Sir David Lindsay's *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*' in his own *The Politics of Performance in Early Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge, 1998). Additionally a forthcoming work, edited by John McGavin and Eila Williamson, will focus on early drama in Scotland. More information on the Records of Early English Drama publications can be found at <http://www.reed.utoronto.ca/collections.html>.

¹⁷ C. Gribben and D.G. Mullan (eds), *Literature and the Scottish Reformation* (Aldershot, 2009).

¹⁸ J. Dawson's masterful overview *Scotland Re-formed, 1488-1587* (Edinburgh, 2007) is a notable exception; J. Wormald's *Court, Kirk and Community: Scotland 1470-1625* (Edinburgh, 1981) is an earlier work that also pays significant attention to the early period.

¹⁹ A. Ryrie, *The Origins of the Scottish Reformation* (Manchester, 2006).

²⁰ In 1960, Donaldson's ground-breaking *Scottish Reformation* challenged the traditional confessional histories, claiming that the on the eve of the Reformation, the Scottish Catholic Church was not the corrupt and decayed institution previously depicted. A collection of essays edited by David McRobert's also made significant headway in presenting a considerably more balanced analysis of the period. Twenty

direct opposition to four centuries of confessional history which had treated the Scottish Reformation as a triumphalist Protestant narrative: the light of the reformed faith victorious over the darkness of Catholicism.²¹ As Ryrie demonstrates, the Reformation Parliament of 1560 came as a surprise, not least to the reformers and their supporters.

Martin Dotterweich's unpublished PhD thesis on 'The emergence of evangelical theology in Scotland to 1550' also sheds light on this oft-overlooked period.²² His research utilises the contemporary literature to flesh-out his much larger chronological study of the origins and evolution of Protestant theology in pre-1560 Scotland. Dotterweich's primary focus is not on the reformist works themselves, but the theology contained therein. In his efforts to outline the origins of evangelical thought in Scotland, he uses the literature of reform to trace theological concepts back to Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, Calvin and others. While Dotterweich's thesis focuses on the development of theology, what follows here centers on how that theology was disseminated and the audiences to whom such reformist literature and appeals were addressed.

Source Material and Methodology

The source material constituting the core of this thesis will be familiar to any scholar of early sixteenth-century Scotland, the output of persuasive literature produced by Scots during the period being relatively small. Compared to the amount of material produced by the German, the French, the Swiss and even the English reformers, it would appear as though there was very little produced by Scots for a Scottish audience. This may be due to a number of factors which will be explored in more detail, including proscriptive legislation passed by the Parliament, limited printing resources and the exigencies of survival. Scotland was without the printing facilities that made Luther's propaganda campaign so successful. Consequently, Scottish evangelicals and Protestants were

years later, Cowan's study added a social and cultural facet. G. Donaldson, *The Scottish Reformation* (Cambridge, 1960); D. McRoberts (ed.), *Essays on the Scottish Reformation, 1513-1625* (Glasgow, 1962); I.B. Cowan, *The Scottish Reformation: church and society in sixteenth-century Scotland* (London, 1982).

²¹ This is characterised by the works of D. Hay Fleming, *The Scottish Reformation* (Edinburgh, 1903) and A.F. Mitchell, *The Scottish Reformation: its epochs, episodes, leaders, and distinctive characteristics (being the Baird Lecture for 1899)*, ed. D. Hay Fleming (Edinburgh, 1900).

²² M.H. Dotterweich, 'The emergence of evangelical theology in Scotland to 1550' (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 2002).

reliant on literature smuggled into the kingdom from England and the Continent. Furthermore, sixteenth-century Scotland lacked the urban culture that would have made mass-action effective. The whole dynamic of decision making was very different from that of more metropolitan Germany and the Low Countries, or the more centralised government of the English.²³

Amongst the surviving persuasive material, some media have a stronger showing than others. For example, court poetry survives in relative abundance, primarily through the works of Sir David Lindsay and George Buchanan. However, for other media, there is a paucity of source material, as illustrated by the fact that not a single complete Protestant sermon survives from the period. Therefore, in order to gain an understanding of the role of preaching in the early Reformation, it is necessary to piece together references from other contemporary works, such as John Knox's *History* and correspondence, as well as heresy trial proceedings. Other works survive in early print editions – some as contemporary texts printed abroad (such as John Johnson's devotional manual, printed in Antwerp), while others were belatedly printed in Scotland after 1560 (like John Wedderburn's *Gude and Godlie Ballatis*).²⁴ Only one relevant manuscript source survives from the period – Murdoch Nisbet's annotated Scots New Testament.²⁵

A thematic approach has been adopted, grouping like sources together – academic discourse, courtly entertainments, printed poetry and polemic, public performances, preaching and pedagogical tools. This allows for unique insight into the development of early reformist appeals and, therefore, the movement as a whole. The chronological parameters of this study coincide with major shifts in Scottish religious rhetoric. The thesis begins in 1527, the year that Patrick Hamilton was first accused of heretical beliefs. Hamilton is traditionally viewed as the first outspoken native Protestant in Scotland. 1527 was the year that he began to preach Lutheran doctrine, the first recorded occurrence of Protestant sermons in the kingdom. Conversely, 1557 was chosen as the end date because the language of reform changed significantly with the

²³ See Dawson, *Scotland Re-formed*.

²⁴ John Johnson, *An comfortable exhortation: of oure mooste holy Christen faith and her frutes* ([Antwerp, J.H. Hoochstraten], 1535), USTC 415548; John Wedderburn, *Ane compendious buik. of Godly and spirituall sangis*. (Edinburgh, John Scott, 1565), USTC 516647.

²⁵ BL Egerton 2880, Murdoch Nisbet, New Testament in Scots.

signing of the First Band of the Lords of the Congregation (3 December 1557). Most notable among the tracts produced before the outbreak of the Reformation Rebellion of 1558-60 are Knox's *First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, as well as his open letters to the Regent Mary of Guise, the nobility and the commonalty.²⁶ In these treatises we see a dramatic departure from the earlier rhetoric of justification, salvation and the reform of the church, towards a more militant political theology. In 1559, the reform movement took a physically violent turn with iconoclastic riots in Perth and the armed rising of the Congregation. These events, and the appeals to public opinion that accompanied them, are of a very different character from what precedes them, and lie outside the parameters of this study.

Recent decades have seen an increase in interest in reception and the role of 'the public sphere' in the social and religious upheavals of sixteenth-century Europe. Studies by Peter Burke, Peter Lake and Steven Pincus, as well as Ethan Shagan have challenged the traditional claim, espoused most famously by Jürgen Habermas, that the public sphere did not exist until the French Revolution.²⁷ Burke's study on *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* tracks the development of non-elite culture throughout Europe from 1500 to 1800, while Lake and Pincus examine the manner and motivations of attempts made by various parties in early modern England 'to appeal to and mobilize various publics'.²⁸ Shagan's research analyses the role of the public within the early modern English political arena. He argues that in many instances, the social elite – including the Crown – made a concerted effort to court the wider public, acknowledging that they needed the assent of the common subjects to legitimise their actions.²⁹ Central to each of these studies is the examination of how these appeals were received and understood by their audiences. Unfortunately, surviving evidence for reception in early

²⁶ See John Knox, *On Rebellion*, ed. R.A. Mason (Cambridge, 1994); R.A. Mason, 'Covenant and Commonweal: the language of politics in Reformation Scotland' in *Church, Politics and Society: Scotland 1408-1929*, ed. N. Macdougall (Edinburgh, 1983), 97-126; and Dawson, 'The Two John Knoxes'. John Knox, *First blast of the trumpet against the regiment of women* ([Geneva, Pierre-Jacques Poullain & Antoine Reboul], 1558), USTC 450272.

²⁷ P. Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (London, 1978); P. Lake and S. Pincus (eds), *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England* (Manchester, 2007); E. Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (Cambridge, 2003); J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: an inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*, trans. T. Burger and F. Lawrence (Cambridge, 1989).

²⁸ Lake and Pincus, 'Rethinking the public sphere in early modern England', in *Politics of the Public Sphere*, 3.

²⁹ Shagan, *Popular Politics*, 20.

sixteenth-century Scotland is extremely rare, especially beyond the ranks of the educated elite, and it is, therefore, nearly impossible to ascertain how the sources examined in this thesis were received and interpreted by their respective audiences. Although reception is even less quantifiable within a Scottish context than it is elsewhere, it is possible to gauge how the reformers hoped their works would be received, albeit with the proviso that expectations and realities rarely ever matched up. What is clear is that the writers and preachers featured in this study were actively trying to shape and condition beliefs and opinions by addressing specific audiences through specific media. Through an examination of the expanding circles of opinion to which these works are addressed, this thesis sheds light on the process as well as the purposes of religious persuasion.

Chapters

The sixteenth-century religious Reformations began in the universities of Europe, and nearly all of the early Scottish reformers came out of domestic or foreign institutions of higher education.³⁰ Many of these scholars were exposed to the radical new theology while studying abroad. They then brought these ideas and their heretical books back with them when they returned to study and teach at the Scottish universities. Others who had studied at St Andrews, Glasgow and Aberdeen encountered Lutheranism through officially sanctioned disputations intended to denounce the heresies. The spread of knowledge, if not belief, was aided also by interaction with those who had returned from abroad, as well as other evangelicals and Protestants within the scholarly community. A handful of Scottish Protestant academics, notably Patrick Hamilton and Alexander Alesius, utilised academic discourse in their efforts to appeal to their peers. Their attempts to influence the kingdom's intellectual elite through a reasoned critique of Catholic theology and the development of a Lutheran alternative is the focus of Chapter One.

³⁰ Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, whose enrollment at the University of St Andrews is debatable, is the most notable exception. Carol Edington, in particular, questions the claims that the 'Da. Lindsay' registered in St Salvator's College in 1508/9 and the courtier-poet are the same person. The name would have been common enough in the period, and Lindsay the poet appears to have been at the royal court in that year. Edington, *Court and Culture*, 13.

The reformers had a number of reasons for seeking the sanction of St Andrews, Glasgow and Aberdeen. The universities were Church institutions and most of the clerical elite were university-educated. Early evangelicals had hoped that the Church would reform itself, and early Protestants had hoped that the clergy would take the lead in bringing about religious change. The endorsement of the kingdom's universities would go a long way towards influencing those in positions of authority within the Church hierarchy. Additionally, those reformers who had spent time on the Continent had witnessed first-hand the benefits of having the endorsement of the academy – as the institutions responsible for the intellectual pursuit of theology and the education of the clergy – for the advancement of the reformist cause. Finally, and perhaps most crucially for Scotland, the universities were the only places in the kingdom where the heretical doctrines could legally be discussed. A law passed by Parliament in 1525 confined the discussion of the 'dampnable opiniounis' of 'the heretik Luther and his dischiplis' to the university cloisters, with the caveat that these exchanges should result in the condemnation of said 'opiniounis'.³¹

As far as the institutions themselves were concerned, the government's trust was not misplaced and the Scottish universities would officially maintain orthodox positions until the Reformation Parliament of 1560 and beyond. Individual scholars, on the other hand, were a different story and it was among them that reformation had the greatest impact. The academic writings of Patrick Hamilton and Alexander Alesius highlight the attempts of reformist scholars to gain the support and endorsement of their colleagues and are analysed in the first chapter. The influence of such academic discourse – sanctioned and unsanctioned – within the Scottish universities can also be seen in other reformers, including Henry Balnaves, George Buchanan, John Gau, John Johnson, John Knox, and James and John Wedderburn, most of whom would address audiences beyond the academic elite, but who were all exposed to religious debate while students at St Andrews. Denied official endorsements from the kingdom's universities, many reform-minded Scots turned their attentions elsewhere. Some joined the wider international academic debate. Others concentrated their efforts on an audience closer to home.

³¹ *RPS*, 1535/10.

By the early 1530s, the focus of domestic reformist appeals had shifted to the king, and by extension the royal court. A number of these works directly addressed James V, whom the reformers hoped would use his position to initiate religious change. With James and his intimate circle in mind, the tone of these compositions was considerably more lighthearted than their academic counterparts. Debates and treatises were replaced by poetry and plays – forms much more suited to appeal to an audience that preferred to be entertained rather than lectured. These works were couched in terms designed to interest James, and played to his growing sense of sovereignty. The young king was just emerging from a turbulent minority and was trying to assert himself against his former regent – his erstwhile step-father, the Earl of Angus – as well as his volatile uncle, Henry VIII of England, whose break from Rome was seen as a model for some Scots. Experience had made James wary, but he was still young. Evangelicals and Protestants at court saw an opportunity to influence the king in a non-threatening manner through the medium of *speculum principis*: ‘advice to princes’ literature. Intended to amuse, as well as entreat, these courtly entertainments are the focus of Chapter Two.

James was willing to tolerate, even favour, a group of evangelicals and Protestants at his court. This led some within the king’s household, including Lindsay and Buchanan, to believe that James might be persuaded to pursue a reformist agenda. To that end, they employed Scots and Latin verse to convey their appeals for religious change to the king. However, James’s tolerance had its limits. Fundamentally pragmatic when it came to issues of religion, the king was only interested in reform in so far as it furthered his own political and diplomatic interests. When it best suited him to court the favour of his uncle, James would exhibit a willingness to entertain thoughts of reform. But when he wanted favours from the Pope or a Catholic monarch, the King of Scots would proudly display his most orthodox credentials. Evangelical writers at the court, like Lindsay and Buchanan, were often caught up in this elaborate diplomatic manoeuvring. However, the king’s sudden death in 1542 dramatically changed the religious and political landscape of Scotland. The crown passed to his six day-old daughter Mary and in the uncertain environment of another long royal minority, appeals to the monarch came to an end while appeals to the wider nobility and beyond took on added intensity.

To take their message to an audience beyond the cloisters of the universities and the exclusive circle of the royal court, reformers and their supporters began to experiment with the relatively new technology of print. This was a rather complicated and limited venture, as only four printers appear to have been active in Scotland before 1560 and none of them were operating at the same time. Furthermore, there were strict laws against the production and importation of heretical literature in Scotland. With only one domestic print house for the authorities to monitor at a time, the risks of printing at home were too great, and the reformers had to rely on presses abroad – chiefly from the Low Countries and England. Consequently, only one evangelical reforming work was printed in Scotland during the period discussed in this study: two editions of Lindsay's poem *The Monarche* were printed in St Andrews in 1554 and 1559, both under false imprints.³²

At least three of Lindsay's poems were printed between 1527 and 1560. With the exception of the two St Andrews editions of *The Monarche*, all were printed abroad. These poems also happen to be the only known Scottish reformist poems to survive in print from the 1527-1557 period. As such, they provide a unique case study for the use of print in the early Scottish Reformation. Each of the poems conveniently represents a different period in the development of reform in Scotland. The 1530s and early appeals to the monarch are illustrated in the 1538 edition of *The Testament of the Papyngo*, while the turbulence of the 1540s is echoed in *The Tragedie of the Cardinall* (1548). As the situation became more heated, Lindsay became more radical. Consequently, all four editions of *The Monarche* were reactions to the events of the 1550s. The publication history of these works highlights the lengths to which reform-minded Scots were willing to go to disseminate their message. It also provides interesting insight into the relationships developed between Scots and Englishmen seeking religious change.

Most Scottish evangelicals and Protestants were dependent upon literature smuggled into the kingdom from England and the Continent. The period of Anglo-Scottish conflict that followed the revocation of the Treaties of Greenwich in 1543 saw an influx of English books and pamphlets in Scotland. Running in concert with military invasion, English strategists – namely Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset – flooded

³² Archbishop John Hamilton's (1510/11-1571) *Catechisme*, an example of Scottish Catholic reform, was also printed in Scotland, by John Scott in 1552.

the Scottish Lowlands with propaganda intended to promote dynastic and religious union between Scotland and England. Aimed at a wider lay public as well as the wider Scottish nobility, the printed polemic was designed to vilify Cardinal Beaton and undermine the Catholic Franco-Scottish alliance. These tracts, as well as Lindsay's printed poetry, are discussed in Chapter Three.

Although court entertainments and academic discourse often incorporated oral presentations, and while print and manuscript texts were often read aloud, the first three chapters of this study focus on media predominantly reliant upon the written word. In contrast, Chapters Four and Five centre on media whose primary means of dissemination was the spoken word: Public Performance and Preaching. In their efforts to evangelise their countrymen beyond the confines of the educated and lay elite, those seeking religious change in the early Reformation tapped into the pre-existing medieval oral traditions of religious drama and sermons, modes of communication that had wide and direct public appeal.

While the later Protestant Kirk in Scotland would condemn theatre, a handful of early reformers took advantage of its auditory and visual attributes for reaching the illiterate. Although Sir David Lindsay's evangelical *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* (1552/4) is the only early modern vernacular Scots play to survive in its entirety, fragmentary evidence exists for at least three other reformist plays. Friar Kyllour's *Historye of Christis Passioun* was performed at Stirling in 1535 before a diverse audience that included James V, and James Wedderburn's *Beheading of John the Baptist* and his *Historie of Dynoisious* [sic] *the Tyranne* were performed on the public playfield at Dundee in 1539/40. Lindsay's *Satyre* was first performed in 1552 before an audience of his neighbours at Cupar. It was then performed two years later on Edinburgh's public playfield, with an audience that included the royal court. By examining the little that is known of the plays of Kyllour and Wedderburn and what is known of Lindsay's work, with particular attention to the staging of the Cupar *Satyre*, Chapter Four focuses the ways publicly performed drama was utilised as a means of presenting the reformist message not only to the illiterate, but to socially diverse audiences.

Sermons, like their theatrical counterparts, were confined to a specific time and locality. Likewise, they were also delivered to heterogeneous gatherings. By far the

most significant tool of persuasion throughout the Reformation era, most reformers viewed the preaching of the Word of God – the subject of Chapter Five – as the most important aspect of the Reformation and of their individual ministries. Despite the centrality of preaching to the reformist cause, no complete Protestant sermon transcripts survive from the early Scottish Reformation. While hundreds of Luther's and Calvin's sermons are extant in print or manuscript, the homilies of their Scottish counterparts survive only in fragments or passing references in other contemporary works. The absence of transcripts does not mean that the Scottish preachers were less active or that they had less regard for the sermon, but highlights the unique circumstances of the Scottish situation.

Unlike their Continental brethren, early Protestant preachers in Scotland did not have the luxury of permanent pulpits from which to preach regular sermon series. Most spoke from borrowed pulpits, at market crosses, in fields or in private homes because, with the exception of the brief period of Governor Arran's 'Godly Fit' in 1543, the message they preached was illegal. Some were executed for their efforts, Patrick Hamilton and George Wishart being the most notable examples. On the run, protected by various supporters amongst the aristocracy, the early Scottish reformers were unable to accumulate the groups of student note-takers that facilitated the transcription and publication of so many of Luther's and Calvin's sermons. Nor were similar printing facilities available in Scotland. Still, through various sources, including trial records, attributed works, and references made by their contemporaries, it is possible to re-create the preaching itineraries of the most prominent preachers, as well as to gain some understanding of what they were preaching, and to whom. Although they addressed socially diverse gatherings, these early preachers would find their most efficacious and supportive audience amongst the kingdom's nobility.

While the first five chapters of this thesis focus on media intended to persuade various spheres of Scottish society to permit and/or promote religious reform, the sixth and final chapter concentrates on media intended for a different audience – the already converted. Many reformers believed that the true reformation of society and religion would only come to pass after individuals experienced an inward transformation of heart, mind and soul. However, the process of personal reformation did not end at conversion. The faithful needed to nurture and cultivate their faith through prayer and

Bible study. Consequently, reformers throughout Europe produced works for the edification of their brethren.

As with other reformist works from the period, the unique circumstances of early sixteenth-century Scotland meant that the production of these works for a Scottish audience was limited. Furthermore, circumstances also meant that the implementation of these works also differed from their Continental counterparts. The most common surviving Scottish specimens are devotional manuals, the earliest of which was John Gau's catechism *The Richt Vay to the Kingdome of Heuuen* (1533), followed in 1535/6 by John Johnson's *Ane comfortable exhortation: of our mooste holy Christen faith and her fruites*. Although both works were written and printed abroad, they were intended for a Scottish audience. Both works were also overtly Lutheran, as was the only known vernacular didactic song collection from the period, *The Gude and Godlie Ballatis*. Although the oldest known print edition of the *Ballatis* is dated after 1560, it is generally agreed that the collection had its origins in the early decades of reform. Aided by familiar tunes and rhyming verse, the songs would have been easy to memorise and to share with others. However, the most important text to come out of the entire Reformation period was the vernacular Bible. The reformers believed that Scripture was the only arbiter of doctrine and practice, and as such, it was essential for everyone not only to have access to it, but to understand it. In the early years of the sixteenth century Murdoch Nisbet, a notary from Ayrshire, produced the only surviving sixteenth-century Scots translation of the New Testament. However, for much of the period under examination, the discussion – if not possession – of such works was illegal. Even when Governor Arran's 'Godly Fit' of 1543 sanctioned the possession of vernacular Scripture, a caveat forbid anyone to 'despute, argoune or hald oppunionis of the samin'.³³ Such legislation would have been difficult to enforce, and Scottish Protestants would continue to meet privately to read and discuss Scripture and to pray.

The decades before the Scottish Reformation Parliament of 1560 witnessed the unprecedented use of a range of different media to disseminate the evangelical and Protestant message. In their efforts to persuade and educate various spheres of Scottish society, reformers turned to familiar literary and verbal forms, as well as the relatively new technology of print. Through an examination of these works, set within their

³³ RPS 1543/3/25

historical context, this thesis traces the development of calls for religious change in early sixteenth-century Scotland. Different media were intended for different audiences, revealing radiating circles of appeal – when met with resistance in one sphere, the reformers cast their nets ever wider, using a variety of media to connect with and shape the views of converted and unconverted alike.

CHAPTER ONE: Academic Discourse

The Reformation in Scotland began, as it had in other European kingdoms, as an intellectual challenge. It was among the ranks of the educated classes that Luther's controversial theology first began to circulate and to generate support. However, although most of the early proponents of reform were university educated, the early Scottish reform movement did not enjoy the official endorsement of any of the kingdom's universities.¹ While evangelical and Lutheran academics sought to persuade their colleagues to initiate reform, these efforts were insufficient to effect institutional change from within St Andrews, Glasgow or Aberdeen. Assured of the orthodoxy of the universities, the temporal and spiritual authorities sought to confine any discussion of the subject of heresy to the academic cloisters, and there to extinguish it. Legislation was passed in 1525 that expressly forbade the importation of Lutheran books and the discussion of the heretical doctrine – *except* within the universities. A marginal amendment further specified that only men with the proper qualifications within the universities (the clerks) had the right to enter into such deliberations, and then, only if these disputations were to 'the confusioun' of Lutheran 'heresyis or opunyeounes'.² Clearly, Scotland's governing elite believed the academic community to be the only body within the kingdom capable of discussing heresy without falling victim to its subversive implications. It also possessed the added advantage of being able to do so behind closed doors.

Such legislation also demonstrates the extent to which Lutheran and evangelical literature was available in Scotland in the decade following Luther's defiance. Fearing contamination by something they saw as completely foreign, the Scottish Parliament claimed that the 'dampnable opunyeounes of heresy' were being imported by foreigners who brought 'with thaim ony bukis or werkis of the said Lutheris, his discipillis or servandis'. The Scottish authorities failed to take into consideration (or, perhaps, acknowledge) that some of those 'discipillis' may well have been Scots, instead putting

¹ A number of religious campaigns abroad benefited from university endorsements. For example, the German Lutherans had support from institutions like the University of Wittenberg. They also founded their own universities, including the University of Marburg. Meanwhile, in France, the judgment of the Sorbonne was the arbiter of orthodoxy.

² *RPS* 1525/7/32.

forth the claim that ‘this realm and liegis has fermelie persistit in the halifaithe’.³ The law also made clear that the heresy was believed to be coming specifically from the Continent (to ‘arrife with thare schippis’), not from across the English border. The Earl of Angus, Archibald Douglas, was regent at the time and this may have had some considerable bearing on the wording and passing of the legislation. Angus was Henry VIII’s brother-in-law, having married Henry’s sister Margaret, the widow of James IV. Henry had been instrumental in securing Angus’s position as regent the previous year. By claiming a religious solidarity with England, it is likely that Angus was seeking to court his brother-in-law’s favour. Henry’s government was going to great lengths to safeguard orthodoxy within its own realm and, in 1525, the Scottish legislators were seeking to demonstrate a similar commitment.⁴ The English, however, did not have such faith in the orthodoxy of their northern neighbours – as an incident in 1527, to be discussed in more detail below, would demonstrate.

Collectively, Scotland’s academics were entrusted with the front-line defence of the kingdom from the advance of foreign blasphemy. For the most part, this trust was not misplaced as the universities of Scotland remained religiously conservative well into the sixteenth century. Individual scholars, however, were another matter. While the authorities may have attempted to regulate the importation of books, it was considerably more difficult to regulate the importation and discussion of ideas – especially considering the international and peripatetic nature of late-medieval academia. Although the legislation was clearly designed with merchants and foreign trade in mind, it did not appear to consider the travels of native academics. Numerous Scottish scholars journeyed to Continental institutions to further their studies and careers. Some, like Patrick Hamilton (1504?-1528), returned to their homeland, bringing their new knowledge, as well as their personal libraries, with them. Even if the authorities made good on their threats of confiscating ‘thar [...] gudis and putting of thar persounes in presoun’, the ideas themselves would prove more difficult to suppress.⁵

Whether through merchants importing controversial texts or scholars returning from abroad, knowledge of the Lutheran dissent began to attract the attention of

³ *RPS* 1525/7/32.

⁴ *SP* 1/21, f.228, Leo X to Wolsey, 16 March 1521; *LP* iii/1, 1297, Henry VIII to Leo X, 21 May 1521; *SP* 1/22, f.195, Leo X to Wolsey, 7 June 1521.

⁵ *RPS* 1525/7/32.

individual scholars within the kingdom's academic community, particularly at St Andrews. These Scottish evangelicals utilised scholarly debate and writing in their efforts to persuade their countrymen among the academic and clerical elite to enact reform. When denied such a forum at home and forced into exile overseas, some, like Alexander Alesius (1500-1565) and John Macalpine (d.1557), would engage in the scholarly religious debate abroad.

Banned Books

Undeterred by the legislation of 1525, attempts were made to import the banned material. In a letter dated 20 February 1527, John Hackett, the English agent in Antwerp, wrote to Cardinal Wolsey bemoaning that a shipment of heretical books in the English language was on its way to Edinburgh and St Andrews. Unfortunately, the letter is vague regarding the exact nature of the volumes being shipped, although it is generally accepted that Tyndale's New Testament, printed in Worms in 1526, was chief among them.⁶ Hackett feared that the heterodox material would make its way into England from Scotland. At this point in England, as with its northern neighbour, the heresy was believed to be, or at least touted to be, an external affair.⁷ The English authorities suspected heretical material was being smuggled into the kingdom from abroad and legislation was put in place banning the importation of dissenting literature.⁸ Foreign merchants were especially singled out and placed under surveillance.⁹

Printing activities in Antwerp were of particular interest to the English. Antwerp printers had something of a monopoly on producing, importing and exporting English

⁶ A.F. Mitchell, 'Introduction' to John Gau, *The Rycht Vay to the Kingdom of Heuine*, ed. A.F. Mitchell (Edinburgh, 1888), xv; Donaldson, *Scottish Reformation*, 29. G. Wiedermann, 'Martin Luther versus John Fisher: Some Ideas concerning the Debate on Lutheran Theology at the University of St Andrews, 1525-1530' in *Scottish Church History Society Records*, 22 (1984), 13; Ryrie, *Origins*, 30. William Tyndale, *New Testament* (Worms, Peter II Schöffer, 1526), USTC 677266.

⁷ C. D'Alton, 'The Suppression of Lutheran Heretics in England 1526-1529', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 54 (April 2003), 231.

⁸ In 1526 Wolsey further banned English booksellers from importing Lutheran and other heretical literature. On 12 October 1524, Cuthbert Tunstall, the Bishop of London, warned the city's booksellers against importing and selling books from abroad. Two years later, on 25 October 1526, he issued a second 'monition' specifically forbidding the works of Luther and prohibiting the booksellers from publishing, importing, or selling books without the approval of Cardinal Wolsey, Archbishop Warham, or himself. D'Alton, 'Suppression', 230; G. Tournoy, 'Humanists, Rulers and Reformers: Relationships between England and the Southern Low Countries in the First Half of the Sixteenth Century' in *Antwerp, Dissident Typographical Centre: The Role of Antwerp Printers in the Religious Conflicts in England (16th Century)*, eds D. Imhof, G. Tournoy and F. de Nave (Antwerp, 1994), 24.

⁹ D'Alton, 'Suppression', 233.

works for the English market, as well as the Scottish market – a position that the city would maintain into the 1540s.¹⁰ Wolsey instructed Hackett to investigate suspicious ‘nywe impryntyd bokes’ and to ‘dystrewe and brynge them to nought’.¹¹ It would appear that Hackett had difficulties convincing the Antwerp authorities to join him in his pursuits. A letter dated 12 January 1527 details the agent’s frustrated legal dealings with the Council and the Margrave. During the drawn-out proceedings, one of the suspected printer/booksellers, Christoffel van Ruremund, was brought in for questioning.¹² Ruremund’s attorney reminded the court that his client was a subject of the Emperor and ‘that the Emperor is subiectes beyng in the Emperor is contres and in land off justyce, ought nott to be iugyd nedyr condemnyd by the sentence or condemnacion off the lawys or iuges of eny othyr contres’.¹³ The Council agreed, further frustrating Hackett’s attempts to carry out his orders.¹⁴ Hackett expressed his exasperation with the whole affair, claiming that at one point he entertained the idea of purchasing all of the books in question and sending them to London, where they could be burned. He was dissuaded from this course of action by a friend, a decision he probably regretted a month later.¹⁵ In his final letter on the subject, Hackett lamented that Scottish ships containing the heretical books were on their way to St Andrews and Edinburgh. He declared that when he had heard that the ships had been anchored in Zealand, he had hurried to the port, ‘thynkyng yff that [he] had fownd syche stuffe there [he] wold cawse to make as good a fyer off [the cargo]’. But the ships had sailed the day before.¹⁶

The whole affair raises two interesting points. The first concerns the lengths to which the English Catholic authorities were willing to go in order to protect their kingdom from heresy. On two occasions, Hackett was willing to cause an international

¹⁰ F. de Nave, ‘Antwerp, Dissident Typographical Centre in the 16th Century’, in *Antwerp*, eds Imhof, et al., 11.

¹¹ *The Letters of Sir John Hackett 1526-1534*, ed. Elizabeth Frances Rogers (Morgantown, 1971), 41. John Hackett to Cardinal Wolsey, 21 November 1526.

¹² In Hackett’s letters Ruremund is referred to by his alias, Christopher Endhowen. Ruremund was active in the Antwerp print industry from 1522-1531. A. Rouzet, *Dictionnaire des Imprimeurs, Libraires et Éditeurs des Vxe et XVIe Siècles dans les Limites Géographiques de la Belgique Actuelle* (Nieuwkoop, 1975), 193-4.

¹³ *Hackett*, 65. Hackett to Wolsey, 12 January 1527.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Hackett*, 68. Hackett to Wolsey, 12 January 1527. In October 1526 Bishop Tunstall had attempted a similar endeavour, involving editions of Tyndale’s New Testament, which had the disastrous consequence of funding further editions of the book. D’Alton, ‘Suppression’, 241.

¹⁶ *Hackett*, 73. Hackett to Wolsey, 20 February 1527.

incident: the first instance involved the sentencing and punishment of Ruremund – challenging whether a subject of one ruler, in that ruler's lands, could be bound by the laws of another monarch; the second instance involved the Scottish ships. Once again, Hackett was willing to trespass on the sovereignty of another kingdom in order to safeguard orthodoxy in his own. The agent of the English king intended to damage goods belonging to subjects of the Scottish king on soil controlled by neither prince. Furthermore, the fact that Hackett wanted to burn Scotland-bound merchandise demonstrates that the English were afraid of heresy entering England through the backdoor of Scotland. It has been generally taken for granted that the theological exchange went in the other direction, largely due to the fact that Scotland lacked a viable print industry of its own at this time and, therefore, was dependent upon print houses abroad.¹⁷ However, while they were still incapable of producing such material domestically, the evidence suggests that the Scots were not only importing heresy, as the Scottish Parliament feared, but were exporting it as well.

The second point concerns the content of the shipment destined for Scotland. In his correspondence with Cardinal Wolsey, Hackett reported that the Antwerp authorities refused to pass judgment on any printers or booksellers dealing in English religious books until the works in question were translated into Dutch or Latin – so they could read them for themselves and determine if they contained unorthodox material. When Hackett refused to comply, doubting the trustworthiness of the Antwerp translators, the proceedings were further delayed while he waited for Wolsey to send samples of similar books to show to the Council.¹⁸ If Tyndale's New Testament was the only text under investigation, it is unlikely the Antwerp officials would have requested Latin or Dutch translations. Therefore, it is highly likely that Tyndale's *Introduction to Paul's Epistle to the Romans* was also available in Antwerp and may have been among the offending books shipped to Edinburgh and the university town of St Andrews in February 1527.

These works were also two of the only heretical works in the English language to be printed outside of England before February 1527.¹⁹ However, both were printed in

¹⁷ This subject will receive further treatment in Chapter Three.

¹⁸ *Hackett*, 57. Hackett to Wolsey, 22 December 1526.

¹⁹ According to a *USTC* search on 28 January 2013.

Worms, not Antwerp.²⁰ Their availability in Antwerp, Ruremund's suspected involvement (as a possible procurer, not printer) and the subsequent shipment to Scotland highlights the flow of Continental literature into Scottish ports through booksellers in Antwerp. Likewise, other heterodox religious works, in languages other than English, could be procured in Antwerp and shipped on to Scotland for an educated audience. Still, while the scholarly elite were not confined to the vernacular, an English translation of the New Testament would have been of great interest to some of the kingdom's academics. This interest might account for Hackett's claim that the 'most party' of books in the February 1527 shipment were bound for the university city of St Andrews.²¹

While Hackett did not disclose the number of books in the shipment, his reaction to the news of their shipping implies that there was more than a handful hidden among other merchandise. Therefore, it also can be surmised that the books sent to St Andrews and Edinburgh were not intended to be used in an official capacity by the clerks for any sanctioned 'confusion' of heresy – a task for which a couple of copies would have been sufficient. Furthermore, the shipment indicates that there were enough interested parties in Edinburgh and St Andrews (or who the merchants thought might be interested) to risk breaking the law to import the banned material.²²

In addition to smuggling, heterodox literature also made its way into the Scottish universities through the orthodox texts intended to refute them. A prime example was John Fisher's *Assertionis Lutheranae Confutatio* (1522). Written in response to Luther's *Assertio Omnium Articulorum* (1520-1), Fisher's treatise contains the entire text of Luther's *Assertio*. There is evidence that Fisher's text was available in St Andrews during the 1520s, when an Augustinian canon, Alexander Alesius, drew heavily from the book in his public disputation against the Lutheran heresy.²³ In order to discredit the alternative doctrine, the kingdom's academics would need to have knowledge of, and

²⁰ An edition was begun in Cologne in 1525, but production was brought to halt when the print shop was raided: William Tyndale, *The New Testament* (Cologne, H. Fuchs, 1525), USTC 501880; *The Newe Testament as it was written and caused to be written by them which herde yt* (Worms, Peter II Schöffer, 1526), VD16 B4570; *A compendious introduccion, prologe or preface vn to the pistle off Paul to the Romayns* (Worms, Peter II Schöffer, 1526), USTC 501937.

²¹ Hackett, 73. Hackett to Wolsey, 12 Jan 1527.

²² For further discussion regarding other Lutheran works that might have been available in St Andrews at this time see Wiedermann, 'Luther versus Fisher', 13-34.

²³ See Wiedermann, 'Luther versus Fisher'.

therefore access to, Luther's opinions. However, this carried unexpected consequences as the discussion of this material, in turn, further circulated the details of the new theology among the academic community. Once again, the temporal and spiritual authorities that had instituted the legislation of 1525, thereby engaging Scotland's educated elite in their campaign against heresy, appear to have misjudged their audience. Confident in the orthodoxy of the universities, they did not consider that any of these academics, when presented with the unorthodox ideology, would be swayed to favour, much less defend it. Whether through exposure during organised refutations, or through their own studies and travels, the number of Scottish scholars receptive to the Lutheran message gradually increased. Despite the academic community's perceived orthodoxy and Parliament's edict against Protestant theology and literature, doctrinal disputations created tensions within the universities. By the mid-1520s, pockets of evangelical sympathy existed at St Andrews, particularly within St Leonard's College.²⁴

Patrick Hamilton

The most notable example of the provocative nature of these early theological debates is the case of Patrick Hamilton (1504?-1528). An academic with a growing reputation and noble family connections, Hamilton probably came into contact with Lutheran ideas while studying at the University of Paris – where the controversial beliefs were condemned by the scholars of the Sorbonne.²⁵ Incorporated into the University of St. Andrews in 1523 and admitted into the faculty of arts in 1524, Hamilton was described

²⁴ Based on the example of Montaigu in Paris, St Leonard's was founded in 1512. Although James IV's illegitimate son, Archbishop Alexander Stewart, who himself had been tutored by Erasmus, was involved in the college's foundation, he had little direct influence over it. Distracted by his own interests in the Pedagogium (later St Mary's college), as well as affairs of state, Stewart left the organisation of St Leonard's in the more conservative hands of Prior John Hepburn. If Stewart had any humanist aspirations for the college, they were left unfulfilled following his death at the Battle of Flodden in September 1513. However, despite the strictly orthodox leadership of Prior Hepburn, St Leonard's came to be associated with heresy and independent views. In the 1520s, when the archbishopric of St Andrews was once again vacant, Hepburn 'contested the succession of James Beaton, Archbishop of Glasgow, to the see'. Isla Woodman suggests that it was during this time, while the prior was preoccupied, that heretical views began to edge into the college. Furthermore, St Leonard's College was affiliated with the Augustinian Priory at the Cathedral and there were strong ties between Protestantism and Augustinianism throughout Europe – Luther himself had been a member of the order. Dotterweich, 'Emergence', 122; *Acta Facultatis Artium Universitatis Sanctiandree, 1413-1588*, ed. A.I. Dunlop (Edinburgh, 1964), lx, xliii-xlix; I. Woodman, *The Universities of Scotland in Europe, 1410-1513* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of St Andrews, 2010).

²⁵ Dotterweich, 'Emergence', 119.

by Alexander Alesius as ‘a man of excellent learning and very acute mind’.²⁶ Gotthelf Wiedermann argues that Hamilton further developed his interests in Lutheran theology while in St Andrews, for by Lent 1527 his theological views were sufficiently unorthodox to precipitate an inquiry by Archbishop James Beaton.²⁷ Word of the impending inquisition prompted Hamilton to flee to Germany, where he enrolled at the new Lutheran university at Marburg. Although an outbreak of plague in Wittenberg may have had some influence, Hamilton’s decision to go to Marburg would have been a very deliberate choice, as it was the first new university founded by the Lutherans.

At the request of François Lambert of Avignon, the head of Marburg’s theological faculty, Hamilton participated in the university’s first public disputation. This Latin debate formed the basis of his most famous work, a discourse of Lutheran commonplaces commonly referred to as *Patrick’s Places*.²⁸ As far as is known, the original debate transcript does not survive. The oldest known print edition of Hamilton’s treatise was published in Dutch in 1530 (two years after his death) under the title *Die summa ende dat begrijp des menschen salicheyts* (*The Summa and the Concept of Man’s Salvation*). The book claims to have been printed in Marburg by Cornelis Nyenhuys. However, it is more likely to have been printed in Antwerp, as ‘Cornelis Nyenhuys’ was another alias for Christoffel van Ruremund (the same Ruremund who fell foul of Hackett in 1527).²⁹ The first English language edition was translated by English theologian John Frith (1503-1533) and was published by Symon Cock in Antwerp in 1531.³⁰

The treatise presents a summary of the theology of justification by faith, following the Lutheran formula of comparing the Law and the Gospel, works and faith, in succinct and easy prose. Throughout, Hamilton consistently relied on Scripture as the justification for his statements. Biblical verses and paraphrases dominate the text and are woven together by snippets of interpretation labeled as ‘arguments’ – much like the format of academic debates. True to the Lutheran tenet of *sola scriptura*, the

²⁶ *Acta Facultatis*, 346. I. Torrance, ‘Hamilton, Patrick (1504?–1528)’, *ODNB*

²⁷ Wiedermann, ‘Luther versus Fisher’, 17; ‘The Sentence’, in P. Lorimer, *Patrick Hamilton, the First Preacher and Martyr of the Scottish Reformation* (Edinburgh, 1858), i, 149.

²⁸ Patrick Hamilton, *Die summa en dat begrijp des menschen salicheyts* (Marburg [Antwerp], Cornelis Nyenhuys [Christoffel van Ruremund], 1530), NB 14286, A^v.

²⁹ Rouzet, *Dictionnaire des Imprimeurs*, 194.

³⁰ Patrick Hamilton, *Patrikes places* (Antwerp, Symon Cock, 1531), NB 14287. Symon Cock was active as a printer in Antwerp from 1521-1562. Rouzet, *Dictionnaire des Imprimeurs*, 41.

interpretive sections are brief, with the intention that the biblical references speak for themselves. The text opens by outlining the Ten Commandments as found in the Old Testament book of Exodus. This is followed by Christ's summary of the Commandments, as found in the Gospel of Matthew.³¹ Hamilton placed the emphasis on Christ's New Testament interpretation over that of the Old Testament Commandments – an indicator of his adherence to the Lutheran argument favouring the Gospel over the Law.

In further support of this position Hamilton stated that it was impossible for any man fully to obey the law (Aii^v). He denied that salvation could be earned by any human actions, stating that 'there is no remedy to saue the in thyne owne hande and that thou mayst seke remedy at sum othere' (Aiii^r). This was a Lutheran response to Catholic doctrines teaching that in addition to faith, the works of individual Christians – such as participation in the Sacraments and acts of charity – were necessary in order to secure salvation. With this oversimplified rhetoric, Hamilton intended to associate the Catholic Church with the legalism of the Old Testament while aligning reformed doctrines with the teachings of Christ in the New Testament Gospels. This caricaturing of Catholic beliefs would have been in keeping with the work's original purpose as a scholarly debate. By the time of Hamilton's Marburg disputation in 1527, the battle over reform was building. Campaigners on either side were not interested in presenting balanced accounts of the argument. They were more interested in gaining (and maintaining) support for their own position.

The theme of comparing the Law and the Gospel was one of Luther's favourite rhetorical tools – a tactic most likely honed in his own academic debates.³² Likewise, Hamilton employed similar language to support his own position:

The law sayeth make amendes for thy synne.
 The gospell sayeth Christ hathe made it for the,
 The law sayeth the father of heuen is wrothe with the.
 The gospell sayeth Christ hath pacefyed hym with hys bloude
 The law sayeth wher is thy ryghtwysene goodnes and satisfaccion
 The gospell sayeth Christ is thy ryghtwysenes thy goodnes and
 satisfaccyo[n].

³¹ Patrick Hamilton, *Dyuers fruitful gatherynges of scripture and declarynge of fayth and workes of lawe* (London, Robert Redman, 1534), USTC 502661. All subsequent references and citations regarding Hamilton's work come from this edition.

³² Lindberg, *European Reformations*, 69.

The law sayeth thou arte bounde and obliged to me to the deull and to hell.

The gospell sayeth Christ hath delyuered the from them all (Aiiii^{r-v}).

Hamilton and his fellow Lutherans argued that Christ's death and resurrection alone were sufficient to atone for the sins of humanity. Therefore, works such as penance, prayers for the dead, and the purchasing of indulgences were not only unnecessary, they were completely ineffectual and unbiblical. Furthermore, they claimed that anyone who maintained that the works of men affected their salvation rendered Christ's sacrifice obsolete (Bi^r). Faith in the atoning sacrifice of Christ was deemed all that was necessary to obtain salvation.³³ However, works were not to be fully removed from the equation. While they were no longer to be conduits of grace and salvation, works were to follow faith, acting as an indicator of salvation. Quoting Luther, Hamilton states that 'good workes make not a good ma[n] nor euell workes an euell man but a good man maketh good workes and a euel man euel workes' (Bii^v).³⁴

Although considered the first theological text of the Protestant Reformation in Scotland, the content of *Patrick's Places* drew on the Lutheran literature available throughout Europe at the time.³⁵ Luther's didactic influence, in particular, is evident throughout Hamilton's text. The treatise relies heavily on Luther's *Freedom of a Christian Man* (1520) and, to a lesser extent, on Melanchthon's *Loci communes* (1521), in some instances lifting whole sections from one text or the other.³⁶ Hamilton's familiarity with these works suggests that he had access to them while in St Andrews, as he spent but six months in Marburg.³⁷

According to Alesius, Hamilton returned to Scotland in 1528 with a mind to share Lutheran theology with his countrymen. He spent the first month near his family home at Kincavil, near Linlithgow, and took the opportunity to speak openly while

³³ 'We know that a man is not iustified by the dedes of the lawe but by the fayth of Jesu Christ. And we beleue in Jesu Christ that we may be iustified by the fayth of Christ and not by the dedes of the lawe.' Hamilton, *Dyuers fruitful gatherynges*, Av^v-Avi^r.

³⁴ Martin Luther, 'The Freedom of a Christian' in *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings*, ed. J. Dillenberger (New York, 1962), 69.

³⁵ J.E. Goldrick, *Luther's Scottish Connection* (Cranbury, 1989), 42.

³⁶ For more on the direct influences of Luther and Melanchthon on Hamilton's *Places*, see Wiedermann, 'Luther versus Fisher', 17-22. The remainder of the article draws parallels between Luther's works and Hamilton's heresy charges. Wiedermann, 'Luther versus Fisher', 23-29.

³⁷ Wiedermann, 'Luther versus Fisher', 18.

under the protection of his brother, the sheriff.³⁸ But once more, his theology was cause for concern and he was summoned to appear before the Archbishop in St Andrews. Rather than flee again, Hamilton returned to St Andrews, where Alesius claims he spent some time teaching and disputing in the University.³⁹ This relative freedom lasted only one month, after which he was tried and charged by the Archbishop. Accused of affirming, publishing and teaching ‘divers opinions of Luther and wicked heresies’, the twenty-four year old was found guilty and, after his refusal to recant, was hastily taken to be burned at the stake, in front of St. Salvator’s College, on 29 February 1528.⁴⁰

Hamilton’s choice to return to St Andrews is significant. He could have fled to the safety of Lutheran Germany, as he had done before. However, he clearly thought it was essential that he return to the university town. There are two possible – though not mutually exclusive – reasons for this decision. Firstly, after his time on the Continent, and especially considering his association with the University of Marburg, Hamilton would have been highly conscious of the importance that the endorsement of universities held for the furtherance of reform. Therefore, Alesius’s claim that Hamilton was actively speaking within the university may have added weight. Hamilton may have returned to the burgh with hopes of persuading members of the academic community within St Andrews to support the new theology. After all, it was one of the only venues in Scotland (in addition to Glasgow and Aberdeen) where it was technically legal to have such a discussion.

Secondly, Hamilton may have been keenly aware that his return to St Andrews would afford him an even more significant platform from which to share his message – that of a heresy trial. As Jane Dawson observes, many reformers ‘welcomed [their] trials as battles of wits’ as well as an opportunity to argue their views and challenge the authorities publicly.⁴¹ She refers to the process of trial leading to execution as ‘the theatre of death’, in which both sides understood the parts they must play in the drama. A public trial in the kingdom’s ecclesiastical capital would have been a prime

³⁸ James Beaton, ‘Citatio Patricii Hamilton’ in A.F. Mitchell, *The Scottish Reformation: its epochs, episodes, leaders, and distinctive characteristics (being the Baird Lecture for 1899)*, ed. D. Hay Fleming (Edinburgh, 1900), 289-290.

³⁹ Lorimer, *First Preacher*, 128.

⁴⁰ ‘The Sentence’ in Lorimer, *First Preacher*, 150.

⁴¹ J. Dawson, ‘The Scottish Reformation and the Theatre of Martyrdom’ in *Studies in Church History*, 30 (1993), 262.

opportunity for Hamilton to present his case not only to the Archbishop, but to the assembled clerics and laity as well.

Whether Hamilton anticipated that his trial would result in summary execution is another matter. According to Dawson, at the time of Hamilton's summons, Scotland lacked the tradition of 'formalized and ritualized executions' found in other European kingdoms. Furthermore, there were very few precedents for the public execution of native heretics.⁴² Before Hamilton, the Wycliffite James Resby (d.1407) and the Hussite Pavel Kravař (d.1433) were the most well-known incidents of religious executions in Scotland.⁴³ However, both men were considered foreigners – Resby was English and Kravař, Bohemian. The most publicised case of native heresy revolved around the Lollards of Kyle in 1494. However, the thirty Lollards summoned were not condemned. This leniency is attributed to the intervention of James IV, as a number of the accused were well known to him, and the fact that those under indictment abjured.⁴⁴

In addition to the lack of precedent for the execution of native heretics, the king's intercession on behalf of the Lollards (particularly those of his acquaintance) may also have played a significant role in Hamilton's expectations regarding his return to St Andrews. Hamilton was a second cousin of James V, and his uncle, James Hamilton, first earl of Arran, was heir presumptive to the throne. Furthermore, young Patrick was related, by the marriage of his uncle, to the Archbishop of St Andrews, James Beaton.⁴⁵ In a society that placed such importance on the ties of kinship, it is likely Hamilton anticipated that these social connections would ensure his protection. Indeed, five years

⁴² Dawson, 'Theatre of Martyrdom', 265-266.

⁴³ M.H.B. Sanderson, 'The Lollard Trail: some clues to the spread of pre-Protestant religious dissent in Scotland and its legacy', *SCHSR* 33 (2003), 5-6; P.Vyšný, 'A Hussite in Scotland: The Mission of Pavel Kravař to St Andrews in 1433', *SHR* 82 (April 2003), 1.

⁴⁴ Sanderson, 'The Lollard Trail', 10.

⁴⁵ Patrick Hamilton was a younger son of Sir Patrick Hamilton of Kincavel – the illegitimate son (legitimized in 1513) of Sir James Hamilton of Cadzow, the first Lord Hamilton (1410-1479). This meant that his uncle was James (1475?-1529), second Lord Hamilton and first earl of Arran (heir presumptive to the throne through his mother, Princess Mary, daughter of James II). Hamilton's mother was Katherine Stewart, daughter of Alexander, third duke of Albany, the second son of James II and brother of James III. This made him second cousin to James V. Hamilton was distantly related to Archbishop James Beaton through his uncle Arran's third wife, Janet, who was Beaton's sister. Torrance, 'Hamilton', *ODNB*.

later, the personal intervention of James V – specifically acting as a kinsman – would save the lives of Hamilton’s brother and sister when they were accused of heresy.⁴⁶

Consequently, although he may have expected incarceration, exile or even corporal punishment, Patrick Hamilton may not have foreseen certain death upon his return to St Andrews. If he did anticipate his execution at the hands of the Archbishop’s court, he most likely expected it to happen quickly, as befitted his rank, but relatively quietly. The death penalty was not uncommon in Scotland. However, it was rarely the grand, orchestrated spectacle that could be witnessed in many other countries at this time. The Scots employed little ceremonial in their executions, as public rituals were usually reserved for reconciliations.⁴⁷

Whatever his original expectations upon returning to St Andrews, by the time his accusers led him from the trial to the fire, Hamilton had accepted his imminent execution. According to witnesses, he remained composed and committed to his beliefs, even as the damp wood and strong winds prolonged his death.⁴⁸ His conduct – his calm acceptance, presenting his cloak to a servant and giving a speech – subverted the original intention of the spectacle. As a result, in the eyes of some witnesses, the exhibition changed from being the execution of a heretic to the death of a martyr.⁴⁹ One of Archbishop Beaton’s acquaintances went so far as to warn him against further public displays, as they might foster sympathy for the heretics.⁵⁰

Following Hamilton’s death, the English theologian and writer John Frith (1503-1533) recognised the potential of Hamilton’s example and prepared his academic treatise for a wider English-speaking/reading audience. In 1531 Frith, a close associate of William Tyndale and, like him, in exile in Antwerp, translated Hamilton’s work into English.⁵¹ In the introduction to his edition of *Patrykes [sic] Places*, Frith does not

⁴⁶ *TAMO* (1570), 1156. However, at the time of Patrick Hamilton’s trial, James V was preoccupied with plans to declare his personal rule.

⁴⁷ Dawson, ‘Theatre of Martyrdom’, 266.

⁴⁸ John Knox, *History to the Reformation in Scotland*, ed. W.C. Dickinson (London, 1949), i, 14.

⁴⁹ Dawson, ‘Theatre of Martyrdom’, 265.

⁵⁰ John Lindsay to Archbishop Beaton: ‘My Lord, if you burn any more, except ye follow my counsel, ye will utterly destroy yourselves. If ye will burn them, let them be burnt in [deep] cellars; for the reek of Master Patrick Hamilton has infected as many as it blew upon.’ Knox, *History*, i, 18.

⁵¹ Frith was in exile in Antwerp at the time on account of his own Lutheran beliefs. Three years after the 1530 publication of his translation of Hamilton, Frith was burned at the stake in London. Before his death he published a translation of Luther’s *Revelation of Antichrist* and his own works *Antithesis, where are compared together Christ’s Acts and our Holy Father the Pope’s* and *Disputacion of Purgatory*. D. Daniell, ‘Frith, John (1503–1533)’, *ODNB*.

indicate where he first encountered the text.⁵² During his time in Antwerp he may have obtained a copy of Ruremund's 1530 Dutch edition. However, Frith also spent some time in Marburg (in 1529), attending a colloquy between Luther and Zwingli.⁵³ It is possible that Frith may have acquired Hamilton's treatise there, as Hamilton's Latin debate may have been available in print or manuscript. It was not uncommon for universities to circulate their public disputations, and Hamilton's, particularly as the first such debate at the new University of Marburg, may have received similar treatment. Regardless of the original source, Frith hoped that his English translation might inspire those who could read English, particularly in England, to 'retourne in to the right waye which leadeth vn to life everlastinge'.⁵⁴

Martin Dotterweich speculates that the simple language used in the text demonstrates that Hamilton himself intended to present the work to a wider audience outside of academia.⁵⁵ However, the rhetorical style is indicative of its intended use by scholars, particularly within a university setting, as the format of presenting 'propositions' and 'arguments' was chiefly used in academic discourse. Although it is possible that Hamilton preached a number of sermons containing similar insights as those found in the *Places*, no physical evidence survives to suggest that he was trying to prepare the Latin text for vernacular publication.⁵⁶ The straightforward language may simply be the concise rhetoric of scholarly debate. Hamilton was dealing with scholars, and the work, it appears, remained in Latin until the Dutch and English translations of Ruremund and Frith.

While the author may not have intended an audience outside of the academy, Ruremund, Frith and later publishers clearly recognised the potential of the scholarly treatise for wider consumption. The tract went through at least five English language editions and three additional Dutch editions before the end of the century, making the Hamilton's work more readily available.⁵⁷ Since the majority of the English editions

⁵² Hamilton, *Patrikes Places*. Titles and title spellings vary between different English print editions.

⁵³ Daniell, 'Frith', *ODNB*.

⁵⁴ Hamilton, *Patrikes Places*, 1^r

⁵⁵ Dotterweich, 'Emergence', 134.

⁵⁶ Based on the 'Sentence of the Archbishop' in *First Preacher*, 149. The tribunal twice accused him of 'preaching', first claiming that that he 'affirmed, taught, and preached'. In the second instance he 'hath presumed to preach wicked heresy.'

⁵⁷ English editions: *Patrikes places* (Antwerp, S. Cock, 1531), USTC 441409; *Dyvers frutefull gatherynges of scripture and declaryng of fayth & workes* (London, T. Godfray 1532), USTC 515977;

were printed in London, Dotterweich speculates that Hamilton's literary legacy was more lasting in England than in his homeland.⁵⁸ However, while the books were printed in London and Antwerp, and although it was illegal to import heretical material into the kingdom, many works published abroad made their way into Scotland at this time.⁵⁹ In addition to Hackett's account, a priest from Leith was arrested in London in 1531 for possessing books by Luther and others, which he was intending to take home. There was also a case, in 1539, of an Edinburgh merchant who was found to have quite an extensive collection of evangelical works.⁶⁰ It is not unreasonable to believe that Hamilton's treatise could have been among them. According to John Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*, Henry Forrest was executed in St Andrews in 1532 for declaring that Hamilton was wrongfully executed and that 'his Articles were true'.⁶¹ Whether Forrest read or heard Hamilton's 'articles' is unclear, although it is possible that, despite the 1525 ban on Lutheran literature, a growing black market trade facilitated the transfer of illegal copies of *Patrick's Places* to some of Hamilton's countrymen, albeit in small numbers.⁶² Furthermore, Hamilton's debate at Marburg, as well as the Dutch editions of his treatise, highlight the international nature of the early reform movement, and the involvement of Scots within it.

However, in terms of quantifiable results, Patrick Hamilton appears to have had very little immediate impact on the realities of the religious situation in Scotland as the Church and the universities remained stalwart in their orthodoxy. The renowned Scottish scholar John Mair, in his dedicatory introduction to his commentary on

Dyvers frutful gatherynges of scripture and declarynge of fayth and workes of the lawe (London, R. Redman, 1534), USTC 502661; *Dyvers frutful gatheringes of scrypture concetnyng [sic] fayth and workes* (London, W. Copeland, 1549), USTC 504271; *A most excelent and fruitful treatise, called Patericks Places* (London, W. White, 1598), USTC 513688. Dutch editions: *Die summa ende dat begrijp des menschen salicheyts* (Marburg [Antwerpen], Cornelis Nyenhuys [Christoffel van Ruremund], 1530), USTC 437485; *Die summa ende dat begrijp des menschen salicheyts* (Marburg [Antwerp], Cornelis Nyenhuys [Niclaes can Oldenborch], 1540), USTC 438041; *Die somma ende dat begrijp des menschen salicheyts* (s.l., s.n., s.d.), USTC 424865; *Die summa ende dat begrijp des menschen salicheyts* (s.l., s.n., s.d.), USTC 438186.

⁵⁸ Dotterweich, 'Emergence', 147.

⁵⁹ Ryrie, *Origins*, 30.

⁶⁰ *Registrum Secreti Sigilli Regum Scotorum: The Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland*, eds D.H. Fleming, et al. (Edinburgh, 1908-57), ii, 2396.

⁶¹ *TAMO* (1570), 1155.

⁶² Cowan, *Scottish Reformation*, 94.

Matthew, commended Archbishop Beaton for executing Hamilton.⁶³ He was not alone in his approval. According to John Foxe, the faculty at Louvain also applauded Beaton for condemning Hamilton, calling his action a ‘worthy deede, by whose workes, that true faith which, not long ago, was tainted with heresie, not onely remaineth vnhurt, but also is more confirmed’. They further praised the University of St Andrews for its role in the condemnation of Hamilton, declaring that ‘now we acknowledge your Vniuersitie, which was founded according to the example of our Vniuersitie of Louane, to be equall to ours, or ells aboue.’⁶⁴ In the same letter, the scholars also commended the Scottish government for its dedication to upholding orthodoxy. It is evident that Hamilton’s case did not incline the temporal authorities towards religious toleration, and in 1535 they re-enacted the anti-heresy legislation of 1525.

Alexander Alesius

Nevertheless, Hamilton’s appeals to the academic community did not go wholly unheeded, as his most measurable impact was on a handful of scholars from St Andrews. The fruits of his academic debates, as well as his example at the stake, were in the conversion to Lutheranism of Alexander Alesius (Allane), John Johnson and John Gau. In the months and years immediately following Hamilton’s death, all three were forced to flee abroad for their adherence to unorthodox beliefs. From exile, they wrote to their countrymen in hopes of promoting reform at home. Of the three, Alesius continued to address his fellows among the educated elite.⁶⁵

A scholar and rhetorician of some renown, Alexander Alesius was one of St Andrews’ most skilled orthodox apologists. Born in Edinburgh and educated at St Andrews, in the 1520s Alesius had been chosen to refute the theology of Martin Luther in a public debate within the University. In 1528 he was sent to reason with Hamilton while the latter was awaiting trial. Hamilton refused to recant and, in the end, it was Alesius who changed allegiances. Following Hamilton’s execution and his own conversion, Alesius fled to Germany, where he became a friend of Luther’s lieutenant, Philip Melanchthon. While there, he changed his family name from ‘Allane’ to ‘Alesius’

⁶³ John Mair, *In quantuor evangelia expositiones luculentae et Disquisitiones et disputationes contra haereticas plurimae* (Paris, Josse Bade, 1529), FB 78772.

⁶⁴ *TAMO* (1570), 1109.

⁶⁵ Johnson and Gau focused on addressing the laity and will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Six.

– the Latinised Greek for ‘wanderer’ or ‘exile’. Spending the remainder of his life in Germany (1532-1535 and 1540-1565) and England (1535-39), Alesius held faculty positions at Wittenberg, Cambridge, Frankfurt-an-der-Oder and Leipzig, and published many academic works promoting solafideist theology. His Latin disputations and commentaries on Romans (1540-53), 1 & 2 Timothy (1550, 1551), Titus (1552), St John (1553), and his first book of the Psalms (1554) were widely distributed and esteemed in Lutheran circles.⁶⁶ He also loosely translated a number of his friend Thomas Cranmer’s works into Latin and published these for Continental consumption. These works included the *Order of Communion* (1549) and the 1549 *Book of Common Prayer* (1551).⁶⁷

In the early years of his exile, Alesius’s homeland was very much on his mind. In 1533 he produced what was arguably his most famous work, *Epistola contra Decretum quoddam Episcoporum in Scotia*.⁶⁸ The Latin tract, published by Josef Klug in Wittenberg, attacked the Scottish Church’s 1532 ban on vernacular translations of the Bible and other evangelical texts.⁶⁹ Styled as an open letter addressed to James V, the text urged the Scottish king not only to permit but to encourage vernacular Scripture reading among his subjects. Alesius claimed that the prohibition was detrimental to the spiritual health of the State as well as the Church. Furthermore, the ecclesiastical ban,

⁶⁶ Alexander Alesius, *De primo capite ad Romanos disputatio prima* (Frankfurt an der Oder, Johannes I Hanau, 1540), VD16 ZV377; *Capita proposita ad disputandum de xi cap. Epistolae ad Roma* (s.l, s.n., 1545), VD16 ZV376; *Disputatio de duodecimo capite ad Romanos* (Leipzig, Valentin I Bapst, 1545), VD16 A1729; *De argumento epistolae ad Romanos disputatio prima* (Leipzig, Valentin I Bapst, 1547), VD16 ZV379; *De Paulina argumentatione, capite secundo ad Romanos* (Leipzig, Valentin I Bapst, 1549), VD16 A1739; *Disputatio septima, de Paulina phrasi et sententia in epistola ad Romanos* (Leipzig, Valentin I Bapst, 1549), VD16 A1730; *Disputatio octava, de Paulina phrasi et sententia, ab initio tertii capitis epistolae ad Romanos* (Leipzig, Valentin I Bapst, 1550), VD16 ZV380; *De Paulina phrasi et sententia in epistola ad Romanos, cap. Vi* (Leipzig, Valentin I Bapst, 1551), VD16 ZV20712; *Decima octava disputatio, de XIII. Capite epistolae ad Romanos* (Leipzig, Georg Hantzsch, 1552), VD16 ZV25883; *Omnes disputationes de tota epistola ad Romanos* (Leipzig, Georg Hantzsch, 1553), VD16 A1736; *Expositio prioris epistolae ad Timotheum* (Leipzig, Michael Blum, 1550), VD16 A1733; *In alteram ad Timotheum expositio* (Leipzig, Georg Hantzsch, 1551), VD16 A1734; *Epistolae ad titum expositio* (Leipzig, Georg Hantzsch, 1552), VD16 A1732; *Commentarius in evangelium Joannis* (Basel, Johann Oporinus, 1553), VD16 A1726; *Primus liber psalmorum* (Leipzig, Georg Hantzsch, 1554), VD16 B3195.

⁶⁷ G. Wiedermann, ‘Alesius [Allane or Alan], Alexander (1500–1565)’, *ODNB*. Alexander Alesius, *Ordo distributionis sacramenti altaris* (London (Leipzig), Valentin I Bapst, 1549), VD16 E1333; *Ordinatio ecclesiae, seu ministerii ecclesiastici, in florentissimo regno Angliae* (Leipzig, Wolfgang Günther, 1551), VD16 A1738.

⁶⁸ Alexander Alesius, *Epistola contra decretum quoddam episcoporum in scotia, quod prohibet legere Novi Testamenti libros lingua vernacula* (Wittenberg, Josef Kulg, 1533), VD16 A1731

⁶⁹ According to Alesius’s letter, the Church was responsible for this act, not the Parliament. Exactly which piece of legislation this refers to remains unclear.

which Alesius believed was issued by the monks without James's approval, infringed upon the king's inherent rights of rulership.⁷⁰

James had begun his personal rule five years previously, emerging from a minority plagued by usurpations of royal authority, and the king was keen to assert his sovereignty. Alesius would have been aware of this and encouraged the young monarch to reassert his God-given authority over the Church by terminating this piece of ecclesiastical legislation. James's uncle Henry VIII of England had been trying to gain an upper-hand on the Church in his own kingdom since 1529. To that end he issued the Act of Restrain of Appeals in 1533. It is quite possible, especially in light of the build-up surrounding Henry's decision to break from Rome the following year – with the Act of Supremacy in 1534 – that James was all too aware of the implications for royal authority in Alesius's suggestion.

Although addressed to the King of Scots, the *Epistola*'s format as an open Latin letter launched Alesius into the international academic debate on reform. The *Epistola* sparked a response, in the form of another open letter, from the German scholar Johannes Cochlaeus (1479-1552).⁷¹ A Catholic apologist and friend of Erasmus, Cochlaeus would become one of Martin Luther's greatest detractors.⁷² Cochlaeus's evident distaste for Luther, and disciples such as Alesius, is apparent in the open letter he wrote to James on 8 June 1533. In the epistle Cochlaeus admitted his ignorance of Scottish affairs, as he was writing from Dresden, but believed that the kingdom and its monarch had always been loyal to the Church. Judging by his own experience with vernacular Scripture in Germany – Luther had published a German New Testament in 1522 – Cochlaeus defended the ban imposed by the Scottish Church.⁷³ The ramifications of the Peasants War (1524-25) were still fresh, and Cochlaeus warned that vernacular translations of the Bible had evil consequences, stating that the King of Scots would do well to check all goods coming from Germany to prevent the transfer of

⁷⁰ *Letters of James V*, eds R.K. Hannay and D. Hays (Edinburgh, 1954), 241. Alexander Alesius, *Epistola contra Decretum quoddam Episcoporum in Scotia*.

⁷¹ Johannes Cochlaeus, *An expediat laicis, legere Novi Testamenti libros lingua vernacula: ad serenissimum scotiae regem Jacobum. V* (Augsburg, Alexander I Weißenhorn, 1533). VD16 C4245.

⁷² His descriptions of Luther's character would colour Catholic polemic for the next four centuries, claiming that Luther had not only made a pact with Satan, but was the offspring of his mother's relationship with the devil. Lindberg, *European Reformations*, 15.

⁷³ Martin Luther, *Das New Testament* (Basel, Adam Petri, 1522), VD16 B4317.

heresy and rebellion.⁷⁴ Cochlaeus's pleas to James were further bolstered by endorsements from Erasmus and Ferdinand, the King of the Romans, brother of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.⁷⁵

The following year, Alesius responded to Cochlaeus's refutation in another open letter: *Alexandri Alesii Scoti responsio ad Cochlei calumnias*.⁷⁶ He asserted that Cochlaeus was meddling where he did not belong. Alesius reminded the king of his loyal service to the Scottish Church in 1529, when he had worked under the orders of Archbishop James Beaton. Asked by the Archbishop of St Andrews to give a discourse on piety and Christian study at the diocesan synod, Alesius came down on the wrong side of Prior Patrick Hepburn, Beaton's rival, for criticising lecherous clerical behaviour. In the letter he detailed his resulting incarceration and ill treatment at the hands of the Prior, declaring that Hepburn almost killed him. Alesius presented these credentials to demonstrate his academic proficiency and respected position within the Church, as well as to justify his subsequent flight to the Continent. He claimed that it was not for holding unorthodox opinions that he was forced to flee, but to escape the Prior. He further asserted his belief in the writings of the Apostles, Prophets and Church Fathers, and his respect for the authority of the Church, and continued to entreat James not to sanction the Church's decree regarding vernacular Scripture.⁷⁷

However, Alesius's efforts were further undermined by another intervention from Erasmus and by James's desire to remain in the Papacy's good graces.⁷⁸ James signed a letter addressed to Erasmus, stating that the celebrated scholar's request for him to resist Lutheranism would not go unheeded.⁷⁹ The same day a letter was composed to Cochlaeus, declaring the king's pleasure with the dedicatory epistle.⁸⁰ In

⁷⁴ *Letters of James V*, 241. Cochlaeus to James V, 8 June 1533.

⁷⁵ *NAS* GD149/264, 26^v. Erasmus to James V, 8 December 1533; *NAS* GD149/264, 26^f. Ferdinand to James V, 18 January 1534.

⁷⁶ Alexander Alesius, *Responsio ad cochlei calumnias* (Wittenberg, Josef Klug, 1534), VD16 ZV378. *Letters of James V*, 260-261. Alesius to James V, *Alexandri Alesii Scoti responsio ad Cochlei calumnias*.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ In October 1534 James wrote to the Pope requesting that the vacant, and highly lucrative, commendatorship at Kelso Abbey be awarded to his oldest illegitimate son, James, who was five years old at the time. His petition was successful. This was not the same Lord James Stewart (son of James V and Margaret Erskine) that would later become the Earl of Moray and James VI's first Regent. This was his older brother of the same name (son of James V and Elizabeth Shaw) who died in 1557. *NAS* GD149/264, 39^f. James V to Clement VII, 31 October 1534.

⁷⁹ *NAS* GD149/264, 27^f. James V to Erasmus, 1 July 1534.

⁸⁰ *NAS* GD149/264, 27^v. James V to Cochlaeus, 1 July 1534.

the following month, Cochlaeus released another letter dedicated to James, *Pro Scotiae Regno Apologia Iohannis Cochlaei Adversus Personatum Alexandrum Alesium Scotum*.⁸¹ Cochlaeus once more defended his condemnation of vernacular Scripture and Lutheran theology.⁸² It appears as though the German scholar's warnings to James were justified. Despite the anti-heresy legislation of 1525, and an amendment in 1527 to include punishments (confiscation of goods and imprisonment) for native Scots, contraband literature was still making its way into Scotland. In August 1534, Patrick Hamilton's brother, Sir James Hamilton of Kincavil, was condemned before James V for possessing forbidden evangelical literature in the vernacular. The condemnation was issued *in absentia* as Hamilton had fled.⁸³ Of the four others who were tried for heresy at the same time, two recanted and two were executed.⁸⁴

In the end, Alesius's letters did not accomplish the intended goal of persuading the king – or Alesius's ancillary learned audience – to permit or support vernacular Scripture or evangelical practice within the kingdom. In a November 1534 letter to Emperor Charles V, James expressed his support for the calling of a general council to address the suppression of Lutheran doctrine.⁸⁵ In June of the following year Parliament re-enacted the anti-heresy legislation of July 1525.⁸⁶ Alesius's reasoned arguments also failed to convince the majority of his fellow scholars within Scottish academia to support his vernacular Scripture initiative – the universities remained stalwart in their support of orthodoxy.

The letters did, however, launch Alesius into the international academic debate. Alesius could have presented his case privately to the King of Scots. Instead, he chose the medium of open Latin letters, and in so doing, actively sought a much larger, educated audience. By using Scotland as an example, Alesius endeavoured to justify the

⁸¹ Johannes Cochlaeus, *Pro scotiae regno apologia adversus personatum Alexandrum alesium scotum, ad sereniss. Scotorum regem* (Leipzig, Michael Blum, 1534), VD16 C4364.

⁸² *Letters of James V*, 273-274. Cochlaeus to James V, *Pro Scotiae Regno Apologia Iohannis Cochlaei Adversus Personatum Alexandrum Alesium Scotum*.

⁸³ J. Durkan, 'Scottish "Evangelicals" in the Patronage of Thomas Cromwell', *The Records of the Scottish Church History Society* 21 (1981-3), 133.

⁸⁴ *TAMO* (1570), 1156.

⁸⁵ *NAS* GD149/264 38^r-39^r. James V to Charles V, 4 November 1534.

⁸⁶ The only alteration to the original legislation of 1525 is the inclusion of the following directive: 'That nane of thame have, use, kepe or consele ony bukis of the saidis heretik or contenand thare doctrine and opinionis, bot that thai deliver the samin to thare ordineris within xl days under the panis forsadis.' See *RPS* 1535/10.

cause of vernacular Scripture not only for his homeland, but throughout Christendom. Consequently, his argument came to the attention of two Catholic scholars. Cochlaeus was a renowned and widely successful adversary against Lutheranism, while Erasmus was the most famous academic in Europe. Against such forces, and the conservatism of the Scottish educational, governmental and spiritual institutions, Alesius's arguments made little headway in the land of his birth.

With the academic door to Scotland effectively shut, Alesius concentrated his efforts on the international debate. Endorsed by Melanchthon and charged with delivering a copy of his *Loci Communes* to Henry VIII, Alesius left Germany for England in 1535.⁸⁷ In his *De auctoritate verbi Dei*, Alesius explained that he took the commission because Cochlaeus had threatened to have him arrested if he remained on the Continent. Furthermore, he claimed that he was in England at the request of Vicar-general Thomas Cromwell and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer.⁸⁸ Although he never gained the support of the King of Scots, through the efforts of Cromwell he enjoyed the patronage of Henry VIII of England. Alesius spent a brief period as the King's Scholar at Cambridge, until his radical Lutheran ideas led to his forced resignation.⁸⁹

In 1537, while sponsored by Cromwell, Alesius entered into debate with the Bishop of London, John Stokesley.⁹⁰ At first glance, this confrontation in England, in front of English ministers and clergymen, concerning English religious matters would appear to have little to do with the Scottish Reformation. However, it must be remembered that, following his split with Rome in 1534, Henry was keen to convince his young nephew, James V, to adopt a similar settlement and to form a religious alliance. Over the next eight years, James and Henry engaged in an elaborate diplomatic game of flattery, force, and duplicity.⁹¹ Cromwell, in particular, saw to it that a number

⁸⁷ *LP* ix, 224 & 225. Melanchthon to Henry VIII, August 1535; Melanchthon to Cranmer, August 1535.

⁸⁸ Alexander Alesius, *Of the auctorite of the word of god agaynst the bisshop of london* (Strasbourg, W. Köpfel, [1544?]), USTC 503473, Aiii^v-Aiv^v.

⁸⁹ G. Wiedermann, 'Alexander Alesius's Lectures on the Psalms at Cambridge, 1536', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 37 (Jan. 1986), 18.

⁹⁰ C. Kellar, *Scotland, England, and the Reformation 1534-1561* (Oxford, 2003), 38.

⁹¹ This relationship will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Two.

of Scottish religious exiles, including Alesius, were employed within the English Church, government and universities.⁹²

The exchange between Alesius and Stokesley is detailed in Alesius's *De auctoritate verbi Dei*, albeit in a rather biased tone.⁹³ The debate occurred at the February 1537 vice-gerential synod that resulted in 'The Bishop's Book'.⁹⁴ Alesius claimed that he attend the synod and entered into the debate at Cromwell's insistence.⁹⁵ His dialogue with Cochlaeus had made a name for Alesius in scholarly European circles. However, his new opponent, Bishop Stokesley, had a towering international academic reputation of his own.⁹⁶ Stokesley had accomplished no small feat when, in 1530, he succeeded in persuading the faculty at Paris to support Henry's divorce from Katherine of Aragon. At home he debated this issue with Thomas More and John Fisher. But, as Alesius's account demonstrates, he remained a religious conservative, staunchly opposing the changes to the English Church proposed in the 1530s.⁹⁷

At the 1537 vice-gerential synod Stokesley defended the traditions of the Church, the teachings of the Church Fathers and the Seven Sacraments (Baptism, the Eucharist, Confirmation, Confession, Marriage, Holy Orders, and Extreme Unction). Alesius, in turn, dismissed tradition as the justification for Christian practice and claimed that Scripture alone could dictate doctrine. Furthermore, he argued, only Christ could institute a Sacrament and that, as a consequence, there were only two: Baptism and the Eucharist (Bii^v). The Word of God prescribed the number of the Sacraments and their implementation.

However, before either side could command the debate, it was brought to a close, ostensibly due to the late hour. The following day the conservative bishops petitioned Cromwell and Cranmer to have Alesius excluded from the synod on the grounds that he was 'a stranger'. Cromwell warned the Scot that he should probably comply, knowing from experience that they 'wold neuer cease til thei had gote[n] him

⁹² For more on Cromwell's patronage of Scottish exiles, see Durkan, 'Scottish "Evangelicals"'; and Kellar, *Scotland, England, and the Reformation*.

⁹³ Alexander Alesius, *De auctoritate verbi Dei liber contra episcopum lundensem* (Strasbourg, Kraft Müller, 1542), VD16 A1724. The text was partially translated as *Of the auctorite of the word of god*.

⁹⁴ 'The Bishops' Book' was a conciliatory exposition on the Creed, the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Seven Sacraments and the Ave Maria.

⁹⁵ Alesius, *Of the auctorite*, Avⁱ, Bi^r. Where possible, subsequent references will be within the text.

⁹⁶ A.A. Chibi, 'Stokesley, John (1475–1539)', *ODNB*.

⁹⁷ Chibi, 'Stokesley'.

out of the way and thei had before brought to death diuerse whom the king did highly fauor'. This may have been a reference to Henry's erstwhile queen, Anne Boleyn, who had been executed nine months earlier. As Alesius was barred from the proceedings, Cromwell asked for a written response, so that he could show it to the assembled bishops (Bvii^v).

The resulting treatise continues on the Lutheran theme of *sola scriptura*, and confines the Word of God to the books of the Old and New Testaments. The Bishop of London had advocated that the inspired Word of God also included the traditions of the Church and the rulings of the Fathers and various Church councils over the centuries (Bviii^r). Alesius, in true Lutheran fashion, denounced such ideas as the 'horrible blindnes of men and the boldnes and malycyos obstinacy' (Ei^v). He went even further, labeling those who supported such teachings as 'false prophets' working for Antichrist. The treatise continues to denounce pardons, Purgatory, private masses, prayers to the saints, the veneration of images, holy orders, and 'all mans tradicyons'. To add these to the ordinances of the Word of God, Alesius declared, was to accuse God of ignorance and willful negligence (Eiii^r). Furthermore, Alesius endorsed the doctrine of faith over works (Ev^r). But once again, his reasoned arguments were unsuccessful. Two years later, following the passing of the Act of Six Articles – of which Stokesley is believed to have been the chief architect, the Scot was forced to flee to Germany.

Alesius, particularly owing to his connections with Cromwell, would certainly have been aware of Henry's attempts to induce James to embark on a reorganisation of the Church in his realm. In his disputation, Alesius took special care to highlight the growing debate over vernacular Scripture, stating that princes who read and promoted the Bible in the language of the people would live longer, peaceful lives. Those who 'play the tyra[n]nes ouer the scripture and ouer the readers of it' would be punished by God (Avi^r). This may very well have been intended as a warning to the King of Scots, who, five years previously, had rejected Alesius's advice in this regard. Although Henry remained hesitant regarding vernacular Scripture, he did license an English translation of the Bible in 1538.⁹⁸

⁹⁸ A. Pettegree, 'Printing and the Reformation: the English exception' in *The Beginnings of English Protestantism*, eds P. Marshall and A. Ryrie (Cambridge, 2002), 169.

Yet, more than anything, Alesius's situation highlights the involvement of Scots in the international religious debate. Without a platform at home, some Scottish scholars with Lutheran sympathies, like Alesius (and Hamilton before him) took advantage of opportunities abroad. Indeed, Alesius appears to have lost interest in his homeland, instead focusing on reform in Germany and England, and serving on a number of occasions as a bridge between the two reforming groups – most notably between Melancthon and Cranmer. Alesius's commentary on the book of Romans, in particular, is an interesting piece of international academic exchange.⁹⁹ Written by an exiled Scottish academic and prefaced by the leading German reformer and intellect Melancthon, it is dedicated to the English prelate Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury. While the forum for such discourse may have been denied at home, there were other avenues for voicing one's convictions.

John Macalpine (Machabeus)

Within this context, one further example of the evangelical Scottish scholar abroad bears mentioning – John Macalpine, also known as 'Machabeus' (d.1557). Macalpine studied theology at Cologne and was licensed BTh by the Dominicans in 1525. In 1532 he was appointed prior of the Dominican convent at Perth. Suspected of unorthodox views, he was summoned to appear before Archbishop James Beaton's commissioner in August 1534. Instead of obeying the summons, he fled to England. There, he became chaplain to the evangelical Bishop of Salisbury, Nicholas Shaxton, and married fellow Scottish exile, Agnes Macheson. Agnes's sister Elizabeth would also marry a reformer, Miles Coverdale, around 1540.¹⁰⁰ During his time in England it is believed that Macalpine wrote two treatises – *De vera et falsa ecclesia* (1535-8), which does not survive, and *De conjugio sacerdotum, an liceat sacris initiatis contrahere matrimonium* (c.1538) which has survived in manuscript form in Cambridge. The latter addresses issues of clerical celibacy. Macalpine argued that clergymen should be allowed to marry, even after taking Orders, and that, once married, they should not have to abstain from sleeping with their wives. Furthermore, he claimed that the Church's practice of

⁹⁹ Alexander Alesius, *Omnes disputationes de tota epistola ad Romanos diversis temporibus propositae ab ipso in celebri academia Lipsensi* (Leipzig, Georg Hantzsch, 1553), VD16 A1736.

¹⁰⁰ T.Riis, *Should Auld Acquaintance Be Forgot: Scottish-Danish Relations c.1450-1707* (2 vols, Odense, 1988), i, 114-115, 118.

turning a blind eye to clerical concubinage while insisting that the clergy remain unmarried was just the sort of hypocrisy that was corrupting the Church from within.¹⁰¹

By November 1540 the Macalpines had moved to Saxony, where he matriculated at the University of Wittenberg and became a close associate of Melanchthon – it was Melanchthon who Latinised the Scotsman's name to 'Machabeus'.¹⁰² In 1541 Macalpine participated in one of the university's scholastic disputations, presided over by Luther.¹⁰³ The following year he obtained his doctorate in theology from Wittenberg. Macalpine's academic reputation and connections brought him to the attention of Christian III, King of Denmark (1503-1559), who appointed him professor of theology at the University of Copenhagen. Between 1543 and 1544, he was involved in an official disputation, along with two other professors of Divinity from the university, with the Catholic canons of Copenhagen, Lund and Roskilde.¹⁰⁴ Owing to his position within the university, Macalpine was instrumental in introducing a Melanchthonian tradition to Danish Lutheran theology.¹⁰⁵ Respected by the king and among his peers, he was twice named chancellor of the University (1544 and 1549) and remained active there until his death in 1557.¹⁰⁶ Although he did not return to Scotland, as Hamilton had done, nor did he follow Alesius's example and write concerning Scottish religious affairs, Macalpine's ties to his homeland were not completely severed. He assisted evangelical Scots interested in studying in Denmark, including John Erskine of Dun.¹⁰⁷ Macalpine also facilitated introductions for Scottish academics, like James Balfour, to well-known international scholars, including Melanchthon and Alesius.¹⁰⁸

Macalpine was highly regarded by Christian III, who appointed him as his personal chaplain and saw to his involvement in the preparation of the first complete Bible in the Danish language (1550).¹⁰⁹ In 1548 Christian requested that Macalpine – along with fellow professor of Divinity, Peder Palladius – compose a *responsum* to

¹⁰¹ Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, i, 115.

¹⁰² T.L.Christensen, 'Scots in Denmark in the Sixteenth Century', *SHR* 49 (Oct. 1970), 137.

¹⁰³ R.L. Greaves, 'Macalpine, John (d. 1557)', *ODNB*.

¹⁰⁴ Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, ii, 197.

¹⁰⁵ T.L.Christensen, 'Scots in Denmark', 138.

¹⁰⁶ Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, i, 116.

¹⁰⁷ Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, ii, 193.

¹⁰⁸ Greaves, 'Macalpine, John'.

¹⁰⁹ Christensen, 'Scots in Denmark', 137. *Biblia, Biblia, Det er den gantske Hellige Scrifft udsæt paa Danske* (København, Ludwig Dietz, 1550), USTC 302434.

Charles V's *Augsburger Interim*. Three years later, in 1551, Palladius and Macalpine were again asked by the king to formulate a *responsum*, this time as a refutation of Andreas Osiander. However, due to an illness, Macalpine was unable to participate.¹¹⁰ Still, this did not diminish the scholar's standing with Christian. In 1554, Macalpine represented the king at the secularisation of the monastery of Cara Insula.¹¹¹ The following year the Danish king's favour proved pivotal in securing the release into exile abroad of Macalpine's brother-in-law, Miles Coverdale. At Macalpine's request, Christian successfully appealed to Mary Tudor for the liberation of the Bible translator and erstwhile Bishop of Exeter.¹¹² The mutual respect between Christian and Macalpine would continue until the latter's death in 1557.¹¹³ The king attended Macalpine's funeral, even going so far as to follow the coffin on foot.¹¹⁴

Macalpine's career demonstrates not only the role of Scottish evangelical scholars abroad, but also the ways in which academic and courtly circles often intersected during the late medieval and early modern periods. As the intellectual developments of the Renaissance began to make an impact across Europe, princes became increasingly interested in surrounding themselves with well-educated advisors.¹¹⁵ Furthermore, the peripatetic and transnational nature of late-medieval academia facilitated the flight into exile – but not necessarily obscurity – of many scholars who found themselves on the wrong side of the accepted orthodoxy in their homelands. Many intellectuals sought refuge within like-minded educational institutions abroad. Through their scholarly pursuits, some, like Macalpine and Alesius, even managed to secure the influential patronage of foreign princes and dignitaries.

Conclusion

Patrick Hamilton and Alexander Alesius provide prime examples of the ways in which academic discourse was employed, albeit with limited success, as a medium of persuasion in the early stages of Scottish reform. In the 1520s and 30s Scottish scholars

¹¹⁰ Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, i, 116.

¹¹¹ Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, ii, 197.

¹¹² *TAMO* (1563), 1150-1152.

¹¹³ Christensen, 'Scots in Denmark', 137.

¹¹⁴ Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, i, 118.

¹¹⁵ N. Hammerstein, 'Relations with Authority' in *A History of the University in Europe: Volume II Early Modern Europe (1500-1800)*, eds W. Rüegg, H. De Ridder-Symoens (Cambridge, 1996), 116.

sympathetic to the Lutheran cause turned to reasoned arguments in their efforts to promote the controversial doctrine within the kingdom's universities and among the educated elite. However, these attempts had little success in the early years, as the academic and governing bodies of Scotland remained staunchly conservative. Hamilton, Alesius and others like them, including Macalpine, were forced abroad, where they travelled to international centres of learning, and there became further involved in religious reform. Only Hamilton returned to Scotland, where his advocacy of Lutheran doctrine led to his execution by the Scottish Church and the University of St Andrews. While his endeavours did little to sway the institutions of Scotland to adopt or even consider the new theology, his influence can be seen in a small group of individual scholars, Alesius among them. Alesius, in turn, used his rhetorical skills, honed before his conversion in the employ of the Archbishop and the University of St Andrews, to engage in further academic debate while in exile.

In Germany, where Hamilton, Alesius and Macalpine all had spent time, and in Denmark, as demonstrated by Macalpine's career there, the support of various universities had proved central to the success of the early reform movement. The lack of similar university endorsements partially accounts for why the Scottish Reformation took so much longer to consolidate than its Continental counterparts. Scottish Lutherans were unable to accrue comparable support from among their own academic community, and without a major institution to promote or protect the cause, the fate of the movement rested in the hands of individuals. However, the debates did serve to foster interest among the kingdom's scholars, many of whom obtained influential positions outside of academe or abroad. They, in turn, would carry the message to other audiences beyond the conservative universities. The careers of Alesius and Macalpine, in particular, are illustrative of the intersecting of academic and courtly circles. Alesius had hoped to induce James V to involve himself in religious matters through his open letters in 1533 and 1534. While he failed to gain his king's approval, his experiences in England highlight the potential benefits of royal and courtly patronage in advancing the cause of reform. This relationship is further exemplified through Macalpine's position as chaplain and friend to Christian III, as well as his influence at the University of Copenhagen.

Although the examples of Alesius and Macalpine demonstrate the confluence of academic and courtly spheres abroad, similar intersections existed in Scotland. As it became increasingly evident that the Scottish universities would not endorse reform, Scottish reformers began to concentrate their persuasive efforts on another audience: the king. Many reform-minded individuals were university educated – having first encountered the new ideas during their studies (either domestically or overseas) – and a number were now well placed within the royal court and household. These men would take the campaign for religious change beyond the realms of the purely academic, marking the transition of the reform movement's persuasive attentions from a scholarly focus to that of the royal court and the governing elite. However, evangelicals at the Scottish court were aware that it would take something other than reasoned, academic arguments to persuade their robust young king, newly of age after a lengthy minority, to address reform.

CHAPTER TWO: Courtly Entertainments

Following the establishment of James V's personal rule, the focus of appeals for religious change shifted to the king and the royal court. Having been denied by the universities at home and, by extension, the Scottish Church authorities, many among evangelical and Protestant circles began to look to their sovereign to reform the Church in the realm. The majority of the reforming material extant from this period (1528-1542) was presented to the lay elite in general and directed to the young king in particular, marking a clear shift of evangelical appeal from the limited arena of the Church and cloister to the more open and volatile environment of the royal court. While Alesius had failed to interest James in spiritual concerns through academic discourse, others, like Sir David Lindsay and George Buchanan, tried the somewhat more playful route of courtly entertainments. Through poetry and theatrics presented at court, these evangelical poets hoped to engage the attention and support of a young king more inclined towards the spectacle of kingship than scholarly pursuits. James, in turn, would spend most of his personal rule carefully playing each side of the religious debate against the other.

The King

An enigmatic figure whose character and reign are only now beginning to receive proper attention from historians, James V was the only surviving child of James IV of Scotland and his wife, Margaret Tudor.¹ Following the death of his father at the Battle of Flodden in September 1513, James was crowned King of Scots at the age of seventeen months. With a toddler on the throne, the Scots settled in for yet another long,

¹ J. Cameron's *James V: The Personal Rule 1528-1542* (East Linton, 1998) has gone a long way in rounding out our knowledge of James's political relations, both domestic and international. Edington's *Court and Culture* examines James's court through the works of courtier/poet, Sir David Lindsay of the Mount. R.A. Mason's work on Stewart kingship examines the development of Renaissance monarchy in Scotland – Roger Mason, 'Renaissance Monarchy? Stewart Kingship (1469-1542)' in *Scottish Kingship, 1306-1542: Essays in Honour of Norman Macdougall*, ed. M. Brown and R. Tanner (Edinburgh, 2008), 255-278; and R.A. Mason, 'Laicisation and the Law: The Reception of Humanism in Early Renaissance Scotland' in *A Palace in the Wild: Essays on Vernacular Culture and Humanism in Late-Medieval and Renaissance Scotland*, ed. L.A.J.R. Houwen, A.A. MacDonald and S.L. Mapstone (Leuven, 2000), 1-25. A. Thomas's *Princelie Majestie: The Court of James V of Scotland, 1528-1542* (Edinburgh, 2005) provides an in-depth study of the cultivation of the royal court.

turbulent minority.² Young James had a series of regents who often abused his power, and though he was pampered by nobles who sought to ingratiate themselves with him and indulged by regents who sought to distract him from affairs of state, James became keenly aware of his status as a political pawn. This was never more evident than during the final regency of James's minority: that of Archibald Douglas, Earl of Angus and James's one-time stepfather.³ At the age of sixteen and following a violent power struggle, James managed to break free of Angus's hold and declared himself able to rule in his own right. The adolescent king was immediately on the defensive. Not only did James have to deal with an ambitious and indignant ex-regent anxious to regain his power, he had also to explain himself to his over-bearing uncle, Henry VIII of England. Henry had financially supported the regime of his erstwhile brother-in-law, and would have preferred his young nephew to remain a weak puppet. In freeing himself from the authority of Angus, James had, for the most part, also liberated himself from the indirect control of the English Crown. Henry was far from pleased with this outcome, and endeavored to have Angus reinstated. James managed to block these attempts and began to consolidate his own authority.

The experience of his minority would affect various aspects of James's adult reign. After being so powerless in the hands of his regents – Angus in particular – James was keen to enforce and protect his own sovereignty. He also endeavoured to remain in Henry's good graces without relinquishing any of his autonomy. These concerns would become paramount in his attitudes towards religious reform. James was interested in the spiritual situation of his kingdom – and that of the rest of Europe – only in so far as it could be utilized to strengthen and safeguard his own position. Consequently, those who sought to persuade the king to address religious reform often appealed to James's sense of authority. As we have already seen, Alexander Alesius touched on this theme in his academic letters to the king, although to no effect. Other writers, such as Sir David Lindsay, would address James's sovereignty through the more relaxed forms of poetry and entertainments.

² All four of the previous Scottish kings had inherited the throne as minors: James I at 12, James II at 6, James III at 9, and James IV at 15.

³ Queen Margaret had married Angus after James IV's death at Flodden. The union was tumultuous and Margaret and Angus were granted an annulment on 11 March 1528.

James proved fundamentally pragmatic when it came to issues of religion. A practitioner of conventional medieval piety – attending mass, going on pilgrimages, and financially supporting numerous religious foundations – James's faith was probably genuine enough, although, as Roger Mason has argued, it clearly did not prevent him taking advantage of international events to exploit the Church's vast financial resources to an unprecedented degree.⁴ By projecting the image of filial allegiance to the Papacy, especially in contrast to his post-1534 schismatic uncle Henry, James gained substantial rewards in the form of increased authority over the Church in Scotland, as well as its wealth.⁵ In addition to imposing the heaviest tax the Scottish Church had ever faced, James appointed five of his seven known illegitimate sons to six of the most lucrative commendatorships in the kingdom. As minors, their father had direct access to the revenues.⁶ It was precisely this control over the Church that the reformers desired to harness to their cause. James could be a powerful ally, not simply because he was the monarch, but also because the King of Scots, as the reformers reasoned, had ultimate authority over the Church in his realm.⁷ In 1534 James's uncle Henry declared himself supreme head of the Church in England, officially separating from Rome. Henry and many among the Scottish evangelicals hoped that James might be persuaded to adopt a similar settlement. Consequently, the majority of the reforming texts addressed to James in the 1530s emphasised his supremacy.

For his part, James was inclined to tolerate, and even exploit evangelical sympathies at court. Many within the royal circle were sympathetic to Erasmian-style reform, and the court contained a number of outspoken evangelicals like David Lindsay and George Buchanan, as well as out-and-out Protestants like Henry Balnaves and John Bellenden. These men and others, as members of the king's inner circle, actively sought to influence James's religious policy. Conversely, James was known to use these

⁴ Mason, 'Renaissance Monarchy?', 264. Religious houses sponsored by James V include the Observant Franciscans, Trinity College Edinburgh, the Collegiate Church at Restalrig, the Convent of Sciennes, the Abbey of Cambuskenneth, and the Greyfriars at Stirling. Thomas, *Princelie Majestie*, 115-116.

⁵ Kellar, *Scotland, England, and the Reformation*, 29.

⁶ James [i], son of Elizabeth Shaw, was appointed to the abbeys of Kelso and Montrose; James [ii], son of Margaret Erskine, was appointed to the priory of St Andrews; John, son of Elizabeth or Katherine Carmichael, was appointed to Coldingham; Robert [i], son of Euphemia Elphinstone, was appointed to the abbey at Holyrood; and Robert [ii], whose mother remains unknown, was appointed to the priory at Whithorn. P.D. Anderson, 'James V, mistresses and children of (act. c.1529–1592)', *ODNB*.

⁷ James's authority was more *de facto* than *de jure*. For more on the unique 'Church-Crown hybrid', see Dawson, *Scotland Re-formed*.

evangelically-minded courtiers in attempts to convince Henry that he, too, was considering a break with Rome. James found this to be especially convenient when it was necessary to cultivate Henry's favour or to maintain peace with his volatile uncle.

Speculum principis: Advice To Princes

Those at the royal court were best placed to advise the king, as well as to gauge his receptiveness to reforming ideas.⁸ Indeed, one of the chief occupations of the courtier was to provide counsel to the prince. According to Baldassare Castiglione, author of *The Book of the Courtier* (1528), the goal of the perfect courtier was to win the mind and favor of the prince so that he could advise the prince 'without fear or risk of displeasing him' and steer the prince 'to the path of virtue'.⁹ In addition to its advisory role, the royal court also served as a cultural focus.¹⁰ The accomplishments and services of the various scholars, artists, writers, craftsmen and musicians added prestige and sophistication to the monarch's reputation, as well as providing entertainment and ornamentation.¹¹

During the Renaissance, it became fashionable, as well as being considered prudent, for rulers to surround themselves with highly educated advisors and attendants.¹² Consequently, there were a number of university educated courtiers present within James V's court and household. Among them were lawyers – including Sir Thomas Erskine of Brechin, Robert Galbraith, Thomas Bellenden, James Foulis and Adam Otterburn, as well as clerks, like Henry Balnaves and John Bellenden, and poets, such as William Stewart and David Lindsay.¹³ Also included in the ranks of the university-educated were brothers George and Patrick Buchanan, tutors to the king's illegitimate children, while James's private confessor, Alexander Seton, was educated at St Andrews.¹⁴ A number of men who served both the ecclesiastical and temporal

⁸ Thomas, *Princelie Majestie*, 17.

⁹ Baldassare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, trans. George Bull (Harmondsworth, 1983), 284-5.

¹⁰ Thomas, *Princelie Majestie*, 15-26.

¹¹ For more on the development of James's court and its culture, see Thomas, *Princelie Majestie*; Edington, *Court and Culture*; and J.H. Williams (ed), *Stewart Style, 1513-1542: Essays on the Court of James V* (East Linton, 1996).

¹² N. Hammerstein, 'Relations with Authority', 116.

¹³ Edington questions whether Lindsay actually went to university. Edington, *Court and Culture*, 46-7 & ; A.A. MacDonald, 'William Stewart and the Court Poetry of the Reign of James V' in J. Hadley Williams (ed.), *Stewart Style 1513-1542: Essays on the Court of James V* (East Linton, 1996), 182-3.

¹⁴ Edington, *Court and Culture*, 46-7.

authorities also possessed degrees. Gavin Dunbar and James Beaton, archbishops of Glasgow and St Andrews respectively, both attended St Andrews. Both men also held the title of Chancellor of Scotland at different times during James's reign. Beaton's nephew, David – who would become a cardinal and Archbishop of St Andrews, as well as serving as an ambassador to France – attended St Andrews, Glasgow and Orléans.¹⁵ The presence of so many learned men within James's retinue demonstrates that James, although not much of a scholar himself, recognised the potential advantages to be found in the confluence of the scholarly and the courtly spheres. A number of these men had encountered – and some had adopted – the new theology during their studies.

As members of the royal household, Sir David Lindsay (a royal herald) and George Buchanan (a tutor to one of the king's children) employed creative works to make reformist appeals to James V. In doing so, they were operating within an environment that believed in the power of literature to influence the prince. Greg Walker observes that humanists in particular believed that literature 'could provide a moral mirror in which princes might view both good and bad examples and judge their own behaviour by analogy'.¹⁶ Furthermore, much could be said through wit, humor and goodwill that might otherwise have resulted in rebuke or punishment.¹⁷ As a result of this unique position, many writers believed that they were obligated to the prince to provide advice, counsel and, when necessary, censure through their work.¹⁸

By the sixteenth century, the 'advice-to-princes', or *speculum principis*, literary form was a well-established tradition throughout Europe and had an esteemed reputation in Scotland.¹⁹ Early proponents of this principle in Scotland include Sir Gilbert Hay and John Ireland. In 1456 Hay had the *Secreta Secretorum* – which claimed to be the advice Aristotle imparted to Alexander the Great – translated into Scots for

¹⁵ R.D.Oram, 'Dunbar, Gavin (c.1490–1547)', J.K.Cameron, 'Beaton, James (c.1473–1539)'; M.H.B.Sanderson, 'Beaton, David (1494?–1546)'. All from the *ODNB*.

¹⁶ Walker, *Writing Under Tyranny*, 111.

¹⁷ For example, John Heywood, a playwright at the court of Henry VIII, condemned the Boleyn marriage in 'The Play of the Wether'. Heywood escaped punishment, unlike his uncle, Thomas More. In 1544 Heywood was condemned for denying the Royal Supremacy, but was pardoned by the king. John Heywood, 'The Play of the Wether' in *The Plays of John Heywood*, eds R. Axton and P. Happé (Cambridge, 1991).

¹⁸ Walker, *Writing Under Tyranny*, 52.

¹⁹ J. Robinson, *Court Politics, Culture and Literature in Scotland and England, 1500-1540* (Aldershot, 2008), 57.

James II.²⁰ Ireland originally planned to dedicate his *Meroure of Wyssdome* (completed in 1490) to James III. However, following the king's untimely death in 1488, Ireland dedicated the manuscript – which has the distinction of being the first theological treatise composed in the Scots vernacular – to James IV. Ireland hoped that the young king would use this 'ABC of Christien theologie' to become a wise and pious monarch.²¹

James V, like his father and great-grandfather before him, received literary works of advice from subjects eager to offer counsel. The leading Scottish academics John Mair (1467-1550) and Hector Boece (1465-1536) both presented James with books instructing him on successful monarchy: Mair's *Historia Majoris Britanniae tam Angliae quam Scotiae*, published in Paris in 1521, and Boece's *Scotorum Historiae a prima gentis origine cum aliarum et rerum et genitum illustratione non vulgari*, also published in Paris, dating from 1527.²² James was so impressed with Boece's work that he commissioned one of his clerks, John Bellenden (1495-1545?), himself a humanist poet of some renown, to translate *Scotorum Historiae* from Latin into the Scots vernacular in 1531, resulting in *The Hystory and Croniklis of Scotland*. In his introduction to the translation, Bellenden explained his reasons for taking the commission. He asserted that as he 'wes in seruice with the kyng' from the monarch's '[y]eris tenderest', his life was dedicated to finding ways 'that mych [the king] pleis in ony maner best'.²³ Similar declarations of privileged standing and dutiful commitment were typical of *specula principis* and established a platform of credibility and humility, however genuine, from which to dispense advice.

This tradition of *speculum principis* set a precedent that was capitalised upon by court evangelicals seeking to gain James's support. Thus, Lindsay and Buchanan addressed their literary appeals for reform to James specifically and the court generally. As is well-known, Lindsay composed a number of courtly entertainments with overt evangelical themes. These works demonstrate the degree to which talk of moderate

²⁰ Thomas, *Princelie Majestie*, 129.

²¹ John Ireland, *Meroure of Wyssdome*, ed. Charles MacPherson (Edinburgh, 1926), i, 17.

²² John Mair, *Historia Majoris Britanniae* ([Paris], Josse Bade, 1521), FB78759, USTC145413; Hector Boece, *Scotorum Historiae a prima gentis origine* ([Paris], Josse Bade, Hector Boethius, 1527), FB58305, USTC145871.

²³ Hector Boece, *The Hystory and Croniklis of Scotland*, trans. John Bellenden (Edinburgh, Thomas Davidson, [1540]), USTC 503140, Ai^v.

reform was tolerated in James's court. The less familiar case of George Buchanan, however, provides a telling example of the reforming impulse at work in court poetry, as well as the perils of royal patronage.

Poetry in Motion

It is interesting to note that both Lindsay and Buchanan turned to poetry as their persuasive medium of choice. In both cases, the decision was deliberate. Having served within the royal household since the king's infancy – and in some of the most intimate capacities – Lindsay had a fairly good understanding of James's likes and dislikes. He observed that James had always been inclined towards 'antique storeis and dedis marciall', 'fabylls' and 'mony vther plesand storye'.²⁴ The tradition of music, poetry, story-telling and recitation was strong at James's court. The king himself was known to compose verses, as well as to sing – Lindsay once described him as the 'Prince of Poetry'.²⁵ Furthermore, Lindsay also knew that this prince was no scholar, lamenting that James had been hastily 'tuke [...] frome the sculis' when he was twelve years old to learn instead the arts of war ('Complaynt', lns 126-140). According to Lindsay, the same 'rewlairs' (chiefly, the Earl of Angus) who removed James from the classroom also taught the young king to scorn scholarly pursuits, claiming that they 'thynk thame verray naturail fulis, That lernis ouir mekle at the sculis' ('Complaynt', lns 28, 166-7). With such an upbringing, Lindsay was keenly aware that the playful, and often colourful language of verse was more likely to get and, more importantly, hold his king's attention than any purely academic text. George Buchanan would also have been conscious of this. As an employee within the royal household, serving as tutor to one of James's children, he would have witnessed the king's preferences first hand. Moreover, Buchanan was an active member of the domestic and international academic communities. As such, he would have been aware of Alesius's failed attempts at using scholarly discourse to attract James's support for vernacular Scripture. This knowledge,

²⁴ David Lindsay, 'The Dreame', in *Sir David Lyndsay: Selected Poems*, ed. J.H. Williams (Glasgow, 2000), lns 31, 40&44. In this chapter, subsequent references to 'The Dreame', 'The Complaynt', 'The Testament of the Papyngo' and 'The Deploration of the Deith of Quene Magdalene' are taken from this edition.

²⁵ Edington, *Court and Culture*, 92-3; David Lindsay, 'The Answer to the Kingis Flyting' in D.Hamer (ed.), *The Works of Sir David Lindsay: Volume One, The Poems* (Edinburgh, 1931), ln. 102.

as well as his own fondness for Latin verse, would have influenced Buchanan's choice of medium.

In addition to personal knowledge of the audience and awareness of what had failed in the past, as well as both writers' own inclinations towards verse, the poetic medium also may have been chosen for its own unique persuasive merits. Aided by rhythm and rhyme, verse is more easily memorised than prose. Furthermore, poetry's potential for coded criticism would have been of particular interest to those who wished to say something controversial. The medium had the ability to obscure – through wit, allegory and clever word-play – what might otherwise have been too dangerous to state in direct conversation. Through entertainments such as verse and drama, writers (and their patrons) could both suggest and enlarge upon themes of reform, sometimes, as Greg Walker observes, risking 'nothing more serious in response than the charge of poor taste'.²⁶ For some writers the charges would be far more serious. Still, this was a risk that many reform-minded poets and playwrights were willing to take.

Sir David Lindsay of the Mount

Master of the King's Household during James's childhood, Lindsay was a royal herald and known to act on behalf of the Lyon King of Arms, the king's senior herald.²⁷ Along with these official duties, Lindsay was also a court poet, composing interludes and verse to entertain James and his retinue. For Lindsay, the moral conduct of individuals and society, as well as the efficacy of government, were directly affected by the piety of the monarch and his involvement in the religious affairs of his kingdom. Of the opinion that the established Church needed reforming, Lindsay believed that reform should be instigated and controlled by a just, moral, and pious king. The reform of the Church by the monarchy would then result in an overall reform of society. For Lindsay, such a reformation would best be accomplished through persuasion rather than confrontationally through diatribes and Scripture tracts.²⁸

²⁶ G. Walker, *Plays of Persuasion: Drama and Politics at the Court of Henry VIII* (Cambridge, 1991), 20.

²⁷ J.H. Williams, 'David Lyndsay and the Making of King James V' in J.H. Williams (ed.) *Stewart Style, 1513-1542: Essays on the Court of James V* (East Linton, 1996), 201 and 207. Lindsay was officially appointed as Lyon King in 1542. However, he is recorded as filling the post in an embassy to the English court in the 1530s, and at the funeral of James's first wife, Madeleine, in 1537.

²⁸ Edington, *Court and Culture*, 167.

Lindsay repeatedly stressed the special relationship he enjoyed with James as he endeavored gently to persuade the young monarch to reform the Scottish Church. In both ‘The Dreame’ (1526/8) and ‘The Complaynt’ (1530) he highlighted his role as personal servant, caregiver and playmate in the king’s infancy.²⁹ In ‘The Dreame’ Lindsay recalled how he had held the young king in his arms and often played music for him (lns 8-14). He then proceeded to remind the king of the household duties he had performed, demonstrating his position as a trusted servant and advisor (lns 22-25). In a picturesque scene within ‘The Complaynt’ the poet recounted the times when he carried the child-king on his shoulders, as well as the infant’s first words: ‘Pa [play], Da Lyn’ (lns 88-92). Lindsay related these intimate details in an effort to highlight his familiarity and trustworthiness as the grounds for supplying his advice.³⁰ He was also quick to establish his allegiances, claiming that he was sympathetic to James’s situation during the nefarious regency of Angus:

I prait daylie on my knee
My young maister that I mycht see
Of eild, in his aistait royall,
Havand power imperyall. (‘Complaynt’, lns 113-116)

The poet was clearly distancing himself from the unpleasant periods of James’s minority, and reassuring him that, although married to a Douglas, he had always been on the king’s side. In fact, he had been removed from the royal household at the outset of the Angus regency, when Queen Margaret orchestrated a purge of staff in 1524. ‘The Complaynt’ was written as a petition to return to the king’s favoured service.

In addition to establishing Lindsay’s loyalty, these lines represent an opportunity to flatter James’s sense of sovereignty – his ‘power imperyall’. Lindsay professed that he had long desired to see James rule in his own name and assert his own imperial authority, as was his right (ln.116). The poem implies the fulfillment of this hope since James had declared his majority two years previously and ‘to no man art subiectit’

²⁹ Both poems existed first in manuscript form and were not printed until later. ‘The Dreame’ first appears in print in 1558, bound together with Lindsay’s other works – ‘The Papyngo’, ‘The Tragedie of the Cardinal’ and ‘The Monarche’: Lindsay, *Ane dialog betuix Experience and ane courteour* ([Rouen, J.Petit], 1558), USTC 152381. (The printing of this edition will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three.) ‘The Complaynt’ first appears in print in a volume of Lindsay’s collected works printed in 1568: Lindsay, *The Warkis of the Famous and Worthie Knight Schir David Lyndesay* (Edinburgh, J.Scot, 1568), USTC 506825.

³⁰ Robinson, *Court Politics*, 52.

(ln.377). Now that James was in full and sole possession of his rights, Lindsay wanted him to turn that power towards a specific task – the reform of Church and State.

In ‘The Dreame’ (1526/8) Lindsay used the well-established literary convention of recounting a dream to entreat the young king to rule wisely and take heed to reform the Church in his kingdom. In the dream Dame Remembrance guides the narrator through the realms of Hell, Heaven, and Earth. While in Hell, the narrator observes many members of the clergy (lns 173-180). Lindsay gave a simple reason for their punishment: ‘haly kirk quhilk [they] did abusioune’ (ln. 182). These men of the cloth abused their positions and neglected to fulfill their clerical duties while living hypocritical, unchaste lifestyles of ‘covatyce, luste, and ambitioune’ (ln. 186). The punishments of Hell, however, were not reserved only for the wicked of the Church. Hell would be no respecter of rank, profession, or gender. Temporal lords, elegant ladies, wealthy merchants, and poor peasants all found their just rewards in Lindsay’s tour of the underworld.

Although he later kept company with those of more extreme religious views, there is no evidence that Lindsay ever officially left the Catholic Church. However, as an evangelical Catholic, he was certainly sailing very close to the wind. While he believed that the Church could not err on points of doctrine, he harboured no illusions that individuals working for the Church practised what they preached.³¹ Therefore, it was up to the king to keep the Church and the churchmen within his realm in check. Lindsay called James to this very task in ‘The Complaynt’, warning that if the king was to foster ‘gude ordour’ in his lands, he must ‘have ee’ to the Spiritual Estate (lns. 410-412). Specifically, Lindsay desired that James

Cause thame mak ministratioun
Conforme to thare vocatioun
To preche with unfenyeit intentis,
And trewly use the sacramentis
Efter Christis institutionis,
Levyng thare vaine traditiounis
(Quhilkis dois the syllie scheip illude
Quhame for Christ Jesus sched his blude),
As superstitious pylgramagis,
Prayand to gravin imagis
Expres aganis the Lordis command. (lns 412-423)

³¹ Lindsay, *The Dreame*, ln. 348.; example of penance: ln. 607.

Here Lindsay's evangelical allegiance is clear: the use of images in worship and religious pilgrimages are condemned, while preaching and the Sacraments as Christ established them in Scripture are condoned.³² In both 'The Dreame' and 'The Complaynt' Lindsay cautioned the young king to be on his guard against hypocritical clergymen, who deceived their parishioners ['scheip illude'], and advised James to remedy the corruptions of the Scottish Church before it was too late.

Lindsay's 'The Testament and Complaynt of our Soverane Lordis Papyngo', composed around 1530, continued in this vein.³³ The poem, written as the last words of the king's favorite pet parrot ('papyngo'), advises James and his court to be vigilant against pride and other vices.³⁴ Echoing concerns voiced in 'The Dreame' and 'The Complaynt', the parrot cautions the king to be wary of churchmen who disguise themselves in cloaks of piety and righteousness. As the parrot lies dying, three birds attend her, representing members of the Church hierarchy: the magpie representing a canon regular; the raven, a monk; and the gled (kite), a friar. They promise to help safeguard her soul into heaven, but as she exhales her last breath, they descend upon her, dismembering and devouring her corpse until nothing remains. The parrot's heart, which she had bequeathed to the king, is stolen by the greedy and gluttonous monk-birds (lins. 1144-1171). This was a thinly veiled warning to James to beware of those among the clergy who were ruled by their lust and greed, those who would rob the flock they were pledged to shepherd. Even the property and authority of the king himself was not beyond the reach of their ambition, and the poem counseled the young monarch to take control of the Church before it took advantage of him. Once again, Lindsay was making use of the poetic medium's ability to recast or temper criticism. The imagery of a brightly coloured pet bird dispensing pearls of wisdom may have been amusing

³² According to some evangelicals, and many Protestants, Christ instituted only two Sacraments: Baptism and Eucharist. Some Protestants, like Zwingli and his followers, agreed that Baptism and Eucharist were instituted by Christ, but denied their efficacy as conduits of Divine Grace, therefore negating their designation as Sacraments. Instead, they believed that Baptism and Eucharist were symbolic ordinances. By advocating 'the sacramentis efter Christis institutionis' (emphasis my own), Lindsay placed himself within an evangelical Catholic/moderately Protestant camp, without crossing into radical Protestant territory.

³³ 'The Papyngo' also first existed in manuscript form and was not printed until 1538. Lindsay, *The complaynte and testament of a popiniay* (London, J. Byddell, 1538), USTC 503030.

³⁴ There is evidence that James actually possessed a pet parrot. *Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland*, eds T. Dickson and J. Balfour Paul (Edinburgh, 1877-1916), vii, 22; vi, 390 & 429.

enough to soften the scathingly anti-clerical message of the piece, and protect the author from rebuke.

Still, Lindsay said nothing truly radical in these early works. In fact, even his use of anthropomorphic birds to issue a moral warning was not unique in Scottish literature.³⁵ Richard Holland's *The Buke of the Howlat*, in which a prideful young owl was the central character, was written in 1450 and printed in 1508.³⁶ In the poem, the ugly howlat (owl) applied to the Pope (a peacock) to be granted beautiful feathers. The Pope ordained that all the other birds donate a feather to the howlat, who, in turn, became so vain that he was stripped of his new plumage. The moral of the story was to beware of vain ambition and pride.³⁷ Lindsay's 'Papyngo' issued as similar warning, and it is possible that he was familiar with Holland's earlier poem.

As for the fierce anti-clerical rhetoric employed in the poem, such criticism was a medieval commonplace. What set Lindsay's poetry apart from its predecessors was the climate of religious revolution in which it was composed. Since 1517, anti-clerical criticism had taken on new and increased significance. However, in the late 1520s and early 1530s, Lindsay petitioned his king to follow the ways of Catholic renewal, not Lutheran protest. He did not advocate a break with Rome, nor did he directly attack the theology of the Catholic Church. He condemned instead the conduct of the clergy, those who were supposed to be the representatives of Christ in the world. Indeed, one is hard-pressed to find an admirable friar or monk within any of Lindsay's works, an attitude that may well have found favor with the king. For all his claims to be a loyal son of the Church, and for all his patronage of religious houses and shrines, James enjoyed hearing and participating in anti-clerical satire.

Lindsay hoped to couch reform in language that would appeal to a young king who was extremely sensitive about his own sovereignty. Through the traditional medium of advice-poetry, Lindsay could offer counsel to James without appearing to dictate to him. Embedded in his light-hearted verse were serious requests that the king

³⁵ Nor was it unique on the British Isles. Chaucer's *Parlement of Foules* (c.1374-1385), a poem that combines the use of anthropomorphic birds and a dream sequence, was first printed by William Caxton in Westminster in 1477 (USTC 500015). Another edition was produced in London by John Rastell in 1525 (USTC 501863). It is possible that Lindsay was familiar with the work.

³⁶ Richard Holland, *The Buke of the Howlat* (Edinburgh, Walter Chepman and Andrew Myllar, [1508], USTC 516151.

³⁷ Richard Holland, 'The Buke of the Howlat' in *Scottish Alliterative Poems: Part One*, ed. F.J. Amours (Edinburgh, 1891-2), 47-81.

reform the Church in his realm. Indeed, in deference to James's authority, Lindsay implied that the Crown should control the Scottish Church, rather than allow the Church to control the Crown. Previous Stewart monarchs had been granted special privileges over Church appointments and revenues (not unlike French Gallicanism), creating what Jane Dawson has called a 'church-crown hybrid'.³⁸ Arguably, Lindsay was encouraging James to extend the Crown's control over the Church in a manner that anticipates Henry VIII's assertions of royal supremacy.

Rising Tensions

In November 1534 Henry VIII effectively raised the stakes when the English Parliament passed the Act of Supremacy, officially severing the English Church from Rome. Conscious of the strategic advantages of maintaining Scotland as a religious ally, Henry and his ministers set about persuading James to adopt a similar policy. The English king hoped to make Scotland a partner against his Catholic enemies on the Continent. He also hoped to keep the Catholic powers from aiding the Scots or using Scotland as a backdoor to England, should there be a military conflict. Henry used every tool at his disposal: flattery, familial connections, diplomacy, and when these proved ineffectual, force. What resulted was an elaborate balancing game, with James yielding enough to keep Henry from a full scale military attack, while also keeping his own options open with the Catholic powers of Europe. James, in his turn, played Henry, the Catholic rulers on the Continent and the various religious parties in his own kingdom against each other.

The evangelicals at the Scottish court recognised the opportunity and hoped to capitalise on it. Their task, however, would not be an easy one, as the Catholic authorities – the Papacy abroad and the bishops at home – endeavoured to keep James firmly within the Catholic fold, offering concessions and rewards for his fidelity. Archbishop James Beaton initiated an anti-heresy campaign that, on his death in 1539, was taken up and intensified by his successor and nephew, Cardinal David Beaton.³⁹ Despite this opposition, and encouraged by affairs to the south, the evangelicals still sought to gain the support of the king. Events elsewhere in Europe had also proven that

³⁸ Dawson, *Scotland Re-formed*, 20.

³⁹ David Beaton was made a cardinal in 1538.

religious reform was impossible without the cooperation of the secular authorities. The support – and more significantly, the protection – of the local princes continued to be essential for the perpetuation of Lutheran reform in various regions of Germany.

In 1535, the year after Henry's split from Rome, the humanist poet George Buchanan began producing a series of deeply anti-clerical, particularly anti-fraternal poems, which he claimed were written at the behest of the king.⁴⁰ This is perfectly possible for although James may not have been committed to the reform of the Church, he was at least willing to admit that many among the clergy were not living up to their vows, and was known to enjoy a laugh at their expense. It is also likely that, as Henry was putting on the pressure, James was keen to throw his uncle a bone.⁴¹

Educated first at St Andrews and then at Paris, by 1536 Buchanan was employed as tutor to one of the king's bastard children – once again illustrating the confluence of the academic and courtly spheres.⁴² By this time, deeply influenced by the reforming humanism of Erasmus, Buchanan was firmly in the evangelical camp and, according to Arthur Williamson, of the opinion that 'only kings might hope to contain clerical power'.⁴³ With this in mind, Buchanan advised the king to reform the abuses of the Church in a series of ever longer Latin poems – 'Somnium' (1535), 'Palinodia' (1537), and 'Franciscanus' (1538). These were probably intended to be read aloud to the court, and all contain fierce criticisms of the Catholic clergy, with particular vitriol aimed at the Franciscan Order.⁴⁴ Although the friars were a common target of evangelical attacks, Buchanan harboured a personal grudge against them. When he was newly returned to Scotland, he became embroiled in a legal debate with a member of the Order. The argument centred on the legitimacy of heresy trial procedures. Buchanan was particularly concerned that defendants were not allowed to know the names of their accusers. He was further enraged because the testimonies of a defendant's enemies were

⁴⁰ P. McGinnis and A. Williamson (eds), *George Buchanan: The Political Poetry* (Edinburgh, 1995), 5. Subsequent references to Buchanan's poems are from this edition. When possible, citations will be in the text.

⁴¹ In 1536 Henry embarked on the dissolution of the monasteries. Failing to recognise the already unique situation in Scotland, in the form of the 'church-crown hybrid', he would spend the next eight years trying to convince James to follow suit.

⁴² McGinnis and Williamson, *Buchanan*, 5.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 170.

uncritically admitted into evidence.⁴⁵ Following Buchanan's exchange with the Franciscan, the friar began circulating malicious rumors about the scholar. Buchanan was not alone in his disapproval of the Franciscans and claimed that James also had a poor opinion of the Order, believing them to be involved, with certain noblemen, in a plot against him.⁴⁶ There may be something to Buchanan's claims that the Order, at least momentarily, was out of favour with the king. When the 'Somnium' was composed, James had forgone the tradition of appointing a Franciscan as his personal confessor in favour of the Dominican, Alexander Seton – a Dominican who, as we shall see, was himself sympathetic to reform.⁴⁷

The Franciscans were neither an easy, nor, apart from his own personal grudges, a seemingly obvious target for Buchanan's invective. The Order was one of the healthiest and most respected religious orders in the kingdom.⁴⁸ According to Moir Bryce, the Franciscans were relatively immune to the charges of pecuniary greed commonly leveled at other religious orders, as they were 'the poorest of the great brotherhoods' in pre-Reformation Scotland.⁴⁹ In this regard, they were respected by the laity for maintaining at least some of their vows. Along with the Dominicans, the Franciscans also were responsible for most of the preaching in the pre-Reformation Church and were esteemed for the other services they provided.⁵⁰ Indeed, James IV had claimed to support the Observantine Franciscans on the basis of public policy, stating that they did more for the care of souls than any other religious order.⁵¹ Traditional anti-clericalism aside, the Franciscan friars were generally well respected by the Scottish laity.

However, these were precisely the virtues that would rouse the ire of their detractors. As Alec Ryrie has noted, the fiercest attacks during the iconoclastic and anti-fraternal violence of 1559-60 were 'directed at the healthiest and best ordered

⁴⁵ The friar is unidentified. We know of this incident only because Buchanan discussed it, years later, in his defence before the Lisbon Inquisition in 1550-1551. McGinnis and Williamson, *Buchanan*, 168.

⁴⁶ I.D. McFarlane, *Buchanan*, (London, 1981), 52-53. Unfortunately, Buchanan did not provide further details regarding the rumours or the plot against the king.

⁴⁷ J. Foggie, *Renaissance Religion in Urban Scotland: The Dominican Order, 1450-1560* (Lieden, 2003), 41.

⁴⁸ Ryrie, *Origins*, 18; W.Moir Bryce, *The Scottish Grey Friars* (Edinburgh, 1909), i, 91.

⁴⁹ Bryce, *Grey Friars*, i, 139; Ryrie, *Origins*, 18.

⁵⁰ A.Ross, 'Some notes on the Religious Orders in pre-Reformation Scotland' in *Essays on the Scottish Reformation*, 202.

⁵¹ Bryce, *Grey Friars*, i, 92.

institutions. The more lax houses posed no threat'.⁵² The same principle can be applied to the anti-clerical literature of the 1530s: the more secure the adversary, the more vigorous and calculated the offensive. Although a considerable number of reformist sympathisers emerge from among the kingdom's friars, those numbers were highest among the Dominicans. The number of Franciscans to convert was substantially lower.⁵³ Moreover, friars were regularly employed as assessors and judges in heresy trials.⁵⁴ This propensity to maintain and defend orthodoxy, in addition to the solid place they occupied within Scottish society, made the Franciscans a formidable obstacle to the cause of reform. For Buchanan, and others like him, this was a dangerous combination, making it all the more important to undermine the standing of the Order.

Whatever the king's actual motivations, Buchanan claimed that James had asked him 'again and again in front of many people' to write something at the expense of the Franciscans.⁵⁵ The resulting poem, 'Somnium' ('The Dream'), written in 1535, was inspired by William Dunbar's vernacular poem 'How Dumbar wes desyrd to be ane Freir' (also known as 'Visitation from St Francis') – dating from the reign of James IV. In Buchanan's 'Somnium' St Francis appears to the narrator in a dream and entreats him to join the Order (ln. 5). The narrator refuses this offer, listing the faults and corruptions of the Order to justify his denial. He opposes the lifestyle of empty show, and further claims that the Order is so debased, that there should be very few of them in Heaven (lns 26-31). The narrator states that when one becomes a monk, one loses all modesty and conscience, and becomes a liar and a cheat (lns 21-25). The short poem concludes with the narrator's tongue-in-cheek assertion that if he were to join the clergy, he would much rather become a bishop and wield worldly power (ln. 40).

Much like the criticisms found in Lindsay's works, the anti-clericalism of the 'Somnium' remained in the realm of traditional medieval criticism. The first four stanzas are a loose translation of Dunbar's poem and were therefore already regarded as part of the respected Scottish literary canon.⁵⁶ Yet, while Buchanan's work may have found favour with the king, it did not sit well with the ecclesiastical authorities.

⁵² Ryrie, *Origins*, 19.

⁵³ Ross, 'Notes on the Religious Orders', 204.

⁵⁴ Foggie, *Renaissance Religion*, 41.

⁵⁵ McFarlane, *Buchanan*, 52-53.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

Religious tensions were escalating across Europe and the Scottish Church officials were acutely aware of censure. It is quite possible they were fearful that such satire would further harm their standing with the king, and push him towards his uncle. However, for the moment, Buchanan remained safely within the protection of the king's patronage.

Alexander Seton

Buchanan and Lindsay were not the only voices within the king's household openly to criticise the clerical estate at this time. Nor was Lindsay alone in committing to paper his desire to see James exercise power over the Church and its personnel. James's confessor, Alexander Seton (d.1542), also appealed to James's growing sense of sovereignty in his petition that the king subjugate the clergy. A Dominican friar, Seton had been educated at St Andrews and, from 1530-33, served as prior of the Order's house in that city. It was during this time that Seton began to develop reformist sympathies, although these beliefs did not bar him from royal service as the king's confessor.⁵⁷

In 1535, Seton ran into some trouble with a series of Lenten sermons delivered at St Andrews, in which he preached a watered-down version of Lutheran justification.⁵⁸ In response to criticisms of those sermons, Seton preached another sermon that included an outright denunciation of the Church hierarchy, declaring that 'within Scotland there was no true bishop, if that bishops should be known by such notes and virtues as Saint Paul requires in bishops'. For this, he was brought before Archbishop James Beaton. At first Seton managed to defend himself with wit, but the word-play soon devolved into insults, rousing Beaton's anger. However, the archbishop did not punish Seton immediately. Knox maintained that this reticence was partly due to Seton's 'learning and bold spirit', although he highlighted what was most likely the real reason – Seton's privileged standing as confessor to the king. According to Knox, Beaton and other churchmen, fearing Seton's influence over James – owing to his confidential position – plotted Seton's downfall and declared him a heretic.⁵⁹ This, however, must have taken some time, as evidence suggests that Seton was still in

⁵⁷ Foggie, *Renaissance*, 311, 58.

⁵⁸ Knox, *History*, i, 19-20.

⁵⁹ Knox, *History*, i, 20-21.

Scotland in 1536, when he signed a copy of the works of Origen with his name, his order and his house at St Andrews.⁶⁰ The exact date of Seton's flight to England is unknown, although he became a naturalised Englishman in 1539.⁶¹ Shortly after his escape across the border to Berwick, Seton wrote an undated letter of defence and warning to the Scottish king. Although Knox implicated James in the plot to condemn Seton, the tone of Seton's letter to his prince implies that he believed the king was still kindly disposed towards him and would give him a fair hearing.⁶² Seton placed the blame for his flight, and the mismanagement of the kingdom, not on the king, but on a manipulative clergy.

From the very beginning, Seton's letter appealed to James's sovereignty over Church and State. The salutation declared that the king's 'power and authority to exercise justice within [the ...] Realm' came directly from God. Seton maintained that although a king was answerable to God alone, the Scottish 'Bishops and Kirkmen' had been acting as though 'they were rather King, and [James] the subject [...]'. This arrangement, according to Seton, was contrary to Scripture. To illustrate what he saw as the perversity of the situation, as well as to explain why he had fled the country, Seton claimed that the very kirkmen who had usurped the king's authority were persecuting anyone who dared speak out against their corruption – including himself.⁶³

To further underline the dangers to the Scottish spiritual condition, Seton accused the clergy of gross ignorance and the exploitation of 'the king's lieges' for the sake of their 'insatiable avarice'. The clergy, he claimed, were not earning their keep, 'neither preaching nor teaching out of the Law of God (as they should), to the rude, ignorant people'.⁶⁴ They were more concerned with gaining worldly power – a desire that was a direct threat to James's sovereignty. As a member of the king's inner circle, Seton would have been aware of similar warnings in Lindsay's 'Papyngo'. Indeed, Seton's counsel to his prince echoed the concerns of Lindsay's poem, particularly those implied by the scene in which the monk-birds greedily devoured the parrot's heart. Just as Lindsay cautioned James against a greedy clergy that would steal and devour that

⁶⁰ Foggie, *Renaissance Religion*, 41.

⁶¹ Durkan, 'Scottish "Evangelicals"', 141.

⁶² Knox, *History*, i, 21.

⁶³ Seton to James V, in Knox, *History*, ii, 230-232.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

which rightfully belonged to the king, so Seton sought to counsel his prince against prelates who ‘neither fear the King of Heaven, as their lives testify, neither thee their natural Prince, as their usurped power in thy actions shows’.⁶⁵ While the fate of Lindsay’s parrot highlighted the threat to James’s possessions and wealth, Seton’s admonition struck at the very heart of the king’s power.

In contrast to his condemnation of the clergy, Seton defended the nobility. As we shall see, members of the kingdom’s temporal elite would eventually become the reform movement’s most influential supporters. In his letter to James, Seton stated that the noblemen were being pushed out of their rightful place in the king’s council by the greed of churchmen who had no business meddling in temporal affairs. By doing so, the churchmen made James nothing more than ‘the King of Bean’, the mock-king of Christmas and Epiphany celebrations.⁶⁶ Seton called upon the king to reclaim his authority from the usurpers; an act that would restore his standing in the hearts of his subjects, as well as bring peace and justice to the land.

In his final plea, Seton entreated James to give hearing to ‘heretics’.⁶⁷ This request, although tagged to the end of his letter, was the ultimate purpose for Seton’s petition: a plea that James assume control over the Church in his realm. His experience with the king had given him the impression that James would give reformers a fairer hearing than the Church authorities. By encouraging James to exercise authority over the Church, Seton had hoped that James would then be in the position to force reforms on the Church – much as his uncle Henry was doing in England. James allowed Seton’s letter to circulate among the court and the clergy – as per Seton’s request – but he did not allow the writer to return and plead his case in person.⁶⁸ Seton remained in England.⁶⁹ His case illustrates both the extent of the calls for reform within the king’s court and household and the limits of the king’s tolerance. The writings of Lindsay, Buchanan and Seton indicate the scope of anti-clerical sentiment, and how the king’s apparent willingness to condone and encourage it doubtless contributed further to its appeal as a persuasive literary form. More hesitantly, and certainly more dangerously,

⁶⁵ Seton to James V, in Knox, *History*, ii, 230-232.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *TAMO* (1570), 1418-1420.

calls for the king to reform the Church sometimes shaded into calls for the king to follow Henry VIII and assume full control over it. But here the views of the king were shaped as much by the exigencies of foreign diplomacy as by domestic pressures for reform. More specifically, in 1536, James was intent on securing a French alliance through marriage into the French royal house.

The First French Marriage

In the autumn of 1536, the King of Scots set out for France to secure a bride. On New Year's Day 1537, after much negotiation, James married Madeleine, the eldest daughter of Francis I. A few days after the wedding, the Pope sent James a blessed sword and cap, the ultimate symbols of Papal favour. In the letter that accompanied the gift, the Pope stressed James's loyalty to the Holy See in contrast to Henry VIII's apostasy.⁷⁰ He called upon the symbolism of the gifts to encourage James to be vigilant in his resistance to heresy:

[that James may] have blessing from on high, God strengthening his right hand with the sword, and covering his head with the cap [...] that he may defend the church and the faith against those for whom the justice and the judgment of God are made ready.⁷¹

Paul III entreated James to regard the gifts as a sign of the Holy Father's good will.⁷² The young king was duly flattered – the pope appeared to be succeeding in his efforts to exchange his favour for James's fidelity.

However, this particular union with Catholic France may not have been viewed by court evangelicals as the dreaded development one might expect, but as an encouraging sign, as it is probable that Madeleine had reforming sympathies. Buchanan certainly believed this to be the case. In his *History of Scotland* (admittedly written decades later), he records that her death on 7 July 1537 was 'to the great grief of all, except the priests, for they feared that her life would put an end to their luxury and lust, because they knew she was educated under the discipline of her aunt the Queen of Navarre'.⁷³ Many of the women in Francis's personal life were known to have been

⁷⁰ NAS GD149/264, 53^v. Paul II to James V, 19 January 1537.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 53^v-54^r.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 54^v.

⁷³ George Buchanan, *The History of Scotland from the Earliest Period to the Regency of the Earl of Moray* (London, 1733), ii, 174.

evangelically inclined. Queen Claude's household had a 'humanist reform' presence, and following her death in 1524, her daughters were raised by their aunt Marguerite of Navarre, whose reputation for evangelical and reforming sympathies was known throughout Europe.⁷⁴ For a brief time, Francis's mistress Mdm. D'Étampes, described by foreign observers as a Lutheran, also had care of the princesses.⁷⁵ However, it was Marguerite who had the most influence.

Marguerite was a well known patroness of evangelical reformers in France, including Guillaume Briçonnet, the reforming bishop of Meaux, to whom she wrote regularly for spiritual advice. Briçonnet often encouraged Marguerite to use her influence with the king to further the evangelical cause. In December 1521, he encouraged Marguerite 'to draw the King's attention to the illness of the Church and the remedy that she carried' in her evangelical beliefs. The bishop encouraged vigilance, claiming that the example of the royal family would be 'infectious' for the clergy and would spread to the entire kingdom of France.⁷⁶ According to the German reformer Johannes Ecolampadius, Marguerite was the key to achieving reform in France.⁷⁷ It is significant that Marguerite approved of Madeleine's marriage to James, although her specific reasons for the endorsement are unclear.⁷⁸

Evangelicals at the Scottish court would have been aware of the religious climate of the French court. Lindsay made three official visits to France in the 1530s. He was first sent in 1532 as part of the delegation entrusted with James's marriage negotiations. During the second diplomatic visit in 1534, Lindsay may have witnessed the 'Affair of the Placards'.⁷⁹ His third visit was in 1536/7 as part of James's entourage, which also included David Beaton, to secure the king's French bride.⁸⁰ On that visit, James himself would have been exposed to the evangelical sympathies of the French

⁷⁴ E.W. Ives, 'Anne Boleyn and the "Entente Évangélique"' in *François I^{er} et Henri VIII. Deux Princes de la Renaissance (1515-1547)*, ed. C. Giry-Deloison (Lille, 1996), 100.

⁷⁵ R. Knecht, *The French Renaissance Court 1483-1589* (New Haven, 2008), 237.

⁷⁶ *Répertoire Analytique et Chronologique de la Correspondance de Marguerite d'Angoulême, Duchesse d'Alençon, Reine de Navarre (1492-1549)*, ed. P. Jourda (Geneva, 1973), 13, nos. 39 and 41. Briçonnet to Marguerite, 22 December 1521. Special thanks to Dr. Malcolm Walsby for assistance with French translations.

⁷⁷ Quoted in Knecht, *Renaissance Court*, 234.

⁷⁸ *Répertoire Analytique*, 145, no. 641. Marguerite to Mons. Le Grand Master, August/September 1536.

⁷⁹ On the night of 17 October 1534 printed placards attacking the Mass appeared in Paris, Blois, Rouen, Tours and Orléans. One was even nailed to the door of the king's bedchamber. The incident is credited with bringing about the end of Francis's religious toleration.

⁸⁰ Edington, *Court and Culture*, 164.

court. As Francis's biographer Robert J. Knecht observed, in terms that echo James's situation in Scotland, the king of France 'was torn between his role as defender of the Catholic faith and his willingness to listen to the evangelicals at his court'.⁸¹ He and his family were known actively to protect 'heretics' as well as listen to them. His new Scottish son-in-law would follow this example. James also emulated the French king in turning to his advantage the tensions between reformers at his court and the established hierarchy.

Madeleine herself received praise from evangelical camps. When she died before Jean Dés Monstiers could complete his French-language history of Scotland the book was reworked into a memorial.⁸² The printed version contains four Latin epitaphs dedicated to Madeleine. Two of the poems were written by scholars with known evangelical sympathies: Nicholas Desfrenes and Etienne Dolet. Desfrenes was a follower of Lefèvre d'Etaples, and Dolet, suspected of heresy in late 1530s, was burned at the stake in 1546.⁸³

David Lindsay also composed a poem in honour of 'Magdalene, umquhyle of Scotland quene' (ln. 108).⁸⁴ While he made no mention of her religious sympathies, Lindsay did paint a picture of a young couple very much in love (lns 36-42). With this in mind, as well as Marguerite of Navarre's reputation for supporting reform, evangelicals at the Scottish court may have been hopeful that the young Queen would persuade her husband to adopt reforming policies. However, those dreams would last only six months. The journey to Scotland proved too much for Madeleine's delicate health and she died at Holyrood on 7 July 1537. Following his bride's untimely death, James petitioned Francis for another French wife. The court evangelicals were aware that they might not be so lucky the second time around.

Taking Criticism Further

⁸¹ Knecht, *Renaissance Court*, 232.

⁸² Jean des Monstiers, *Summaire de l'origine, description et merveilles d'Escosse* (Paris, Antoine Bonnemère pour Jean André vend Vincent Sertenas, 1538), FB 15626, USTC 13247. The history is based on Boece's *Scotorum Historiae*.

⁸³ Thomas, *Princelie Majestie*, 149.

⁸⁴ The oldest known surviving print edition of *The Deploration of the Deith of Quene Magdalene* is bound with the 1558 printed poems mentioned above, in *fn* 29.

Expectations regarding what the union of James and Madeleine could have accomplished for the evangelical cause, as well as concern for the future of the movement following her death, may explain why Buchanan felt it possible to sharpen his criticism of the clergy in two more Latin poems – ‘Palinodia’ and ‘Franciscanus’. In 1537, the year of the ill-fated marriage, Buchanan wrote another poem satirizing the debauched behaviour of the Catholic clergy in general and Franciscan Order in particular. ‘Palinodia’ was supposed to be a retraction of ‘Somnium’, probably due to pressure from the ecclesiastical authorities. In the end, however, the poem was an even more scathing critique, continuing where ‘Somnium’ left off. Abducted by a mob of friars, the narrator is brought before an outraged St Francis. Not to be intimidated, the narrator boldly states that Francis’s bleeding hands were not the result of the stigmata, but wounds inflicted by the sewing needle of a girl defending her virtue from his advances (pt I, lns 33-35). Brushing this statement aside, Francis attacks the narrator for ‘betray[ing] the mysteries’ of the Order, and revealing their ‘depredations and devious ways’ to the masses (pt I, lns 40, 48). As he is beaten, the narrator offers a series of backhanded well-wishes, further insulting the Order: May they never be caught in their lies; may the peasants, widows, maidens, and cuckolded husbands never catch on to their corruption (pt I, lns 78-109). He denounces them all as hypocrites, observing that while they claim to follow Christ’s example, they are rarely ever simple, modest, chaste, or honest (pt II, ln. 2). The most scandalous stanzas of the poem describe St Francis pleasuring himself in the snow (pt II, lns 23-62). However, instead of being angered by these accusations, the saint is entertained by the ribald humor. As Francis laughs, the narrator awakens from the dream, escaping further punishment.

While ‘Somnium’ mocks the Order and ‘Palinodia’ accuses the friars and their founder of outright sexual deviance, the most controversial and dangerous criticisms were in ‘Franciscanus’. Written in 1538, the long poem has multiple narrators, much like a play. First to speak is Buchanan, who enters into a dialogue with a friend wishing to join a monastery. Buchanan relates that he, too, once thought of joining a religious order, but was discouraged by a friar named Eubulus. Eubulus – whose name means ‘the counsellor’ or ‘of good counsel’ – then reveals what he claims to be the true nature of the Order: the men who take on the habit are not saints at all, but sure sinners (lms 47-52). Eubulus acknowledges that the Franciscans were once a virtuous and spiritual

Order. Now, however, they seek only to satiate their desires (lns 73-76). The Order attracts the dregs of society, those for whom taking the habit is a last resort (lns 93-94). In the old days, Eubulus muses, the desperate would kill themselves – now they join the Franciscans (lns 172-182). There imbeciles are turned into founts of wisdom and thieves become saints. The monk's depravity only grows once he has taken his vows. Yet, as Eubulus observes, 'poison is still poison even when you drink it from a golden cup' (ln. 184).

The young novices are instructed by an Old Monk who, taking over the poem's narration, shares with them all the cunning ways of the Order: how to turn the confessional into a weapon; how to blackmail people into turning their wealth over to the Order; how to seduce women and young boys. As the crafty Old Monk instructs the novices in the art of preaching without revealing their vast ignorance, he recommends sprinkling sermons with Latin and classical references – even if they have no clue as to the meaning themselves. He also advocates employing a heavy dose of fear-inducing hell-fire and damnation:

Let the flames burst forth from the mouth of Purgatory,
 Their heat unendurable, except that they do not burn forever,
 But may be put out by prayers, and quenched by holy water,
 Diminished by indulgences, alleviated by masses.
 [...] But let [the priest] free only the rich ones from their torment (lns
 642-645, 654).

Throughout the Old Monk's lesson it is clear that the primary prey of the Order are the wealthy upper classes. This accusation would have particular resonance with Buchanan's royal and aristocratic audience, especially when the Old Monk encourages his pupils to provoke the common people to resent the nobility:

...the people like to hear attacks on the nobility,
 Here lies a wide open field for you when you are preaching.
 Wars, thefts, pillage, and violence, fraud, injustice, slaughter,
 And a whole host of crimes will always present themselves;
 On this subject there's many a weapon handy for instant use (lns 676-679).

However, he warns the novices not to take these denunciations too far. The people are to be discouraged from taking action against their overlords. He suggests, tongue-in-cheek, that they are instead to let God alone enact his vengeance upon the decadence of their superiors (lns 709-719).

If anyone criticizes the Order, or questions their teachings, they are to be branded a heretic (ln. 667). The Old Monk specifically warns the novices to beware of Lutherans, evangelicals, and the teachings of St Paul – all of which will undermine the Order as well as the Church (lns. 530-531, 755). The novices are also warned of another danger, in the form of the older monks, who sneak around the monastery after the lights have gone out, seeking to satiate unfulfilled desires. Finally, the novices are threatened with a cruel and painful death if they divulge any of the Order's secrets (lns 918-925). Unsurprisingly, after hearing the accounts of Eubulus and the Old Monk, Buchanan's young friend is dissuaded from joining the Order.

Buchanan did not go unpunished for writing his scathing works of clerical criticism, even if, according to his own account, he had done so at the behest of the king. Unfortunately for Buchanan, the composition of 'Franciscanus' coincided with Cardinal David Beaton's anti-heresy push in February and March 1539. While the bawdy scenarios described in the poems may have amused the king (whose own amorous escapades were well-known), they were not enough to spare Buchanan from the cardinal's displeasure. Shortly after the writing of the 'Franciscanus', the scholar was jailed, although he managed to escape to England, possibly with the king's assistance. There are varying accounts regarding Buchanan's flight, but whatever the case, he had escaped to England with his life.⁸⁵ Other targets of Beaton's orthodoxy were not so fortunate.

Buchanan's anti-clerical poetry exemplifies both the fluidity of contemporary religious opinion and the king's pragmatic, if not cynical, response to it. Evangelicals at court were convinced that James could be persuaded to respond favourably to reform. James, in turn, used these same evangelicals in his dealings with his uncle and even the Pope. The 1530s were a volatile time in Scotland as the young king tried to assert and maintain his own authority at home, but was often caught between his schismatic uncle to the south and his Catholic allies at home and on the Continent. James was engaged in a dangerous diplomatic and religious balancing act and the king who commissioned and presumably relished Buchanan's blasphemous anti-clerical satires was the same king

⁸⁵ One account claims that James had him released from the custody of his investigators on the pretense that he was to serve the king as an agent in England. Another account states that Buchanan was rescued from the prison of St Andrews Castle by a nephew of the Archbishop of Glasgow. McFarlane, *Buchanan*, 67-68.

who attended the heresy trial that condemned the author (now safely abroad) and sentenced to death six others.⁸⁶

Beaton's Purge

When Cardinal David Beaton succeeded his uncle, James Beaton, to the Archbishopric of St Andrews in February 1539, he immediately set out to continue his uncle's program to eliminate heresy in Scotland.⁸⁷ The cardinal was an ardent defender of Catholic orthodoxy as well as a supporter of the Franco-Scottish alliance. A talented statesman, he made no less than seven diplomatic journeys to France in the decade between 1530 and 1540. One of these embassies occurred two months after the death of Queen Madeleine, when Beaton was sent to negotiate a second French marriage for James. He successfully returned to Scotland in June 1538 with Mary of Guise, the daughter of the Duke of Guise and sister to the future Cardinal of Lorraine. Mary's upbringing was more orthodox than Madeleine's, having spent her formative years in the Convent of Pont-aux-Mousson under the care and tutelage of her grandmother, Philippa de Gueldres, herself a Poor Clare.⁸⁸

With Beaton's rising power and the second French marriage, the evangelicals at court were losing whatever grip they had had on the king. Nine of the fourteen heresy executions to take place under James occurred in the years 1538-39. Of the thirty or more reformers known to have fled into exile during James's reign, the majority escaped between 1538-40. According to Ryrie, these renewed persecutions can be directly linked to Beaton's elevation to the primacy. In the weeks following his elevation, Beaton presided over the dramatic heresy trial that resulted in six men being burned on Castle Hill in Edinburgh. The cardinal was known personally to have paid for the special stage built at Holyrood for the trials.⁸⁹ Friars Lyn, Beveridge, and Kyllour; sir Duncan Simson, Thomas Forret, and Robert Forrester were charged with heresy and attempting to proselytize.⁹⁰ Forret, for example, was condemned for teaching his parishioners from an English Bible and for creating a vernacular children's catechism.

⁸⁶ Thomas, *Princelie Majestie*, 118.

⁸⁷ Dawson, *Scotland Re-formed*, 143.

⁸⁸ P.E. Ritchie, *Mary of Guise in Scotland, 1548-1560* (Edinburgh, 2002), 11.

⁸⁹ Ryrie, *Origins*, 42.

⁹⁰ Dawson, *Scotland Re-formed*, 144.

While James did not always approve of the heresy trials, he was known to attend them periodically, particularly when he had a special interest in one of the accused. In this instance, two of the accused, chorister Richard Carmichael (who recanted) and Buchanan (who had fled), were members of the royal household.⁹¹ However, the king did nothing to halt the proceedings and sanctioned the trial with his presence.

Beaton and the orthodoxy he represented were tightening their grip. The cardinal's rise to power was enough to cause concern not only for the evangelicals at court, but for Henry VIII as well. Feeling was growing against a religious settlement like that of England and Henry blamed Beaton. In 1539 Henry once again tried to persuade James to make common cause with him. Through his ambassador, Ralph Sadler, the English king claimed that Beaton was a papal spy, and advised James 'not to suffer any of his subjects to take upon him "that red hat of pride" which will make him the b[isho]p of Rome's liegeman and to have the rule as well as James'. In the same conference, Sadler endeavoured to convince James that 'the supremacy of Princes by the holy Scripture [was] graunted vnto hym and other Princes in earth vnder Christ, vpon theyr Churches'.⁹² Sadler's arguments were unsuccessful. The following year he complained to Thomas Cromwell that Beaton was making things difficult for him.⁹³ The English king and his ministers were clearly distressed by the Cardinal's widening influence. They realised that a window of opportunity was closing rapidly.

A Brief 'Interlude'

However, there was one occasion that gave hope to evangelicals at home and abroad. James commissioned an interlude to be performed before him and his court at Epiphany in 1540. The only surviving account of the 'Epiphany Interlude' is preserved in the correspondence of William Eure, the English deputy Warden of the East March.⁹⁴ In a letter to Cromwell he recounts a meeting with Thomas Bellenden and Henry Balnaves in January 1540. Eure remarked that Bellenden was 'inclyned to the soorte [of religion]

⁹¹ Thomas, *Princelie Majestie*, 118.

⁹² *TAMO* (1570), 1258. Ralph Sadler to James V, 1539.

⁹³ A.Clifford (ed.), *The State Papers and Letters of Sir Ralph Sadler* (Edinburgh, 1809), i. 47-48. Sadler to Thomas Cromwell, [22] February 1540.

⁹⁴ William Eure was the English deputy Warden of the East March.

used in our Soverain's Realme of England'.⁹⁵ When asked to provide information on the Scottish king's thoughts regarding 'the reformation of the mysussing of the spiritualitie in scotlande', Bellenden assured the Englishman that James 'was gretely geven to the reformation of the mysdemeanours of the Busshops, Religious persones and preists within the Realme'.⁹⁶ Whether or not Eure picked up on the difference between a reformation of *clerical abuses*, and a reformation of *religion* is unclear. To add credence to his claim, Bellenden requested copies of Henry VIII's religious legislation on James's behalf. But as Mason observes, 'this proved no more than a ruse intended to keep both [James's] own clerical hierarchy and foreign diplomats guessing as to his true intentions'.⁹⁷

At this meeting, Bellenden also described the 'Epiphany Interlude'. Believed to have been written by Sir David Lindsay, it bears a striking resemblance to his later *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* (1552). The 'Interlude' was staged at Linlithgow on 6 January, for an audience of the king and queen, the court and foreign dignitaries. Fiercely anti-clerical, according to Eure's report, 'the hoole matier whereof concluded vpon the Declaracion of the noughtines in Religion, the presumption of busshops, the cullucion of the sprituall Courts [...] and mysusing of preists'.⁹⁸ In the play, the character Poor Man was looking for the king. When directed towards the King of the play, he declared that 'he was not the king of scotlande for ther was another king in scotlande that hanged John Armstrang with his fellowes and Symn the larde and many other moe which had pacified the countrey and stanchd thifte'. Poor Man was looking specifically for James V. He claimed that for all the good the real king had done in bringing peace to the kingdom 'he had lefte one thing vndon whiche perteynde aswell to his charge as thother'. When asked what that was, Poor Man responded: 'of the oppression of the poor [...] and of many other abussions of the spiritualities and church'.⁹⁹ Poor Man listed out the abuses perpetrated by the clerical estate: rape, marrying their illegitimate daughters to the sons of the Scottish nobility and thus polluting the blood of the aristocracy, embezzlement, robbing of the poor through

⁹⁵ *LP*, xv, no. 114. Eure to Cromwell, 26 January 1540.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ Mason, 'Renaissance Monarchy?', 272.

⁹⁸ *LP*, xv, no. 114. Eure to Cromwell.

⁹⁹ Thomas Bellenden, 'The Copie of the nootes of the interluyde' in *The Works of Sir David Lindsay*, Vol. 2, ed. D. Hamer (Edinburgh, 1931), 5.

outrageous rents, cloisters run as brothels, etc.¹⁰⁰ When all of these crimes were confirmed by the character Experience, the King (in the play) ordained that all of these grievances should be ‘reafourmede’.¹⁰¹ The message was clear: the poor people of Scotland were depending on James to reform the Church in his kingdom. Since coming to the throne, he had done well in restoring temporal order and justice to the country. Now he was to complete the job and bring spiritual order as well.

Bellenden reported that when the entertainment was finished, James sent for Archbishop Gavin Dunbar of Glasgow and various other bishops in attendance, and warned them that he ‘wold sende sex of the proudeste of thaym unto his uncle of England, and, as those were ordoured, soe He wolde ordour all the reste that wolde not amende’ if they did not address the abuses of the Church.¹⁰² Most scholars believe that James’s staging of the ‘Interlude’ and his subsequent comments were all a ruse, intended to pacify his uncle.¹⁰³ James’s response could also have been an assertion of his royal sovereignty over the lords of the Church. He was reminding the clergy that he controlled them, they did not control him. Archbishop Dunbar’s response appears to support this: ‘therunto the Chauncelour [Dunbar] shuld aunsuer, and say unto the King, that one worde of His Graces mouthe shuld suffice thayme to be at commaundement’.¹⁰⁴

A few weeks later, Sir David Lindsay and Sir John Borthwick, both well known as critics of the established Scottish Church, were among those specifically appointed to greet and entertain Sir Ralph Sadler, the English ambassador (and Cromwell’s former aide), when he arrived in Scotland.¹⁰⁵ Following a meeting with Borthwick and Lindsay, ‘gentlemen who favour Christ’s Doctrine’, Sadler optimistically reported that there was support in Scotland for a Reformation like that of England.¹⁰⁶ Once again, this arrangement was all part of James’s elaborate political posturing, aimed at holding Henry at bay. By presenting his most evangelically-minded courtiers, James hoped to convince his uncle that he, at the very least, permitted evangelical belief in his realm,

¹⁰⁰ Bellenden, ‘Nootes of the interluyde’, 5-6. These crimes were also listed in Lindsay’s anti-clerical works, including *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*.

¹⁰¹ *LP*, xv, no. 114. Eure to Cromwell

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

¹⁰³ Thomas, *Princelie Majestie*, 143.

¹⁰⁴ *LP*, xv, no. 114. Eure to Cromwell.

¹⁰⁵ *BL* Cotton Caligula B/VIII f.99^r. Sadler to Henry VIII, [22] February 1540.

¹⁰⁶ Clifford, *Sadler Papers*, i., 47. Sadler to Cromwell, [22] February 1540.

and might, if properly courted, still be persuaded to adopt an English-style religious settlement. These actions, in turn, led Scottish evangelicals to believe that James still might be persuadable. Whether or not Borthwick and Lindsay were aware of the true nature of the affair, as a ploy, is unknown, although it is likely they were not.

Perhaps acting on Bellenden's favourable testimony regarding the 'Interlude', and his own meeting with Lindsay and Borthwick, Sadler had a long conversation with James in February. In a detailed letter to Henry, Sadler recounted their meeting. The ambassador tried to persuade James to adopt a policy of Supremacy similar to Henry's. Among other things, he appealed to James's sense of sovereignty, claiming that 'the bishop of Rome [...] meaneth nothing else than to usurp princes' powers and to diminish the same'. He also entreated James to dissolve the monasteries, this time appealing to James's pecuniary greed. With each petition, James's response was non-committal, assuring the ambassador that he was content the way things were, although, not wanting to offend his uncle, he promised to think about what Sadler had said. In an effort to undermine Beaton's growing influence, Sadler also attempted to implicate the cardinal in a papal plot to usurp James's authority. James remained unconvinced and made excuses for Sadler to remain in Edinburgh and not accompany him on his progress.¹⁰⁷ At this time, James's imperial pretensions were at their height, and his spurning of the English ambassador was a clear indicator of his opinion in regards to English interference in Scottish affairs. Mary of Guise was crowned in Holyrood Abbey in February that same year (1540).¹⁰⁸ In May, the queen gave birth to a son, James, securing both the succession and the Franco-Scottish alliance. The opportunities to influence James to adopt evangelical policies were growing fewer and fewer. Henry's ambassador knew it, and the evangelicals in James's court knew it as well.

The King Chooses A Side

In May 1540 James effectively shut the door on further discussions of the religious question. That month the Protestant courtier John Borthwick came under Cardinal Beaton's judgment. Borthwick had been an officer in Francis I's French Guard, and

¹⁰⁷ *BL Cotton Caligula B/VIII ff.99^{r-v}*. Sadler to Henry VIII, [22] February 1540.

¹⁰⁸ R.A. Mason, 'Renaissance and Reformation' in *Scotland: A History*, ed. J. Wormald (Oxford, 2005), 119.

had, in 1537, been charged with the duty of delivering to James V the papal favours of a cap and sword, as well as the title of ‘Defender of the Faith’.¹⁰⁹ After discharging his duty, Borthwick wrote a letter of protest to Henry VIII’s Protestant chief minister, Thomas Cromwell. In the letter he made clear his disgust regarding what he saw as the hypocrisy of the Papacy:

the swerd he send as it appers be ye popis breif all inco[n]tra cheritie the hatt as I belief is send to cower & holddown all ye fals simulation and wikit ypocrisy at rignis in papistis bot it is to litil to hydd all. I am sor[r]y to thinke at noble princes suld be *among those rulers of the earth who fornicate with whores, and even, I fear, that by reason of those whores they were brought to the door of death and were destroyed.*¹¹⁰

By the following year, Borthwick was listed on the English payroll.¹¹¹

As he became more outspoken about his increasingly radical evangelical convictions, Borthwick’s actions came to the attention of Cardinal Beaton. Only a few months after Borthwick’s and Lindsay’s meeting with Ambassador Sadler, Borthwick’s situation became decidedly more precarious, although he managed to flee before circumstances became too dangerous. He was, however, tried *in absentia* for twelve counts of heresy on 28 May 1540. The charges leveled against him included denying Papal supremacy and the efficacy of pardons, promoting clerical marriage and espousing the teachings of Wycliffe and Hus. The 1583 edition of Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments* contains Borthwick’s rejoinder to these charges.

Borthwick was also charged with possession of books condemned as heretical by the Papacy and the Scottish state: among them were a New Testament in English and works by Æcolampadius and Melancthon, as well as the condemned works of Erasmus. He was further accused of reading and sharing those books with others.¹¹² His response to this particular accusation was characteristically barbed:

O good God, who can suffer so great a blasphemye? with what a filthy cankered stomacke doe these Romishe swine note the new testament of heresie? who would not iudge it a most venomous tongue, which dare pronounce or vtter such contumelious wordes agaynst the holy Gospell

¹⁰⁹ After Henry’s separation from Rome in 1534, the Pope granted the title to James, as the loyal Catholic monarch in the Atlantic Archipelago. Henry was not pleased.

¹¹⁰ *SP* 1/116 f.104. Borthwick to Cromwell, 23 February 1537. Special thanks to Joanna Lamb for the translation of the italicised sentence from Latin.

¹¹¹ Durkan, ‘Scottish “Evangelicals”’, 132.

¹¹² *TAMO* (1583), 1283-1290.

of our Sauour Christ?¹¹³

Borthwick's vitriolic rhetoric aside, the charge against him demonstrates that heretical works were still making their way into Scotland, despite the numerous bans on their importation and circulation.

Four of the twelve charges against Borthwick involved the promotion of a religious settlement like that of England. One charge claims he was trying to persuade others that 'the heresies of England, or most of them, are good and just'. Another charge accused Borthwick of praying that 'the Church of Scotland might be brought to like ruin as that of England'. To this accusation, Borthwick declared that his countrymen would be better off if they, like their English cousins, cast off the bonds of 'the mother of all whoredome: vpon whose rotten and filthy paps and brests, they haue a long tyme depended and hanged, beyng made drunke with the wyne of her whoredome and vnshamefastnesse'.¹¹⁴ In response to a charge that he supported the dissolution of the English monasteries, Borthwick likened the Scottish monastic houses to 'brothell houses, swine sties, and dennes of discord'. He then voiced his fervent desire that the Scottish king 'abolishe and dryue away' the monks.¹¹⁵

The seventh, and possibly the most dangerous, charge leveled against Borthwick claims that he actively endeavoured to persuade James V to take possession of the Church in his realm. In responding to this claim, Borthwick wrote

It is no marvel though these mad dogs do so bark against me, whom they think to have counseled the King's Majesty (I would to God I had also thoroughly persuaded him) that he should take away from these unjust sacrilegious possessors the riches wherewithal they are fatted and engreased like swine. For this is the nature of dogs, that if any man go about to take away the bone out of their mouth, by and by to snatch at him and tear him with their teeth. It is out of all controversy unto such as have any wit at all that such were very childish, that is to say, ignorant of all learning and judgment, who did so fat and feed with their possessions these belly-beasts.¹¹⁶

The Scottish Church recognised and feared the powers of persuasion possessed by reform-minded individuals in James's acquaintance and employ – Borthwick was found

¹¹³ *TAMO* (1583), 1289.

¹¹⁴ *TAMO* (1583), 1287.

¹¹⁵ *TAMO* (1583), 1289.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*

guilty on all counts. Following the proceedings Cardinal Beaton pronounced the sentence of condemnation: Borthwick's goods were confiscated, his effigy was burned, and a warrant was issued for his arrest.¹¹⁷

The Borthwick episode further highlights the extent to which religious dissent was entertained within the king's household. James's patronage of evangelically-minded poets like Lindsay and Buchanan encouraged Borthwick, Seton and their fellow court evangelicals to believe that James might be favourable to reform. However, Borthwick's case demonstrates that James was personally only willing to go so far in his toleration of nonconformist doctrine. Borthwick had become too radical. When his attempts to persuade the king to adopt a Henrician settlement drew the attention of Cardinal Beaton, he was put on trial and condemned. Unlike the case of the less overtly political George Buchanan, James, as far as is known, was not instrumental in effecting Borthwick's escape. Buchanan had taken his criticisms of the Church beyond what was acceptable to remain in the country with his life, yet still maintained enough of the king's favour to receive James's support in his escape. Borthwick, on the other hand, took things too far. A little over a year after Buchanan's flight, James was unable, or unwilling, to offer his assistance to Borthwick.¹¹⁸ However, it is interesting to note that while James denied the fugitive Seton a hearing and permitted both Buchanan and Borthwick's trials, Sir David Lindsay was still active within the court, presumably under the king's protection. Lindsay, however, had at least the appearance of being more moderate in his religious convictions and did not advocate a split with Rome.

In the wake of the Borthwick trial, James made clear his orthodox Catholic allegiances. On 3 December 1540 Scottish Parliament passed an act ordaining that 'the auctorite of Halikirk be mantenit and defendit in all thar prevelege and liberteis as thai haif bene in oure sovirane lordis tyme that now is and his predecessouris, kingis of Scotland, of maist nobill mynd bipast'.¹¹⁹ The established Church in Scotland was safe. James still asserted his own authority over the Church, but made clear that he felt no need to sever ties with Rome. Orthodox Catholicism was paying off for the King of Scots. He had a Catholic wife who had given birth to a son, securing the succession and

¹¹⁷ *TAMO* (1583), 1289-1290.

¹¹⁸ This could also be indicative of the extent to which Cardinal Beaton's influence had grown.

¹¹⁹ *RPS* 1540/12/12.

maintaining a strong alliance with France. James had also found favour in the eyes of the Papacy, had been granted the title of ‘Defender of the Faith’ (once vaunted by his uncle) and had received the coveted emblems of the blessed sword and cap. He had also profited from many other favours granted by the Papacy in exchange for his fidelity, including extended control over appointments to church benefices and the grant of unprecedented ecclesiastical taxation. The Church gave him no reason to be displeased and effect a separation. In the years that followed, James turned down repeated invitations to meet Henry to discuss matters in person. (The ill-fated conference at York in 1541 is an exception, although on that occasion, James neglected to attend.) Cardinal Beaton was confident enough that the religious situation in Scotland was well in hand that he journeyed to France in 1541-1542.

Conclusion

The courtly entertainments and appeals designed to persuade the king to adopt a more evangelical, if not fully Protestant, religious policy had failed. No doubt Lindsay’s verses and Buchanan’s bawdy tales of clerical debauchery had entertained the young monarch and his court. But they failed to secure the desired result. Instead, the king used these writers and other evangelicals at his court to his own ends, making use of their religious convictions in his own political posturing with the English court. These posturings, in turn, perpetuated the cycle, leading others, including Alexander Seton and John Borthwick, to believe that James might listen to their appeals. However, by 1540 it was becoming increasingly clear that the reformers could not depend on the king. James had already shut the door. It was the king’s unexpected death in December 1542 at the age of thirty that changed the face of the religious question in Scotland. With the crown passing to the six day-old Mary Stewart, opportunities arose that would not have existed under an adult monarch.¹²⁰ The minority effectively re-opened the door for appeals to those in charge of the kingdom – the aristocratic and clerical elite from whom a regency government would be chosen. The reformers would also capitalise on the uncertainty and disruptions of this transition period to reach out beyond the confines of the royal court to a new audience among the wider Scottish nobility and public.

¹²⁰ The son born to James and Mary of Guise in May 1540 (James) and another son born in April 1541 (Robert) died within days of each other in 1541. Mary was James’s only surviving legitimate heir.

CHAPTER THREE: Printed Poetry and Polemic

With the king's death in 1542, Scottish reformers once again had to redirect their persuasive attentions. To that end, some turned to the printing press, albeit in a very limited capacity, to carry the message of reform beyond the exclusive realms of the academic cloisters and the circle of the royal court, into other spheres of Scottish society. Throughout Europe print media made polemic literature more widely available not only to the literate and those who possessed the text, but to anyone who might hear it read. At this time written and oral traditions were not wholly disengaged from one another and reading was not the silent, private activity we experience most commonly today, as printed and manuscript materials were often read aloud. Print allowed reform-minded Scots to present their message to a wider audience than ever before. This was particularly crucial in Scotland following the death of James V and the succession of his infant daughter, Mary. In the climate of uncertainty that followed, reformers (like David Lindsay) and their English allies found it increasingly necessary to address a reader and listenership among the wider nobility (those outside of the immediate royal circle) and also beyond the kingdom's elite. Printed reformist material from the 1540s and 1550s specifically aimed at a Scottish audience includes English pamphlet material intended to persuade the Scots to accept dynastic and religious union with England, as well as three of Lindsay's poems. Together, these works demonstrate the propagandistic uses of print in the early Scottish Reformation. Lindsay's poetry in particular provides important insights into the evolution of the reformist movement's persuasive agenda – from a peaceful campaign of appeals towards violent rebellion.

Printing in Scotland

The study of print in the early Scottish Reformation presents a challenge. Scottish printing houses were few and far between, and the Scottish book market in general relied heavily on foreign printers. Only four printers appear to have been active in Scotland before 1560 and none of them at the same time. A late entry in regards to the printing revolution, the first Scottish printing press opened in Edinburgh in 1507 when

Walter Chepman and Andro Myllar were granted a royal patent by James IV.¹ By 1509 Chepman and Myllar's partnership had ended, as Chepman produced Bishop Elphinstone's *Breviarium Aberdonense* alone.² In his capacity as a printer, Chepman disappears from the records around 1513.³ The *USTC* reveals another printer, John Story, whose 1520 *Compassio beate Marie*, printed in Edinburgh, was his only recorded publication.⁴ The next documented printer was Thomas Davidson, whose Edinburgh press began operation as early as 1525.⁵ In 1541 the Clerk Register, James Foulis of Colinton, granted a six year copyright to Davidson to print the *Acts of Parliament*.⁶ However, Davidson's printing activities cease after 1542. John Scott was the only other printer known to be active before 1560. In June 1539 Scott was described as a 'calligrapher' or 'impressor' working in Edinburgh. However, in December of that year he renounced his grant and does not appear in the records again until 1547, when the Privy Council ordered his arrest in Dundee. John Durkan speculates that Scott had been printing forbidden books.⁷ The exact nature of these works remains unknown, although given the date of his troubles, it would not be surprising if Scott's materials related to the execution of the Protestant preacher George Wishart (March 1546), the retaliatory assassination of Cardinal Beaton (May 1546), and the subsequent siege of St Andrews Castle. Scott managed to elude his would-be captors who went to great lengths to apprehend him.⁸ Nevertheless, whatever his previous 'demeritis and faltis' and 'evill

¹ L. Lewis, 'Chepman and Myllar: The First Printers in Scotland' in *Worlds of Print*, eds J. Hinks and C. Armstrong (New Castle, DE, 2006), 57; A. Mann, *The Scottish Book Trade 1500-1720* (East Linton, 2000), 7-8. There is surprisingly little recent scholarship regarding early print in Scotland, especially considering the 500th anniversary in 2007. Alastair Mann noted this lacuna in the *Scottish Historical Review*. The forthcoming A. J. Mann and S. Mapstone (eds), *Edinburgh History of the Book in Scotland, Volume I: Medieval to 1707* (Edinburgh, expected March 2014) should do much to address this. A. Mann, 'Review of Sally Mapstone (ed.), *The Chepman and Myllar Prints (DVD)*', *SHR* (Oct. 2012), 352.

² *Ecclesia Catholica, Breviarii Aberdonensis* (Edinburgh, Walter Chepman, 1509), USTC 501067.

³ J. Durkan, 'Chepman, Walter (1471?-1528)', *ODNB*.

⁴ *Ecclesia Catholica, Compassio beate Marie*, (Edinburgh, John Story, 1520), USTC 515962. Special thanks to Sophie Mullins for bringing this entry to my attention. G. Duff, *A Century of the English Book Trade: 1457-1557* (London, 1905), 152.

⁵ The earliest publication listed for Davidson is Gavin Douglas, *The Place of Honour* (Edinburgh, Thomas Davidson, [1525]), USTC 518377.

⁶ RPS 1540/12/102; A. Mann, "'Some Property is Theft': copyright law and illegal activity in early modern Scotland" in *Against the Law: Crime, Sharp Practice and the Control of Print*, (eds) R. Myers, M. Harris and G. Mandelbrote (New Castle, DE, 2004), 32. James V, *The New actis and constitutionis of parliament maid be the rycht excellent Prince James the fift kyng of Scottis. 1540* (Edinburgh, Thomas Davidson, 1541), USTC 518628.

⁷ John Durkan, 'Scott, John (fl. 1539-1571)', *ODNB*.

⁸ *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland*, eds J.H. Burton, et al. (Edinburgh, 1877-1970), i, 69-70.

deidis', by 1552 Scott was in St Andrews fulfilling a commission for the Scottish Catholic Church, printing Archbishop Hamilton's *Catechism*.⁹ The remainder of the pre-1560 output bearing Scott's name or device was orthodox in nature.¹⁰

Evidently, Scottish reformers had no choice when it came to domestic print houses. With only Davidson and Scott sporadically active between 1527 and 1557, homegrown works of printed dissent would have been easy to trace. Scott, particularly after 1547, would have been a doubly dangerous option as he was likely watched closely. Without regular access to a printing press on their own soil Scottish reformers lacked the ability to mass-produce immediate responses to events or legislation and were ill-equipped to commission large print runs, since the books and pamphlets would need to be smuggled into Scotland. As a result, they were incapable of producing the flood of persuasive print material that proved so important to the reform movement in other countries. However, the limitations of the domestic print industry do not necessarily mean that there was not a market for evangelical/Protestant material in Scotland. It was simply a market that had to be satisfied from abroad. With the exception of two editions of Lindsay's *The Monarchie*, all of the printed reformist material that survives from 1527-1557 (and perhaps all that was produced) was printed outside Scotland. Another four editions of Lindsay's works can be traced to English printers – all four editions bear false imprints.¹¹ Early vernacular Bibles came through the Low Countries and two catechisms were produced in Sweden, while a number of John Knox's pamphlets originated in Geneva.¹²

That being said, domestic presses were not entirely silent. On 2 June 1543 the Lords of Council issued an act 'for remeid of sclanderous billis, writtingis, ballatis and bukis that ar dalie maid, writtin and prentit to the diffamatioun of all estatis baith sperituale and temporale'. The punishment for writing or printing such material was death and the confiscation of all movable goods. Furthermore, anyone possessing copies was ordered to destroy them within forty-eight hours or be charged in an open proclamation at the market cross. The act goes on to denounce 'ony bukis or werkis of

⁹ John Hamilton, *The catechisme* ([St Andrews], John Scot, 1552), USTC 504714.

¹⁰ Other works include Patrick Cockburn's *In Dominicam Orationem* (St Andrews, 1555), USTC 505145; Quintin Kennedy's *Ane compendius tractive conforme to the scripturis of almychtie God* (Edinburgh, 1558), USTC 505556; and John Hamilton's *Ane godlie exhortatioun* (Edinburgh, 1559), USTC 516586.

¹¹ These will be discussed in detail below.

¹² Vernacular Bibles and catechisms will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

condamnit heretikis and of thar appunzeonis of hereseyis’ and was particularly aimed at two texts, now lost, referred to as ‘the new dialoge callit pascullis and the ballait callit the bair’.¹³ By February 1552 Parliament felt it necessary to pass further legislation ‘anent prentaris’, directed against ‘divers prentaris in this realme that daylie and continuallie prentis bukis concerning the faith, ballattis, sangis, blasphematiounis, rymes, alsweill of kirkmen as temporall’.¹⁴ Someone was clearly printing something unorthodox, likely of an ephemeral, perhaps broadside nature, which also might account for its non-survival – very probably John Scott.¹⁵ The law decreed that any printer ‘in ony tymes tocum’ who wished to ‘prent ony bukis, ballattis, sangis, blasphematiounis, rymes or tragedeis, outhir in Latine or Inglis tounge’ must first submit the text to ‘sum wyse and discreit persounis’ for review. If the work passed the censor, the printer must then obtain a licence from the queen or Governor Arran before it could be printed. Those who did not comply risked the confiscation of their goods and banishment from the kingdom.¹⁶

The acts of 1543 and 1552 were the first laws directly concerned with the internal censorship of the Scottish book trade, and it is significant that they came at a time when Scottish reformers were actively seeking to engage more of their countrymen in the growing religious debate. Legislation passed in 1525 and 1535 was focused on the importation of heretical books and ideas from abroad. The 1543 and 1552 laws were designed to address growing concerns over the production and circulation of heresy originating from within the kingdom. It is unknown who else, besides Scott, may have been printing the controversial material, but we do know that Scott did not heed the warnings: the only surviving examples of domestically printed Scottish religious dissent – two editions of Lindsay’s *The Monarchie* – can be traced to Scott’s St Andrews or Edinburgh press. All of the other reformist works discussed in this chapter were printed in England and are illustrative of the collaboration between Scots and Englishmen seeking religious change in their respective kingdoms, as well as of the uses of print in the early Scottish Reformation.

¹³ *Acts of the Lords of Council in Public Affairs, 1501-1554*, ed. R. K. Hannay (Edinburgh, 1932), 527-8.

¹⁴ *RPS* 1552/2/26.

¹⁵ Durkan, ‘Scott’, *ODNB*.

¹⁶ *RPS* 1552/2/26.

Lindsay's Printed Poems

Each of Lindsay's three surviving printed poems date from a different decade of the early Scottish Reformation and, as such, provide insight into the development of the reform movement's persuasive agenda. *The Testament and Complaynt of our Soverane Lordis Papyngo*, written around 1530, is representative of appeals to king and court in the 1530s.¹⁷ Its publication in London in 1538 was perhaps part of, or in response to, the diplomatic and religious manoeuvrings between James V and Henry VIII. *The Tragedie of the Cardinale* was written in 1547 and printed in London the following year.¹⁸ Composed after the assassination of Cardinal Beaton, the poem was born out of the hostilities of the 'Rough Wooings' and the mercurial governorship of the Earl of Arran. Finally, *Ane Dialog betuix Experience and Ane Courteour, Off the Miserabyll Estait of the Warld*, commonly known as *The Monarche*, dates from 1552, within a few years of the Reformation Rebellion.¹⁹ In the culture of printed dissent, poetry had another advantage: once read or heard, sections of rhyming verse could be easily memorised and passed along by word of mouth. Furthermore, imaginative works such as poetry were, as Carol Edington argues, 'a more subtle, arguably more effective, way of advancing the evangelical cause' than pure polemic.²⁰ As discussed in the previous chapter, the oblique character of verse provided potential opportunities for coded criticism.

The Testament of the Papyngo (1538)

As discussed in the previous chapter, *The Testament of the Papyngo* describes the unfortunate death and cautionary final words of James V's pet parrot. While the Papyngo's speech consists of warnings addressed specifically to James V and his court, the printing of the poem opened its message to an audience far beyond those present for its original recitation, and there is much within the poem that a wider readership would have been able to identify with. As the Papyngo lies dying, she is attended by three

¹⁷ David Lindsay, *The complaynte and testament of a popiniay* (London, John Byddell, 1538), USTC 503030.

¹⁸ David Lindsay, *The Tragical death of David Beato[n] Bishoupe of saint Andrewes in Scotland* (London, John Day and William Seres, 1548), USTC 504058.

¹⁹ David Lindsay, *Ane dialog betuix Experience and ane courteour off the miserabyll estait of the warld* (Edinburgh, John Scot, 155[2]) STC 15672; ([Rouen, J. Petit], 1558) STC 15673; ([Rouen, J. Petit], 1558) STC 15674; and (Edinburgh, John Scot, 1559) STC 15675.

²⁰ Edington, *Court and Culture*, 167.

birds representing various clergymen – a magpie, a raven and a kite.²¹ All three birds would have been universally recognisable as scavenging or predatory, traits that many critical of the established Church would have attributed to its representatives. Not deceived by their false holiness, the Papyngo refuses to accept their assistance, asserting that they are nothing more than thieves and scavengers.

When the monk-birds demand to know why the Papyngo vilifies them so, she answers that, although the Catholic Clergy started humble and holy, they have since fallen into habits of wickedness (lms 785-6). Distracted by their quest for wealth and property, they have fallen into moral decline and neglected their spiritual duties (lms 988-996). This section of the *Papyngo* would have particularly appealed to those, on either side of the border, who supported Henry VIII's attack on Church property begun in 1536 – the dissolution of the monasteries. Although she continues to doubt their trustworthiness, in her final moments the Papyngo resigns herself to the assistance of the monk-birds, lamenting that no one else was available. Her acquiescence to the false brethren of the Church was indicative of a spiritual plight that Lindsay believed many faced in Scotland. Without reform, and in the absence of an alternative, people had no choice but to submit to exploitation by the Church.

The 1538 London publication of this poem (the only surviving version) came at an interesting time in the history of Scottish and English religious reform. The 1530s, as discussed in the previous chapter, witnessed the emergence of influential evangelicals and Protestants at the Scottish court and in government circles. These evangelicals – whether humanists (like Buchanan), Protestants (like Balnaves) or something in between (like Lindsay) – actively petitioned the king to address issues of religious reform. Some of these men, through the nature of their offices or by their close association with the king, were key players in the kingdom's religious, political and diplomatic affairs when Henry VIII was drastically altering the religious landscape south of the border. As Clare Kellar observes, these English alterations 'could not leave Scotland unaffected'.²²

²¹ Unless otherwise stated, references Lindsay's works are from *The Works of Sir David Lindsay of the Mount, 1490-1555*, ed. D. Hamer (4 vols, Edinburgh, 1931). When possible, references will be noted in the text.

²² Kellar, *Scotland, England and the Reformation*, 11.

Between the 1530 composition of *The Testament of the Papyngo* and its 1538 printing, Henry VIII had declared himself Head of the English Church (1531), ordered the submission of the clergy (1532), issued the Acts of Restraint of Annates (1532) and Appeals (1533), issued the Act of Supremacy (1534), sanctioned the Ten Articles (1536), begun the dissolution of the monasteries (1536) and commissioned the Great Bible (1538). He had also divorced Katherine of Aragon and married Anne Boleyn (1533), executed Anne Boleyn, and married Jane Seymour (1536). Cardinal John Fisher and erstwhile Chancellor Thomas More, two of the most prominent opponents of Henry's religious policy, had also been executed (1535). All the while, Henry was pressuring his Scottish nephew to enact similar legislation. For the most part, as we have seen, James V spent the decade carefully dancing around the issue, while manipulating the situation for his own gain. Consequently, Lindsay and other evangelicals and Protestants at James's court were often deliberately employed in the king's dealings with Henry.

It is not unreasonable to conjecture that the London publication of Lindsay's anti-clerical poem was a result of this religious and diplomatic interplay. In the years between 1530 and 1538, Lindsay himself passed through London at least four times on official business.²³ Lindsay also had contact at home with Henry's ambassadors to the Scottish court. The poem could have been passed on to the printer by Lindsay himself, by one of his contacts in London, through Henry's agents in Scotland, or even by one of Lindsay's friends or acquaintances. While the sponsor(s) of the publication and his (or their) ultimate motivations remain unknown, it is hardly coincidental that the Scottish courtier's censorious work was published in London at the height of Anglo-Scottish religious tensions. Unfortunately, no manuscript of the original 1530 composition survives, so it impossible to tell whether the 1538 print edition was altered to reflect developments south of the border.

There are a number of possible reasons why the text was printed in the English capital in 1538. Firstly, and perhaps most practically, only one printer, Thomas Davidson, was operating in Scotland in 1538 and his output was orthodox in nature,

²³ The first two times in 1532, then in 1534, and finally in 1535. Edington, *Court and Culture*, 32-33.

including commissions from the Crown.²⁴ It is possible that, out of necessity, the piece was printed in London for a Scottish audience, perhaps at the request of Scottish reformers in their efforts to encourage Scots beyond court circles to support moderate reform. The format of the printed poem would have been light-weight, coming in at twenty-four quarto-sized leaves, and therefore, comparatively inexpensive and relatively easy to transport to Scotland. The anglicised orthography of the printed edition suggests the likelihood of an additional English audience as well.²⁵ By editing the spelling, the printer, John Byddell, may have hoped to get more mileage out of the work. Scots could (and would) read English, but the English were more hesitant to read Scots.²⁶ Byddell was the successor of Wynkyn de Worde, one of the most prolific early English printers. In the years surrounding 1538 Byddell's output included a number of books by Erasmus and various works for the Church of England.²⁷

It is possible that the poem was printed at this time in order to demonstrate to English and Scottish readers alike that, while James V appeared non-committal, there were those within his inner circle who were still intent on persuading him to take seriously the reform of the Scottish Church. Henry's patience was notoriously short, and James's two French marriages did little to smooth things between uncle and nephew. Still, James's evangelical courtiers were hopeful that he could be induced to adopt a reformist agenda. This was an image they took care to project to Henry. Even after the appointment of the pro-French/anti-reform Cardinal Beaton to the archbishopric of St Andrews in late 1538, and the subsequent heresy trials of early 1539, evangelicals in James's retinue continued to claim that the king could be won over. According to Bellenden's account, James had responded favourably to the anticlerical 'Epiphany Interlude' of January 1540.²⁸

Whatever the circumstances surrounding the printing of Lindsay's poem, its publication made the religious debates of the Scottish court available to wider audiences

²⁴ His known printed works from this time include John Bellenden's translation of Hector Boece, *The hystory and croniklis of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1540), USTC 503140; and two commissions from the king: *Ad serenissimū Scotorum regem Iacobum Quintum de suscepto regni regimine a diis feliciter ominato strena* (Edinburgh, 1535), USTC 502690; and *The New actis and constitutionis of parliament* (Edinburgh, 1541) (see fn 6).

²⁵ 'Quhill' was changed to 'whyle', 'quhy' was changed to 'why', etc.

²⁶ P. Bawcutt, 'English books and Scottish readers in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries', *Review of Scottish Culture*, 14 (2002), 1-12.

²⁷ USTC 'printer' search for 'Byddell, John'.

²⁸ LP xv, 114. Eure to Cromwell, 26 January 1540.

on both sides of the border. In spite of its fierce anticlericalism, *The Testament of the Papyngo* makes no mention of doctrine, attacking only the clergy who abused their positions and the practices that allowed them to do so. The poem is clearly a call for reform, but it leaves open to interpretation the exact nature of the reform desired: whether internal reform of the Church, Erasmian reform, a Henrician-style settlement, or out-right Protestantism.²⁹ Through the voice of a parrot and the playful medium of poetry (in person and in print) Lindsay's work simply highlighted the need for reform, airing, first at court and then to a wider audience, anti-clerical and reformist sentiments that he developed still further over the next two decades.

'Godly Fit' and 'Rough Wooings'

The death of James V in December 1542 and the succession of his infant daughter, Mary, transformed both the political and religious landscape. With the prospect of yet another long minority, the government was thrown into turmoil as James Hamilton, Earl of Arran, and Cardinal Beaton fought over the regency. In the early months of 1543, the evangelical cause in Scotland scored a series of victories. After seizing control of the governorship, the evangelically-sympathetic Arran had Cardinal Beaton arrested. Arran officially announced his conversion to Protestantism, proceeded to sanction the reading of vernacular Scripture and employed two Protestant preachers, Thomas Guilliame and John Rough, within his household.³⁰ However, this was not an invitation to unchecked reforms. While Scots were permitted to read the Bible in a common language, they were not authorised to discuss it. Nor were they legally allowed access to evangelical and Protestant literature, which was made clear in the legislation against heretical books and printing on 2 June 1543. Arran and his government, while sanctioning a degree of toleration, wanted to remain in control of the religious situation. Nevertheless, on 1 July 1543 Arran further affirmed his reformist religious affiliations in the most dramatic fashion by concluding the Treaties of Greenwich. One treaty declared perpetual peace with Scotland's historic enemy, England. But it was the other treaty that would prove the most controversial. Contrary to the traditional alliance with Catholic France it

²⁹ Although no evidence survives to confirm that Lindsay ever converted, based on their interpretations of Lindsay's works, including *The Papyngo*, later Protestants would come to view him as their champion.

³⁰ *RPS* 1543/3/25.

promised dynastic union with anti-Roman England through the marriage of Mary Queen of Scots to the English king's son and heir, the future Edward VI.

However, this period of government-sanctioned evangelical activity, often referred to as Arran's 'Godly Fit', proved short-lived. In April Beaton was released and began mustering support amongst the nobility. In the meantime, Arran's half-brother, John Hamilton, Abbot of Paisley, returned from France. Historians credit John with influencing his younger half-brother.³¹ Indeed, this would appear to be the case, as by September Arran had performed a complete volte-face. On the 8th he met with Beaton and officially recanted his Protestantism. When the Treaties of Greenwich were finally denounced in the Scottish Parliament on 11 December 1543, Henry VIII blamed Arran and Beaton. The English king then launched a military campaign intended to strong-arm the Scots into accepting the English marriage. Arran's 'Godly Fit' had come to an end, only to be replaced by the 'Rough Wooings'.

On 4 May 1544 the English troops landed at Leith. They burned and looted Edinburgh, then advanced through the countryside, burning and pillaging castles, monasteries, churches and villages as they went. Cardinal Beaton, who had proved himself a formidable religious and political enemy, became a symbol of all the English and many among the Scottish evangelicals were fighting against: Catholicism and a French alliance. They realized that they needed to undermine the Cardinal's authority in order to succeed. In March 1544, Henry VIII had suggested that his troops 'should leave written upon the church door or other place of the towns they spoil such words as "You may thank your Cardinal for this; for if he had not been, you might have been in quiet and rest, for the contrary whereof he hath travailed as much as can be, to bring you to sorrow and trouble"'.³² Although this was not the catchiest of slogans, the sentiment it contained appeared to have found resonance among the Scottish public.³³ Following the capture of Edinburgh in May 1544, Hertford reported that he heard the women and 'pore myserable creatures of the towne' cursing the Cardinal.³⁴ If the English were hoping to make Cardinal Beaton, and the Church he represented, into an enemy of the

³¹ For example, see M. Merriman, *The Rough Wooings: Mary Queen of Scots 1542-1551* (East Linton, 2000), 122; Edington, *Court and Culture*, 59; Dawson, *Scotland Re-formed*, 159.

³² *LP* xix/1, 188. William Paget to Edward Seymour, 11 March 1544.

³³ Ryrie, *Origins*, 79.

³⁴ *The Hamilton Papers [Searchable Text Edition]*, ed. Joseph Bain (TannerRitchie Publishing & The University of St Andrews, 2004), ii, 233. Seymour (Hertford) to Henry VIII, 9 May 1544.

people, they were succeeding. After all, violence itself can be a very effective form of persuasion.

War of Words

Henry put Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, in charge of one of the largest forces ever to march on Scotland. His military invasion was accompanied by a carefully orchestrated propaganda campaign. This concept was not new to the English. During the Anglo-Scottish conflict of 1541-42 (that culminated in Scottish defeat at Solway Moss), Henry VIII had commissioned a pamphlet known as *A Declaracion, conteynnyng the iust cayses and consyderations, of this present warre with the Scottis, wherein alsoo appereth the trew & right title, that the kings most royall maiesty hath to the soueraynitie of Scotlande*.³⁵ The treatise, as the title suggests, laid out England's historical (and often legendary) claims to suzerainty over Scotland, at one point stating boldly that 'the kinges of Scottis haue alwais knowledged [English superiority] by homage and fealtie to our progenytours even from the begynnyng'.³⁶ The arguments for Scottish subjugation presented in the *Declaracion* were often repeated, although sometimes modified according to circumstance, in English propaganda throughout the 'Rough Wooings'.³⁷

Following the Scottish rejection of the Treaties of Greenwich in 1543, the Anglo-Scottish conflict continued with renewed vigour and the English once again turned to the presses. One pamphlet, known as the *Proclamation*, was intended to coincide with the initial assault on Edinburgh in May 1544. Hertford, inspired by Henry's earlier order to 'set bills on the churche doores', proposed to use a broadside 'to cause it to be proclaymid [...] the ontroth and faulshed of the Governar and Cardinall might apper', and to recruit Scottish collaborators.³⁸ The *Proclamation* was aimed at assured Scots – those who had agreed to assist the English – and those who might be persuaded to become assured.³⁹ However, there was some debate between Hertford, the king and the Privy Council regarding the pamphlet's content. Hertford proposed a

³⁵ Henry VIII, *A Declaracion, conteynnyng the iust cayses and consyderations, of this present warre with the Scottis* (London, Thomas Berthelet, 1542), STC 9179.

³⁶ *A Declaracion*, Biii^r.

³⁷ Merriman, *The Rough Wooings*, 267.

³⁸ *Hamilton Papers*, ii, 311.

³⁹ Merriman, *Rough Wooings*, 113.

conciliatory declaration, advertising the possibility of peace and mercy, should the Scots surrender and uphold the Treaties of Greenwich.⁴⁰ Initially, Henry agreed, although he gave Hertford permission ‘to burn, &c’ should the Scots fail to hand over the required hostages or Queen Mary – as also stipulated in Hertford’s original *Proclamation*.⁴¹

However, as the date for the anticipated invasion approached, Henry changed his mind. He wanted revenge for what he saw as Scotland’s betrayal and informed Hertford that, regardless of what the *Proclamation* promised and whether or not the Scots capitulated, he was to ‘put all to fyre and swoorde, burne Edinborough towne’ as well as Cardinal Beaton’s city of St Andrews and the surrounding countryside of Fife.⁴² Hertford was not comfortable with this duplicity. Henry took this into account and sent a new proclamation to be ‘sett forth’ when Hertford entered Scotland. The revised *Proclamation* was considerably more forceful than the previous draft. It outlined Arran’s breach-of-promise, blaming ‘the sinistre intisement and persuasions of the Cardinall of St Andrews’.⁴³ For this, Henry declared that he had ‘a just, lawfull and godly cause to be revenged uppon the same’. The *Proclamation* warned its readers that Hertford was on his way ‘with force and power of armes to persecute this realme in such sort as youe may be for ever a general example to all the world here-after’. Finally, anyone who found themselves penitent (and willing to be assured) could do so and find protection in Henry’s mercy from future vengeance. However, this charity was to be available only *after* Hertford had made good on Henry’s threats of destruction.⁴⁴ This was the *Proclamation* that Hertford took with him into Scotland in May 1544.

After the burning of Edinburgh, the Scots rallied and on 27 February 1545 achieved a victory at the Battle of Ancrum Moor. French reinforcements arrived in June. However, events outside of Scotland brought a halt – albeit, a temporary one – to Anglo-Scottish hostilities. The Treaty of Camp, signed in June 1546, brokered an end to a conflict involving France, the Ottoman Empire, the Holy Roman Empire and England. Included in the treaty was a clause that English troops would withdraw from Scotland

⁴⁰ *Hamilton Papers*, ii, 311, 314-15, 349-51.

⁴¹ *Hamilton Papers*, ii, 315, 312.

⁴² *Hamilton Papers*, ii, 326.

⁴³ *Hamilton Papers*, ii, 348-9.

⁴⁴ *Hamilton Papers*, ii, 350-1.

and that ‘the serene King of England shall not move any war without new occasion’ against the Scots.⁴⁵ The peace lasted eighteen months.

When Henry VIII died on 28 January 1547, the English throne passed to Edward VI. As the new king was only nine years old on his accession, the real power was in the hands of his uncle, Edward Seymour, now Duke of Somerset and Lord Protector of England. Somerset had aspirations for a decidedly more Protestant kingdom than Henry had ever envisioned.⁴⁶ That vision extended to Scotland as well, and Somerset embarked on a renewed campaign to force Scotland into the English marriage – a campaign that began with English victory at the Battle of Pinkie in September 1547.

Once again, printed propaganda accompanied Somerset’s military offensive. However, the first notable English pamphlet of this next phase of the ‘Rough Wooings’ was written by a Scotsman – James Henrisoun. Henrisoun’s *An Exhortacion to the Scottes to conforme themselves to the honorable, Expedient, & godly Union betweene the two Realmes of Englande and Scotland* was printed in London in 1547.⁴⁷ Unlike the other authors already discussed in this study, Henrisoun was neither a university-educated cleric nor a member of the royal court, but a merchant from Edinburgh – proof that the reformist message was indeed reaching wider audiences. Perhaps motivated by his long-standing evangelical convictions, Henrisoun joined Somerset’s forces in Edinburgh and went with them when they returned to England.⁴⁸ Under Somerset’s patronage, he rose to prominence as the principal propagandist for union and is credited with producing at least three tracts circulated between 1547-48 – although only one bears his name.⁴⁹ His involvement in the political and the religious discourse of the ‘Rough Wooings’ demonstrates not only how the message of reform had moved beyond the universities and the royal court by the 1540s, but also how religious convictions eclipsed national loyalties for some Scottish evangelicals.

⁴⁵ Merriman, *Rough Wooings*, 156, 195-201.

⁴⁶ Kellar, *Scotland, England and the Reformation*, 104.

⁴⁷ James Henrisoun, *An Exhortacion to the Scottes to conforme themselves to the honorable, Expedient, & godly Union betweene the two Realmes of Englande and Scotland* (London, Richard Grafton, 1547), USTC 503893.

⁴⁸ Ryrie, *Origins*, 76.

⁴⁹ Merriman, *Rough Wooings*, 154, 45, 238. *An exhortacion to the Scottes* (see fn 47); Henry VIII, *Proclamation* (London, Richard Grafton, 1547), STC 7811; Edward Seymour, *An epistle or exhortacion, to unite & peace* (London, Richard Grafton, 1548), STC 22268. Only the *Exhortacion* actually bears Henrisoun’s name.

The *Exhortacion* was circulated as part of the military campaign culminating in the Battle of Pinkie.⁵⁰ Intended to coerce the Scots into accepting the English marriage – and to warn them of the consequences should they continue to deny the Treaties of Greenwich – the treatise emphasised that the union was ‘the will of God’ and that England had spiritual as well as temporal suzerainty over Scotland. Consequently, Henrisoun argued that the current conflict was ‘a Ciuill warre, where brethren, kynsmen or contreyemen be diuided, and seke ye bloud of eche other: a thyng destable before God, horrible to the worlde’.⁵¹ It was from this platform that Henrisoun lobbied for renewed union through the marriage of Edward VI and Mary Stewart.

According to Henrisoun, the marriage would not only reunite the two kingdoms politically, but also their spiritual estates. ‘For howe godly wre it,’ the *Exhortacion* suggests, ‘yat these two Realmes should grow into one, so should thei also agre in the concorde & vnite of one religion, & the same ye pure, syncere & incorrupt religion of christ.’ Henrisoun pointed out that Scotland had once belonged in the diocese of York and that, historically, the Archbishop of York was Primate of Scotland. This knowledge served three purposes: firstly, as a historical precedent for Anglo-Scottish religious confederation; secondly, to undermine Cardinal Beaton’s authority; and thirdly as an example of English precedence in matters of religion, further proving ‘a certayn kynde of subieccion in Scottes [to the English]’.⁵² Therefore, the Scots should once again submit to the religious rule of England – and break with Rome. Henry VIII, Henrisoun claimed, was a godly prince, who rooted out ‘those wicked plantes, not onely vnprofitable to his commo[n] wealth, but also enemies to all veritie and true Religion’. The Scots, Henrisoun reasoned, would do well to follow his example.⁵³

Henrisoun was one of a handful of pro-English propagandist to focus on the religious possibilities of the proposed marriage between Edward VI and Mary Stewart.⁵⁴ However, according to the *Exhortacion*, these dreams for a godly and united Britain had been derailed by the revocation of the Treaties of Greenwich. Like the *Proclamation* in 1544, Henrisoun held Beaton and Aran responsible for the ensuing bloodshed and

⁵⁰ Merriman, *Rough Wooings*, 269.

⁵¹ Henrisoun, *Exhortacion*, Eviii^r, Bviii^v-ci^v, Aii^v.

⁵² Henrisoun, *Exhortacion*, Hv^v, Dv^r-Dvii^v.

⁵³ Henrisoun, *Exhortacion*, Dvii^r, Dviii^v.

⁵⁴ William Patten’s *Expedicion into Scotland* (1548) outlines the ‘godly blessings’ of an island united against Antichrist’s Rome. R.A.Mason, *Kingship and the Commonweal* (East Linton, 1998), 258-61.

destruction. In language that echoes the bills attached to ruined church doors ('You may thank your Cardinal for this, etc.'), the *Exhortacion* claims that 'if these people would as earnesty traile for the concord of bothe realmes, [the conflict] should either not haue happened, or els to the least, not so long haue continued'.⁵⁵ Although Beaton had been assassinated the previous year, his supporters and Governor Arran still pursued his programme favouring Catholicism and the Franco-Scottish alliance. As a result of this legacy, the *Exhortacion* warned that Somerset was coming 'with a puisau[n]t & invincible army', to punish those persisting in 'stubborn and wilful disobedience' and to thereby institute the Treaties of Greenwich by force. However, there was still a chance to 'case wisely doen ye armour & weapons' and to submit 'humbly to the mercy & clemencie of so noble & benigne a Prince'. Henrisoun warned his countrymen that their refusal would 'stirre vp [Somerset's] corage to do vengeance vpon you for your insolencie and faith broken'.⁵⁶ These were not empty threats. Following their victory at Pinkie, the English occupied a number of key positions throughout the Lowlands, including Haddington and the castle at Broughty Crag, near Dundee.

The Tragedie of the Cardinall (1547/8)

The English government and their propagandists were not alone in attempting to vilify the Cardinal or in addressing appeals to the wider Scottish public. Over the course of the 'Rough Wooings', demonizing the Cardinal became an obvious reformist strategy. Lindsay's second printed poem, *The Tragedie of the Cardinall*, written in the wake of Cardinal Beaton's assassination in 1546, is a prime example. Earlier that year Beaton had ordered the arrest and execution of George Wishart, a popular young Protestant preacher who had been gaining support among the nobility.⁵⁷ Wishart's death acted as something of a catalyst and, in May 1546, three months after his execution, a small group of Fife lairds, led by Norman Leslie, forcibly took control of the Cardinal's castle at St Andrews, killing him and displaying his body on the ramparts. The 'Castilians' would hold the castle until they were violently removed in July the following year.

Lindsay knew many of the men involved. His family was from Fife and, following James V's death, Lindsay had retired to his estates there. The region was

⁵⁵ Henrisoun, *Exhortacion*, Av^r.

⁵⁶ Henrisoun, *Exhortacion*, Hvii^v-Hviii^r.

⁵⁷ Wishart's preaching ministry will be discussed in fuller detail in Chapter Five.

known for its reformist sympathies and, during his time there, Lindsay's reforming works became more outspoken. Whether this change was the result of evolving opinions or the emergence of suppressed ideas remains unclear. Regardless, in 1548 Lindsay published his first known reformist work since the 'Epiphany Interlude' had been performed in 1540: *The Tragedie of the Cardinall*. The poem appears to have been written early the previous year, while the assassins were still holed up in the castle. In the poem the ghost of Cardinal Beaton, 'aboundantlie bledyng, with vissage pail and with an dedlye [expression]', appears before the poet (lms. 17-18). Providing an account of a life full of corruption and dissipation, the phantom speaks of immense greed, immoral behaviour, incomparable pride and an insatiable desire for power.

Through the ghost, the Cardinal takes the blame for the past five years of almost continual conflict with England. The spectre most notably laments his opposition to a dynastic union with England and takes full responsibility for the period of devastation and destruction that followed:

I was the rute of all that gret myschief.
[...] With Ingland wald I have no unitie.
Bot quho consydder wald the veritie,
We mycht full weill have levit in peace and rest
Nyne or ten yeris, and than playit lowis or fast,
Had we with Ingland kepit our contrackis.
[...] On ather syde all wrangis had been redrest.
Bot Edinburgh, sen syne, Leith and Kyngorne,
The day and hour may ban that I was borne. (lms 187-203)

It is likely that Lindsay had read Henrisoun's *Exhortacion*, as this passage resembles a sentiment voiced by Henrisoun: while Arran and Beaton sat safe at home, 'the feldes lie ful of their bodies, whose deathes thei moste cruelly and vnchrsitia[n]ly haue procured. If Ede[n]brough, Lieth, Louthian, Mers or Tiuidale had tongues to speake, their loude complainte would perse the deafe eares.'⁵⁸ The theme of Beaton's culpability also echoes the opinions – if Somerset's reports are to be believed – of many of the inhabitants of Lowland Scotland who had suffered at the hands of the English military. Published after the Scots' crushing defeat by the English at the Battle of Pinkie, the 'tragedie' in the poem's title refers not so much to the prelate's painful death, as to his wicked life and its destructive effects on Scotland. In this regard, Lindsay's poem once

⁵⁸ Henrisoun, *Exhortacion*, Aiii^v.

again resembles the *Exhortacion*, which claimed that ‘this miserie [brought on by the invasion] is muche to be sorowed, and more to be sorowed, then their [Beaton’s and Arran’s] wickednes to be detested, whiche haue kyndled the fire, and still laie on brandes to feede the same’.⁵⁹

While the poem never mentions the precise circumstances of Beaton’s murder, it conveys very clearly the opinion that he got what he deserved. Nothing less than Divine Retribution brought an end to his life. By likening the Cardinal’s death to the biblical examples of David and Goliath, and Judith and Holofernes, Lindsay absolved the assassins of any wrong doing (lns 239-245). Beaton’s murder was not the end result of a personal vendetta or an English plot, but of heavenly justice, and his assassins were, like David and Judith, heroes of faith. Lindsay would certainly have had both religious and personal reasons for justifying the actions of the killers, many of them neighbours. Beaton had been the reform movement’s most stalwart and powerful opponent. His death, while not necessarily desirable, removed a major impediment.

Although the text only specifically addresses prelates, princes and kings, Lindsay undoubtedly included the whole of the ruling elite, lay as well as clerical, in his admonitions. He begs them to heed the example of his own life and death, lest they ‘be servit on the sammyn wyse’ (ln 343). The spectre then calls upon the princes and rulers of the land, warning them of their own responsibility for the spiritual welfare of the kingdom. They are responsible for promoting competent clerics to the spiritual vacancies in their jurisdictions. After all, the spectre muses, common sense dictates that one would not place virgins in the keeping of a common whore (lns 407-409). Therefore it is the worthy, educated, moral man who should be appointed to a spiritual position, not the man who can pay the most for it. The ghost departs with a final admonition: unless ‘everyilk christinit kyng With in his realm mak reformatioun,’ they ‘Sall bureit be in hell – saule, blude, and bonis’ (lns 421-427).

Written in 1547, the poem was published in London by John Day and William Seres in 1548. By this time Day’s and Seres’s religious sympathies were evident.⁶⁰ That same year, Day was involved in the printing of thirty-eight other works. All of them had

⁵⁹ Henrisoun, *Exhortacion*, Aiiii^r.

⁶⁰ Day would go on to publish John Foxe’s *Actes and Monuments*. He also was closely associated with both the Edwardian and Elizabethan regimes. E.Evenden and T.S.Freeman, *Religion and the Book in Early Modern England: The Making of John Foxe’s ‘Book of Martyrs’* (Cambridge, 2011), 64.

strongly Protestant themes.⁶¹ Other authors on the list include Calvin, Cranmer, Latimer, Frith, Wycliffe and Tyndale.⁶² While Lindsay's personal religious convictions are still a matter of conjecture, Day's publication of his work in 1548 demonstrates that some of Lindsay's contemporaries viewed him as more than just an evangelical reformer, perhaps even a crypto-Protestant.

This edition of *The Tragedie of the Cardinall* opened with an introduction by Robert Barrant, an Englishman, and included Wishart's trial transcript. Interestingly, Lindsay himself made no reference to Wishart's death as a motivation for Beaton's assassination. The closest he came was stating that Beaton sought to destroy the lives of a number of 'gentyll men of Fyfe' (lms 214-217). Through the introduction and the inclusion of trial details, it was Barrant, Day and Seres who made the Wishart connection for the reader. After an exposition on the destruction of persecuting tyrants, Barrant rejoices in the death of Beaton, stating that he knew 'not who hath most cause to reioyse and prayse the Lorde of his deliuerance, whether Scotlande for that they are deliuered fro[m] his trayterous tyranny, or els England who found hym an obstinate and proude enemy'.⁶³ This statement highlights expected readerships in both kingdoms. Lindsay's connections in England may well have facilitated the poem's publication there. The overall tone of Lindsay's poem supports the English union and condones the Cardinal's assassination for his objection to the marriage. Therefore, it is possible that the English government recognized the potential of *The Tragedie of the Cardinall* for their propaganda campaigns aimed at persuading the Scots to uphold the Treaty of Greenwich. Barrant's introduction certainly hints at this possibility. Although it was printed in London, this does not mean that it was not available in Scotland, since the English were pouring pamphlets into the northern kingdom at this time.

Fire, Sword and Ink

Lindsay's poem was printed in the same year that Somerset began circulating *An Epistle or exhortacion to unitie & peace*.⁶⁴ Somerset, as Marcus Merriman so accurately

⁶¹ Twenty-six in collaboration with Seres.

⁶² USTC 'printer' search for 'Day, John'.

⁶³ David Lindsay, *The Tragical death of Dauid Beato[n]* (London, John Day and William Seres), USTC 504058, Biiiii^{r-v}.

⁶⁴ Seymour, *An Epistle or exhortacion to unitie & peace* (See fn. 49).

observed, ‘was determined that his invasion of 1547 should be fully understood by the Scots’.⁶⁵ Although it bears Somerset’s name, *Henrisoun* was the pamphlet’s most likely author. Much like the *Exhortacion*, the *Epistle* endorses the marriage of Mary Queen of Scots to Edward VI. However, Somerset’s tract has a decidedly more forceful tone, presenting the Scots with two options: consent to dynastic union and live in peace and prosperity; or reject the marriage and face complete destruction and conquest. At the time of the treatise’s dissemination, the English were masters in Scotland. However, they knew that it was only a matter of time before Scotland’s French allies arrived.⁶⁶ Somerset wanted to convince the Scots that the conflict could still end peacefully – and without French involvement. Moreover, he wanted it known, in no uncertain terms, that things could also end catastrophically. The choice rested in Scottish hands.

In terms of the first option – peaceful union through the marriage – the *Epistle* speaks of love, brotherhood, a shared heritage and a desire to act in Scotland’s best interest. According to the text, the military campaign and subsequent occupation were not acts of aggression, but of brotherly love, intended to call the Scots to their ‘awne commoditie and profite, euen as the father to the sonne, or thelder brother would do to the yo[n]ger brother: And as a louyng Phisicion would do to the mistrustfull and ignorau[n]t pacient’.⁶⁷ England was to act as a ‘patron’ – an older, wiser, more powerful brother. Under this arrangement the author makes many promises to uphold Scotland’s ‘auctoritie, name, title, right’. Furthermore, they would dispense with the designations of ‘Scotland’ and ‘England’ and would instead use the title of ‘Britayne’, so that all would be equal.⁶⁸ However, based on the condescending tone of the treatise, and the reality of an English military invasion, one could forgive the Scots for doubting Somerset’s sincerity in this regard.⁶⁹

In addition to the talk of brotherly love, the text declared that the English held the ultimate trump card: the Will of God. ‘Almightie GOD’ himself ordained that Scotland should have a young queen and England have a young king at just such a time, ‘to shew his will and pleasure to be’ that the two kingdoms be united in ‘perpetuall loue

⁶⁵ Merriman, *Rough Wooing*, 274.

⁶⁶ Merriman, *Rough Wooings*, 274.

⁶⁷ Seymour, *Epistle*, Aiii^r.

⁶⁸ Seymour, *Epistle*, Bi^v.

⁶⁹ Mason, *Kingship and Commonweal*, 257.

and amitie'.⁷⁰ To reject the union was to reject the Will of God. Therefore, England would have no other choice but to take further action in the form of Option Two: complete military invasion and conquest. If the Scots failed to comply, they would have no one to blame but themselves for the retribution they would suffer.⁷¹ The *Epistle* boasts that the English would certainly triumph, as God was on their side. If ever there was a just war, the *Epistle* declares, this was it. The Scots had broken their solemn promise (made under 'the greate seale of Scotland') and were therefore the instigators of the present conflict. The English only came to claim that which was theirs by right.⁷²

The rhetoric surrounding the implied breach-of-promise echoes that of Henrisoun's *Exhortacion*, as does the rhetoric of culpability, although here the accusations were far more direct. The *Epistle* claims that the Governor and the Cardinal cared nothing for the welfare of the Scottish people and sought only to line their own pockets with foreign gold and to adorn their persons with foreign titles.⁷³ In their greed, they were willing to sell the Scottish Queen to the French. Beaton had always advocated the Auld Alliance with France and Arran had recently been persuaded, with the gift of an impressive title and a handsome pension, to favour the alliance. In regards to any Franco-Scottish union, Somerset informed the Scots that the French would make them into slaves and take away their Queen. Then, when the French were occupied with their own wars, they would leave Scotland unprotected and 'pray to [England] & true conquest'.⁷⁴ In the final admonition, the *Epistle* reminds readers that God had ordained the English marriage, and that England will follow His orders to the utmost: 'we shal not willying but constreined, pursue the battail, chastice the wicked and malicious, by the angrie Angelles of GOD, the fire and Sworde'.⁷⁵ Four editions of the *Epistle* were printed and circulated: two in English and two in Latin.⁷⁶ These were distributed in Scotland by Lord Grey of Wilton's and Thomas Lord Warton's invading forces.⁷⁷ Warton acknowledged the receipt of 260 copies of the tract and ordered them 'to be sent

⁷⁰ Seymour, *Epistle*, Av^v-Avi^f.

⁷¹ Seymour, *Epistle*, Avii^v.

⁷² Seymour, *Epistle*, Bii^f.

⁷³ Seymour, *Epistle*, Aiii^f.

⁷⁴ Seymour, *Epistle*, Biv^v.

⁷⁵ Seymour, *Epistle*, Ci^v.

⁷⁶ Both English editions were printed in London by Grafton (STC 9180, 9181), while the Latin editions were printed in London by Reyner Wolf (STC 22268, 22269).

⁷⁷ SP 50/3 f.39, Thomas Palmer to Somerset, 12 February 1548; SP 15/2 f.28, Thomas Lord Warton to Somerset, 15 February 1548.

throughout the west parts of Scotland to noblemen and others', believing 'all charitable men in that realm ought to be contented with them'.⁷⁸

Somerset's *Epistle* formed part of a broader effort, running in concert with military invasion and occupation, to persuade the Scots of the merits of dynastic union with England, to reject the French Catholic policies pursued by their treacherous governor and corrupt cardinal, and to seize instead the God-given opportunity to create a united Protestant Britain.⁷⁹ Lindsay's *Tragedie of the Cardinall* could be seen as of a piece with this sort of propaganda campaign, albeit in a less strident Anglo-centric vein. Moreover, it was a campaign of persuasion that was aimed not just at the ruling elite, but at what the *Epistle* called the commons and 'all other inhabitants' of the realm.

Ultimately, however, the promises of love and acts of violence failed to persuade the Scots who mattered to uphold the Treaty of Greenwich. Somerset's efforts in Scotland suffered a major set-back in June with the arrival of French troops. By July Queen Mary was betrothed to the French Dauphin, Francis, and immediately dispatched to her future father-in-law's court. Subsequent military and financial aid from Henri II, and Somerset's own fall from grace in October 1549 ensured that the English were forced out of Scotland. The hostilities were officially brought to an end by the Treaty of Boulogne on 24 March 1550. From this point, the French became actively involved in Scotland's domestic as well as foreign affairs.

Scottish authors opposed to the English union were not entirely silent during the 'Rough Wooings', and the claims of English suzerainty promoted in the *Epistle* were opposed in *The Complaynt of Scotland*.⁸⁰ Attributed to Robert Wedderburn, a priest from Dundee, the *Complaynt* was printed in Paris in 1550, possibly as early as 1549.⁸¹ The disquisition counters the unionist arguments of the *Epistle* with histories and legends supporting Scottish autonomy. Similar themes are found in William Lamb's *Ane Reasonyng of ane Scottis and Inglis merchand betuix Rowand and Lionis*, begun in

⁷⁸ SP 15/2 f.32, Warton to Somerset, 18 February 1548.

⁷⁹ For more on this campaign, see Mason, *Kingship and Commonweal*, 251-261.

⁸⁰ [Robert Wedderburn], *The Complaynt of Scotland* (Paris, s.n., [1550]), STC 22009, USTC 203112.

⁸¹ Wedderburn's authorship has been a subject of much debate. For more see, A.A.MacDonald, 'On First Looking Into the *Gude and Godlie Ballatis* (1565)' in *Older Scots Literature*, ed. S.Mapstone (Edinburgh, 2005), 232; 'Robert Wedderburn (c.1510–1555x60) in J.K.McGinley, 'Wedderburn, James (c.1495–1553)', *ODNB*.

1549.⁸² However, *The Complaynt* remains the only known treatise printed in response to Somerset's propaganda campaign – Lamb's *Reasonyng* remained unpublished.⁸³

Nevertheless, although Governor Arran could be bought with the duchy of Châtellherault, not everyone was pleased with the renewal of the Franco-Scottish alliance.⁸⁴ If the sentiments expressed in *The Cardinall* are anything to go by, Lindsay would have been among those dissatisfied with the outcome of the Treaty. It is interesting to note that in late-1548, Arran sent Lindsay on a diplomatic mission to Denmark. As Carol Edington observes, Arran's action might have been an attempt to '[remove] from the country a man whose political and religious sympathies were not in line with government policy but whose long service and symbolic status rendered him difficult to deal with in any other manner'.⁸⁵ It is also possible that, following the publication of *The Tragedie of the Cardinall* Arran was keen to have Lindsay, and his pen, out of the country and away from the English presses.

The Monarche (1552)

Still, this did not keep Lindsay from writing more anti-clerical invective. Shortly after the publication of *The Tragedie of the Cardinall*, Lindsay began yet another poem intended publicly to censure the established Church – the decidedly apocalyptic *Ane Dialogue betuix Experience and ane Courteour, Off the Miserabyll Estait of the World*, better known as *The Monarche*. Perhaps motivated by a near-death experience on his return journey from Denmark, Lindsay began work on the poem in 1549, although it was first printed in 1552.⁸⁶ The work, Lindsay's longest known poem, consisting of 6338 lines, opens with the disclaimer that 'amorous folkis amiabyll' will not enjoy the depressing words contained therein. The poet lamented that the kingdom lacked an adult monarch and that he must, therefore, address Governor Arran, Archbishop Hamilton, and 'Prudent Pastouris Spirituall, [...] Nobyll Erlis, and Lordis Temporall' (lms 5,10-13, 26-38). Lindsay's purpose in addressing the nobility was not in deference

⁸² R.J. Lyall (ed.), *William Lamb's Ane Reasonyng of ane Scottis and Inglis merchand betuix Rowand and Lionis* (Aberdeen, 1987), xvii.

⁸³ Mason, *Kingship and Commonweal*, 258.

⁸⁴ Ritchie, *Mary of Guise*, 16.

⁸⁵ Edington, *Court and Culture*, 64.

⁸⁶ On a return journey from Denmark in February 1549 Lindsay's ship foundered. Edington, *Court and Culture*, 64.

to their authority or social standing, but because he held the temporal and spiritual authorities of Scotland responsible for the kingdom's mismanagement, and ultimate 'miserie'. It was 'for the brekyng of the Lordis command' that God 'hes Scurgit this pure [poor] Realme of Scotland, be mortall weris' (lns 43-54). Scotland was being punished for 'laik of Faith, and for Ydolatrie, For Fornicatioun and for Adultrye, Off Princis [and] Prelatis' (lns 67-72). Lindsay's intention was clear. If those in power would reform themselves, the Church and the State, God would show mercy and the kingdom would experience peace and prosperity.

The poem's narrator, Courteour, recounts a conversation with an old man named Experience regarding, as the full title suggests, the miserable state of the world. Experience claims that mankind's sin was the root of all the world's problems. He traces the biblical history of mankind's repeated sinfulness and God's subsequent retributions from Adam and Eve to Noah, followed by the story of the Tower of Babel. The remainder of the poem takes a very apocalyptic turn and describes the Four Kingdoms, or Beasts, Daniel prophesied would precede the arrival of the Antichrist and the Apocalypse.⁸⁷ Lindsay spent much of the poem describing, in gruesome detail, the rise and catastrophic falls of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Ancient Rome; the First, Second, Third, and Fourth Monarchies, respectively.

Finally, and most dramatically, Experience condemns the Fifth and last monarchy: that of Papal Rome. Lindsay's inspiration for this section may well have come from John Knox's first public sermon, preached in St Andrews in April 1547, on the book of Daniel – a sermon Lindsay was instrumental in bringing about, being among those who encouraged Knox to preach.⁸⁸ Daniel 8 describes the king whose kingdom will follow the Four Monarchies as a king 'which shalbe wyse in darke speakynges'. This king, according to Daniel, 'shall destroye aboue measure, and all that he goeth aboute shall prospere [...]. Many one shall he put to death [...] he shall sta[n]de vp agaynst the Prynce of Prynces'.⁸⁹ Experience declares that the Pope, as the most powerful ruler in many an age, is perfectly suited to this role, destroying all who stand in his way (lns 4261-4270, 4323-4328). He even goes so far as to call the Pope an

⁸⁷ Daniel 8.

⁸⁸ K.R. Firth, *The Apocalyptic Tradition in Reformation Britain, 1530-1645* (Oxford, 1979), 119.

⁸⁹ *The Byble in Englyshe [The Great Bible]* (Paris, François Regnault; London, Richard Grafton & Edward Whitchurch, 1539), USTC 503073, fol.cxiii^r.

Antichrist (ln. 5247). By referring to the Holy Father as ‘an’ Antichrist – one among many, and not ‘the’ Antichrist – Lindsay fits into the medieval antichrist tradition which, as Edington notes, was far from monolithic.⁹⁰ However, although criticism of the papacy had been growing within the Scottish Catholic Church, it could be argued that referring to the Pope as ‘Antichrist’ in any form is hardly the behaviour of a good Catholic. It would appear that Lindsay had become radical in his old age, and was at last ready for Scotland to sever ties with Rome.⁹¹ Exactly what the Scottish Church would look like without the Papacy he – characteristically – left open.

Lindsay’s commentator launches into an extended catalogue of the Papacy’s abuses, perversions and various acts of exploitation, describing Rome as another Babylon:

[A] horribyll vaill of euerilk kynd of vyce,
 Ane laithlye Loch of stynkand Lychorye,
 Ane curssit Coue, corrupt with Couatyce,
 Bordourit aboute with pryde and Symonye,
 Sum sayis, ane systeme full of Sodomye,
 Quhose vyce in speciall, gyf I wald declair,
 It wer aneuch for tyll perturbe the air. (lns 4939-4952)

This scathing description is followed by an apocalyptic warning, stating that ‘the plaiges of Iohnis Reuelatioun sall fall vpon thare Generatioun’ (lns 4957-4958). Experience then offers terrifying descriptions of ‘the moste terrabyll Day of the Extreme Iugement’, ‘the maner quhow Christ sall cum to his Iugement’ and the horrors and punishments that await the sinful in Hell. Yet all is not doom and gloom: Experience concludes with a brief description, by way of contrast, evoking the delights and peace that await the faithful in Heaven.

Clearly, Lindsay believed that the judgment of God upon Christendom generally, and Scotland specifically, was imminent, if not already begun. Following in the devastating wake of the ‘Rough Wooings,’ wars and rumors of wars on the Continent and rising religious tensions throughout Christendom, one can hardly blame him for believing that The End was nigh. Once again, his purpose in writing was to draw attention to the need for reform. While Lindsay still refused to put a label on the type of reform he longed to see enacted, the demands outlined by *The Monarche* were

⁹⁰ Edington, *Court and Culture*, 201.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 196.

more direct than those of his previous works. This was largely due to Lindsay's growing eschatological concerns, adding a sense of urgency to his pleas for religious change. Time, the poet believed, was running out.

Publication History of *The Monarchie*

The publication of *The Monarchie* was also part of an effort to engage with a wider public. While only one edition of the poem was printed during Lindsay's lifetime (he died in 1555), its publication, either with or without the poet's consent, brought the work and its message to the attention of those beyond Lindsay's intimate circle. Four pre-1560 editions of *The Monarchie* survive: one from 1552, two from 1558, and a fourth from 1559.⁹² Dating the 1552 edition has proved something of a challenge. The final page of the edition is clearly printed with the date '1552' – the only date printed on the text. However, scholars and cataloguers continually date this edition to 1554. One basis for this might relate to a clue within the poem itself which stated that 447 years remained until the end of the world (lns 5302-3). It was commonly expected that the world would end in the year 2000, which Edington claims would put the poem's date at 1554.⁹³ However, if we do not count the year already in progress when the poem was written, the calculations would put that date at 1553. Furthermore, if Lindsay did not actually factor in the final year (2000), as it would be incomplete due to the world coming to an end at midnight on the final night of the year 1999, the calculation works out to 1552 as the date that the poem was completed, if not printed – the date indicated on the actual printed edition. A 1552 publication date would also present a clearer explanation as to why the poem was dedicated to Arran, who stepped down in early 1554, and makes no mention of Mary of Guise (lns. 5-38).

The 1552 and 1559 editions (Figure I and II) both profess to be printed in Copenhagen, while the other two, both marked 1558 (Figure III and Figure IV), claim to hail from Paris. All are false imprints and none of them bear a printer's name. The tense religious climate of 1550s Scotland (and England) was grounds for such duplicity. Edington believes that the counterfeit imprint of the first edition, in particular, was in reaction to the Parliamentary legislation of February 1552 forbidding the unauthorized

⁹² (Edinburgh, John Scot, [1552]) STC 15672; ([Rouen, J. Petit], 1558) STC 15673; ([Rouen, J. Petit], 1558) STC 15674; and (Edinburgh, John Scot, 1559) STC 15675.

⁹³ Edington, *Court and Culture*, 224.

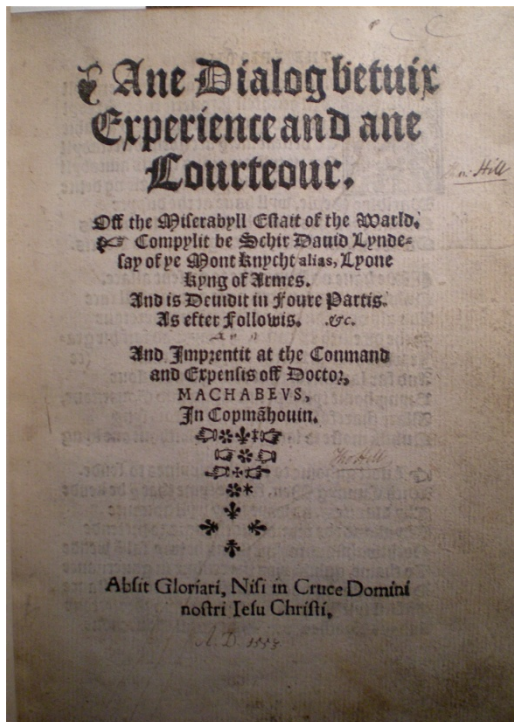


Figure I: STC 15672
([Edinburgh, John Scot, [1552]])
By permission of the Folger
Shakespeare Library

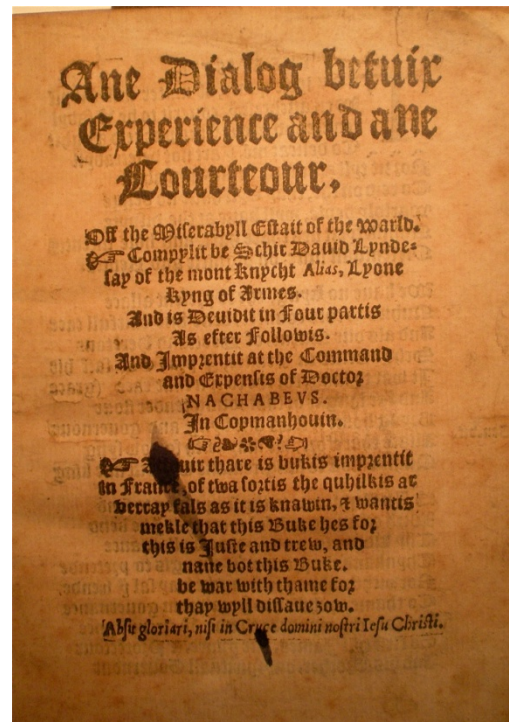


Figure II: STC 15675
([Edinburgh, John Scot], 1559)
By permission of the Folger
Shakespeare Library



Figure III: STC 15673
([Rouen, Jean Petit], 1558)
By permission of the Folger
Shakespeare Library

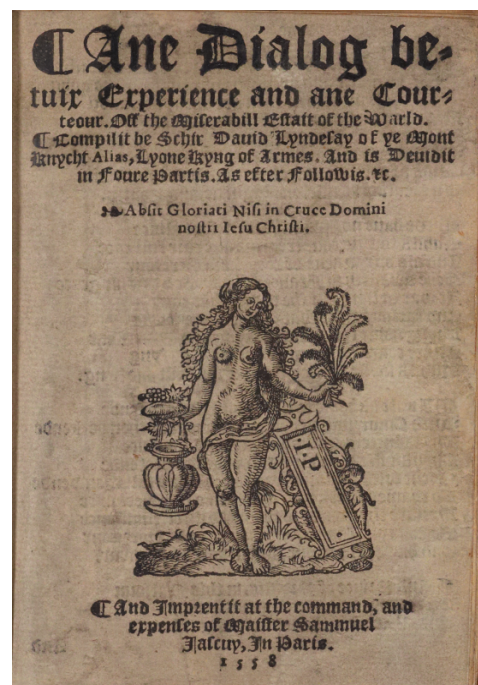


Figure IV: STC 15674(.5)
([Rouen, Jean Petit], 1558)
By permission of the National
Library of Scotland
(Special thanks to Claire McLoughlin)

publication of ‘bukis, ballatis, sangis, blasphematiounis rymes or Tragedies outhir in latine or Inglis tounge’.⁹⁴ Scholars have long argued on the basis of print type and decorations that the 1552 and 1559 ‘Copenhagen’ editions were printed by John Scott in either Edinburgh or St Andrews.⁹⁵ Furthermore, it has been generally agreed that the 1558 ‘Paris’ editions were most likely printed in Rouen, although that designation will be challenged below.

A fresh comparison of the 1552 and 1559 editions confirms that they were issued by the same printer. A further comparison with John Scott’s 1552 edition of John Hamilton’s *Catechism* confirms that the 1552 and 1559 editions of *The Monarche* were, in fact, printed by Scott.⁹⁶ Of the four pre-1560 editions, only the 1552 Scott edition was printed during Lindsay’s lifetime – the poet died between 16 January and 13 March 1555.⁹⁷ Printing the poem in Scotland at any point during the 1550s would have been a risky enterprise. Consequently, Scott claimed that his 1552 and 1559 Scottish editions were ‘imprentit at the command and Expensis off Doctour Machabeus in Copmanhovin’ [Copenhagen]. In order to appear both legal and credible, Scott not only ascribed their place of publication to a city outside of the Scottish Crown’s jurisdiction, he also attributed their commissioning to John Macalpine (also known as Macabeaus), who was then living in Copenhagen.⁹⁸ As a well-known religious exile, safely beyond the reach of both the Scottish Crown and the Catholic Church, Macalpine provided the perfect cover for Scott’s publications.⁹⁹

Around the time of the first publication, Scott was engaged in printing sanctioned religious material, the most significant of which was Archbishop Hamilton’s *Catechism* in 1552.¹⁰⁰ The catechism was the chief product of the Provincial Council of that year. Yet for all of the Council’s arguably anti-papal undertones, it is highly unlikely that Hamilton was involved in the publication of *The Monarche*. With a powerful sponsor like Archbishop Hamilton, Scott would not have found it necessary to

⁹⁴ Edington, *Court and Culture*, 178.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 177.

⁹⁶ All three volumes were consulted simultaneously at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC in April 2013. Hamilton, *The catechisme*, USTC 504714.

⁹⁷ He presided over a trial in Cupar on 16 January 1555 and a charter dated 13 March 1555 implies that he was dead by that date. *The Works of Sir David Lindsay*, ed. Hamer, vol. iv, xxxix.

⁹⁸ Macalpine is discussed in Chapter One.

⁹⁹ It is also possible that Lindsay had visited MacAlpine on his diplomatic visit to Denmark in 1548. Edington, *Court and Culture*, 177.

¹⁰⁰ See *fn. 10* above.

go to all the trouble of fabricating the publication information. Hamilton's status as the highest ranking clergyman in the country, as well as half-brother of Governor Arran, would have provided the necessary protection.

It is interesting that while the printer chose to remain anonymous, Lindsay's name appears clearly on the title page, suggesting that he knew of the 1552 publication. If he had not given his consent, Scott could have easily withheld or falsified the name of the author just as he withheld his own name and falsified the city of publication. Why then, given the dangers of printing such a poem in Scotland at the time, was Lindsay willing to reveal his authorship? The 1552 edition of *The Monarche* would have appeared around the time of the 1552 public performance in Cupar of Lindsay's play, *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*.¹⁰¹ Lindsay may have assumed that following the performance of his strongly reformist, evangelical play, and in light of his previous works, the authorities would have suspected him anyway. His own apocalyptic beliefs might also account for his boldness in claiming authorship. If The End was imminent, or at the very least, if things were already as bad as all that, why bother being anonymous? It appears as though Lindsay was willing to take the risk, although his printer was not. He may also have been counting on his old age and his positions as Lord Lyon King of Arms and favourite of the deceased king to protect him. The fact that Lindsay faced no known repercussions following the 1552 and 1554 productions of *The Thrie Estaitis* or the 1552 publication of *The Monarche* indicate that he may well have had some sort of immunity.

Interest in false imprints of *The Monarche* tends to focus on these 1552 and 1559 'Copenhagen'/Scottish editions, but the two 1558 'Paris' editions (STC 15673 & 15674; Figures III & IV, respectively) also use purposefully incorrect publication information. However, John Scott was not responsible for the 1558 editions. As a matter of fact, he denounced them as 'verray fals' on the title page of his 1559 *Monarche*. While this condemnation could have been a part of the false imprinting rouse, a side-by-side comparison of the four editions indicates that the 1558 editions were indeed printed by a different press than the 1554/2 and 1559 editions.

That being said, the 1558 editions, like their Scottish counterparts, also present a false sponsor – this time in the person of the mysterious 'Samuel Iascuy', of whom

¹⁰¹ *The Thrie Estaitis* will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Four.

nothing is known. Long attributed to one printer, the 1558 editions differ from each other in layout, decoration and size. STC 15673 (Figure III) is quarto-sized and bears a block print of David Lindsay in his heraldic garb. The other edition, STC 15674 (Figure IV), is octavo-sized and decorated with the modified device of Jean Petit of Rouen.¹⁰² Due to the presence of this device, most scholars and library catalogues tentatively ascribe both STC 15673 and 15674 to Petit's press. However, Jean Petit died in 1552. Petit's widow and son (also named Jean Petit) continued the printing operation, although there appears to have been a gap of two to three years between the last work printed by the widow (1554) and the first by the younger Petit (1557).¹⁰³ Furthermore, the printer's device on STC 15674 has been modified by the shortening of the name 'I. Petit' to simply 'I.P'. It is unlikely that Petit's relations would have felt it necessary to remove their own last name from the block. Therefore, it seems probable that at least some of Petit's printing materials were sold or redistributed between 1554 and 1557. This, then, begs the question of who actually printed STC 15674 and 15673.

The typeface used in STC 15674 can be traced to the London press owned by John Wayland.¹⁰⁴ There is a unique 'M' in STC 15674 that also appears in various works from Wayland's press, most notably in *The Pathe of Obedience* (1556) and *The Prymer in English and Latin after Salisburys use* (1558). Furthermore, the 'M' only appears in Wayland's work after 1556, which implies that Wayland's shop acquired additional printing materials around that time. It was also at this time that some of Jean Petit's printing materials may have been sold or redistributed. So it is possible that either Wayland – or his assigns – may have acquired some of Petit's materials, including the 'M' and at least one block of Petit's device.¹⁰⁵ However, due to poor health and finances, it is unlikely that Wayland did any of his own printing after 1556. Furthermore, Wayland was imprisoned for debt in 1558, the year STC 15673 and 15674

¹⁰² L.C. Silvestre, *Marques Topographiques* (Paris, 1867), no.340.

¹⁰³ USTC search; G. Lepreux, *Gallia Typographique ou Répertoire Biographique et Chronologique de tous les Imprimeurs de France* (Paris, 1912), i, 355-356.

¹⁰⁴ Special thanks to Dr. Malcolm Walsby for bringing it to my attention that STC 15674 was not actually printed in France, but probably in England. Any errors in designating a printer, however, remain my own.

¹⁰⁵ James Cancellor, *The Pathe of Obedience* (London, John Wayland, 1556), USTC 505300; *The prymer in English and Latin after Salisburys use* (London, Assigns of John Wayland, 1558), USTC 505517.

were printed. Instead, from 1556, the output from Wayland's press was managed by his assigns, John Day and William Seres.¹⁰⁶

Day and Seres, as we have seen, were well-known Protestants. John King describes Day's career as exemplifying 'a lifelong commitment to the dissemination of Protestant' ideology.¹⁰⁷ William Seres's Protestant affiliations were no less notable than Day's – he was known as a trusted servant of William Cecil.¹⁰⁸ Together, Day and Seres were responsible for numerous reformist works. During the reign of Edward VI, it was safe enough to acknowledge involvement in the publication of such literature. However, by 1558 it was distinctly hazardous. On Edward's death in 1553, his half-sister Mary gained the English throne and instituted an intense, often violent, campaign to return England to the Catholic fold. Both Day and Seres spent time in prison during her reign – both for printing heretical books.¹⁰⁹ Hence, Day and Seres would have felt it judicious to publish their edition of *The Monarchie* under the device of a deceased Frenchman and with a false city of publication outside of England.

Day was no stranger to clandestine printing. Between 1553 and 1554 he printed Protestant materials in Lincolnshire under the pseudonym 'Michael Wood'. For his part in the illicit book trade, he was incarcerated in October 1554. It was perhaps as a condition of his release that he worked for Wayland, one of the printers engaged to produce authorised primers and other materials for Mary's re-Catholicisation of the English Church.¹¹⁰ Evenden and Freeman suggest that the years spent printing works supporting the Catholic regime were frustrating for Day.¹¹¹ It is likely that they were dissatisfying years for Seres as well. It is certainly possible that Day and Seres may have taken advantage of their employer's own incarceration in 1558 to print illicit material. Wayland's orthodox print shop would have been an ideal blind.

Day and Seres were familiar with Lindsay's work, having printed Lindsay's *Tragedie of the Cardinall* ten years previous. Considerably longer than *The Cardinal*, *The Monarchie* would have been quite an undertaking. However, their combined

¹⁰⁶ Evenden and Freeman, *Religion and the Book*, 69.

¹⁰⁷ King, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs and Early Modern Print*, 81.

¹⁰⁸ From 1548, Seres lived in a property owned by Cecil and collected rents for the erstwhile privy councillor. Evenden and Freeman, *Religion and the Book*, 67; E. Evenden, 'Seres, William (d. 1578x80)', *ODNB*.

¹⁰⁹ King, *Foxe's Book of Martyrs and Early Modern Print*, 82; Duff, *English Book Trade*, 146.

¹¹⁰ Evenden and Freeman, *Religion and the Book*, 67, 69.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 70.

experience meant that they would have been capable of producing the long work relatively quickly. This haste might also explain the errors and omissions alluded to in Scott's 1559 edition.¹¹² While Lindsay would have been a less obvious choice than someone like Calvin or Cranmer, given the riskiness of the endeavour, the printers may have deliberately chosen a more innocuous writer in case they were questioned. Lindsay's reputation would have made him a somewhat safer choice: a respected member of a Catholic royal court and a known favourite of a Catholic king. Moreover, Lindsay was an evangelical Catholic, and not a known Protestant – his more radical beliefs were not evident until the publication of *The Monarchie* itself. This familiarity with Lindsay's work, coupled with the connection to Wayland's press, as well as their known Protestant sympathies and activities indicate John Day's and William Seres's involvement in the printing of STC 15674.

STC 15673 bears a strong resemblance to STC 15674. However, there are a number of differences in layout, decoration and format. The most notable are the size, the absence of Jean Petit's device and the substitution of a block print intended to represent Lindsay in his heraldic garb. There are also some changes regarding the fonts used throughout the publication. Furthermore, punctuation has been added in places, as has Lindsay's poem on the death of Queen Madeleine. However, although the printers may have altered the size, font, layout and title illustration, one thing remains consistent – the use of the same unique decorative initials scattered throughout the text (see Figures V and VI for an example). The presence of these decorations indicate that STC 15673 and 15674 were issued by the same printers. For the sake of safety, Day and Seres may have made the variations in a further effort to evade the authorities. Moreover, the differences imply that Lindsay's *Monarchie* was popular enough to warrant a second print run in 1558.

Lindsay's apocalyptic poem would have seemed rather timely to some audiences in 1558, which may account for two English publications that year. In addition to Mary Tudor's marriage to Phillip II of Spain in 1554 and the anti-Protestant purge that followed, England suffered from two years of poor harvest leading to famine, as well as an influenza epidemic. In the face of religious and civil unrest, in addition to threats of

¹¹² (Edinburgh, John Scot, 1559), STC 15675.

war with France and Scotland, many Englishmen may have been attracted to the kind of apocalyptic scenarios evoked by Lindsay in *The Monarchie*.



Figure V: STC 15673, (Ei^r). Decorative initial 'F'.
By permission of the Folger Shakespeare Library

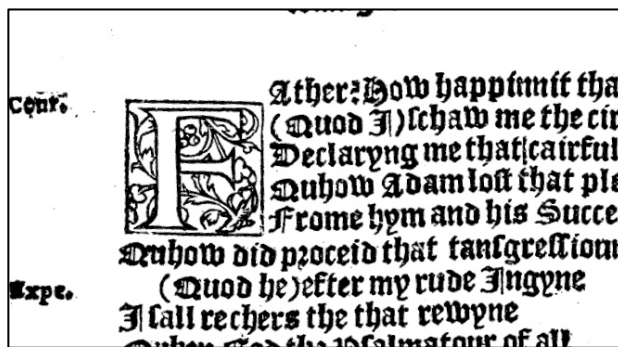


Figure VI: STC 15674(.5), (Bviii^v). Decorative initial 'F'.
By permission of the National Library of Scotland and EEBO

There is evidence that the 1558 editions also made their way into Scotland. The denunciation of the 1558 editions made in Scott's 1559 edition implies that both 1558 'Paris' editions were already circulating in Scott's potential Scottish market. Concern for developments in England as well as growing anxiety over the situation at home may account for *The Monarchie*'s growing Scottish audience in 1558/9. In April 1554 Mary of Guise, supported by Henri II of France, had obtained the Scottish regency. Her daughter was poised, one day, to become queen of France. Coupled with news of Mary Tudor's marriage, there were growing concerns that Habsburg-Valois hostilities would find a new theatre on the Anglo-Scottish border.¹¹³ Furthermore, the forced re-Catholicization of England had a number of reform-minded Scots on edge. They were fearful that the new Queen Regent might follow the English example and resort to violence as a means of suppressing reform.

¹¹³ Mason, 'Renaissance and Reformation', 125.

The situation in Scotland, however, differed greatly from that of its southern neighbour. With the brief exception of Arran's 'Godly Fit' in 1543, there had been no extended period of government-implemented Protestant reform that needed violent reversing. Guise remained diplomatic with the reformist noblemen, exhibiting a certain degree of toleration towards the Protestants. The Queen Regent had no need to or interest in following Mary Tudor's example. More concerned with Franco-Scottish relations, her focus was eastward rather than to the south. As Jenny Wormald observes, 'the need to keep Scotland in alliance with Catholic France rather than the Catholic England of Mary Tudor persuaded Mary of Guise to pursue the remarkable policy of toleration towards the Scottish Protestants'.¹¹⁴ This policy of toleration may also explain why Lindsay remained unpunished for the 1552 edition of *The Monarchie* as well as the 1552 and 1554 productions of *Ane Saytre of the Thrie Estaitis*. Guise further demonstrated her politique policy and desire to appease the Protestants by attending the Edinburgh performance of *The Thrie Estaitis* in 1554. For the most part, the situation in Scotland remained comparatively calm.

However, as Mary Stewart's promised marriage to the Dauphin approached, tensions began to escalate. The 1558 and 1559 editions of *The Monarchie* may have been produced in response to the growing concerns over the French union. In 1555 the outspoken Protestant preacher John Knox had returned secretly from exile and began reconnecting with sympathetic noblemen. In December 1557 five of these noblemen signed what has become known as 'The First Band' or 'The Common Band', declaring their commitment to the Protestant cause.¹¹⁵ Despite her assurances to the contrary, the Protestant nobility feared that Mary of Guise's dynastic ambitions – in her daughter's marriage with the French Catholic crown – would trump her religious toleration.¹¹⁶ Still, in the months following the wedding in April 1558, the Queen Regent did not turn on the Protestant lords. Instead, she called another Scottish Church Council, emphasising her goodwill towards the Protestants.

Everything changed in November 1558 when Mary Tudor died and her Protestant half-sister Elizabeth took the English throne. Inspired by the reversal of

¹¹⁴ Wormald, *Court, Kirk and Community*, 102.

¹¹⁵ Knox, *History*, i, 136.

¹¹⁶ Ritchie, *Mary of Guise*, 247.

religious fortunes to the south, the Scottish Protestants became bolder. Incited by the iconoclastic preaching of John Knox, the Reformation Rebellion began with a riot in Perth in May 1559. Two months later the untimely death of Henri II in a joust elevated Francis and Mary to King and Queen of France. Mary's new role tied Scotland's fate even more securely to that of Catholic France, an outcome dreaded by the Lords of the Congregation (as the Protestant nobility now styled themselves). Over the next year, Scotland was caught up in a civil war as the Lords of the Congregation clashed with the forces of the Queen Regent. The 1559 publication of Lindsay's *Monarchie* may very well have been a part of the build-up to this rebellion that ultimately culminated in the overthrow of Mary of Guise, the Reformation Parliament of 1560, and the abolition of the Mass in Scotland. Even in 1559, Scott still felt it necessary to falsely claim that the edition was printed in Copenhagen at the request of Doctor Machabeus. Although the Protestant cause was gaining momentum, its victory was by no means a forgone conclusion.

As this survey of the poem's editions suggests, while Lindsay may have had his own reasons for the initial composition of *The Monarchie* in 1552, subsequent publications also made use of the poem's message. With its apocalyptic overtones and its criticisms of the Papacy and other corrupt rulers, *The Monarchie* found a ready market in 1550s England as well as Scotland. Sections of the poem addressing the fall of ancient empires at the hands of women may have found renewed resonance with those who believed that so many women controlling the major thrones of Europe was a sign of the End. In his own 1558 publication, *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, Knox, in no uncertain terms, declared female rulership to be unnatural.¹¹⁷ Doubtless, there were others who shared his views.¹¹⁸ Coupled with hardship at home and abroad, changes in government and religion, and general unrest, circumstances made *The Monarchie* a sellable product throughout the decade.

That two printing houses in two countries – producing a total of four editions before 1560 – went to so much trouble to print the text at a time and in places where such strong criticism of the Catholic Church was dangerous is testimony to the poem's

¹¹⁷ Knox, *First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* ([Geneva, Pierre-Jacques Poullain & Antoine Reboul], 1558), USTC 450272.

¹¹⁸ For more on Knox's *First Blast* and gender, see A. Shephard, *Gender and Authority in Sixteenth-Century England: the Knox Debate* (Ryburn, 1994).

(and Lindsay's) appeal to reformist parties in both Scotland and England. Even while utilising false imprints, publishing *The Monarche* was a risk as it was not a short work and could not have been run off as quickly as pamphlet or broadsheet material.¹¹⁹ While the printers might have recognised that the market for the poem would be limited due to its controversial message, they certainly acknowledged, by its printing, that there might be an audience beyond the halls of the Church and government that would be receptive. At the very least, they obviously felt the text would prove a useful piece of persuasive literature for the reformist cause.

Conclusion

The printed poems and polemic tracts discussed in this chapter trace the development of reformist appeals as they moved beyond the royal court. Following James V's death in 1542 and the break-down of the Treaties of Greenwich in 1543, the 'Rough Wooings' brought the consequences of Anglo-Scottish diplomatic and religious disputes to the attention of the entire kingdom. The English editions of Lindsay's poems as well as Somerset's propaganda also highlight the collaboration between Scots and Englishmen eager to promote the reformation of religion in both kingdoms. The Reformation was changing the religious landscape across Europe – transforming old alliances and overturning centuries of tradition. In this climate of change and conflict, those seeking religious reform began looking to former enemies for support. They also turned to new technology, such as print, in their efforts to accomplish their agenda. Somerset orchestrated a printed propaganda campaign, running in concert with military invasion, in his efforts to persuade the Scots of the virtues of Protestantism and union. Similarly, Lindsay and his supporters utilised the printing press to promote Scottish religious dissent among audiences on both sides of the historically contentious Anglo-Scottish border. Although it is impossible to gauge the actual impact of Lindsay's works in the early decades of the British Reformations, his oeuvre enjoyed immense popularity in print after 1560, particularly in Scotland, not least because his works were appropriated by the Protestants. As James Melville observed in the later part of the century, Lindsay was second only to the Bible in the esteem of 'godly' Scots from all walks of life.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ The shortest known pre-1560 edition is the 1554/2 edition, which comes in at 232 pages.

¹²⁰ R. Pitcairn (ed.), *The Autobiography and Diary of Mr James Melville* (Edinburgh, 1842), 18-19.

CHAPTER FOUR: Public Performance

Another medium that carried religious discourse beyond the kingdom's elite was the publicly staged performance. Evangelical and Protestant plays tapped into a medieval tradition of religious drama. Early modern Scottish playgoers would have been accustomed to the miracle, mystery and morality plays employed throughout Europe as instructional tools by the Catholic Church.¹ In addition to capitalising on a familiar visual medium, plays had the persuasive advantage of actively involving a community.² As there were no professional theatrical troupes in Scotland at this time, the players involved would have been locals.³ The plays would have been special occasions for the townspeople who attended the performance, as well as for those who participated in them. The audience would have been encouraged to engage with the characters and the story, sometimes physically. Although the production of these theatrics would have been limited to a localised audience, they would have been open to a cross-section of that society, a feat not accomplished by more exclusive courtly entertainments.

Religious drama in public spaces had been around since the thirteenth century and was originally tied to sacred observances or the liturgical calendar.⁴ While they drew audiences from all social classes, medieval mystery, miracle and morality plays were ideally set up for educating the illiterate, and it was through these plays that most people came to know biblical stories. Mystery plays dramatised Scripture, often developing into elaborate and costly depictions of the entire biblical narrative – from Creation to the Last Judgment. Miracle plays centered on saints' lives and were often performed on the saint's feast day, while morality plays, featuring allegorical personifications of various vices and virtues, were also widely popular throughout Europe.⁵ These public theatrics were significant events in the life of a community and could last for days. It was not uncommon for the entire population of a town or city to become involved in the staging of a Passion or Corpus Christi play. Such performances

¹ Pettegree, *Culture of Persuasion*, 76.

² G.Ehrstine, *Theatre, Culture, and Community in Reformation Bern, 1523-1555* (Leiden, 2002), 12.

³ S.Carpenter, 'Early Scottish Drama' in *The History of Scottish Literature, Vol I*, ed. R.D.S. Jack (Aberdeen, 1988), 201.

⁴ J.Parente, Jr., 'Drama' in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation Online*, ed. H.J. Hillebrand (Oxford, 2005).

⁵ Pettegree, *Culture of Persuasion*, 77-79.

were often expensive and caused a considerable disruption within the town, bringing business to a halt as various guilds and mercantile groups took responsibility for scenes most reminiscent of their professions.⁶

Early Protestant reformers recognised the potential of the performance medium for the promotion of their ideas, particularly as an effective means of public education. In his study of ten religious plays performed between 1523 and 1555 in Bern (Switzerland) and its environs, Glenn Ehrstine highlighted how public theatre could foster and consolidate Protestant reform. He noted the early Protestant belief that ‘a play, decorously performed, [was] an effective means of disseminating God’s word, surpassing sermons in its ability to move an audience, and ideal for instructing youths in tenets of faith’.⁷ Luther, Melanchthon, Calvin and Bèze all advocated the use of drama for didactic purposes. Luther often referred to plays as ‘paintings’ and ‘pictures’ capable of illustrating biblical stories and virtues. Drama was frequently used as an instructional tool in Lutheran education. Melanchthon’s earliest publication was an edited edition of Terence’s Latin plays. Calvin’s protégé Bèze wrote *Abraham Sacrifiant* and Heinrich Bullinger wrote *Lucretia and Brutus*, while in *De Regno Christi* Martin Bucer calls for biblical drama with Protestant theology. Scripture plays can be found in all of the major denominations.⁸

In his study of the literature of the English Reformation, John King observes that the Reformation period was the only time in the history of English theatre that clergymen were the driving force behind the promotion, rather than suppression, of drama.⁹ Bale, Becon, Foxe, Baldwin, Udall, and Grimald all wrote plays for the edification of the English public. Foxe even went so far as to claim that ‘Players, printers, Preachers [...] be set vp of God, as a triple bulwerke, against the triple crowne of the Pope, to bringe hym downe’.¹⁰ Drama presented the reformist message in a way that not only educated but also entertained. Comedy and satire, in particular, were well suited to highlighting the abuses of the Catholic Church, as well as the faults of society as a whole. Drama provided opportunities for the audience to engage directly with

⁶ Ehrstine, *Theatre, Culture*, 35.

⁷ Ehrstine, *Theatre, Culture*, 6, 3.

⁸ Pettegree, *Culture of Persuasion*, 81-89.

⁹ King, *English Reformation Literature*, 275.

¹⁰ *TAMO* (1563), 806.

religious discourse, giving physical form to Protestant propaganda.¹¹ It also supplied added protection for the writers and the actors. Much could be said through wit, humour, and the use of allegorical abstractions that might otherwise be met with severe consequences.¹² This vehicle of presentation was particularly useful when it was too dangerous to espouse evangelical doctrines overtly, as would be the case in early sixteenth-century Scotland as religious tensions began to escalate.

Scottish Drama

While other evidence exists for what Roderick Lyall refers to as ‘a flourishing theatrical tradition in Scotland before 1550’, David Lindsay’s *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* is the only complete example of late-medieval/early modern Scots vernacular theatre.¹³ Sarah Carpenter attributes the dearth of surviving texts to the instability of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as well as the post-Reformation Kirk’s suppression of theatre. However, through various church, burgh, guild and royal court accounts, it has been possible to prove that late-medieval and Renaissance-era Scots were acquainted with all of the European dramatic traditions.¹⁴ These performances included Robin Hood plays in May, clerks’ plays at universities, as well as courtly entertainments, like the ‘Epiphany Interlude of 1540’ mentioned in Chapter Two. Public religious dramas were also popular. Evidence exists for Candlemas and Corpus Christi plays in Aberdeen as well as religious dramas – focusing on the lives of saints and biblical themes – performed in Perth, Edinburgh, Dundee, and Lanark.¹⁵ Most plays were performed outdoors, in public and were managed by burgh councils. Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Haddington, Markinch, Perth and Stirling all had public playfields.¹⁶

Although the Reformed Kirk has been blamed for ‘the death of Scottish theatre’, evidence suggests that the early reformers found drama to be a valuable form of

¹¹ S.B. House, ‘Literature, Drama and Politics’ in *The Reign of Henry VIII: Politics, Policy, And Piety*, ed. D.MacCulloch (London, 1995), 201; Ehrstine, *Theatre, Culture*, 234.

¹² Pettegree, *Culture of Persuasion*, 80, 89.

¹³ R.Lyall, ‘Introduction’ in David Lindsay, *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*, ed. R.Lyall (Edinburgh, 1989), xxii; Carpenter references the text of a ‘plough play’ dating from around 1500 that survives as a song. Carpenter, ‘Early Scottish Drama’, 200.

¹⁴ Carpenter, ‘Early Scottish Drama’, 199.

¹⁵ Lyall, ‘Introduction’, xxii.

¹⁶ A.J. Mill, *Mediaeval Plays in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1927), 349-353.

reformist propaganda.¹⁷ The shift in opinion between the early and the later Scottish Reformation has much to do with the reformers themselves and the confessions they professed. Early evangelicals and Lutherans were less condemning of the theatre than their later Reformed brethren. Of those writing reformist drama, Friar Kyllour and James Wedderburn were Lutherans, and although his religious convictions resist categorization, David Lindsay was at the very least an evangelical, but clearly not a Calvinist. These designations account for the fact that the five known examples of Scottish reformist drama occurred before 1560: Friar Kyllour's *Historye of Christis Passioun* (1535), James Wedderburn's *Beheading of John the Baptist* and *Historie of Dyonisius the Tyranne* (1539-40), the 'Epiphany Interlude' (1540) attributed to Lindsay and Lindsay's *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* (1552-4). Indeed, it is also possible that the 1525 and 1535 legislation against heretical books and the 1552 act against printers may have prompted these reformers to turn from print to the stage.¹⁸

The Plays of Kyllour and Wedderburn

What little is known of Kyllour's play can be gleaned from Knox's *History*. According to Knox, the Dominican friar was responsible for a play on *The Historye of Christis Passioun*, performed in Stirling on Good Friday 1535, with James V in attendance. It is likely that the play was staged on the town playfield as it was implied that the performance was open to the public. According to Knox, Kyllour's play drew parallels between the religious teachers who condemned Christ to death and 'the bishops and men called Religious' of his own day.¹⁹ Knox further claimed that 'this plain speaking so inflamed the hearts of all that bore the beast's mark that they ceased not, till that the said Friar Kyllour [and others] were cruelly murdered in one fire'.²⁰ It must be remembered that Knox recorded this account over thirty years after the fact and was most certainly not an eye-witness. While his description of the audience's response must therefore be approached with caution, other aspects of the performance itself can still be viewed as an example of Reformation packaged as a conventional miracle

¹⁷ Carpenter, 'Early Scottish Drama', 202; Mill, *Mediaeval Plays*, 88.

¹⁸ According to Edington, this was almost certainly the case for Lindsay. Edington, *Court and Culture*, 178.

¹⁹ Knox, *History*, i, 26.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

play.²¹ Furthermore, it was not uncommon for reformist plays to compare sixteenth-century clergy negatively to the Jewish leaders in the New Testament. The theme could be found in Continental works, most notably in Dutch Protestant dramas of the 1530s.²² Nevertheless, Kyllour was tried in the presence of the king in February 1539 and executed with five others in Edinburgh. The exact nature of the charges against him is unknown, although it is possible that Kyllour's authorship of this reformist play was at least one cause for his execution. However, it is likely that he was also found guilty of preaching heretical sermons.

Friar Kyllour was not the only reformer to try his hand at polemical theatre. James Wedderburn, better known along with his brother John as a possible compiler of the Lutheran song collection *The Gude and Godlie Ballatis*, composed and staged two plays – *The Beheading of John the Baptist* and *The Historie of Dyonisius the Tyranne* – in Dundee in the late 1530s.²³ A native of the burgh, Wedderburn was educated at St Andrews by Gavin Logie, an early advocate of reformist doctrines.²⁴ After St Andrews, Wedderburn was briefly engaged in the family mercantile business abroad, where he had opportunities to encounter Continental Lutheranism. His inclinations towards reform were further bolstered upon his return to Dundee when he continued his studies under James Hewat, a Dominican with reformist views. Wedderburn's plays were performed in the burgh in 1539/40.²⁵ Neither play text survives, although Calderwood's accounts indicate that both attacked the Roman Catholic Church and were staged on the playfield located just outside the West Port.

The subjects of John the Baptist and Dyonisius lent themselves to reformist propaganda. Both could easily be employed to illustrate the plight of reformers oppressed by the authorities.²⁶ The story of John the Baptist, in particular, resonated with the reformers.²⁷ Described in Scripture as 'the voyce of a cryer i ye wildernes' proclaiming 'prepare ye the waye of ye Lord', John preached a controversial message,

²¹ Mill, *Mediaeval Plays*, 88.

²² Waite, *Reformers on Stage*, 132.

²³ *The Gude and Godlie Ballatis* will be discussed further in Chapter Six: Pedagogy.

²⁴ R.G. Cant, *The University of St Andrews: A Short History* (Edinburgh, 1946), 41.

²⁵ D. Calderwood, *The history of the Kirk of Scotland*, ed. T. Thomson and D. Laing, (1842–9), i, 142.

²⁶ Carpenter, 'Early Scottish Drama', 204.

²⁷ Waite, *Reformers on Stage*, 131.

calling the religious and temporal authorities of his day to reform.²⁸ When confronted by the Jewish religious authorities – the Pharisees and the Sadducees, he rebuked them, saying

O generacyon of vipers, who hath taught you to fle from the vengeaunce to come? Brynge forth therefore the frutes ye be long[sic] to repe[n]taunce. And be not of soch mynde that ye wolde saye in youre selues: we haue Abraham to oure father. For I saye vn to you, ye God is able to bring to passe, ye of these stones ther shall ryse vp chyldre[n] vnto Abraham. Euen now is the axe also put vn to the rote of the trees: so that euery tree which bryngeth not forth good frute, is hewen downe, and cast into the fyre.²⁹

According to the Gospel of Matthew, the religious leaders of John's day relied upon their traditions and religious heritage. John warned them that their time was coming to an end and that a violent fate awaited those who did not repent. Although this challenge was met with hostility by the authorities, it found resonance among the laity. John had a large following, and was so highly regarded by the people that King Herod initially spared John from execution for fear of causing a riot.³⁰ However, John was eventually beheaded on the whim of a girl and her mother.³¹ Not surprisingly, John the Baptist was a favourite of religious reformers throughout Europe. Many identified with him, viewing him as a prototype for the Protestant preacher. Applying John the Baptist's situation to their own experience, they read his criticisms of the Jewish priesthood as an attack on the Roman Catholic clergy.³²

There would have been plenty of allusions for Wedderburn to exploit for his play. Although John's status as a prophet preaching a message that was at once infuriating to the authorities and supported by the laity may not have perfectly mirrored the struggle of reforming preachers – as the Scottish laity was not so easily enthralled – it still captured the hopes and expectations of the reformers. The Jewish religious leaders' insistence on adhering to tradition would have found resonance with those critical of what they saw as the Catholic Church's dependence on tradition to uphold their doctrine and practice. Even the circumstances of John's death would have proved

²⁸ This and all subsequent biblical references are taken from *The Byble in Englyshe* (Paris, François Regnault; London, Richard Grafton & Edward Whitchurch, 1539). Mark 1:3.

²⁹ Matthew 3:7-10.

³⁰ Matthew 14:5.

³¹ Matthew 14:6-11.

³² King, *English Reformation Literature*, 298.

tempting material for satire. According to Matthew, Herod was so overcome with desire for his brother's wife, Herodias, that he took her for his mistress. When John the Baptist condemned this behavior, Herod had him arrested. Later, at Herod's birthday celebrations, the dancing of Herodias's daughter so pleased the king that he promised to give her whatever she wanted. Prompted by her mother, she requested John's head, which was brought to her on a platter that same evening.³³ Wedderburn could have drawn effective parallels between the adulterous and cunning Herodias (and her conspiring daughter) and the Roman clergy that he believed to be immoral and crafty.

Nearly two years after Wedderburn's *John the Baptist* entertained an audience in Dundee, George Buchanan wrote and produced his own interpretation of the biblical drama. After fleeing Scotland in 1539, Buchanan spent roughly four years (1539-1543) teaching at the collège de Guyenne in Bordeaux. While there he composed four Latin plays for use in the schoolroom, including *Baptistes* in 1542.³⁴ However, the circumstances of Buchanan's production differed greatly from that of Wedderburn's play. Buchanan's audience was composed of French schoolboys and his *Baptistes* was written in Latin to be used as an educational exercise. Despite these differences in purpose and audience, in the absence of Wedderburn's text, Buchanan's play can offer some insight into what Wedderburn's Dundonian production may have contained.

In addition to the Scriptural narrative of the Baptist's life, Buchanan and Wedderburn may have addressed other common themes. For example, we know that both plays were fiercely anti-clerical. Calderwood claimed that Wedderburn's play 'carped roughlie the abuses and corruptions of the Papists'.³⁵ Buchanan's John the Baptist denounces the religious leaders of his day as 'silent watchdogs which do not bark, which do not drive off the wolves which howl around [their] sheepfolds'. He claims that they themselves were the wolves: 'You devour the flock; their wool clothes you, their milk slakes your thirst, their flesh relieves your hunger. You feed not the

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ The other three – *Medea*, *Jephthes*, and *Alcestis* – were written between 1542 and 1543. P. Sharratt and P.G. Walsh, 'Introduction' in *George Buchanan: Tragedies*, (trans and eds) P. Sharratt and P.G. Walsh (Edinburgh, 1983), 1-4.

³⁵ Calderwood, *History*, i. 142.

flock but yourselves'.³⁶ John Gau made a similar accusation in his 1533 translation *The Rycht Vay to the Kingdome of Heuuen*.³⁷

Throughout his play Buchanan, portrayed the religious leaders as greedy, vengeful and unscrupulous. Buchanan's production also highlighted John the Baptist's warning to the religious leaders. Although about to die by the 'crafty calumnies of jealous people', John declares that he is not afraid of death, stating his conviction that 'God has willed death be a punishment for the wicked and a harbour for the good – the end of a long journey'.³⁸ The play implied that John's holy life would lead to his reward in 'the passage to a life without death', and that the wicked – those who opposed the prophet – would receive their punishment. He counseled the religious authorities to 'abandon the vices of a life basely lived, and to cast out the images of a foreign cult' before it was too late.³⁹ Wedderburn's *John the Baptist* may very well have issued a comparable admonishment.

At first glance Wedderburn's other play, *The Historie of Dyonisius the Tyranne*, might seem a less obvious choice for use as reformist propaganda. But upon closer inspection, the account of Dionysius I of Syracuse (d.367 B.C.) would have provided the reformer with a number of opportunities to make anti-clerical, even antipapal, allusions. Dionysius had been used by the ancients as an example of the worst kind of despot. Characterised as corrupt, war-mongering and merciless, he was known to sell the entire populations of defeated enemy cities into slavery. His enemies were not the only ones to feel his wrath. During tense periods of his reign, Dionysius executed a number of his friends on false charges and exiled many others. In the end, it is believed that Dionysius was murdered by his own son, seeking retribution for past cruelty.⁴⁰

While all of these actions would clearly depict Dionysius as a tyrant, there were other behaviours which would have found particular resonance with sixteenth-century Scottish reformers. Dionysius was known for immense greed – inflicting high taxes and

³⁶ George Buchanan, *Baptistes* in *George Buchanan: Tragedies*, eds. Sharratt and Walsh, 150.

³⁷ Christiern Pedersen, *The Richt Vay to the Kingdome of Heuue*, John Gau (trans.) (Malmø, J. Hoochstraten, 1533), Pi^v, USTC 302642.

³⁸ Buchanan, *Baptistes*, 157.

³⁹ Buchanan, *Baptistes*, 163.

⁴⁰ D.M. Lewis, 'Sicily, 413-368 B.C.' in *The Cambridge Ancient History*, eds D.M. Lewis, J. Boardman, S. Hornblower and M. Ostwald (Cambridge, 1994), vi, 132-155.

confiscating the goods of his subjects and his enemies.⁴¹ At this time, reformists in Scotland were leveling similar accusations against the Catholic Church. Discontent was growing in regards to the Church's abuse of the teind (tithe) and the taxes levied on necessary Church services. Around the time Wedderburn's plays were staged, the 'Epiphany Interlude' performed for James V accused the clergy of 'the oppression of the poor by the taking of the corse presainte beistes and of the herying of poor men by concistorye lawe and of many other abussions'.⁴² Similar allegations are made throughout the works of David Lindsay. One such example can be found in his play, *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* (1552). Between acts, the character of the Pauper relates a litany of fees exacted from him by his local vicar. When a family member died, the Pauper claimed, the vicar came to collect some of his goods to pay for funeral services. This left the Pauper more destitute than before, precipitating the death of another family member, which, in turn, caused the vicar to return for more payment, resulting in yet another death and another visit from the vicar. In the end, the Pauper blamed the Church for turning him and his children into beggars.⁴³

Dionysius's personal life may also have been compatible with reformist views of Church personnel. Although Dionysius was entitled to marry, he had not one but two wives, and used them both ill. In keeping with anti-clerical opinion, this could have served to parallel the perceived sexual rapacity of the clergy.⁴⁴ Some among the laity felt that they were expected to pay more and more for a clergy that worked less, who spent more of their time whoring with their concubines and other men's wives than in pious enterprise. Wedderburn's Dundonian audience would have been familiar with the story of Alexander Furrou who, in 1528, returned to Scotland after seven years in an English prison, only to find his wife having an affair with a priest, sir John Dingwall. To add further insult, Dingwall also had been spending Furrou's money. When Furrou voiced his displeasure and began speaking ill of the priesthood, he was accused of heresy. Brought before the religious authorities in St Andrews, he declared that the priests knew more about defiling the sacraments, matrimony in particular, than they did

⁴¹ Lewis, 'Sicily', 141.

⁴² Bellenden, 'Nootes of the interluyde', 5.

⁴³ Lindsay, *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*, ed. R. Lyall, lns 1978-2011. All subsequent references to *The Thrie Estaitis* will be taken from this edition. When possible citations will be made in the text.

⁴⁴ Lewis, 'Sicily', 151.

about conducting the Mass.⁴⁵ The whole trial descended into a farce.⁴⁶ Furrou began naming priests and ‘the men’s wives with whom they had meddled’. He entreated the clergy to marry in order that he ‘and others, whose wives [the priests] have abused, may be revenged upon’ them. Rising to the taunt, Bishop Gavin Dunbar of Aberdeen stated that Furrou ‘shalt not know’ his wife, to which Furrou replied that the bishop’s mistress was far too old. To the delight of the assembled crowd, he declared his intention to drink with the bishop’s daughter before he left town.⁴⁷ Perhaps fearing the response of the crowd, the authorities let Furrou go free.

Two years after the Furrou episode, and only a few years before Wedderburn’s productions, Lindsay leveled a similar charge of clerical immorality in his poem *The Testament of the Papyngo*, claiming that ‘Dame Sensuall’ had such a hold on the clergy that their ‘bastards ourthort the cuntre’.⁴⁸ In 1540 the ‘Epiphany Interlude’ denounced ‘busshopes, Prelletes, Abbottes’ for ‘reving menes wives and doughters’.⁴⁹ Later, John Knox would make sure to mention that Cardinal Beaton had spent the night before his murder in the company of his mistress, Marion Ogilvy.⁵⁰ Although Lindsay’s and Knox’s accusations were no doubt exaggerated, the Provincial Councils of the Scottish Catholic Church held in 1549, 1552, 1556 and 1558 addressed similar concerns, implying that there was some veracity to the reformers’ claims.

There was one final aspect that Wedderburn may have exploited in making his parallels between Dionysius and the Catholic Church: Dionysius was nepotistic to the extreme. He even went so far as to marry his brothers to his daughters, in order to keep certain positions within the family.⁵¹ Throughout Europe, reformers were challenging the practice of Church officials appointing unqualified men and underage boys to important positions as favours to friends and relations. In Scotland there was the added complication that high-ranking clergymen were marrying their illegitimate children into the Scottish nobility, forming alliances and dynasties. In the ‘Epiphany Interlude’ the

⁴⁵ Knox, *History*, i, 18.

⁴⁶ J. McGavin, *Theatricality and Narrative in Medieval and Early Modern Scotland* (Aldershot, 2007), 22-25.

⁴⁷ Knox, *History*, i, 19.

⁴⁸ Lindsay, ‘The Testament of the Papyngo’ in *The Works of Sir David Lindsay, Vol. I*, ed. D. Hamer, lns 1054-1057.

⁴⁹ Bellenden, ‘Nootes of the interluyde’, 5.

⁵⁰ Knox, *History*, i, 76.

⁵¹ Lewis, ‘Sicily’, 152.

Poor Man lamented how through this practice, ‘the blode of the Realme was degenerate’.⁵² To this was added concern over the quantity of temporal lands handed over to the Spiritual Estate through these unions.⁵³ Familial connections also proved contentious when it came to ecclesiastical appointments, with consanguinity sometimes, although not always, overriding competence. As Gordon Donaldson observed, “the kin” has always been a potent element in Scottish life, and the richer the benefice the stronger was the desire to keep it in the family’.⁵⁴ The Beatons would have been a prime example, as Cardinal David Beaton succeeded his uncle James as Archbishop of St Andrews in 1539. Consequently, both nepotism and inappropriate marriages were great cause for concern among Scottish reformers.

Wedderburn probably intended Dionysius to be representative of the Pope, or perhaps leaders of the Church in Scotland like Cardinal Archbishop David Beaton. In the months before the staging of Wedderburn’s plays, Beaton had been responsible for the execution of at least six heretics. If Wedderburn’s Dionysius was indeed a characterisation of Cardinal Beaton, the scene in which Dionysius is murdered by his son would have served as a particularly poignant cautionary tale aimed at the Church: a reminder that children have been known to overthrow a cruel parent. It must be remembered that the reformers themselves would have been raised in the Catholic Church and were, in that respect, children of a Church that some considered to be tyrannical. Beaton himself was murdered by a small group of Protestant sympathisers in May 1546. Whether any Dundonians drew parallels between the manner of Beaton’s death and Wedderburn’s theatrical warning six years earlier remains unknown.

Wedderburn’s *Dyonisius* would have been a comedy, while *John the Baptist* was a tragedy. This is a very important delineation and is indicative of the over-all themes and possible intents of the two pieces. *Dyonisius* would be classed as a comedy because the main character, while a villain, receives his comeuppance in the end. *John the Baptist* was a tragedy because of the hero’s death. Both designations were clear statements of Wedderburn’s theological position. As for the actual productions, nothing is known apart from the fact that they were performed and that both attacked the

⁵² ‘Nootes of the interluyde’, 5.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ Donaldson, *Scottish Reformation*, 17.

Catholic Church. Even less is known of their reception. What we do know is that Wedderburn was accused, before James V, of conjuring a ghost and left for France in 1540. The charge of conjuring is usually given as his reason for flight. But it is no coincidence that this episode occurs immediately after the plays were performed, so it is possible that the plays were at least partially to blame. According to Calderwood, Wedderburn's last words to his son were 'We have beene acting our part in the theater: you are to succeed; see that you act your part faithfullie!'⁵⁵ From a man more often associated with a musical collection, these final words highlight the importance of drama in the mind of at least one Scottish reformer.

Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis

The next Scottish playwright to attempt reformist drama lived and worked in circumstances very different than those of Kyllour and Wedderburn. While they were relative unknowns who were executed or exiled, David Lindsay was a respected member of the royal court and died at home of natural causes. As we have already seen, Lindsay's privileged status protected him. Perhaps another difference between the fates of the three playwrights hinges on the fact that Kyllour and Wedderburn were more outspoken concerning their theological beliefs: both were Lutheran. Lindsay was more ambiguous. As has been demonstrated, this ambiguity did not mean that Lindsay was any less scurrilous in his criticisms of the Church and its personnel. In his capacity as court entertainer, he is believed to have written the 'Epiphany Interlude of 1540', as it bears a resemblance to his most famous work, the play *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*.⁵⁶

However, the *Thrie Estaitis* also differed from the 'Interlude' in a number of ways, but most strikingly in its audience. The interlude was performed at Linlithgow before the king and his court, while the *Thrie Estaitis* was first performed for the townspeople of Cupar, Fife. Cupar was Lindsay's hometown and there the spectators would not have been nobles, but neighbours. The production was preceded by a

⁵⁵ Calderwood, *History*, i, 142.

⁵⁶ Edington, *Court and Culture*, 50. Whether this 'Interlude' was a prototype for *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* or a completely separate work by Lindsay is discussed by J.S. Kantrowitz in *Dramatic Allegory: Lindsay's Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* (Lincoln, 1975), 11-22. G.Walker presents a comparative analysis of the two works in chapter 4 of his *The Politics of Performance*, 117-162.

‘Proclamation’ acted out in the town center, which made it known that the performance was open to all. The character of ‘Nuntius’ (Latin for ‘messenger’) announced that the play was to be performed on Castle Hill on 7 June 1552. He cautioned the townspeople to rise early that day because they would be starting at seven. More importantly, he informed them to bring their own beer.⁵⁷

The *Thrie Estaitis* begins as the young monarch, Rex Humanitas, returns to his kingdom after a prolonged sojourn abroad. In his absence the welfare of the kingdom has been neglected and Gude Counsall and the other Virtues (chiefly Veritie and Chastitie) were banished from the realm. For want of moral guidance, the young king subsequently falls under the influence of his courtiers Wantonnes, Placebo and Solace. They, in turn, encourage him to accept the advice of Falset, Dissait and Flatterie, who are disguised as monks and friars. Aided by this unscrupulous cohort, Rex soon succumbs to the temptations of Dame Sensualitie. However, Divyne Correctioun arrives in time to save the king and the kingdom from certain ruin at the hands of the Vices. Correctioun reveals the corruptions of the Thrie Estaitis (Spiritualitie, Temporalitie, and the Merchands), who were ultimately responsible for the running of the country in the king’s absence. He claims that while they should have been protecting the kingdom from the Vices, they instead embraced them, allowing the kingdom to be over-run with debauchery and to fall into decay. Johne the Common-weill is brought in to testify to the ‘true’ condition of the kingdom. Upon hearing his description of the plight of the people – brought on by the decadence and corruption of the Estaitis, Rex Humanitas, with the aid of Divyne Correctioun, executes most of the Vices (Flatterie manages to escape), banishes the immoral prelates from the kingdom, and reforms the Church and society.

The titular Three Estates were the three components of the Scottish Parliament: the Spiritual, the Temporal, and the Burgesses. The Spiritual Estate was comprised of the prelates of the Church – cardinals, bishops, abbots and priors, while the Temporal Estate consisted of the lairds, nobility and other land holders. The Burgesses were merchants and burgh commissioners. While all three of the estates came under fire in Lindsay’s work, it was the Spiritual that bore the brunt of the attack, as, according to Correctioun, the ecclesiastical authorities were supposed to be an example of virtue and

⁵⁷ Lindsay, ‘Proclamatioun maid in Cowpar of Fyffe’ in Lindsay, *Thrie Estaitis*, ed. Lyall, lns 11-24.

to provide a moral compass for the others. One of Lindsay's greatest claims was that the clergy were exploiting the populace in the name of religion: exacting enormous taxes from people on Church lands, charging large fees for services necessarily provided by the Church and subsequently filling Church coffers while the people starved physically and spiritually (lms 1934-2300). He would criticize and condemn these perceived abuses throughout the play. At the time of the Cupar performances, the region of Fife was becoming increasingly supportive of church reform and evangelical views.⁵⁸ Given the burgh's proximity to St Andrews, the residents could not have been unaware of the Reformation debate. The movement was gaining popularity and it is possible that many in Lindsay's audience were already receptive to the reformist message.

The timing of Lindsay's reformist production is significant, coming on the heels of the Provincial Council held in Edinburgh earlier that year. The council was one of four instituted by Archbishop John Hamilton to address the reform of the Scottish Church from within, concentrating on discipline and practice – but not doctrine.⁵⁹ An earlier council in 1549 had focused on the Church's public image, requiring clergy to keep their persons neat, their activities professional, and their lifestyles sober and chaste. Such requirements were intended to emphasise the sacerdotal nature of the priesthood as well as 'deflect mockery of the clergy'.⁶⁰ Among other issues, the council of 1552 focused on enforcing the reforms of 1549 as well as making provisions for the pastoral care of the laity. This included the institution of regular preaching and the creation of a vernacular catechism (although its use was to be confined to the clergy).⁶¹ Lindsay's audience would have been aware of these councils, although whether Lindsay staged his play specifically in response to them remains unknown. What is apparent is that the *Thrie Estaitis* dramatised a number of concerns growing among the laity regarding the personnel and practice of the Church and that these issues were also of increasing concern to the Scottish Church authorities. At the time of the Cupar

⁵⁸ Dawson, *Scotland Re-formed*, p. 145.

⁵⁹ For a more detailed analysis of the Provincial Councils, see A. Ryrie, 'Reform without Frontiers in the Last Years of Catholic Scotland', *English Historical Review*, 119:480 (February 2004), 27-56.

⁶⁰ Ryrie, 'Reform without Frontiers', 31-32.

⁶¹ These provisions will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Five.

performance, the question was whether Hamilton's reforms were enough to strengthen the Church to combat the spread of heresy successfully.⁶²

Bringing It Home: Cupar 1552

Details of the play's text and its deeper artistic, theological, and social meanings have been examined by many scholars over the years.⁶³ The topics range from the more obvious – Lady Vertie's brandishing of a vernacular New Testament and the Spiritual Estate's entrance on the stage 'gangand backward, led be thair vices' – to the more technical – the difference between the Vices' use of 'we three' and the Virtues' use of 'us three' – to deeply philosophical examinations of Foly's closing sermon. However, this study is most interested in how Lindsay utilised the theatrical medium to present his reformist message to the specific audience of his neighbours.

While hardly lacking in clever word-play and subtext, the overall effect of the *Thrie Estaitis* is that of a simple presentation for simple people. Lindsay's characters speak in regular, sometimes coarse, Scots vernacular. Noticeably missing are the classical allusions that ornamented his court poetry. Instead, he makes references to local places like Dysart Moor and Struthers Castle. Lindsay also made use of the familiar dramatic format of the morality play. The townspeople of Cupar were used to similar plays in public spaces, having attended and participated in medieval religious plays. Consequently, the personifications of Divyne Correctioun, Lady Chastitie, Lady Veritie, Rex Humanitas, Dissait, Danger, and Dame Sensualitie found in the *Thrie Estaitis* would have been familiar. Other *dramatis personae* would have been recognizable as members of the established social order. These include the Merchand, the Persoun [Parson], the Pauper, the Abbot, and – particularly for a community so close to the University of St Andrews – the Doctour of Divinity. But more importantly, Lindsay included caricatures of local people in order to connect immediately with the audience of his own community. The Sowtar and Taylour who invite Lady Chastitie to sit with them and the wives that drive her away may have had real-life counterparts

⁶² Ryrie, 'Reform without Frontiers', 31.

⁶³ Kantrowitz, *Dramatic Allegory*; A.J. Piesse, 'Allegory and Reformation poetics in David Lindsay's *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* (1552-4)' in *Literature and the Scottish Reformation*, eds Gribben and Mullan, 81-94; Edington, *Court and Culture*; Walker, 'Sir David Lindsay's *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*', 5-17.

watching (and identifiable) in the crowd (lns 1288-1395). References are also made to the Provost, the bailies, and Dame Flesher (lns 1943, 2192).

There are even occasions within the dialogue when characters name specific residents of the burgh. During the play's 'Interlude', young Wilkin tells the Pardoner that he will be sure to find a warm welcome and protection with Christiane Anderson (lns 2212-2219). As Dissait is led to the gallows, he bids farewell to the Jamesones, Andersones and Patersones, as well as merchants Lucklaw, Welandis, Carruders and Dowglace, implicating them in his escapades. He claims special regard for Thomas Williamson:

Above them all Thome Williamsone,
My absence ye will rew.
Thome Williamson, it is your pairt
To pray for me with all your hairt,
And think upon my warks:
How I leirit yow ane gude lessoun,
For to begyle in Edinburgh toun
The Bischop and his clarks! (lns 4094-4107)

Falset, also being led to the gallows, names Andro Fortoun, Tailyeour Baberage, Jamie Ralfe, Willie Cadyeoch, and Geordie Selly (lns 4154-4185). Most of the names referenced by Dissait and Falset were common surnames in Cupar or appear in the burgh records.⁶⁴ David and Alexander Jamieson were commissioners for Cupar at the Convention of Royal Burghs. Thomas Williamson was a burgess and served as Baillie in 1549. The Fortunes were another burgess family – Andrew (Andro) may have been Lindsay's tailor – and a John Banerache (Baberage) is listed as a servant in Cupar in 1549.⁶⁵

Lindsay's characters also make reference to non-residents who would have been known in Cupar. For example, the character of Thift (Thief) comes looking for the Earl of Rothes's horse. Both man and horse would have been known in the community. Thift implies that the horse's qualities – 'richt starck [...] ans swift as winde' – were so celebrated throughout the region that he came especially to steal it (lns 3250-3254). George Leslie, Earl of Rothes, was probably in the audience and would have been

⁶⁴ D. Dobson (ed.), *The People of Cupar, 1600-1799* (Dundee, 2009).

⁶⁵ *Thrie Estaitis*, ed. Lyall, 206.

favourable to the reformist message – his brother and son were involved in the death of Cardinal Beaton and the siege of St Andrews Castle.⁶⁶

The naming of and allusions to familiar people would have served two very valuable persuasive purposes. Firstly, they could draw the audience into the action and moment of the play. By presenting characters and dialogue with which they could immediately identify, Lindsay invited his audience to engage with the play, letting them in on the jokes, making them more than casual observers. Secondly, it provided added incentive to pay close attention, as members of the audience would be waiting to see if they or their associates might be mentioned, called out, or represented on stage. It is impossible to know whether the townspeople so identified responded favourably or angrily to their inclusion in Lindsay's work, but it is safe to say that they would not soon forget it.

The *Thrie Estaitis* also offered physical engagement, further aiding in the retention of the message. As there were no professional theatre troupes in Scotland at this time, the *Thrie Estaitis* would have been performed by locals, initiating their immediate involvement and interaction with the reformist ideas conveyed in the script. Edington observes that there are no references in the burgh records to the collaboration of the civic authorities. Therefore, she concludes Lindsay must have staged the play with 'a very informal group of players who provided their own props and equipment'. It is highly likely that Lindsay himself played Diligence.⁶⁷ The relatively large cast of forty-four characters would have required at least twenty-two players.⁶⁸ Cupar was a rural market town with a population of under 2000 inhabitants.⁶⁹ It is, therefore, probable that members of the audience would have known many of the players.

This familiarity would have fostered further interaction with the performance. Early modern play-goers were not a silent audience. They would have yelled at and interacted with the players – perhaps even more so during the Cupar performance of the *Thrie Estaitis*, with so many familiar faces on stage. The interjections would not have been one-way as the actors were just as likely to respond or even single-out an audience member for notice. Towards the end of the play, Foly propositions a nameless young

⁶⁶ A. Thomas, 'Leslie, George, fourth earl of Rothes (d. 1558)', *ODNB*.

⁶⁷ Edington, *Court and Culture*, 65, 29.

⁶⁸ Piesse, 'Allegory and Reformation', 85.

⁶⁹ P. Martin, *Cupar: The History of a Small Scottish Town* (Edinburgh, 2006), 30.

woman in the audience (lns 4440-4460). His rather descriptive proposal is only brought to an end when Diligence recovers from his shock at Foly's impudence.

The interaction between audience and actors would have been particularly felt when characters entered and exited through the audience. Johne the Common-weill has to force his way through the crowd in order to make his entrance, crying 'Out of my gait! For Gods saik, let me ga!', probably throwing elbows at bystanders in the process (ln. 2424). Johne's debut as a member of the audience served further to support his role as representative of the Commonweal. Other, less savory characters also make their entrances from among the assembled viewers. The Pauper begins the Interlude by making his way to the playfield, begging for alms from the audience. His initial dialogue with Diligence was intended to sound as though it was not part of the play, but that an actual pauper was taking advantage of the large crowd and the break between acts to make a little money (lns 1934-1965). Shortly after Pauper's arrival on the stage a Pardoner enters hawking his false relics. He, too, enters through the crowd, also appearing to take advantage of the intermission. The thief, Common Thift, also makes his entrance through the audience, causing mischief along the way. His first lines – 'Ga by the gait, man, let me gang!' – imply that he is apprehended in the process of picking someone's pocket and needs to be let loose (ln. 3214). As Dissait attempts to escape with stolen goods, the stage directions required him to 'rin away with the box through the water' (between lns 1579-1580). At the Cupar performance, the stream at the foot of Castle Hill was used to form a natural boundary between the 'stage' and the audience. Dissait is directed to cross through the stream, implying escape through the crowd. If so, it would have been necessary to push people out of his way to make his exit. The stream may also have supplied other opportunities audience interaction. For example, at one point, the Pardoner's relics are thrown into the water. Depending on the size and number of these props, those standing towards the front of the audience probably ended up a little wet.

The audience members were part of the play. They were not unacknowledged spectators, separated by an impenetrable boundary between stage and audience. Lindsay's characters often traversed between the two, physically and verbally interacting with the audience. It is impossible to know how many, if any, of the townspeople of Cupar actually understood or adopted the *Thrie Estaitis*'s reformist

message. Still, if done well, the use of local names and places, the employing of local people as actors, including caricatures of residents, and engaging with the audience would have made the Cupar performance of the *Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis* a very effective piece of theatre.

Edinburgh, 1554

Two years later, on 12 August 1554, an encore presentation of the *Thrie Estaitis* was staged in Edinburgh. This second performance is testimony that the Cupar production was at least successful as a theatrical – if not reformist – event. However, the audience for this performance differed from the earlier production. This time the play was staged in the presence of the queen regent, Mary of Guise, and ‘ane greit part of the Nobilitie, with ane exeding greit nowmer of pepil’.⁷⁰ The themes and probably some of the characters would have been familiar to the regent and various of the ruling elite who had been present for the ‘Epiphany Interlude’ in 1540. In April of 1554, just months before the Edinburgh staging of the *Thrie Estaitis*, Guise had officially been appointed regent, replacing Governor Arran. In light of this, Rex Humanitas and his long absence may have taken on new meaning: Mary, Queen of Scots was still resident in France and Mary of Guise was governing on her behalf, as the titular *Thrie Estaitis* were supposed to govern on behalf of Rex Humanitas. Furthermore, it must be remembered that Mary Tudor had become queen of England the previous year and had immediately embarked on a violent anti-Protestant campaign. As we have seen, Scottish reformers were concerned that Mary of Guise would adopt a similar policy and they may have seen the play as a warning to Guise of the perils of following the example of the errant *Estaitis* and the English queen.

For her part, Guise’s presence may have been intended as a gesture of goodwill, indicating her policy of religious toleration.⁷¹ As we have seen, she was permissive of evangelical and Protestant reformers within the kingdom in the early stages of her regency. While the *Thrie Estaitis*’s commentary on corruption and abuse is certainly vitriolic, Lindsay’s play never outright calls for a separation from Rome – a fact that may have protected those involved with the production. Still, there were some serious

⁷⁰ Lindsay, *The Warkis of Schir David Lyndesay* (Edinburgh, John Scott, 1568), Aii^v.

⁷¹ Whether she stayed for the entire performance is unknown.

issues that Lindsay felt needed addressing and some abuses that need fixing. Lindsay's 1554 production of the *Thrie Estaitis* was probably motivated by a feeling of urgency, much like that expressed in *The Monarche*.

The provost, bailies and council of the burgh were responsible for paying the workmen who set up and tore down the stage, as well as the minstrels who performed with the players.⁷² The Greenside playfield – where the performance was staged – had been established in 1456. It was reestablished in June 1554 when the council 'ordanis the thesaurar Robert Grahame to content and pay to the maister of wark of the makar of the playing place the sowme of xxiiij li. for compleiting thair of'. Workmen are again paid on 20 July 1554 and 17 August.⁷³ The workers were probably paid on 20 July to prepare the site for the production and on 17 August for the post-performance clean up. As the Edinburgh authorities were at least partially responsible for the production, it is possible that the queen regent was there as their guest. Although Guise was present, the Edinburgh production of the *Thrie Estaitis* was open to the public. While the intimate, local flavour of the original Cupar performance may have been displaced, many of the other audience-engaging devices – entering and exiting through the crowd, calling out to people in the audience, Foly's indecent proposal – would have been retained. It is also likely that Lindsay once again employed local people as cast members. Little else is known of the Edinburgh performance, although, at a time when religious tensions were rising, it is likely that the play was received by a very curious audience.

Conclusion

In their efforts to engage with audiences outside of the universities and the elite, reform-minded Scots tapped into the familiar tradition of religious drama. While the theatre would eventually be suppressed by the Reformed Scottish Kirk, evidence suggests that early evangelical and Lutheran reformers were more open to the potential persuasive power of drama than their later Calvinist brethren. Although only one complete vernacular play text survives and the other productions are only known by their titles and fragmentary contemporary references, it is still possible to piece together the ways in which drama was adapted to the Scottish reformist cause. Through biblical narrative,

⁷² *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh, 1528-1557*, ed. J.D. Marwick (Edinburgh, 1871), 195-197.

⁷³ *Records of Edinburgh*, 195-197.

allegory, tragedy and humour the theatrical works of Friar Kyllour, James Wedderburn, and David Lindsay attempted to engage the public with the message of religious change. Although their audiences were limited to Stirling, Dundee, Cupar and Edinburgh, attendance would have traversed social boundaries of birth, education and wealth.⁷⁴ For Wedderburn and Lindsay, in particular, there may have been a need to convey a message of reform to their home communities. Both saw drama as best means of doing so. The prospect of friends, family and acquaintances in the audience and on stage may have lent a spirit of urgency to the proceedings.

The use of the performance medium allowed Kyllour, Wedderburn and Lindsay to illustrate the theological debates of the day for a broader audience that might not necessarily have had the training or desire to understand doctrinal complexities. Their audiences needed a more tangible, palpable explanation of why religious change was believed to be necessary – whether from within the Catholic Church or as a new Protestant establishment. Furthermore, it is possible that these plays were written to entertain those who were already in agreement with the views of the writers, as well as to convince those who still needed persuading. The anti-clerical themes would have found a ready audience, one that might have been receptive to the reformers' ideas that *something* needed to change.

⁷⁴ Ehrstine, *Theatre, Culture*, 39.

CHAPTER FIVE: Preaching

Perhaps the most theologically important persuasive tool harnessed by the reformist cause in Scotland was the sermon. Most of the reformers believed the preaching of the Word of God to be far and away the most vital aspect of the reform movement and of their individual ministries. Sermons were also ideal propaganda tools. In a society still reliant upon oral transmission, sermons were the best means of mass communication, essential for conveying not only religious teachings and doctrine, but also news and other information.¹ It is not surprising, therefore, that religious reformers across Europe sought to exploit the medium for their purpose. Through preaching, whether as a part of an organised service or as an impromptu oration delivered in a field or at a market cross, the reformers were most immediately able to present their message to large and diverse audiences. Sermons, delivered publicly as well as in conventicles (small, private gatherings of reformist individuals), were essential to the progress of the reform movement. Although no complete Protestant sermons survive from the early period of Scottish reform, there is clear evidence of sermonising activity during this time. Patrick Hamilton was charged with preaching Lutheran doctrine, while George Wishart's reputation was forged as an itinerant preacher. John Knox was most at home in a pulpit, and when denied such a platform much of his later writing resembled sermons.

Preaching Before the Reformation

Vernacular preaching had been around for generations before the European Reformations.² Lent, in particular, was an important homiletic season within the mediaeval tradition, with sermons focused on penance. However, as Andrew Pettegree argues, preaching in pre-Reformation Europe was mostly an urban phenomenon. For the large majority of church-goers beyond the cities sermons were occasional, not regularly integrated into routine worship, and delivered in services separate from the Mass.³ Preaching was rare among the secular clergy, and bishops and diocesan priests were known to hand over their preaching duties to assistants and chaplains, many of whom were ill-equipped for the task. Consequently, dissatisfaction with the poor quality

¹ Pettegree, *Culture of Persuasion*, 5.

² B. Kreitzer, 'The Lutheran Sermon', in *Preachers and People*, ed. L. Taylor, 35.

³ Pettegree, *Culture of Persuasion*, 12-15.

of these sermons resulted in the founding of skilled preaching posts, funded by lay groups, civic leaders and local clergy. However, it was through the travelling ministries of mendicant friars that most people in late-mediaeval Europe experienced preaching. The Franciscans and Dominicans were renowned for their preachers and attracted large crowds when they arrived in a community.⁴ Their sermons were special occasions, often accompanied by music and dramatics. Indeed, there was a very real sense of the preaching itself as a performance.⁵

The preaching situation in Scotland was no different than that across Europe. Sermons were relatively uncommon, particularly in rural areas.⁶ Although their preaching was mostly confined to urban centres, the mendicant friars – the Franciscans and the Dominicans, in particular – were the most effective preachers.⁷ The local clergy delivered very few of their own sermons.⁸ Not all Scottish clergymen were authorised to preach, and those who wished to do so needed a license. When speaking in another community, visiting preachers were required to submit their license to the proper authorities before delivering their sermon(s). These credentials were issued following examination by the local diocesan.⁹ Early reformist and Protestant preachers were often accused of preaching without proper certification.

Most authorised sermons were given on feast days and were separate from the Mass. The preaching would be simple, focusing on popular devotions, the Virgin, miracle stories or saints lives.¹⁰ Many late-medieval ‘thematic’ sermons used a verse of Scripture as the basis for an address on a moral or doctrinal point. These sermons were usually based on the scholastic method, broken down into themes and sub-themes.¹¹ Parishioners might also receive basic instruction on the Pater Noster, the Ave Maria, and the Creed.¹²

⁴ Kreitzer, ‘The Lutheran Sermon’, 36

⁵ Pettegree, *Persuasion*, 17.

⁶ A.D.M. Barrell, *Medieval Scotland* (Cambridge, 2000), 251.

⁷ Ross, ‘Notes on the Religious Orders in pre-Reformation Scotland’, 202.

⁸ *Statutes of the Scottish Church: 1225-1559*, ed. & trans. D. Patrick (Edinburgh, 1907), 125.

⁹ A.J. Fletcher, *Preaching, Politics and Poetry in Late-Medieval England* (Dublin, 1998), 15.

¹⁰ D. McKay, ‘Parish Life in Scotland, 1500-1560’ in *Essays on the Scottish Reformation*, ed. D. McRoberts, 102; E.J. Carlson, ‘The Boring of the Ear: Shaping the Pastoral Vision of Preaching in England, 1540-1640’ in *Preachers and People*, ed. Taylor, 252.

¹¹ T. Worchester, ‘The Catholic Sermon’ in *Preachers and People*, ed. Taylor, 4, 8.

¹² McKay, ‘Parish Life’, 102; Carlson, ‘Boring of the Ear’, 252.

Listening to sermons was not necessarily an integral part of Scottish lay piety. According to the *Statutes of the Scottish Church*, pre-Reformation Scots did not attend sermons as willingly or as often as the Church wished.¹³ If they did attend a sermon, there was no guarantee that they would pay attention. Consequently, the Scottish Church Council of 1551-52 felt it necessary to institute punishments – going so far as threatening excommunication – not only for those who failed to attend preaching services, but for those ‘who jest or behave scurrilously in church at time of the sermon, or who presume at such times to make mockery or engage in profane bargainings in church porches or churchyards’.¹⁴ The quality and quantity of Scottish preaching, as we shall see, would become central concerns for the councils of the Scottish Catholic Church in the late 1540s and early 1550s. While many of the statutes issued by the councils were in reaction to reformist criticisms, the language of those concerned with preaching implied a long-standing problem well before the rise of Protestant dissent.¹⁵

Preaching and the Reformation

Reformers throughout Europe, as Pettegree states, recognised the need to separate from the medieval preaching tradition if they were going to use the medium effectively.¹⁶ They endeavoured to do this not only through the content of their sermons, but also through their homiletic theology. Historians have long emphasised that the reformers were, above all, people of the Word. The influence of the humanist doctrine of *ad fontes* had led to a more exegetical approach to late-mediaeval sermons, and the reformers embraced this trend, making biblical exegesis the central focus of their preaching as well as their doctrine.¹⁷

The Word was all. But their understanding of the Word referred to more than just the sacred texts of Scripture. The Word was Christ himself, the Incarnate Word of God – so named in the first chapter of the Gospel of St John.¹⁸ This understanding of

¹³ *Statutes*, 125. Similar instances of low attendance were reported also in England. Carlson, ‘Boring of the Ear’, 253.

¹⁴ *Statutes*, 139.

¹⁵ *Statutes*, 125.

¹⁶ Pettegree, *Culture of Persuasion*, 12.

¹⁷ Worcester, ‘Catholic Sermon’, 16.

¹⁸ Throughout Christian history, it has been common practice to refer to Christ as ‘The Word’. Among others, Luther, Calvin and the authors of the Helvetic Confession (1536) all refer to Christ as ‘The Word’. The following verses demonstrate the title’s prevalence in Scripture: ‘In the beginning was that worde,

the Word (both Incarnate and as Scripture) was essential to the reformers' insistence on the centrality of the Word in worship. *Sola scriptura* was more than just a call for the return to doctrine based on the Bible alone. It was accompanied by an intense desire for a return to what the reformers viewed as true Christo-centric faith – Christ the Word as revealed in the written Word of God at the centre of Christian worship and theology, unobstructed by centuries of human tradition. In a society where the written word (and therefore, the Word written) was still inaccessible to the majority of the population and where Protestants rejected the use of imagery in worship, speaking – and, therefore, preaching – the Word became paramount.

Adding further significance to the need to preach was the belief that the Word (both written and in Christ) was alive. The reformers interpreted 1 Peter 1:23-24 to mean that the Word existed outside of time, and was as relevant, effective and active in their present as in biblical times.¹⁹ Therefore, the Word was best communicated through the living medium of speech, as opposed to inanimate print. Luther took this even further, claiming that 'the gospel should really not be something written, but a spoken word which brought forth the Scriptures, as Christ and the apostles have done. This is why Christ himself did not write anything but only spoke. He called his teaching not Scripture but gospel, meaning good news or proclamation that is spread not by pen but by word of mouth.'²⁰ Christ himself set the precedent. Therefore, Scripture could not simply be read with the eyes, but needed to be spoken aloud to be most effective. The reformers took a literal reading of Romans 10:14-17:

Howe shalt they call on hym on who[m] they beleued not? How sall they belue on hym of who[m] they haue not herd? Howe shal they heare with out a preacher? And hows shall they preach except they be sent? As it is writte[n] howe beautiful are the fete of the[m] which brynge glad tydyngis of peace and brynge glad tydyngis of good thingis. But they haue not all obeyed to the gospell. For Esayas sayth Lorde who shal beleue oure sayynges? So then fayth co[m]meth by hearynge a[n]d hearynge

a[n]d that worde was with God: God was that worde. The same was in the beginnunge with God.' (John 1:1-2) 'And that worde was made flesshe and dwelt amo[n]g vs, and we sawe the glory of yt, as the glory of the only begoten sonne of the father, which worde was full of grace and verite.' (John 1:14). William Tyndale, *The New Testament* (Antwerp, Christoffel van Ruremund, 1534), USTC 410313, Tvi^f, Tvi^v.

¹⁹ 'For ye are borne anew, not of mortall seed, but of immortall seed, by the worde of God, which lyveth, a[n]d lasteth for euer. Because that all flesshe is grasse, a[n]d all the glory of ma[n] is as the flouer of grasse. The grasse withered, a[n]d the flouer faded awaye, but the worde of the Lorde endureth euer.' (1 Peter 1:23-24). Tyndale, *New Testament*, Oov^v.

²⁰ Martin Luther, 'A Brief Instruction on What to Look for and Expect in the Gospels' in *Luther's Works [LW]*, eds and trans J. Pelikan, H. T. Lehmann, et al, (St. Louis and Philadelphia, 1955), xxxv, 123.

co[m]meth by the worde off God.²¹

Preaching had the power to transform lives because faith, and therefore salvation, came through the direct physical act of hearing the Word.²² Arnold Hunt describes how in seventeenth-century England this insistence upon ‘ear-worship’, the act of hearing in worship, was set up as a contrast to the highly visual and image-based ‘eye-worship’ of the Catholic Church. This distinction was, as Hunt observed, ‘a crucial part of Protestant self-definition, and a key weapon in their polemical armoury’.²³ The same belief held true for Protestants a century earlier, as Luther claimed that the church was ‘not a pen-house but a mouth-house’ where the living Word was proclaimed.²⁴ Preaching became the heart of reformed worship and the primary means of presenting the reformist message. Consequently, many of the major reformers preached daily. For example, in Zurich, Heinrich Bullinger preached between 7000 and 7500 sermons over 44 years, sometimes six to eight times a week, while in Geneva, John Calvin preached around 286 sermons a year – almost 4000 in total.²⁵

Protestant Sermons in Scotland

However, the Protestant sermon presents a serious challenge for scholars of early sixteenth-century Scotland. No complete sermon transcripts survive from the pre-1560 period, a shortage largely due to the transient nature of Protestant preaching at the time. Most reformers delivered their sermons illegally, without the sanction of the Church.²⁶ Consequently, they were often on the move, avoiding the authorities. Denied admittance to many local churches, they often delivered their sermons from make-shift pulpits in fields, at market crosses or as exhortations in conventicals – small, private meetings of reformist individuals, gathered together for Bible reading, discussion and prayer.

²¹ Tyndale, *New Testament*, Bbviii^v.

²² This belief, held by Luther, Calvin and many other reformers, persisted so strongly into the seventeenth century that some English puritans believed that the deaf could not obtain true salvation because they could not hear the Word preached. A. Hunt, *The Art of Hearing: English Preachers and Their Audiences, 1590-1640* (Cambridge, 2010), 24.

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ E.T. Bachmann, ‘Introduction to Word and Sacrament’ in *LW*, xxxv, xi.

²⁵ J.T. Ford, ‘Preaching in the Reformed tradition’, in *Preachers and People*, ed. Taylor, 68.

²⁶ There were some moderates, like St Andrews Sub-prior John Winram, who preached a toned-down message of reform from sanctioned pulpits. For such an example, see notes on Winram’s sermon delivered at George Wishart’s heresy trial in Knox, *History*, ii, 233-234.

These assemblies differed from the so-called ‘privy kirks’ of the late-1550s.²⁷ The later Reformed Church in Scotland recognised three major indicators of a ‘true church’: the preaching of God’s Word, the administration of the true Sacraments (Baptism and the Eucharist) and the implementation of discipline. While they would gather for Bible study, occasional preaching and perhaps for the ministration of the Sacraments, the conventicles lacked the structure necessary for the administration of discipline. Although often gathered around a powerful noble patron and loosely affiliated through kinship networks, the conventicals also lacked the centralised leadership and formal structure necessary to qualify as fully-fledged underground churches.²⁸ Still, these informal Bible study groups provided essential support and protection for the early evangelical preachers and their travelling ministries. This would become particularly important in the 1550s, when most Protestant preaching occurred behind closed doors.

As a result of their forced itinerancy, Scottish preachers were unable to gather the groups of students and stenographers who facilitated the transcription of many of the Continental reformers’ sermons. Even if the sermons had been recorded, the likelihood of having them printed and distributed – as many of Luther’s and Calvin’s were – was extremely low. Scottish preachers did not have the luxury of being able to stay in one place long enough to compile and edit their sermons for publication. Furthermore, as previously discussed, Scotland’s capability for printing such material was limited. Consequently, the reformers were unable to print sermons and other pamphlets as readily as their Continental brethren.

Despite these limitations, sermons were clearly a significant feature of the Scottish reformist agenda, essential for proselytisation and education. The power and necessity of God’s ‘word trew preichit’ and the desire that clergy ‘prieche the Evangel’, ‘the veritie’ and ‘the Auld and New testament’ can be found in other evangelical and Protestant works from the period including *The Gude and Godlie Ballatis* and David

²⁷ It can be argued that ‘the privy kirk’ was a phenomenon specifically limited to Edinburgh. Michael Lynch, ‘From Privy Kirk to Burgh Kirk: An Alternative View of the Process of Protestantisation’, in *Church, Politics and Society*, ed. Norman Macdougall, 86-7, 93; A. Ryrie, ‘Congregations, Conventicles and the Nature of Early Scottish Protestantism’, *Past and Present*, 191 (May 2006), 49, 67-68.

²⁸ Ryrie, ‘Congregations, Conventicles’, 46, 65-66. For a more detailed examination of the differences between conventicles and ‘privy kirks’, see Ryrie’s ‘Congregations, Conventicles’.

Lindsay's *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*.²⁹ Many of the Scottish reformers, notably John Knox himself, believed preaching to be the most important aspect of their ministries. As a vital means of promoting their cause, the very itinerancy that made the preservation of Scottish sermons so difficult also made them an effective means of presenting the reformist message to as socially and geographically wide an audience as possible.

Even without complete texts, there is still clear evidence of Protestant preaching activity in the late 1520s to the 1550s. Preaching itineraries, attributed works and biographical information can provide insight into the homiletic ministries of three of the period's best known preachers – Patrick Hamilton, George Wishart and John Knox. The most basic information is provided through eye-witness accounts and heresy trials, although in a few cases, some details of individual sermons have been preserved. For example, through John Knox we know that in June 1545 George Wishart spoke on Psalm 107:20 ('He sent his word, and healed the[m]') to plague victims in Dundee.³⁰ Through these fragments it is possible to piece together an idea of the style and content of a number of sermons delivered by early Protestant reformers.

Understanding of their sermon styles is also aided by considering the influence of other reformers evident in their extant works. Patrick Hamilton's theology was greatly influenced by Luther; George Wishart found inspiration in the works of Zwingli and Bullinger; and John Knox was personally acquainted with Calvin. It has been widely recognised that these Continental reformers played significant roles in the theological development of their Scottish counterparts, and it is likely that they influenced their homiletics as well. In lieu of the sermon transcripts themselves, such a comparative approach reveals some clues regarding the use and effectiveness of Protestant preaching as a persuasive tool in the first decades of the Scottish reform movement.

Preaching and Exhortation

²⁹ John Wedderburn, *A Compendious Book of Godly and Spiritual Songs*, ed. A.F. Mitchell (Edinburgh, 1897), 55; Lindsay, *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*, lns 2753, 3187 and 3406.

³⁰ Knox, *History*, i, 63. *The Byble in Englyshe [The Great Bible]* (Paris, François Regnault; London, Richard Grafton & Edward Whitchurch, 1539), fol. xxi^r.

Early Scottish Protestants made an important distinction between preaching and another form of didactic discourse – the exhortation. The line between the two is often difficult to discern – particularly within private, small group settings. The case of Adam Wallace, a ‘simple poor’ layman executed for heresy in 1550, provides some insight into the distinction. At his trial in Edinburgh he was accused, among other things, of ‘preachyng, saying & teaching [...] blasphemies and abominable heresies’.³¹ When confronted with the specific charge of ‘preaching’, Wallace was emphatic that he ‘never judged himself worthy of so excellent a vocation, and therefore he never took upon him[self] to preach’. He did, however, admit to reading Scripture and giving ‘such exhortation as God pleaseth’ while ‘at the table’ or in some ‘other privy places’.³² In all instances Wallace claimed his audience was comprised only of people who ‘required and desired’ him to speak.³³ In this view, an exhortation was an informal discursive interpretation of a Biblical passage, presented for the benefit of a small group of co-religionists and often delivered *ad hoc*, around the family dinner table or in a conventicle.³⁴

Conversely, preaching was viewed as a formal, almost lecture-like oration, given by a man qualified for – or more specifically, divinely called to – that vocation. John Knox once cautioned the Protestant nobility to ‘suffer na man without tryell and examinatioun to tak upon him the office of a preacher [...] without just tryell of his lyfe, conversatioun, doctrine and conditoun’.³⁵ A preacher was a professional, usually with some form of religious training. Wallace’s insistence that he could only exhort demonstrates the exalted position that formal preaching (and its practitioners) occupied among early Scottish Protestants.

Formal preaching was usually a public event, although it could also occur in a conventicle environment if a qualified preacher was present.³⁶ Conversion was the primary aim of early public preaching, as preachers endeavoured to spur their audience to repentance, as well as to educate listeners in the basics of evangelical or Protestant

³¹ *TAMO* (1583), 1295-6.

³² Knox, *History*, i, 114.

³³ *TAMO* (1583), 1296.

³⁴ Ryrie, ‘Congregations, Conventicles’, 46, 53-4.

³⁵ John Knox, ‘Letter to Some of the Nobility in Scotland, 27 October 1557’ in *Works of John Knox [WK]*, ed. D. Laing (Edinburgh, 1903), iv, 271.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

faith.³⁷ In comparison, an exhorter could be (and usually was) a layman, viewed by his co-religionists to possess the ability, whether through education, divine revelation or godly lifestyle, to interpret Scripture.³⁸ As such, exhortations served to encourage perseverance, often in the face of persecution – real or perceived – and to further educate the already-converted.

Patrick Hamilton

Patrick Hamilton is best known not for his homiletics, but for being the first Protestant executed during the Scottish Reformation. This is unsurprising considering his career as an evangelical preacher was extremely short-lived, lasting only a few months. Yet, the tribunal that condemned him to death twice accused him of ‘preaching’. They first claimed that he ‘affirmed, taught, and preached’ Lutheran doctrine, and in the second instance they declared that he ‘hath presumed to preach wicked heresy’.³⁹ His contemporary, Alexander Alesius, also claimed that Hamilton spent some time preaching before his final arrest.⁴⁰ As none of these sermons survives, it is only possible to hypothesise about their content based on what little is known about Hamilton himself, his extant work and his influences.

The details of Hamilton’s life were outlined in Chapter One, and it is unnecessary to discuss them here beyond reiterating that he was strongly influenced by Luther’s theology and was forced to flee to Germany in 1527. While abroad he spent six months at the Lutheran university in Marburg, where he would have been exposed to both Lutheran theology and Lutheran preaching. On his return to Scotland, Hamilton spent a brief time preaching and teaching from his family home in Kincavil in Linlithgowshire.⁴¹ Hamilton’s brother James was the sheriff and he may have felt at liberty to speak publicly while under his brother’s protection. Whether he was allowed to speak in the local church is unclear, but he would at least have been able to deliver his message within his family home or the homes of sympathetic friends. Without

³⁷ A. Ryrie, *Being Protestant in Reformation Britain* (Oxford, 2013), 352-353.

³⁸ Ryrie, ‘Congregations, Conventicles’, 59.

³⁹ *TAMO* (1570), 1147.

⁴⁰ Lorimer, *First Preacher*, 149.

⁴¹ Kincavil was one of the major concentrations of the extended Hamilton family’s vast accumulation of properties. E. Finnie, ‘The house of Hamilton: patronage, politics and the church in the Reformation period’, *Innes Review*, 36 (1985), 4.

surviving records, it is difficult to assess if these addresses would have been formal sermons or *ad hoc* exhortations, but the audience would have been comprised of family members, family retainers and other local people acquainted with the Hamilton family, if not Patrick himself.⁴² It has been speculated that Hamilton married during this time. If so, his wife would have been present as well. With such a congregation, his motivations for speaking were most likely personal, driven by a desire to secure the spiritual welfare of those nearest and dearest to him. His teaching certainly had an effect on his brother James and sister Katherine. In the years following their brother's death both were summoned to appear before Archbishop James Beaton on charges of heresy. According to John Foxe, only the king's intervention saved them from their brother's fate.⁴³

No doubt the Hamiltons were aware that the authorities were watching. Patrick had been summoned and charged with heresy once before, in the spring of 1527, and this was likely to happen again. He was almost certainly conscious that time was limited before he was either arrested or forced into exile, lending a sense of urgency to his public preaching and private exhortations. Consequently, these sermons were probably simple and straight-forward. Luther once stated that 'he who teaches most simply, childishly, popularly, that's the best preacher', and encouraged ministers to deliver their homilies in clear, simple language.⁴⁴ Hamilton's surviving attributed work, *Patrick's Places*, relies heavily on Luther and Melancthon and follows this principle of simplicity. There are no complex theological words or academic jargon, and he often repeats himself for clearly didactic purposes. Although *Patrick's Places* was derived from a Latin academic debate, Hamilton may have employed this simple rhetoric as he sermonised in the vernacular. Luther also advocated careful sermon preparation through a close reading of Scripture, stating that 'you cannot read too much Scripture, and what you read you cannot read too carefully'.⁴⁵ Hamilton appears to have agreed, as whole biblical passages were often woven into his *Places*. His sermons presumably followed suit.

⁴² His brother James, sister Katherine, and possibly their mother would have been present. His father, Sir Patrick Hamilton of Kincavel, was killed in the Cleanse the Causeway skirmish (1520). I. Torrance, 'Hamilton, Patrick (1504?–1528)', *ODNB*.

⁴³ *TAMO* (1570), 1156.

⁴⁴ Quoted in Pettegree, *Culture of Persuasion*, 19.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 18.

The text of *Patrick's Places* also resembles a sermon format outlined by Phillip Melancthon, who believed that preaching should first call the audience to faith then to good morals.⁴⁶ The first half of the *Places* explains the doctrine of justification through faith, as opposed to the works-based theology of the Catholic Church.⁴⁷ The second half of the treatise explains that good works and moral living were not a means to an end, but an outpouring of that pre-existing faith. They were the sign that one had already obtained salvation. A good man did good works because such works were a natural result of his faith. It was not the works that made him good or that allowed him to receive grace, but the opposite; it was the faith that allowed him to do good works.⁴⁸ The argument for the doctrine of justification by faith found in the *Places* was clear enough. It would not have been difficult for Hamilton to recycle the style and content of the debate into a model Lutheran sermon.

However, it was not long before Hamilton was summoned to appear before Archbishop James Beaton. In January 1528 Beaton issued the *Citatio Patricii Hamilton*. Addressed to the dean of the Lothians, the citation is greatly concerned with Hamilton's preaching activities. Following his arrival in St Andrews, Hamilton was allowed to teach and debate publicly within the University. We know nothing about what Hamilton said during this time in St Andrews, although it can be conjectured that he spoke on justification by faith and other themes present in his *Places*. His time in St Andrews was short. After being at liberty in the burgh for one month, Hamilton was arrested. On 29 February, he was tried and executed for holding, teaching, and preaching the heretical doctrine of Martin Luther. Although brief, Hamilton's preaching career provides the first major recorded instance of out-right Protestant preaching in Scotland.

Preaching after Hamilton

Evidence exists of further evangelical and Protestant preaching activity in the decade following Hamilton's death. John Knox claims that within a few years some Dominicans and Franciscans had begun 'publicly to preach against the pride and idle life of Bishops, and against the abuses of the whole ecclesiastical estate'.⁴⁹ The

⁴⁶ Kreitzer, 'The Lutheran Sermon', 49.

⁴⁷ Hamilton, *Dyuers frutful gatherynges* (London, 1534), Aviii^{v-r}.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, Bv^r.

⁴⁹ Knox, *History*, i, 15.

mendicant orders had been active preachers in Scotland for some time, especially in the towns where their houses were based.⁵⁰ It is not surprising that, through reading and discussion, many defected to the reformist cause. One such was James V's confessor, the aforementioned Alexander Seton of St Andrews, who began preaching the doctrine of justification by faith in the 1530s.⁵¹ In 1536 he also came under suspicion for criticising clergymen who ignored their duties, saying 'it behoved a bishop to be a preacher, or else he was but a dumb dog, and fed not the flock, but fed his own belly'. When brought before the Archbishop, Seton claimed that the words were not his own, but that he was merely quoting St Paul, and the Prophets Isaiah, Zechariah and Malachi. Furthermore, he said, those who could not tell the difference between Scripture and the words of a simple friar had the ears of asses.⁵² Seton was initially protected from Archbishop James Beaton's judgment by his position as the king's confessor, but was eventually forced to flee to England.⁵³

Protestant preaching, while hardly widespread, persisted through the decade. In 1539, in the presence of the king, six men were convicted of heresy. Among them were two friars and the vicar of Dollar in Stirlingshire. Although the exact nature of their crimes is unknown, it is likely that as Dominican friars John Kyllour and John Beveridge had been engaged in preaching of an evangelical bent not sanctioned by their order. It is also possible that Kyllour was being punished for his part in a reformist play performed in Stirling in 1535. According to the vicar of Dollar, Dean Thomas Forret, Kyllour in particular was a fine speaker. Forret told his servant that while imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle awaiting trial 'he never heard a more heavenly speech in all his lifetime, than out of the mouth of a Friar Killor'.⁵⁴

Of those executed that day, the most is known about Dean Forret.⁵⁵ He was first

⁵⁰ Ryrie, *Origins*, 18.

⁵¹ Knox, *History*, i, 19-20.

⁵² *Ibid.*

⁵³ Knox, *History*, i, 20-21. Accounts of Seton's activities in England can be found in *TAMO* (1570), 1418-19; and *SP* 1/243 f.44a, 'Heresy in London'.

⁵⁴ Calderwood, *History of the Kirk*, i, 125.

⁵⁵ Most of this information is found in John Foxe's 1570 edition of the *Acts and Monuments* and David Calderwood's (c.1575-1650) *History of the Kirk*. However, both texts are far from objective. Foxe received much of his Scottish material from John Winram, subprior of St Andrews. Calderwood's work was compiled before 1650 from various diaries and official documents. However, it is suffused with the author's own Protestant agenda and should be approached with caution. T. Freeman, "'The reik of Maister Patrik Hammyltoun': John Foxe, John Winram, and the Martyrs of the Scottish Reformation",

brought before the Bishop of Dunkeld for preaching every Sunday from the Gospels, which he was not authorised to do. When the Bishop chastised him for preaching so often, Forret reputedly said ‘where your lordship sayeth it is too much to preache every Sunday, indeed, I thinke it is too little, and also would wishe that your lordship did the like’.⁵⁶ In addition, Forret was credited with composing a vernacular catechism for children, which would also have been a heretical offence.⁵⁷ The vicar was later brought before Cardinal David Beaton who charged him with teaching his parishioners to recite the Pater Noster, the Ten Commandments and the Creed in English. Faced with the accusation, Forret allegedly responded:

My people are so roode and ignorant, they vnderstand no Latine, so yat my conscience moved me to pitie there ignorance, whilk provoaked me learne them ye wordis of there salvation in English; that is, the Ten Comandements, whilk are ye law of God, whereby they mycht obferve ye same. I taught them the Beleeif [Creed], whereby they miycht know there faith in God, and Jesus Chryst his sone, and (of) his death, and resurxectioun (for thame). Mairover I teatched (and learned thame) the Lords owen prayer in ye mother tongue, to ye effect yat they sould know to whome they sould pray, and in whose name they sould pray, and what they sould ask and desyre in prayer, whilk I beleefe to be ye paterne of all prayer.⁵⁸

There can be little doubt that Forret’s regular sermons included expositions on the Lord’s Prayer, the Creed and the Ten Commandments, as well as the Gospels. When Forret presented an English Bible with which to justify his actions, he was accused of further heresy and condemned to death.⁵⁹ Ian Cowan observes that following this incident there was ‘little sign of religious unrest in Stirling for many years thereafter’.⁶⁰

The ‘Godly Fit’

During the brief period of government-sanctioned reform in 1543, known as the ‘Godly Fit’, Governor Arran employed two Protestant preachers within his household –

Sixteenth Century Journal, 27 (Spring, 1996), 53; V.T. Wells, ‘Calderwood, David (c.1575–1650)’, *ODNB*.

⁵⁶ *TAMO* (1570), 1481.

⁵⁷ Calderwood, *History*, i, 127.

⁵⁸ R. Pitcairn (ed.), *Criminal Trials in Scotland from 1488 to 1624*, (Edinburgh, 1833), i, 215. While much of Pitcairn’s information comes from Foxe’s *Acts and Monuments*, the origins of this quotation are unclear. It is not found in Pitscottie, Foxe, Spottiswood or Calderwood. It is possible that Pitcairn found the quote in an unspecified manuscript while working at the Register House in Edinburgh.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ Ian Cowan, *Regional Aspects of the Scottish Reformation* (London, 1978), 12.

Thomas Guilliame and John Rough. Knox described Guilliame as a man ‘of solid judgment, reasonable letters (as for that age), and of a prompt and good utterance: his doctrine was wholesome without great vehemency against superstition.’ Rough’s style was described as ‘not so learned [as Guilliame’s], yet more simple, and more vehement against all impiety.’⁶¹ The two preachers were well received in Dundee, where their preaching provoked an attack on the local friaries, but they themselves were physically attacked when they spoke in Edinburgh.⁶² Their employment by Arran did not sit well with the Catholic authorities and, according to Knox, Cardinal Beaton ‘moved both heaven and hell to trouble the Governor, and stay the preaching’.⁶³ Apparently the cardinal’s efforts met with success. By December 1543, the Scottish government returned to its pro-Catholic/pro-French agenda. Guilliame fled to England while Rough headed to Kyle, in Ayrshire.⁶⁴

George Wishart

However brief, the ‘Godly Fit’ had opened the door to evangelical activity, notably Protestant preaching. There were reports of riots and Protestant sermons in Perth, Dundee and Aberdeen, and by 1547 the Bishop of Aberdeen claimed that heresy was ‘thriving greatly’ in that city.⁶⁵ It was also during Arran’s period of Protestant experimentation that George Wishart began his three-year preaching career in Scotland. Protected by various nobles, including the Earl Marischal and the fourth Earl of Glencairn, a pro-English magnate from Ayrshire, Wishart’s sermons were not confined to noble households but addressed sympathetic public audiences – often outdoors – in towns such as Montrose, Dundee, Ayr, Leith, Inveresk, Tranent and Haddington. Born near Montrose around 1513, Wishart was ordained a priest at some point between his graduation from Louvain in 1532 and his return to Scotland around 1535. By 1538 he was a schoolmaster in Montrose, until he was summoned to appear before the Bishop of Brechin, John Hepburn, for teaching his students the New Testament in Greek. Rather than face the bishop, Wishart fled to Bristol, where his controversial preaching resulted

⁶¹ Knox, *History*, i, 42.

⁶² R.L. Greaves, ‘Rough, John (c.1508–1557)’, *ODNB*.

⁶³ Knox, *History*, i, 43.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 48.

⁶⁵ Cowan, *Regional Aspects*, 14.

in his imprisonment. Following his release, he preached another provocative sermon in St Nicholas, Bristol on 15 May 1539. For this he was brought before the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer, on 9 June. Backed into a corner by the ratification of the Six Articles that same month, Cranmer was forced to punish the Scot.⁶⁶ As a result, Wishart was sentenced to bear the faggot of recantation three times, first at St Paul's Cross, London – which he refused to do – and then twice at Bristol. After this, he went into exile on the Continent from 1539 until 1542.⁶⁷

Little is known of his whereabouts during this time, although it is believed that he spent at least some time in Germany, as at his trial in 1546 he makes reference to sailing on the Rhine.⁶⁸ It is also likely that he spent some time in Switzerland where he came into contact with the Swiss Reformed movement and the First Helvetic Confession (1536). The first English translation of this text has been attributed to Wishart. It was originally written in Latin by a group of Swiss reformers who had convened at Basle to outline their theological position following Huldrych Zwingli's death at the Battle of Kappel in 1531. Among those involved were Heinrich Bullinger, Zwingli's successor in Zurich, and Martin Bucer and Wolfgang Capito. Intended to promote unity among the Protestant churches, the Confession leaned heavily on Zwingli's teachings, although it had Lutheran elements as well.⁶⁹ It was this doctrine that Wishart brought with him when he moved to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge in 1542 and when he finally returned to Scotland in 1543. Perhaps encouraged by the 'Godly Fit', Wishart journeyed northwards with Henry Balnaves and other Scottish commissioners sent to negotiate the marriage of Mary, Queen of Scots to Edward Tudor.⁷⁰

Considerably more information is available for Wishart's preaching than for that of Hamilton. These include the attributed translation of The Helvetic Confession of 1536, the transcript from his trial, and Knox's account of his mentor in *The History of the Reformation*.⁷¹ Through these texts it is possible to piece together what Wishart

⁶⁶ M.H.Dotterweich, 'Wishart, George (c.1513?–1546)', *ODNB*.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ Knox, *History*, ii, 238.

⁶⁹ B. Gordon, 'Switzerland' in *The Early Reformation in Europe*, ed. A.Pettegree (Cambridge, 1992), 87.

⁷⁰ Dotterweich, 'Wishart'.

⁷¹ George Wishart (trans.), *The confescion of the fayth of the Sweserlandes* (London, Hugh Singleton, 1548), USTC 504103. An account of Wishart's trial, similar to that in Knox's *History*, is found in Book

might have preached as well as the style in which he delivered his message. In Wishart we first begin to see the shift in Scotland from a German Lutheran towards a more Swiss Reformed theology. Published in London in 1548, it was the printer, Hugh Singleton, who attributed the translation of *The confescion of the fayth of the Sweserlandes* to ‘George Usher a Scotchman, who was burned in Scotland, in the yeare of our lorde Mvxcxvi’.⁷² Based on this and his time on the Continent, it is generally agreed that this refers to George Wishart.

The Confession is a fairly standard Protestant declaration of belief, moving soundly towards Reformed theology. The text upholds Scripture as the ultimate and only authority for Christian doctrine and clearly maintains the doctrine of justification by faith. It further denies tradition as grounds for Church practice, although it acknowledges the influence of the Church Fathers, with the caveat to accept only those of their teachings that are firmly grounded in biblical precepts. To that end, the Confession recognizes only two Sacraments as instituted by Christ in Scripture: Baptism and the Eucharist.⁷³ However, the Swiss reformers deviated from their Lutheran colleagues in regards to the nature of these Sacraments. According to the Reformed tradition, the Sacraments were signs only, not actual conduits for the receiving of divine grace. Baptism, although still considered an important act in the Christian life, was a symbol of being a part of the community of the church, not of one’s salvation. The same was especially true of the Eucharist (translated in this particular text as ‘Howslynge’), which the writers of the Confession claimed should be taken in both kinds by all Christians. As for what happened to the bread and the wine during the service, the Swiss reformers held that

the bread and the wyne are sygnes, but the thyng and veritie is the communion of the body of our Lorde; helthe and saluacion founde, and remyssyon of synnes; the whiche are receyued by faythe even as the sygnes and tokens [bread and wine] are receyued by the bodely mouth. Wherefore we affyrme the Sacramentes not onely to be badges and tokens of Christian societie, but also sygnes of the grace of God.⁷⁴

Eight of *TAMO* (1570, 1576 & 1583 editions), with an added, brief account of his time at Cambridge provided in the 1583 edition. (1570, 1483-1487; 1576, 1255-1259; 1583, 1291-1295).

⁷² C. Rogers, *Life of George Wishart* (Edinburgh, 1876), 63.

⁷³ Wishart, *The confescion*, Aii^v-Aiii^f, Bi^v.

⁷⁴ Wishart, *The confescion*, Bii^{r-v}.

Such doctrine unquestionably denied transubstantiation.⁷⁵ Huldrych Zwingli had been very clear in his belief that the bread and the wine were intended by Christ to serve as physical, outward reminders of the unity of the church and His sacrifice that made possible the grace which was received inwardly, by faith alone. At his trial in 1546, Wishart not only affirmed his belief in these tenets – as well as the doctrines of ‘the priesthood of all believers’ and clerical marriage espoused in the Confession – but also confirmed that he spoke publicly on them.⁷⁶

Wishart’s theology was clearly influenced by Zwingli and Bullinger, and it is possible that he borrowed from their preaching styles as well. Reformed preachers avoided allegory, favouring literal interpretations of Scripture, often cross-referencing other passages in the Bible. They were also encouraged to avoid technical jargon and to provide practical applications for everyday life. The preacher was expected to be well versed in Scripture. Therefore, sermons were often delivered without notes, derived from a deep study of the biblical passage beforehand. Zwingli and Calvin were both known to preach with only Greek and Hebrew Bibles in front of them.⁷⁷ In 1525, Zwingli established the ‘Prophezei’ in Zurich. The purpose of the school was to train ministers in Biblical hermeneutics and homiletics, grounded in exposition of Scripture and training in the ancient languages of the Bible: Greek and Hebrew. This idea was put into effect in Strasbourg and Geneva, and subsequently taken to England by Marian Exiles.⁷⁸ Wishart may have encountered one of these training facilities in his travels.

Reformed ministers were expected not only to be educated, but to spend much of their time in prayer and Bible study.⁷⁹ Wishart appears to have followed suit, as Knox recounts that he was in the habit of spending at least half an hour in prayer before every sermon.⁸⁰ The reformers believed that it was absolutely necessary for the preacher to prepare his own heart and mind in order to preach repentance to his congregation.

⁷⁵ Wishart, *The confescion*, Bii^v-Biii^f.

⁷⁶ Although Wishart denied ever speaking on the number of the Sacraments in his sermons, the way he worded his response indicated that he believed in only two: ‘I taught never of the number of the Sacraments [...]. So many as are instituted by Christ, and are shown to us by the Evangel, I profess openly. Except it be the word of God, I dare affirm nothing.’ Knox, *History*, ii, 234-243; Wishart, *The confescion*, Aviii^f, Bvi^{r-v}.

⁷⁷ Ford, ‘Preaching in the Reformed Tradition’, 69-77.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 69. These dates also correspond with the re-founding of St Mary’s College, St Andrews in 1539, which was a tri-lingual foundation.

⁷⁹ Wishart, *The confescion*, Bi^r.

⁸⁰ Knox, *History*, i, 68.

After all, the Helvetic Confession stated, the whole purpose of the ‘preachynge of the Gospell’ was to announce to the congregation that ‘we are safe onely by the marcie of God, and merite of our Sauour Christ’. In order to do so, ‘theyr synnes shuld be clerely shewed to them by the lawe, and remission by Christes death.’⁸¹ The preacher was responsible not only for declaring that justification was by faith in Christ, but also for making very clear to his congregation the exact nature of their sins that made this justification necessary.

Accordingly, Reformed preachers like Wishart often referred to themselves as prophets and their ministries as prophetic. It is important to note that this understanding did not necessarily equate to predicting future events (although some, like Wishart, were reputed to do so), so much as emulating the Old Testament prophets who called the leaders and people of their day to account for their sins and exhorted them to return to the straight and narrow, warning them of God’s wrath if they refused to repent.⁸² Zwingli, Calvin and Knox all saw themselves as prophets, called not only to teach but to rebuke and warn the people. Wishart, as we shall see, was no different. Like the prophets of old, the Swiss reformers believed that preaching should happen ‘openlie in an open and publyke place’.⁸³ Wishart took this to heart, preaching in fields, rather than conventicles, when denied admittance to a church. His opponents claimed that this was further proof of his heresy, since a clergyman preaching orthodox doctrine would have done so from a proper pulpit. At his trial Wishart addressed this in true Protestant fashion, claiming that God was present wherever the true Word was preached and lawful sacraments were followed.⁸⁴

Wishart rarely, if ever, had the luxury of being able to stay in one place long enough to embark on the exegetical sermon series so common among his more stationary co-religionists on the Continent. He was constantly on the move, preaching his illegal theology, and his sermons likely had a sense of urgency, resulting in added simplicity. With the exception of some time in Montrose, Wishart spent three years preaching throughout the Lowlands. This itinerancy facilitated the spread of his message. He spoke with the nobles and gentry who offered him protection within their

⁸¹ Wishart, *The confescion*, Avii^v.

⁸² Ford, ‘Preaching in the Reformed Tradition’, 67.

⁸³ Wishart, *The confescion*, Biv^f.

⁸⁴ Knox, *History*, ii, 242.

homes and to the common people in fields, at market crosses and in local churches. His message was available to all who, whether out of like-mindedness or curiosity, came to hear him speak.

Wishart's itinerary began in Dundee where he taught from the book of Romans, impressing William, fourth Earl Marischal and other, unspecified, noblemen. It was in Dundee that Wishart, according to Knox, first demonstrated his prophetic abilities. Knox claims that Wishart was 'so clearly illuminated with the spirit of prophecy, that he saw not only things pertaining to himself, but also such things as some towns and the whole realm afterward felt, which he forespake not in secret, but in the audience of many'.⁸⁵ When Cardinal Beaton sent Robert Myll to silence him, Wishart prophesied that the city would be 'visit[ed] with fire and sword' for denying him and his message.⁸⁶ The plague struck the town shortly after his departure.

The reformer headed west, towards Kyle. According to Margaret Sanderson, many of the Ayrshire laity had long supported reform. In 1494 thirty so-called Lollards of Kyle were charged with heresy. Sanderson points out that all of them were lay men and women.⁸⁷ Over time, the reform movement gained ground among the local elite, who became extremely active supporters, and whose social networks testify to the existing associations between reform-minded activists in the west and east of Scotland. By the time of Wishart's visit to the area Glencairn, Cassillis, Ochiltree, Lockhart and Barr already had reformist connections in Fife, as well as Angus and the Mearns.⁸⁸ Although hardly a centralised organisation – and certainly not a structured church entity – the support of these loose networks of noblemen would prove crucial to the longevity of Wishart's preaching ministry.⁸⁹

Wishart spent some time preaching in Ayrshire until the Archbishop of Glasgow, Gavin Dunbar, acting under orders from Cardinal Beaton, appeared in Ayr to challenge him. Dunbar occupied the church, expecting that such an action would obstruct Wishart from preaching. Wishart's supporters, including the Earl of Glencairn

⁸⁵ Knox, *History*, i, 60-61.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

⁸⁷ M.H.B. Sanderson, *Ayrshire and the Reformation: People and Change, 1490-1600* (East Linton, 1997), 64.

⁸⁸ Sanderson, *Ayrshire*, 65. According to Sanderson, these connections included the Earl of Rothes, John Erskine of Dun, the Earl Marischal and the preacher's brother James Wishart of Pittarow.

⁸⁹ For more on the difference between conventicles and the so-called 'privy kirks', see A.Ryrie, 'Congregations, Conventicles', 45-76.

and other gentlemen of Kyle, suggested taking the church by force. Wishart, with little apparent esteem for the Archbishop's preaching skills, responded that they should 'Let him alone; his sermon will not much hurt' and took up preaching at the market cross.⁹⁰ Sanderson suggests that this particular choice would provide Wishart with not only 'a busy vantage point' but also a spot 'where people would be less likely to incur ecclesiastical censure for listening to him than if they had deliberately entered the parish kirk'.⁹¹ Dunbar soon left the area. It is worth noting that he did not issue an episcopal inhibition against Wishart's preaching (as Beaton had done in Dundee).⁹²

Wishart stayed on, preaching in Galston church and in the noble house of Barr. He was also asked to preach at the church in Mauchline, but Sir Hugh Campbell of Loudoun, the Sheriff of Ayr, fearing an iconoclastic riot, prevented his entering.⁹³ Once again, Wishart's supporters suggested taking the church by force, and once again Wishart, who disapproved of violence, rebuked them. This time he opted to preach in the nearby fields, claiming 'it is the word of peace that God sends by me: the blood of no man shall be shed this day for the preaching of it'. His sermon must have contained a strong message of repentance, because Knox claimed that 'one of the most wicked men that was in the country, named Laurence Rankin, laird of Shiel, was converted'.⁹⁴ Such a theme would have been in keeping with established Reformed homiletics. Furthermore, Rankin, who was from a neighbouring parish, suggests that, in Ayrshire at least, people were willing to travel to hear Wishart speak.⁹⁵

When Wishart heard news of the plague in Dundee, which began four days after he had left the city, he felt compelled to return to minister to its people. There he preached from the East Port to the healthy within and the sick outside, speaking on Psalm 107:20 – 'He sent his word, and healed the[m], and they were saued from their destruccyon'.⁹⁶ His message was about the utility and power of God's Word (as both Scripture and Incarnate), punishment for those who did not reverence the Word, and

⁹⁰ Knox, *History*, i, 61.

⁹¹ Sanderson, *Ayrshire*, 66.

⁹² *Ibid.*

⁹³ Knox, *History*, i, 61. Sanderson suggests that Campbell's concern for the preservation of a tabernacle in the church belonging to Melrose Abbey had more to do with his actions than any objections to Wishart's message. His own attitude towards reform was rather ambivalent. Sanderson, *Ayrshire*, 67.

⁹⁴ Knox, *History*, i, 62.

⁹⁵ Sanderson, *Ayrshire*, 68.

⁹⁶ Knox, *History*, i, 63. *The Byble in Englyshe [The Great Bible]*, fol. xxi^r.

God's mercy for those who did. Such a sermon perhaps called to mind his warning from a few months earlier. The plague raging through their city was living proof of what happened to those who rejected God's Word. If they would but receive the Word, they would be healed – if not in this life, then in the life to come.⁹⁷

There was an attempt on Wishart's life following one of his Dundee sermons, but Wishart spotted the would-be assassin, forgave him and protected him from those among his followers who sought retribution. When the plague subsided, Wishart moved onward to Montrose. There is no record of what he said in his sermons there, but there was yet another thwarted assassination attempt. Wishart then decided to head towards Edinburgh. In language common to martyrologies – and echoing the Biblical narrative of Christ's own Passion – Knox claimed that Wishart predicted that his death was imminent.⁹⁸ Consequently, when he and his entourage arrived in Leith, he was advised to go into hiding.

This did not last long, as Wishart felt compelled to preach publicly in Leith and convinced his protectors to allow him to do so. On 13 December 1545 he gave a sermon on Matthew 13.⁹⁹ Further information does not survive, but based on the biblical passage, it is clear that his message once again concentrated on receiving the Word of God. In the passage Jesus relates the parable of the sower and the seed. Jesus explained that the seed represented the Word of God and that the different soils it fell upon symbolised the different people who heard that Word. These designations would have found particular resonance among Wishart's audience. The seed on the path, eaten by birds, symbolised those from whom the Gospel was snatched away by the Devil – or, as Wishart may have suggested, a cardinal and his supporters working on the Devil's behalf. This would have been a prime opportunity for the reformer to criticise those responsible for the collapse of Arran's 'Godly Fit' – including Beaton and Arran himself. The designation of the seed that fell on rocky soil, representing those who forsook the Word because of persecution, would have been particularly immediate to Wishart's audience. Since Cardinal Beaton's elevation as primate of Scotland in 1539, anti-heresy measures had increased and there had been a number of executions. The

⁹⁷ Knox, *History*, i, 63.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 64-65.

⁹⁹ Knox, *History*, i, 66.

third soil type, that of the seed choked by thorns, represented those who were distracted by worldly cares and gain. Wishart may well have taken the opportunity to criticise clerical corruption or even Governor Arran – who turned his back on evangelical reform in pursuit of secular power. Finally, the good soil represented those who embraced the Word and nurtured it in their hearts. Wishart's hearers had only to look to plague-stricken Dundee to see the consequences that awaited those who were not of 'good ground'.

Following the sermon, Wishart was immediately taken into the protection of some Protestant gentlemen from Lothian – Alexander Crichton of Brunstane, Hugh Douglas of Longniddry and John Cockburn of Ormiston – who hid him. Wishart preached on the following two Sundays in Tranent. On both occasions he spoke of his impending death. When he went to preach in Haddington in January 1546, he was received by a considerably smaller audience than expected. Patrick Hepburn, third Earl of Bothwell, had issued a threat that succeeded in deterring potential auditors.¹⁰⁰ That the Earl felt it necessary to issue this ultimatum demonstrates the extent to which Wishart's reputation had grown. If he had not been considered a danger, it would have been unnecessary. At the same time, however, the reformer's message and preaching prowess was not enough for the people of Haddington and its environs to risk the wrath of the Earl.

Of all of Wishart's sermons, Knox provided the most information regarding the second sermon in Haddington. He claims that after spending a considerable time in private prayer, Wishart deviated from the message he had planned to preach. Disheartened by yet another low turn out, he opened his sermon exclaiming: 'O Lord, how long shall it be that thy holy word shall be despised, and men shall not regard their own salvation!' He then chastised the townspeople, who would turn out in the thousands to watch a play, but yet those who gathered 'to hear the messenger of Eternal God, of all [...] town nor parish can not be numbered a hundred persons'. He then prophesied that 'with fire and sword [they] shalt be plagued' and overtaken by strangers. Knox says that Wishart carried on in this way for an hour and a half, and also claimed to have witnessed the fulfillment of these prophecies, making reference to the English siege of Haddington in 1548 and the town's occupation by the French. Wishart

¹⁰⁰ Knox, *History*, i, 66-67.

closed his sermon with ‘an exhortation to patience, to the fear of God, and unto the works of mercy’. That same evening he was arrested at Ormiston.¹⁰¹ He was held briefly by Bothwell, and then sent to Edinburgh for a month before being brought to trial in St Andrews. On 1 March 1546 he was hanged and burned outside the Archbishop’s palace – the castle – at St Andrews.

The morning before his death, Wishart preached his final sermon. After having been denied the Eucharist at the Cardinal’s command, the reformer celebrated a Reformed Communion over the breakfast table. According to Buchanan’s account, Wishart deemed those assembled for the morning meal in the governor of the castle’s lodgings – the ‘friends and servants of the governor [of the castle]’ and the governor himself – to be ‘good men, and fellow-members of the same Body of Christ’.¹⁰² Before sharing the bread and the wine, he spoke for half an hour on the sufferings and death of Christ. He further exhorted them to ‘lay aside wrath, envy, and malice, that their minds might be filled with love to one another, and so become perfect members of Christ’.¹⁰³ Buchanan recounted the communion that followed in imagery that clearly evokes Christ at the Last Supper:

Having thus spoken, when he had given God thanks, he brake the bread, and gave a little to each, and in like manner he gave the wine, after he himself had tasted, entreating them now to remember in this sacrament, for the last time along with him, the memorial of Christ’s death, as for himself a more bitter portion was prepared, for no other reason except preaching the gospel. After which, having again returned thanks, he retired into his chamber, and finished his devotions.

Buchanan’s account is in keeping with Knox’s more blatant parallels between Wishart’s last days and those of Christ. Knox refers to Cardinal Beaton as Caiaphas and Governor Arran as Pontius Pilate while Wishart is the humble Christ-figure. He also likens the alliance between Beaton and Dunbar, Archbishop of Glasgow, regarding the sentencing of Wishart, to that of Pilate and Herod ‘who before were enemies, were made friends, by consenting of them both to Christ’s condemnation’. The only difference, Knox claims, was that Pilate and Herod were ‘brethren under their father the Devil’ in the Temporal estate, while Beaton and Dunbar were ‘sons of the same father the Devil’ in

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 68.

¹⁰² Buchanan, *History*, ii, 356.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 357.

the Ecclesiastic estate. Knox was fully aware of what he was doing, telling his reader: 'If we interlace merriness with earnest matters [in drawing these inferences], pardon us, good Reader; for the fact is so notable that it deserveth long memory'.¹⁰⁴

Thus, Wishart could be seen to follow in the footsteps of Christ: 'he hu[m]bled hym selfe, and became obedyent vnto the deeth' (Phil. 2:8).¹⁰⁵ That he was unwilling to dissemble, even when faced with execution, would be seen by some as the ultimate testimony to the truth of his message.¹⁰⁶ The humility with which he approached death was also key, for within the theatre of martyrdom, peaceful resignation was viewed as a further indicator of sincerity, if not innocence – in contrast to more suspect outbursts of ostentatious bravado.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, the manner of Wishart's death (like that of Hamilton, Forret and others before him), willingly and patiently enduring execution at the hands of 'the sons of the Devil', could be viewed as a sermon of deeds rather than words. As Brad Gregory observes, 'the spectacle of the martyrs' deaths could frame a final act of evangelisation more powerful than a thousand sermons'.¹⁰⁸

Indeed, Wishart's ministry and death raised the profile of the reform movement. Taking a cue from his brethren on the Continent, Wishart actively exploited the medium of the sermon for the Scottish Protestant cause and set about presenting new theology to audiences from all levels of Scottish society. The substantial territory covered by his travels represented one of the first major attempts at widespread Protestant evangelisation in Scotland. Consequently, his sermons had attracted the attention – both positive and negative – of some of the kingdom's most powerful men. He had made an enemy of the Cardinal Archbishop whilst at the same time gaining the support and protection of many among Scotland's elite. It was among the latter that Wishart had his most lasting influence, proving to be his most receptive – and effective – audience. Without the support and protection of various noblemen, Wishart's life and ministry

¹⁰⁴ The narrative of Wishart being moved from one location to the other – from the temporal fortress of Edinburgh Castle to the ecclesiastic stronghold of St Andrews Castle – was also an inversion of Christ's Passion when he is taken first to the house of the chief priest, then to Governor Pilate, who sent him to King Herod, who sent him back to Pilate for sentencing. Knox, *History*, i, 71-72.

¹⁰⁵ *The Byble in Englyshe [The Great Bible]*, fol. lxxix^r.

¹⁰⁶ B. Gregory, *Salvation at Stake: Christian Martyrdom in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, MA, 1999), 110.

¹⁰⁷ Gregory, *Salvation at Stake*, 111.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 135.

would have been considerably shorter. And it was among this same group that the reform movement began to gain serious ground.

On 29 May, three months after Wishart's death, a small group of Fife lairds forcibly took control of St Andrews Castle and murdered the Cardinal. Among their motives they listed 'the shedding of the blood of that notable instrument of God, Master George Wishart', part of what they saw as Beaton's campaign 'against Christ Jesus and his holy Evangel'.¹⁰⁹ The castle would be held by the Protestant 'Castilians' until they were removed by force in July the following year. During the year-long occupation, John Rough, one of Governor Arran's former preachers, joined the Castilians and began preaching in St Andrews. Knox claims that Rough's sermons were 'well liked of the people'.¹¹⁰ In April 1547 Knox himself joined those holding the castle, and it was during this time that he took up his mentor's mantle.

John Knox

John Knox, by far the best known Scottish reformer, has been the subject of countless studies over the centuries, some laudatory, some critical.¹¹¹ Yet for all this disparity of opinion, most scholars agree with Knox's own assessment of his life and purpose – that he was, above all, a preacher. He clearly recognised the power of the spoken word, as his prolific preaching career spanned twenty-five years and five countries. Yet little evidence exists regarding Knox's early and admittedly brief Scottish preaching career. In fact, between 1547 and May 1559 (when his preaching instigated a riot in Perth) Knox spent less than thirteen months in his native land. Furthermore, like his predecessors Hamilton and Wishart, when he was in Scotland, Knox was unable to remain in one location for any length of time. His longest stint was in St Andrews, where he stayed little over three months in 1547. Consequently, there are no full sermon transcripts and most of what information survives is from Knox's own account in his *History* as well as some of his correspondence.

¹⁰⁹ M.H.B. Sanderson, *Cardinal of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1986), 227.

¹¹⁰ Knox, *History*, i, 81.

¹¹¹ For Knox's treatment by historians, see James Kirk, 'John Knox and the Historians' in *John Knox and the British Reformations*, ed. R.A. Mason, 7-28. For Knox's ministry, see R. Kyle, *The Ministry of John Knox: Pastor, Preacher, and Prophet* (Lewiston, 2002). For more on various aspects of Knox's life and thought, see Greaves, *Theology and Revolution in the Scottish Reformation*; the collected essays in Mason (ed.), *John Knox and the British Reformations*; K.D. Farrow, *John Knox: Reformation Rhetoric*; and Dawson, 'The Two John Knoxes'.

While the *History* presents one of the fullest accounts of Knox's ministry, it is not without its drawbacks. Knox worked on it over a twelve-year period (1559-1571), well after many of the events it describes. Indeed, much of it was written at times when Knox was forbidden to preach, and his motivations for writing various sections were affected by the complex events surrounding the collapse of Mary Queen of Scots' regime between 1565 and 1567.¹¹² Knox was a historian only by default, but a preacher and a prophet by vocation.¹¹³ He considered himself 'rather cald of...God to instruct the ignorant, comfort the sorrowfull, confirme the weake, and rebuke the proud, by tong and livelye voyce, in these corrupt dayes, than to compose bokes for the age to come.'¹¹⁴ This may also explain why Knox never bothered to record his sermons in detail. Sermons were intended for the 'here and now' of the original auditors. They may have been delivered in order to inspire or affect future actions, but usually within the near future and by those who initially heard them.

Knox had been a dedicated follower of George Wishart, even acting as his sword bearer and bodyguard. That Knox revered his mentor is evident in the *History*. His early theology and preaching style was presumably strongly influenced by Wishart and, consequently, by Zwingli and Bullinger. However, Knox would argue that it was not his decision to follow in Wishart's vocational footsteps, but a choice that was ultimately made for him.

Following Wishart's execution and Beaton's murder, Knox joined the Castilians holding the Cardinal's castle at St Andrews. The group of local Fife lairds with Protestant sympathies – including Norman Leslie, John Leslie of Parkhill, James Melville, Peter Carmichael and William Kirkcaldy – had gained control of Beaton's stronghold on 29 May 1546. After killing the Cardinal the Castilians barricaded themselves in the castle, hoping for English aid. However, nine days after the assassination, England signed the Treaty of Camp with France, bringing a temporary halt to English activities in Scotland.¹¹⁵ The English could not be seen openly to support those in the castle, and the subsequent aid that arrived was less than anticipated. This

¹¹² M. Lee, 'John Knox and his *History*', *Scottish Historical Review* 45 (1966), 87.

¹¹³ Mason, *Kingship and the Commonweal*, 169.

¹¹⁴ D.D. Murison, 'Knox the Writer', in *John Knox: A Quartrcentenary Reappraisal*, ed. D. Shaw (Edinburgh, 1975), 33.

¹¹⁵ Ryrie, *Origins*, 73.

did not keep Henry Balnaves and John Rough, both men of strong reformist sympathies, from joining the Castilians.¹¹⁶ Governor Arran ordered a siege of the castle, but it was half-hearted and called off when the plague struck St Andrews. Elizabeth Bonner argues that Arran was stalling. He was capable of taking the castle by force, but did not want to anger the English. He was also in no hurry to avenge Beaton, whose death eliminated a political adversary and paved the way for Arran's half-brother, John Hamilton, to become Archbishop.¹¹⁷ Subsequently, the Castilians felt free to come and go between the castle and the town.

It was during this time that Knox first adopted the role that would come to define the rest of his life. After hearing him teach his young pupils from the Gospel of John, Knox was invited to preach by Balnaves, Rough and Sir David Lindsay.¹¹⁸ According to Knox's own testimony, he was extremely reluctant to accept their proposal. The trio resorted to making a public appeal during a Sunday sermon on the election of ministers, delivered by Rough in the parish church of Holy Trinity. After bursting into tears and locking himself in his room for some time, Knox finally consented.¹¹⁹

It was not uncommon for reformers to appear unwilling to take up the charge of preaching. The circumstances of Knox's calling were somewhat similar to, although more dramatic than, those of John Calvin, in that Calvin also transitioned from the classroom to the pulpit. A reluctant preacher, Calvin believed that his purpose in Geneva was to teach, not to preach, yet as Bruce Gordon observes, Calvin was eventually preaching regularly on Sundays and during the week.¹²⁰ Martin Luther had also claimed to be an unwilling preacher. As an Augustinian friar and subprior of the Wittenberg monastery, preaching had been one of his responsibilities and a duty he claimed to accept with great reluctance and even resistance.¹²¹

¹¹⁶ C. Edington, 'Knox and the Castilians' in *John Knox and the British Reformations*, ed. Mason, 34.

¹¹⁷ E. Bonner, 'The Recovery of St Andrews Castle in 1547: French Naval Policy and Diplomacy in the British Isles' in *The English Historical Review*, June (1996), 595, 597.

¹¹⁸ Knox, *History*, i, 82. Knox was tutor to Francis and George Douglas, sons of Hugh Douglas of Longniddry, and Alexander, John Cockburn of Ormiston's eldest son. Cockburn and Douglas were supporters and protectors of Wishart. For more on the influence of Balnaves, Rough and Lindsay on Knox's early preaching career, see Edington, 'Knox and the Castilians'.

¹¹⁹ Knox, *History*, i, 83.

¹²⁰ B. Gordon, *Calvin* (New Haven, 2009), 71.

¹²¹ *LW*, vol. li (Philadelphia, 1959), xi-ii.

There is more to these claims than bashfulness or a disinclination to take on new or greater responsibilities. Reluctance in heeding the call to preach was supposed to be indicative of humility, demonstrating that the speaker did not take up the calling for personal fame or glory. Protestants held preaching in high regard, but practitioners were expected to behave as God's humble servants. Paradoxically, in order to gain credibility the preacher needed to declare his unworthiness, as a sinful man, to be a mouthpiece of the Almighty. Furthermore, as one of the responsibilities of the preacher was to point out the sins of the people, it might ruin the preacher's standing should he appear to enjoy the prospect of passing judgment. Finally, as Richard Greaves points out, Knox's mentor had just been executed for preaching reformed doctrine, serving as a ready reminder of the dangers of the profession.¹²² Whatever his reasons for balking – whether humility, fear for his life, or doubt as to his abilities – Knox eventually accepted the vocation.

It is significant that Knox's calling to the ministry was itself delivered through a sermon and as such provides a fine example of the persuasive power of public preaching. While not necessarily a reliable account of the proceedings, the episode, as recorded in the *History*, still says a great deal about Knox and his colleagues' convictions regarding the preaching ministry. Above all, it was a Divine vocation – quite literally a 'calling'. It was not a job or a career one chose, but an appointment to which a chosen few were commanded by God himself. Knox would later state that 'messingeris of the Word' ought to enter the vocation with 'feir, cairfulness and reverence'. If a preacher failed faithfully to present the Gospel, or balked under the pressure of persecution 'the blude and saullis of thois that perische for lack of [spiritual] fude, admonitioun, and doctrine, salbe requyrit of his hand'.¹²³ For this reason, it was not to be entered lightly, although it was also considered perilous to reject a divine calling. According to Rough's sermon, congregations were empowered by God to appoint any man 'in whom they supposed and espied the gifts of God to be'.¹²⁴ To add weight to his entreaty, Rough claimed that he spoke to Knox not only on behalf of the congregation in St Andrews, but also in the name of God the Father and God the Son.

¹²² Greaves, *Theology and Revolution*, 72.

¹²³ John Knox, *An Exposition vpon the fourth of Mathew, concerning the tentations of Christ* (London, Robert Waldegrave for Thomas Man, 1583), USTC 509769, Bi^f.

¹²⁴ Knox, *History*, i, 83.

These were credentials that should not be ignored. They were also credentials that would add further credence to Knox's claims of humility, emphasising that becoming a preacher was not his idea nor was it for his own acclaim.

The reasons Rough outlined for Knox to accept the calling illustrate the ideals motivating early Protestant preaching ministries. Firstly, preaching was to be to 'the glory of God'. According to Protestant belief, wherever the Word was 'truly preached', God Himself was also present. Rough's second reason, 'the increase of [God's] kingdom', highlights the role of the sermon in proselytizing. His third reason, the 'edification of [the preacher's] brethren', highlights another major use of the sermon: to educate the converted. Rough's fourth purpose is considerably more personal. He exhorts Knox to take up preaching as a favour to him. In retrospect, Knox recalls that at this time Rough was 'oppressed by the multitude of labours' and was hoping that Knox would help relieve the burden by taking on some of his preaching duties. Finally, Rough also indicated that there would be 'rewards'. By responding favourably to this Divine calling, Knox would 'avoid God's heavy displeasure'. In an age that saw sickness, warfare and natural disasters as manifestations of God's anger, to be spared such plights would be considered a reward indeed. Rough further stated that if Knox were to accept the vocation presented to him, he would 'receive God's blessing'.¹²⁵

Knox claims that he eventually acceded to the request after a debate with Dean John Annand, principal of St Leonard's College. At the end of the disputation Knox and Annand publicly vowed to answer each other in print. Yet, according to Knox, 'the people' cried 'we cannot all read your writings, but we may all hear your preaching'.¹²⁶ While Knox is hardly an objective narrator, the whole incident highlights one of the key aspects of sixteenth-century preaching, and the reformer's understanding of it. Sermons allowed the illiterate to have access to the message, and through it, to become a part of the religious debate. Granted, the audience's participation was to be of a controlled nature. They were expected to absorb the information presented and then act according to the reformers' instructions. They were not to take the initiative themselves. They were to be active, yet obedient listeners.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ Knox, *History*, i, 84.

The following Sunday Knox gave his first public sermon in Holy Trinity. A complete transcript does not survive, but we do have Knox's account in the *History*. However, Knox wrote this almost two decades after the sermon's original delivery, and it may well have been subject to intentional editing as well as lapses of memory. Indeed, his 'first' sermon could just as well have been written for an audience in 1565/6 as in 1547. Yet if the *History* is anything to go by, Knox's reputation as a fiery speaker dates from his debut in the pulpit. Choosing Daniel 7 as his text, Knox launched a full-fledged assault on the Roman Church. He also used this first sermon to align himself with the Old Testament prophets, an identification he would evoke throughout his career. In the sermon he claimed that the Roman Church as a whole was Anti-Christ, which he defined as 'one contrary to Christ, because he is contrary to him in life, doctrine, laws and subjects'. He deployed a list of popes and their various indiscretions and misdeeds to illustrate this point. Knox then attacked the practices of pilgrimage, pardons, fasting on Fridays, clerical celibacy 'and other such baggage'. By way of comparison, he claimed that the 'true Kirk' was 'the pillar of verity [...] because it heard the voice of its own pastor, Jesus Christ, would not hear a stranger, neither yet would be carried about with every kind of doctrine.'¹²⁷ This Kirk would subscribe to the doctrine of 'justification by faith' rather than the works promoted by the Catholic Church.

Throughout the sermon Knox utilised terms such as the 'Man of Sin', 'Whore of Babylon' and 'the Beast' to liken the Catholic Church to the chief villains of Revelation and the End of Days. He asked his audience if the description of the Beast provided in Scripture – 'there shall one arise unlike to the other, having a mouth speaking great things and blasphemous' – 'could be applied to any other but to the Pope and his kingdom'.¹²⁸ Knox left no one doubting his stance on the doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. His message was one of apocalyptic urgency. The Roman Church, as Knox saw it, was Antichrist, the fulfillment of the prophecies of Daniel and of the Book of Revelation.¹²⁹ This meant that time was of the essence: members of the

¹²⁷ Knox, *History*, i, 85.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹²⁹ Kyle, *Ministry of Knox*, 103.

‘true Kirk’ must cast off the bonds of Antichrist and prepare to defend the cause of Christ at all costs.

Unlike Hamilton and Wishart, the majority of whose sermons were delivered to curious, if not supportive listeners, Knox presented his first sermon to a dangerously mixed audience. In addition to Rough, Balnaves, Lindsay and the local populace (who he claimed desired his preaching), John Mair, Subprior John Winram, various members of the University, and many canons and friars were also in attendance.¹³⁰ Mair, while not averse to reform from within (having written against clerical abuses), was theologically orthodox: he had been involved in heresy trials in the past and had supported Patrick Hamilton’s execution.¹³¹ At Knox’s sermon he represented the conservative University which had consistently rebuffed attempts at a Protestant re-organisation of the Church. While Subprior John Winram joined the reformers in 1560, at the time of Knox’s sermon he, too, sought the reform of the Church from within, sitting on the heresy trials of John Borthwick, Adam Wallace and Walter Milne as well as preaching at Wishart’s trial.¹³² Even by Knox’s own account, the sermon received mixed reviews. Some said that such an oration would earn him a death like Wishart. Others responded favourably, although Knox may have been exaggerating their numbers.¹³³ Among those who approved of Knox’s message was Sir David Lindsay, whose *Monarchie* (1552) was clearly influenced by the oration.¹³⁴ Knox believed that this first sermon confirmed his calling to the preaching ministry. He had preached the Word of God and many among the listeners had received that message.¹³⁵

While the Church authorities did not approve of the sermon, Knox was spared his mentor’s fate. However, he was, along with Rough, summoned to appear before Winram. The Catholic officials outlined nine tenets they understood Knox and Rough to be espousing in their sermons. The Catholic officials outlined nine heretical tenets espoused by Knox and Rough in their sermons ranging from identifying the pope as

¹³⁰ Knox, *History*, i, 86.

¹³¹ A. Broadie, ‘Mair, John (c.1467–1550)’, *ODNB*.

¹³² L.J. Dunbar, *Reforming the Scottish Church: John Winram (c.1492-1582) and the example of Fife* (Aldershot, 2002), 3.

¹³³ Knox, *History*, i, 86.

¹³⁴ See Chapter Three.

¹³⁵ Kyle, *Ministry of Knox*, 91.

Antichrist to asserting that they were only two sacraments and denouncing the mass as idolatrous.¹³⁶ In the dialogue that followed, Knox affirmed all these beliefs.

Knox further expounded upon his homiletic theology, stating that if ‘anything proceed from faith, it must have the word of God for the assurance; for ye are not ignorant, “That faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God”.’¹³⁷ This statement firmly upheld the Protestant belief in the importance of hearing, and therefore the necessity of speaking and preaching, the Word. Earlier in the *History* Knox had written on the importance of preaching in the vernacular, reminding his readers that ‘Christ Jesus commanded his word to be preached to all nations. Now, if it ought to be preached to all nations, it must be preached in the tongue they understand.’¹³⁸ For Knox, as for Luther, Zwingli, Hamilton and Wishart, the Word was all.

Knox’s sermon and his subsequent interview with the subprior sparked a decree that ‘every learned man from the abbey and university should preach in the parish kirk this Sunday about’.¹³⁹ This action can be seen as an attempt by the Catholic authorities to reclaim the pulpit for orthodoxy. As such, it can also be viewed as a sign of the growing influence of Protestant preaching. In counter-response to this mandate, Knox began preaching on weekdays and claimed that Protestant Communion (‘the Lord’s Table’) was being celebrated in the town.¹⁴⁰ In the meantime, the Scottish government received significant aid from France, including military support. On 31 July 1547, after less than 24 hours of bombardment – the Castilians, including Knox, surrendered the Castle to the French.¹⁴¹ Knox would spend the next two years as a slave on a French galley.

Catholic Alliances and Catholic Renewal

The violent re-taking of St Andrews Castle by pro-French/pro-Catholic forces was indicative of things to come. The English cease-fire in Scotland did not last. Henry VIII had died in January and his young son Edward VI had inherited the throne. In

¹³⁶ Knox, *History*, i, 87.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 44.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 93.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁴¹ Bonner, ‘Recovery of St Andrews Castle in 1547: French Naval Policy and Diplomacy in the British Isles,’ *The English Historical Review*, June (1996), 590-591.

September Protector Somerset led an army north and soundly defeated the Scots at Pinkie on 10 September 1547, subsequently taking control of large parts of the Lowlands. However, the campaign did not have the effect that Somerset desired. Instead of forcing the Scottish government into alliance with England, it drove them to turn once again to the French for help.¹⁴² In July 1548, the Franco-Scottish Treaty of Haddington betrothed Mary, Queen of Scots to the French Dauphin, Francis. The young queen was quickly sent to France, securely out of English reach.¹⁴³ This was a resounding diplomatic and religious triumph for France and for Catholicism in Scotland. By the end of 1549 their military victory was complete. Finally, the Treaty of Boulogne, signed between France and England in March 1550, resulted in the withdrawal of all English troops from Scotland.¹⁴⁴ The French troops were also required to leave the kingdom. However, since the treaty specified the Queen of Scots as an ally of France, the implication was that the French would supply the necessary aid if the English meddled in Scotland again. The death of Edward VI in July 1553 and the accession of his Catholic half-sister Mary, crushed all hopes of English aid for Scottish Protestantism.

Over the next decade, Scotland witnessed a period of Catholic renewal and reform.¹⁴⁵ After the archbishopric of St Andrews had sat vacant for two years, Governor Arran's half-brother John Hamilton, formerly the Abbot of Paisley, was appointed to succeed Cardinal Beaton. In his capacity as archbishop, Hamilton presided over four provincial Scottish Church councils, held in 1549, 1552, 1556 and 1559, that addressed some of the growing concerns over the state and conduct of the Catholic Church in Scotland. According to the statutes of the council of 1549, the assembled prelates and clerics recognised 'two causes' behind the dissensions and heresies: 'the corruption of morals and profane lewdness of life in churchmen of almost all ranks, together with the crass ignorance of literature and of all the liberal arts – and from these two sources principally spring many abuses'.¹⁴⁶ The Council acknowledged that the members of the

¹⁴² Ryrie, *Origins*, 75.

¹⁴³ Merriman, *Rough Wooings*, 309-310.

¹⁴⁴ Kellar, *Scotland, England, and the Reformation*, 111.

¹⁴⁵ Dunbar, *Reforming the Scottish Church*, 30.

¹⁴⁶ *Statutes of the Scottish Church*, 84.

Church itself were at least partially responsible for the religious dissatisfaction and set out to rectify the situation.

The Council of 1549 based some of its rulings on those of the Council of Trent, which first convened in 1545.¹⁴⁷ Of the sixty-six statutes enacted by the Scottish Council, seventeen dealt with clerical discipline, seventeen focused on equipping and mobilizing the clergy to preach, and another three specifically centered on combating heresy. Other statutes concentrated on putting an end to absenteeism and pluralism, while a further nine concentrated on appointing competent and qualified men to various positions within the Church.¹⁴⁸ The first seven sessions of Trent, held between December 1545 and January 1547, had been concerned with similar issues. The fifth, sixth and seventh sessions of Trent, in particular, addressed clerical education, absenteeism, pluralism and the appointment of competent clergy.¹⁴⁹ Like their Tridentine counterparts, the Scottish Council was deeply concerned that the clergy should look presentable and act respectably.¹⁵⁰ The Scottish Council condemned concubinage and enforced clerical celibacy, regulated clerical dress and insisted on a clean-shaven and tonsured priesthood. Furthermore, much time and effort was to be expended to ensure that churchmen were provided with the education necessary to carry out their duties competently.

Whether reacting to Protestant criticisms or as a result of inward examination, or a combination of both, the Scottish Council dictated that regular preaching of the Word of God was to become a priority. The statutes went into detail explaining who was to preach, when preaching was to take place, and how God's Word was to be preached: 'purely, sincerely, and in a Catholic sense; that the true uses of the church's ceremonies be moderately, soberly, and discreetly explained; that false opinions be prohibited, publicly denounced, and confuted'.¹⁵¹ The Scottish statutes made provision for

¹⁴⁷ J.K. Cameron also makes an interesting argument for the possible influence of Hermann von Wied's his *Enchiridion Christianae Institutionis* (1547). Around the time of the Scottish Provincial Councils, St Mary's and St Leonard's college libraries each possessed copies of *Enchiridion*. Cameron's article, however, focuses on von Wied's influence on post-1560 reform in Scotland. J.K. Cameron, 'The Cologne Reformation and the Church of Scotland', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 30/i (January 1979), 39-64.

¹⁴⁸ *Statutes*, 84-134.

¹⁴⁹ *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, ed. and trans. T.A. Buckley (London, 1851); clerical education, 24; preaching, 26-29; absenteeism and visitation, 47-49; pluralism and competent clerics, 55-58.

¹⁵⁰ Ryrie, 'Reform without Frontiers', 31.

¹⁵¹ *Statutes*, 124-125.

preaching within religious houses as well as to the public. Bishops and local ordinaries were required to preach to their flocks in person at least four times a year.¹⁵² Vicars, curates and ‘all those who in any manner so ever hold any parochial or other churches which shall have the cure of souls’ were to ‘feed the people committed to them’ every Sunday as well as on feast days. They were to teach their congregations ‘the things which it is necessary for all to know unto salvation, and announc[e] to them with brevity and simplicity of discourse the vices they ought not to follow after, that they may escape everlasting punishment and obtain the glory of heaven.’ The Scottish statutes also made provision ‘for the permanent establishment of preachers throughout the province and for their maintenance’. Preachers were to speak on an Epistle or a Gospel for the first half of their discourse, while the second half was to focus on catechism. Finally, they were to teach the Lord’s Prayer in the vernacular.¹⁵³

Apparently the Scottish Council had some difficulty enforcing their decrees. When it met again in January 1552, it declared that ‘owning to troublous times and their manifold embarrassments’ certain statutes had not been carried into effect. In particular, the Council of 1552 censured the bishops and rectors who failed to preach four times a year.¹⁵⁴ It also made provision for ‘the issue and publication’ of a vernacular catechism. However, this text was not intended for the laity but was to be used only by the clergy, not least as a study tool for their sermons: so that they might attain ‘such proficiency in the knowledge of the holy Scriptures as to be able [...] rightly to instruct the people in the Catholic faith and other things necessary to salvation, or to convert the erring’. Furthermore, clergymen who neglected to study the catechism would be fined. The Council of 1559 continued to be concerned with preaching, making provisions to examine the doctrine and knowledge of all who are ‘admittit to preach [the Word of God] publickly to the peple’.¹⁵⁵ Although the records of the 1556 Council do not survive, it is likely that the statutes of that session included concerns for preaching as well.

Although Archbishop Hamilton did not have his predecessor’s reputation for persecuting heretics, upon his elevation to St Andrews, he presided over the trial of

¹⁵² *Statutes*, 98.

¹⁵³ *Statutes*, 101-127.

¹⁵⁴ *Statutes*, 135-136.

¹⁵⁵ *Statutes*, 143-157.

Adam Wallace. Wallace, a layman from Kyle, was accused of preaching Reformed doctrine. Summoned to appear before the Archbishop, he denied the charge claiming (on grounds discussed earlier in this chapter) that he ‘never judged himself worthy of so excellent a vocation’, and that he had instead given ‘exhortation’ in private gatherings of fellow reformists. Wallace admitted to reading and discussing Scripture in the vernacular and blamed clerical neglect as justification for these actions. This declaration, coupled with a firm denial of Purgatory and prayers to the saints, resulted in his execution.¹⁵⁶ Yet, of all of the charges leveled against him, perhaps the most damning was that he was publicly proclaiming his radical beliefs through preaching. The incident thus highlights two leading themes of this chapter – the reverence with which Protestants viewed the vocation of ‘true’ preaching and the growing concern among Catholic authorities that Protestant preaching and exhortations were having some impact.

Although few evangelicals or Protestants were willing to follow Wallace’s example in the early 1550s, this did not mean that Protestant sermonising had come to a standstill.¹⁵⁷ Among those persisting in sharing their message were John Willock and William Harlaw. According to Knox, ‘these two did sometimes, in several companies, assemble the brethren who, by their exhortations, began greatly to be encouraged, and did show that they had an earnest thirst of godliness’.¹⁵⁸ A former Dominican friar from Ayr, Willock had fled to England where, along with fellow religious émigré Alexander Seton, he served as a chaplain to Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. In 1551 Willock returned to Scotland to preach in the Borders. He went back to England the following year. In 1554 he fled to Emden after being implicated in the plot to crown Lady Jane Grey.¹⁵⁹ A native of Edinburgh, William Harlaw also spent some time in England. Following the death of Edward VI in July 1553, he returned to Scotland and began speaking in private homes.¹⁶⁰ Dawson observes that during the first half of the 1550s, the authorities left most evangelical and Protestant laypeople alone and that, for their

¹⁵⁶ Knox, *History*, i, 114.

¹⁵⁷ Dawson, *Scotland Re-formed*, 184.

¹⁵⁸ Knox, *History*, i, 118.

¹⁵⁹ D. Shaw, ‘Willock, John (d. 1585)’, *ODNB*.

¹⁶⁰ D. Shaw, ‘Harlaw, William (c.1500–1578)’, *ODNB*.

part, the Protestants ‘remained quiet and unobtrusive’.¹⁶¹ With the collapse of the pro-English/pro-Protestant agenda, and in the face of Archbishop Hamilton’s reforms, Protestant preaching went underground, taking place in small group gatherings or conventicles. Protestants were rare in most regions of Scotland, with Fife, Ayrshire, and Angus and the Mearns being exceptions. But even in these districts, outspoken supporters of reform were few and usually confined to members of the upper and noble classes.¹⁶²

Knox’s Return

Towards the end of 1555, John Knox reluctantly returned to Scotland, where he also began preaching to private gatherings.¹⁶³ Since his release from the galleys in 1549, he had had time to hone his oratorical skills in Berwick, Newcastle, London, Frankfurt and Geneva. In Geneva Knox became acquainted with John Calvin, the city’s principal reformer. It was at Calvin’s suggestion that Knox (again, unwillingly) became the minister of the congregation of English exiles gathered in Geneva.¹⁶⁴ During his time there, Knox had ample opportunity to attend Calvin’s sermons as well as to observe the workings of an established Reformed church.¹⁶⁵ Calvin was a prolific speaker, preaching on average 286 sermons a year. The authority of the Word was paramount, and Calvin sought to make Scripture as clear as possible in his sermons, making it easy for his congregation to understand even the most difficult passages. He even refrained from using theological terms not found in the Bible. He believed that the preacher had two purposes: firstly, to set the godly on the right path, and secondly, to castigate the ungodly.¹⁶⁶ Calvin viewed himself as a prophet, much like those of the Old Testament, who rebuked and warned the people as well as taught them. Knox, who considered his time in Geneva to be the happiest of his life, followed suit.¹⁶⁷

On his return to Edinburgh in 1555, Knox began to ‘exhort secretly’ in the house of James Syme. This attracted a number of ‘personages of the town’ including Erskine

¹⁶¹ Dawson, *Scotland Re-formed*, 184.

¹⁶² Ryrie, *Origins*, 121; Cowan, *Regional Aspects*, 10.

¹⁶³ Knox, ‘Letter to Elizabeth Bowes, 4 November 1555’ in *The Works of John Knox [WK]*, David Laing (ed.), vol. IV (Edinburgh, 1895), 217.

¹⁶⁴ Knox, *History*, i, 110.

¹⁶⁵ Gordon, *Calvin*, 262.

¹⁶⁶ Ford, ‘Preaching in the Reformed Tradition’, 73, 74 & 67.

¹⁶⁷ Gordon, *Calvin*, 262.

of Dun, John Willock and William Maitland of Lethington.¹⁶⁸ At Erskine's request, Knox preached in Dun, Angus. From there he journeyed to Calder, where he was joined by John, sixth Lord Erskine, Archibald, fifth Earl of Argyll and Lord James Stewart – the illegitimate half-brother of the queen – who encouraged him to preach to larger audiences. Knox, it appears, took this advice, because when he moved on to Edinburgh he 'taught commonly'.¹⁶⁹ It is likely that most of this group teaching would have taken place within private homes.¹⁷⁰ However, Knox may have ventured into public, as he reported to his mother-in-law, Elizabeth Bowes, that during one of these early visits to Edinburgh 'the trumpet blew the ald sound thrie dayis together, till privat houssis of indifferent largenes culd not conteane the voice of it'.¹⁷¹

As with his mentor Wishart, the elite of the realm proved to be Knox's most significant supporters. In addition to Balnaves, Lindsay, Maitland, Dun, Argyll, Erskine and Lord James he benefitted from the patronage of a number of other members of the elite. John Lockhart of Barr, who had been a supporter of Wishart, Robert Campbell of Kinzeancleuch, Hugh Wallace of Carnell, James Chalmers of Gadgirth and Andrew Stewart, Lord Ochiltree invited him to speak in their homes. He also, like his mentor, taught in the town of Ayr. Knox claims to have celebrated the Lord's Table (the Reformed Eucharist) at a number of these gatherings. Before Easter he was requested by Alexander, fourth Earl of Glencairn to follow Wishart's route west, this time to Finlaystone in Renfrewshire, where he also preached and administered the Lord's Table. Knox mentions that Protestant communion was partaken of by the earl, his lady and some of the earl's friends. Following this visit, he returned to Calder where 'divers from Edinburgh' and its environs assembled to hear him speak on doctrine and the 'right use of the Lord's Table'. At the request of the gentlemen of the Mearns – who 'maintain true preaching of the Evangel of Jesus Christ, as God should offer unto them preachers and opportunity' – he travelled again to Dun, where he proceeded to speak on the subject of the 'Table of the Lord Jesus'.¹⁷²

¹⁶⁸ Knox, *History*, i, 119.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 121.

¹⁷⁰ Ryrie, *Origins*, 130.

¹⁷¹ Knox, 'Undated Letter to Elizabeth Bowes' in *WK*, iv, 218.

¹⁷² Knox, *History*, i, 122.

At some point during his Scottish sojourn of 1555-56, Knox preached a sermon on Matthew 4 and the Temptation of Christ. We know this from a letter he wrote to Anne Locke dated 9 December 1556 (after his return to Geneva), in which he promised to send her his thoughts on the subject which he had ‘wrait being in Scotland’ and that he ‘taucht [...] befor [he] did wryt it’.¹⁷³ The subsequent exposition was sent to Locke and eventually passed on to a Mrs. Anne Prouze. From there, it made its way into the hands of a London publisher, Robert Waldegrave, who printed *An Exposition upon the fourth of Mathew* in 1583.¹⁷⁴ How much this final printed work resembles the actual sermon is unknown. As with his recollection of his first sermon, it is likely that, in writing it out after the fact, Knox would have taken the time to expound upon it further.

The overall theme of the written sermon focused on resisting the temptations of Satan and trusting in the ultimate victory of Christ. According to Matthew 4, Christ spent 40 days fasting in the desert following his baptism by John the Baptist. There, Satan unsuccessfully tried three times to tempt Christ into disobeying God. Knox’s sermon started with the first temptation. When Satan first approached Christ, he challenged Christ to turn stones into bread – to ease his hunger and thereby break his divinely-ordained fast. Christ responded to this temptation, saying ‘It is writtin, Man liveth not be bread onlie, but be everie word whilk proceideth out of the mouth of God’. The Christian, Knox stated, was to follow Christ’s example and combat the Devil with the pure Word of God. He declared that Scripture was ‘the sword of the Halie Gaist’, and as such, was ‘armour and weaponis sufficient’ to defeat the Satan and his minions – which included the Catholic Church.¹⁷⁵ Satan, Knox warned (paraphrasing 1 Peter 5:8), ‘goith he about, seiking lyke a roring lyoun to undermyne and destroy oure faith’. But the believer was not to fear, for he could call on Christ and his Word to defend him.¹⁷⁶ Christ was already victorious, Knox reminded his audience, for Christ ‘hath fouchtin oure battell, he him self hath takin us in his cair and protectioun; how that ever the Divill rage be temptatiouns, be thai spirituall or corporall, he is not abill to bereif us out of the hand of the potent Sone of God’.¹⁷⁷ These would have been encouraging words

¹⁷³ Knox, ‘Letter to Anne Locke, 9 December 1556’ in *WK*, iv, 239-40.

¹⁷⁴ Knox, *Exposition upon the fourth of Mathew* (London, Robert Waldegrave, 1583).

¹⁷⁵ Knox, *Exposition*, Ciii^v, Civ^v, Cv^v.

¹⁷⁶ Knox, *Exposition*, Cvi^{r-v}.

¹⁷⁷ Knox, *Exposition*, Bv^r.

for a group, gathered behind closed doors, increasingly coming to view their situation in terms of a struggle between good and evil.

Knox also took the opportunity to condemn the Lenten fast, which the Catholic Church claimed had its origins in Christ's own forty day fast. In typically bombastic fashion, Knox declared that '[if] we aught to follow all Christis actionis, than oucht we neher to eat or drink the space of fourtie dayis, for sa fastit Chryst. We aucht to go upon the watteris with oure feit; to cast out divillis by oure worde; to heall and cure all sortis of maladeis; to call agane the deid to lyfe; for so did Christ'.¹⁷⁸ The Lenten fast had long been a point of contention for the Protestant reformers, particularly among the Swiss – Zwingli and his friends notoriously ate sausages during Lent.¹⁷⁹ In keeping with the Reformed viewpoint, Knox stated that the Lenten fast was a counterfeit act, a work of man that accomplished nothing.¹⁸⁰

While Knox originally spoke on all three of the temptations Christ faced in the desert, the transcript remains incomplete. Pleading 'sundrie impedimentis', Knox broke-off his monologue before he could expand upon the second and third temptations. What he had written was committed to paper while he was still in Scotland. Therefore, it is likely that Knox had been unable to finish the transcription because he was on the move. Although he promised Locke that he would complete the sermon in later correspondence, there is no surviving evidence indicating that he ever did so.¹⁸¹ His subsequent responsibilities in Geneva may have further prevented him from finishing the text.

Knox's Scottish preaching itinerary closely resembles Wishart's, so it is no surprise that Wishart's followers in Ayrshire, Angus and the Mearns, and around Edinburgh protected and supported Knox. However, there is at least one major difference between their tours: Knox did most of his preaching and exhorting behind closed doors, while Wishart preached openly. Clare Kellar points to the different religious climates in which the reformers operated. During Wishart's time, the religious atmosphere was more 'volatile'. The confessional implications of the conflict with England encouraged 'outspokenness and risk-taking'. A decade later, the government's

¹⁷⁸ Knox, *Exposition*, Aviii^{r-v}.

¹⁷⁹ Lindberg, *European Reformations*, 161.

¹⁸⁰ Knox, *Exposition*, Aviii^v.

¹⁸¹ Knox, *Exposition*, Cvi^v.

more relaxed attitude to reform provided ‘less incentive for an immediate challenge to the regime.’¹⁸² This explanation, however, is not enough. The defeat of the pro-English/pro-Protestant agenda in 1548/9 and the Church’s attempts at internal reform must also be taken into account. The kingdom was locked securely into an alliance with Catholic France. Meanwhile, the Scottish Church was actively trying to address clerical abuses and, through reformation from within, counter external heresy. While Archbishop Hamilton had not shown his predecessor’s proclivity for persecuting heretics, it was still early days. The kingdom’s Protestants may have been opting to keep their heads down until they could better gauge the situation.

However, this did not mean that Knox’s ministry went un-noticed or unobstructed. The Blackfriars in Edinburgh summoned him to appear before them on 15 May 1556. Erskine of Dun and a number of other noblemen arrived in the capital to offer their protection; however, the meeting did not take place. Instead, Knox took advantage of being in Edinburgh and preached ‘in a greater audience than ever before he had done in that town.’ For ten days he spoke twice daily at the Bishop of Dunkeld’s Great Lodging.¹⁸³ These meetings were attended by many gentlemen, including the Earl of Glencairn and William Keith, fourth Earl Marischal. Clearly, Knox continued to receive support from among the kingdom’s elite. Furthermore, he claimed that Glencairn and the Earl Marischal encouraged him to write a letter to the Queen Regent, Mary of Guise, based on the sermons he had delivered.¹⁸⁴

Approaching ‘The Letter to the Regent’ as the text of a sermon is not without difficulties. Firstly, the original letter was *based* on the series of sermons delivered at the Bishop of Dunkeld’s Lodgings. Not only was the letter an amalgamation of a number of sermons, but these sermons were recorded after the fact. Secondly, the printed version of the ‘Letter’, first published in 1558 while Knox was in Geneva, contains Knox’s additional commentary on the original letter, which he claims was

¹⁸² Kellar, *Scotland, England, and the Reformation*, 152.

¹⁸³ Knox, *History*, i, 122. This location is somewhat perplexing. Bishop Robert Crichton (Bishop of Dunkeld from 1554-71) was once described by Knox as one of the ‘chief pillars of the papistical kirk’. N.M. de S. Cameron (ed.), *Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Edinburgh, 1993), 223. It is likely, therefore, that at the time of Knox’s preaching, the property, which may have been located on the Royal Mile in Edinburgh, near to the present-day Tron Kirk, was no longer in the Bishop’s possession.

¹⁸⁴ Knox, *History*, i, 122.

delivered to the Queen Regent in May 1556.¹⁸⁵ In July 1556 Knox had been summoned to return to Geneva by the English congregation there. Perhaps due to rising tensions in Scotland, he accepted their call.¹⁸⁶ The controversial preacher appears to have left his homeland just in time. Following his departure, the bishops summoned him to face a heresy charge. When he failed to appear, they burnt him in effigy.¹⁸⁷ Excerpts from the original letter from May of that year indicate that Knox was already at odds with the bishops before he left the country. In the letter he attempts to defend himself and persuade the Queen Regent to support the Protestant cause against the bishops. Yet for all these layers and additions found in the printed 'Letter to the Regent' it is possible to distill an idea of what Knox was preaching in Edinburgh in May 1556.

Knox clearly stated his conviction that the kingdom's Protestants were prepared to suffer for what they believed. Furthermore, they would be victorious. Not one to tiptoe around an issue, Knox spoke out against the corruptions of the Catholic Church: 'The corruption of life is evident, and religion is not judged nor measured by the plain Word of God, but by custom, consuetude, will, consent and determinations of men.'¹⁸⁸ This was *sola scriptura*, the absolute core of Knox's theology. 'God cannot lie;' Knox proclaimed, 'God cannot deny Himself. He hath witnessed from the beginning that no religion pleaseth Him except that which He by His own Word hath commanded and established.'¹⁸⁹ Knox expressed similar sentiments in his audience with the subprior of St Andrews a decade before. Furthermore, as with his sermons, Knox's 'Letter' relied heavily upon biblical references to support his arguments. All of these themes were certainly in keeping with Knox's homiletic practice and may have been recycled from those sermons of May 1556.

Although absent from Scotland, in July 1556 Knox wrote to his brethren back home, encouraging them to study their Bibles daily and to not forsake the gathering of the faithful. If they could not gather to worship in public, they were to continue to come together in private homes: 'Within your own houses, I say, in some cases, ye are

¹⁸⁵ John Knox, 'Letter to the Regent' in *John Knox: On Rebellion*, ed. R.A. Mason, 48. John Knox, *The copie of a letter, sent to the ladye Mary dowagire, Regent of Scotland in the yeare. 1556.* (Wesel, Hugh Singleton, 1556), USTC 505341. Singleton was also responsible for the first edition of Wishart's translation of the Helvetic Confession.

¹⁸⁶ Knox, *History*, i, 123, 139.

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 124.

¹⁸⁸ Knox, 'Letter to the Regent', 49-58.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 59.

bishoppes and kynges; your wyfe, chyldren, servauntes, and familye are youre bishopryke and charge'. They were to instruct their families and friends in God's true Word, plant virtue and repress vice.¹⁹⁰

In March 1557 Glencairn, Lorne, Erskine and Lord James entreated Knox to return to Scotland. Knox agreed to their request, but was delayed on the Continent until 1559.¹⁹¹ In a letter to his brethren in Scotland in December 1557, he exhorted them to be diligent, 'lest that oblivion and forgetfulness of our God and of his kingdom creep in our minds'.¹⁹² Knox was concerned that in his absence they would begin to backslide and to compromise with the secular authorities. Later that month he wrote again, this time encouraging the Protestant nobility to obey the civil authorities 'in things lawful'. Furthermore, they were to 'seek the favours of the Authority, that by it (if possible) the cause in which ye labour may be promoted, or at the least not persecuted.' Only after their humble submissions were denied could they 'lawfully attempt the extremities'. Above all, they were to remember that their ultimate goal was to ensure 'that Christ's Evangel may be truly preached, and his holy Sacraments rightly ministered unto you, and to your brethren, the subjects of that Realm'.¹⁹³ The preaching of the Word of God was to take precedence over all else, including submission to the laws and rule of the 'established Authority'.

It was after his return in 1559 that Knox's Scottish preaching career really took off. In the meantime, other Scottish preachers were proclaiming reformed doctrine. And, if Knox is to be believed, they were becoming bolder. William Harlaw preached in Edinburgh, while John Douglas – protected by the Earl of Argyll – delivered sermons in Leith and sometimes in the capital. Paul Methven preached publicly in Dundee and 'divers others' were active in Angus and the Mearns. It was also around this time that John Willock returned from Emden. According to Knox 'some of the nobility [...] with many barons and gentlemen, were his auditors, and by him were godly instructed and wondrously comforted. They kept their conventions, and held councils with such

¹⁹⁰ John Knox, 'Letter of Wholesome Counsel Addressed to His Brethren in Scotland, 7 July 1556' in *WK*, iv, 135-7.

¹⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 132-133.

¹⁹² John Knox, 'Letter To His Brethren in Scotland, 1 December 1557', in *WK*, iv, 269.

¹⁹³ John Knox, 'Letter to the Professors of the Truth in Scotland, 17 December 1557', *WK*, iv, 285.

gravity and closeness, that the enemies trembled.’¹⁹⁴ There may be some validity in this claim, as by 1558 Protestant preaching had become enough of a force that some preachers were summoned to appear before the Queen Regent in July of that year.¹⁹⁵ Among them was Paul Methven, a Scottish religious exile who had recently returned to his homeland and had begun preaching in Angus and Fife. Pitscottie claimed that the summons came to naught since the preacher was ‘so assi[s]ted be temporall men’.¹⁹⁶ Once again, the nobility turn out to be the reform movement’s greatest allies.

Conclusion

The decades between 1527 and 1558 witnessed the rise of preaching as the most theologically significant medium in the Scottish reform movement. Among Protestants the sermon replaced the Mass as the focus of worship, due to the reformers’ belief in the ultimate supremacy of the Word of God (both in Scripture and in Christ) and the necessity of speaking and hearing that Word. According to Knox and others like him, the ‘trew Kirk of Chryst Jesus’ could only exist ‘whairsoever Godis Word hath supreme autoritie; whair Chryst Jesus is affirmit, prechit, and receavit to be onlie Saviour of the world’.¹⁹⁷ Consequently, the very oral and aural nature of the medium facilitated its use as a propaganda tool. Although limited in number, through the preaching of sermons the Scottish reformers were able to present their message to geographically and socially diverse audiences.

The forced itinerancy of these preachers also aided in the dissemination of their beliefs. Barred from holding regular preaching posts, reform-minded preachers were often on the run, speaking when and where opportunities arose. This constant travelling made it difficult to record or print the sermons and scholars must rely on other evidence, such as eye-witness accounts, heresy trial transcripts and surviving attributed works to come to an understanding of the messages, methods and motives of Scottish Protestant preachers, as well as the effectiveness of sermons as a persuasive tool. Clearly, preaching was viewed as an absolutely essential element of the early Scottish reformist agenda. George Wishart and John Knox, among others, dedicated their lives to the

¹⁹⁴ Knox, *History*, i, 125.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 126.

¹⁹⁶ Robert Lindsay of Pitscottie, *The Chronicles of Scotland*, ed. J.G. Dalyell (Edinburgh, 1814), ii, 523.

¹⁹⁷ Knox, ‘Letter to His Brethren’, in *WK*, iv, 267.

vocation of preaching the Word of God. Even the academic Patrick Hamilton spent some time sermonising.

Over the course of the period Protestant preaching gained ground, particularly after Arran's 'Godly Fit' of 1543 opened a door which the governor and Cardinal Beaton could never fully close again. While much of the preaching in the decades to follow was carried out in conventicles, the Catholic authorities were becoming increasingly concerned. It is indicative of the importance attached to preaching that attempts were made to revitalise the Catholic Church's preaching mission in Scotland. As for Protestant sermons, the kingdom's elite appear to have been a particularly receptive and active audience, especially among the lairds of Ayrshire, Fife, Lothian, Angus and the Mearns. All of the major preachers found support, and even protection, from among this group. It is unsurprising that the leaders of the Rebellion that resulted in the Reformation Parliament of 1560 would come from the same network.

CHAPTER SIX: Pedagogy

The final medium under investigation is pedagogical tools, works specifically intended for the regular edification of the already converted. By the eve of the sixteenth century, instructional and devotional literature for lay audiences enjoyed increased popularity in Scotland. Priests and religious composed vernacular texts for secular consumption, and those who could afford them commissioned Books of Hours. As with academic discourse, poetry, drama and sermons, these media were appropriated by Scots seeking religious change. However, instead of conversion, these reformist texts aimed to instruct those already committed to the reformed faith. Devotional tracts, a song collection and a Scots translation of the New Testament were produced for use by laymen and laywomen to promote individual and group interaction with, and understanding of, the new doctrines.

As with the other media discussed in this study, surviving Scottish examples of early reformist devotional and educational literature are markedly fewer in number than their Continental counterparts. While hundreds of different Protestant catechisms were produced in early sixteenth-century Germany, Scotland can boast only two surviving texts printed before 1560 – John Gau’s Scots translation of *The Richt Vay to the Kingdome of Heuine* (1533) and John Johnson’s *An comfortable exhortation: of oure mooste holy Christen faith and her frutes* (1535/6).¹ In addition to devotional tracts and books, Protestant reformers throughout Europe recognised the pedagogical benefits of music, as tunes and rhymes were ideal mnemonic devices. The most ready example of this medium in Scotland is John Wedderburn’s *Gude and Godlie Ballatis*.² Although the oldest known printed edition is dated after 1560, most of the collection was compiled before Wedderburn’s death in 1555, and probably circulated in manuscript or oral form.

However, the most important devotional and instructive text was the Bible itself. Evangelicals and Protestants of all degrees and confessions agreed that access to Scripture in the vernacular was essential not only to the reform of the Church, but to all

¹ Christiern Pedersen, *The Richt Vay to the Kingdome of Heuine*, John Gau (trans.) (Malmö, J. Hoochstraten, 1533; John Johnson, *An comfortable exhortation: of oure mooste holy Christen faith and her frutes* ([Antwerp, J.H. Hoochstraten], 1535).

² John Wedderburn, *Ane compendious buik. of Godly and spirituall sangis*. (Edinburgh, John Scot, at the command & expensis of Thomas Bassandyne, 1565).

aspects of Christian spirituality. Yet only one Bible translation in the Scots vernacular survives from this period – Murdoch Nisbet’s translation of the English Lollard New Testament. Produced before 1530, the text survives only in manuscript as it was quickly superseded by print editions of Tyndale’s English New Testament. Marginalia added to the Nisbet manuscript indicates that Miles Coverdale’s 1537/8 English New Testament was also available in Scotland before 1560.³ In the atmosphere of rising religious tensions, possession and discussion of vernacular Scripture became an extremely contentious subject in early sixteenth-century Scotland.

European reformers were greatly concerned for the spiritual development not only of kingdoms but of individual Christians. While many tried to secure the support of monarchs, nobles, academics and clergymen, this was viewed more as a means to an end than an end in itself. Institutional and governmental backing was essential to cultivating an environment in which individuals (and communities) would be allowed and encouraged to experience the inward transformation of heart, mind and soul that, in turn, would precipitate the true and complete reformation of religion and society. To accomplish this lofty goal it would be necessary to educate not only the clergy and the nobility, but all Christians, in the doctrines and mysteries of faith. Instructional literature, in the form of devotional tracts, song collections and vernacular Bibles were central to this strategy.

Devotional Tracts

Vernacular devotional literature was present in Scotland long before the Reformation. An anonymous hagiography known as *Legends of the Saints* had been available since 1400. The text used language and imagery, including some distinctly Scottish saints, specifically tailored to a Scots audience. Through the example of saintly lives, the work was designed to instruct readers in how best to serve God.⁴ Various other authors, including William Dunbar, composed devotional poems and meditations for wider usage on themes such as Christ’s Passion, the Five Wounds of Christ, the Seven Words of Christ on the Cross, and the Rosary. However, the first truly theological text to

³ M. Dotterweich, ‘A book for Lollards and Protestants: Murdoch Nisbet’s New Testament’ in *Literature and the Scottish Reformation*, eds. C. Gribben and D.G. Mullan (Aldershot, 2009), 237.

⁴ *Legends of the Saints in the Scottish dialect of the fourteenth century*, ed. W.M. Metcalfe (Edinburgh, 1896).

appear in the Scots language was John Irelande's 1490 work, *The Meroure of Wyssdome*. The priest and academic theologian dedicated his manuscript to James IV, hoping that the 'ABC of Christien theologie' would equip the monarch to 'be richt perfit jn theologi'.⁵ The book was also intended to be read aloud by the Scottish clergy to their parishioners, although it was never published for wider circulation.⁶ Another vernacular devotional text, *The Contemplacioun of Synnaris*, was a poem composed in the final years of the fifteenth century by a Franciscan named William of Tours. Divided into seven parts, a meditation (or 'contemplacioun') for each day of the week, the Scots text was published in London in 1499 by Wynkyn de Worde at the request of Richard Fox, Bishop of Durham.⁷ Clues within the devotional indicate that the work was intended for use by the ruling lay elite, encouraging them to set a godly example and to govern justly.⁸

A foundational aspect of the doctrine of the 'priesthood of all believers' promoted by the Protestants was that Christians should know and understand what they believed. To this end, Lutheran reformers on the Continent employed catechisms to educate the laity. These devotional manuals featured vernacular translations of the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, as well as simplified explanations of their meanings, usually in a question-and-answer format. According to Luther, these three declarations contained everything that the Christian needed to know. The faithful were expected not only to memorise these lessons, but to absorb them as well. For Luther, understanding was everything and catechumen were encouraged to think about what they were saying, and to mean it.⁹ Catechisms were intended to be used in the church, the school, and more importantly, the home. Together with sermons and school lessons, they formed the three pillars of Lutheran religious education.¹⁰ In 1529 Luther introduced his Short and Long Catechisms. He encouraged others to follow his lead, resulting in an increase in catechetical writing throughout the German Lutheran territories. Believing that they were acting in 'obedience to the divine

⁵ John Irelande, *Meroure of Wyssdome*, ed. Charles MacPherson (Edinburgh, 1926), i, 17.

⁶ Irelande, *Meroure*, 15.

⁷ William of Tours, *Contemplacioun of Synnaris* (London, Wynkyn de Worde, 1499), STC 5643.

⁸ William of Tours, 'Contemplacioun of Synnaris' in *Devotional Pieces in Verse and Prose*, ed. J.A.W. Bennett (Edinburgh, 1955), 64-169.

⁹ Martin Luther, 'The German Mass and Order of Service' in *Luther's Works*, liii, 65.

¹⁰ G. Strauss, *Luther's House of Learning: Indoctrination of the Young in the German Reformation* (Baltimore, 1978), 155.

command to propagate God's revealed truth and to show their fellow men how they could live by it', Lutheran writers produced thousands of different catechisms in the following decades.¹¹

At least two Scots were directly inspired by these Lutheran devotional aids. By the 1530s, John Gau and John Johnson were living in exile in Lutheran territories abroad. Gau had relocated to Malmö, Denmark (now Sweden). Johnson's whereabouts are harder to trace, although he probably settled in or near Antwerp. Both would have been well placed to witness first-hand the use and benefits of catechetical works and, in the early 1530s, both produced Lutheran devotional manuals for the edification of their brethren among the Scots laity in exile and at home. Once again we see Scottish reformers utilising a medium employed by their Continental brethren. However, the unique circumstances of the Scottish religious and political landscape before 1560 meant that those media would have to be used in a slightly different fashion. The Lutheran system worked best in places where Protestant churches and institutions were permitted, and therefore able to work in concert with one another, unhindered by anti-Protestant legislation. As the previous chapters have demonstrated, the triumvirate of pastor, schoolmaster and parent that Luther and his colleagues depended upon for the religious education of the laity would not have been possible in early sixteenth-century Scotland.

As we have seen, early Protestant preachers, like George Wishart, spent most of their ministries on the run, and were unable to establish regular sermon series for the edification of a single congregation. This itinerancy also gave primacy of place to the message of conversion, rather than the training of the converted. In instances where Protestant converts did meet, they often had to gather in secret, in private homes. Gau, Johnson and their readers embraced Luther's idea of religious education in the home not only for its pedagogical merits, but also because they had no other option. As most instruction had to be clandestine, without the supervision of a regular minister or teacher, manuals for guidance in 'right' doctrine were needed. As a result, instead of serving as supplements to regular preaching and religious education in the schools, devotional literature became a primary means of systematic instruction. For this reason the two surviving catechetical texts intended for a Scots audience were addressed not to

¹¹ Strauss, *House of Learning*, 2, 164.

the young – as was the fashion of many of their German counterparts – but to adult men and women.

The Richt Vay to the Kingdom of Heuien (1533)

In 1533 John Gau sought to address his Lutheran brethren among the Scottish laity with *The Richt Vay to the Kingdom of Heuien*. A translation of a Dutch book, Gau's text is believed to be the first Lutheran work printed in the Scots language.¹² As a catechismal treatise, it contains Lutheran expositions on the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer and the Ave Maria. Designed for private and group devotional use, Gau desired that 'al quhilk ondersta[n]dis the scotis tung ma haiff [it] with thayme and reid and wsz it Dailie'.¹³ His use of the word 'onderstandis' rather than 'reads' implies that he anticipated that his translation would perhaps be read aloud, and therefore accessible to an audience beyond reading individuals.

Translated in exile in Malmø, Gau anticipated that his book would circulate readily among lay folk, whom he hoped would make daily use of it. This readership was not necessarily confined to the circle of Scots Protestants at Malmø. Martin Dotterweich proposes that members of that group may have funded the project with the intention of shipping copies to Scotland.¹⁴ The content of the treatise also indicates that Gau's intended audience was already of the Lutheran persuasion. These expectations imply that Gau and his publisher believed there was a market for the book. Despite parliamentary legislation and ecclesiastical bans, Lutheran theology was gaining followers in Scotland. Gau hoped his book might be of use.

Little is known of Gau himself. A graduate of the University of St Andrews, it is probable that he was witness to Patrick Hamilton's execution in 1528. Fleeing shortly thereafter, he made his home in the Lutheran city of Malmø, a haven for sympathisers of the Reformation and by the 1530s one of the spiritual centres of Protestant Denmark.¹⁵ Alexander Alesius, another Scottish religious exile, also spent some time there following his own flight from Scotland. Gau and Alesius may have met, although this cannot be confirmed. However, Thomas Riis has argued against claims that Gau

¹² Although the publication of fellow Scot Patrick Hamilton's *Places* predates *The Richt Vay* by two years, it was published in English.

¹³ Pedersen and Gau, *The Richt Vay*, Aiv^r.

¹⁴ Dotterweich, 'Emergence', 151.

¹⁵ Riis, *Auld Acquaintance*, i, 215.

served as a chaplain to the Scottish merchants living and working in Malmø, as the Scots community there had no official chapel or altar.¹⁶ He may, however, have served as an unofficial spiritual leader. It was for this group, and with clear hopes of sending copies to his homeland, that Gau translated *The Richt Vay*. The book was printed in October 1533 by Johannes Hoochstraten, a relative (probably the son) of Michiel Hillen van Hoochstraten, an eminent printer-publisher in Antwerp.¹⁷ *The Richt Vay* was a Scots translation of Christiern Pedersen's Dutch work by the same name (*Den rette vey till Hiemmerigis Rige*), first published at Antwerp in 1531.¹⁸ Pedersen's work was based on a German work by Urbanus Rhegius, published in 1523 at Augsburg.¹⁹ Rhegius, in turn, had utilized material from Luther's own writings for his book.²⁰ This intertextuality is illustrative of the transmission of reformation theology from country to country during this period.

Gau provides his own preface and conclusion to his translation, both in the form of an address to his reader. While many German Lutheran catechisms were intended for children, Gau's introduction to his Scots edition makes it clear that his devotional manual was intended for adults, with many references to 'men a[n]d veme[n]' and 'al chrissine pepil', making no specific mention of children. Only sixteen years after Martin Luther first instigated his religious revolution, reformed beliefs may have been new to some of Gau's readers. They needed to be educated in the new doctrine. The full title of the text indicates Gau's purpose: *The richt vay to the kingdome of heuine is techit heir in the x co[m]mandis of God And in the Creid and Pater noster. In the quhilk al chrissine me[n] sal find al thing yat is neidful and requirit to onderstand to the saluation of the saul.*

Gau's introduction opens with an assault on the devotional literature and doctrines of the Catholic Church. He condemned the 'mony oder skaithful bukis and

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ P.V. Blouw, 'Early protestant publications in Antwerp, 1526-30', *Quaerendo* 26 (1996), 97.

¹⁸ Christiern Pedersen, *Den rette vey till Hiemmerigis Rige* (Antwerpen, Willem Vorsterman, 1531), USTC 437544.

¹⁹ Urbanus Rhegius, *Ain kurtze Erklærung etlicher leüffiger puncten aim yeden Christen nutz und not zu rechten verstand der hailigen geschrift zu dienst* (Augsburg, Sigmund Grimm, 1523), USTC 609937, VD16 R1821.

²⁰ J. Kirk, 'John Gaw (d. c.1553)', *ODNB*.

fals doctrine with the quhilk the pepil hes ben falslie dissaut'.²¹ Such books, according to Gau, contained many false lessons, prayers and fables, fabricated by fools or monks (Aiii^r). After abusing works of Catholic devotion, Gau claims to offer a 'godly' alternative. In true Lutheran fashion, he claims that the Ten Commandments, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer contain all that a Christian needs to know. He advises his readers to learn the Ten Commandments in order 'that thay may chrissinlie leir and onderstand first quhou thay sal ken thair sine and ar sinful creaturs.' They must then learn the Creed that they may 'ondersta[n]d quhou thay suld trow in thayr god a[n]d maker a[n]d ken hime.' Finally, in the Pater Noster they are to learn to pray simply, for 'ane richt chrissine man hes prait aneucht quhen he hes prait ane pater noster with the hart and ane guyd mind'. Furthermore, the 'chrissine man' was to pray directly to God and not seek the intercession of the saints (Aiv^r).

The main text follows. Each line of the Decalogue, Creed and the Prayer is provided with a detailed Lutheran explanation of its meaning and application. For example, the commentary on the Decalogue states that the Commandments teach all men to know their spiritual sickness, as well as to know that men can never fulfill all the commandments and keep themselves from sin (Av^v-Avi^r). However, the reader is not to despair, for God's grace extended to the faithful through the sacrifice of Christ (Avi^r). The subsequent exposition on the theme of Law vs. Gospel is similar to that found in other Lutheran works from the period, such as Patrick Hamilton's *Patrick's Places*.

One of the chief desires of evangelical and Protestant reformers throughout Europe was that the laity be taught the Commandments, Lord's Prayer and Creed in their vernacular. Various sources calling for this in Scotland have been outlined in previous chapters, although none of those works actually produced a Scots version of all three.²² Gau's *Richt Vay* was the first Protestant text to do so, providing an explanation of each line, citing heavily from Scripture. On the whole, the work strongly promotes daily vernacular Bible reading, directing the reader to specific biblical passages. This practice was not uncommon in evangelical and Lutheran works, lending credibility to their claims as well as familiarising the audience with scriptural texts. It is, however,

²¹ Pedersen and Gau, *The Rycht Vay*, Aii^r. When possible, subsequent page references will be noted in the text.

²² Lindsay's Johne Commonweill recites the Creed in *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaitis*, but does not provide the Prayer or the Commandments.

interesting to note that the Scots translation of *The Richt Vay* was published in the wake of the 1532 Scottish ecclesiastical ban on vernacular Scripture: the same ban that Alesius composed his open letter to James V to denounce. But whether Gau's 1533 publication of *The Richt Vay* was in response to the ban is a matter of speculation.

The Richt Vay also includes a very brief exposition on the Ave Maria. The writer claimed that, as the words come straight from Scripture, the Angelic Salutation is not apocryphal and must be considered biblical.²³ However, he cautions his reader that it must not be viewed as a prayer to Mary, for only God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are worthy of receiving prayers. Instead, the Ave Maria must be looked upon as merely a remembrance of the 'greit grace quhilk God gaiff to hir [...] to be ye moder of his sone' (Ovii^r-Ovii^v). In this context, Mary was not to be considered the mediatrix, nor was she to be viewed as wholly without sin.

While the majority of the book was a translation of work written by others, Gau brought the devotional manual to a close with his own words. In his concluding epistle, he took special care to address the 'nobil lordis a[n]d baro[n]s of Scotla[n]d'. The language of the 'Epistil' differs from the rest of the text, which was written for those already converted – the concluding letter seeks to convert. Gau announced his desire that the nobility would treasure the reading of vernacular Scripture, give their lives over to God and teach the truth of the Gospel to their children (Pi^v-Pviii^r). He further assured them of the futility of works, and then outlined the theology of justification by faith. Gau made special mention of Patrick Hamilton, whose fate would have been well known among the court and nobility, where he had connections – his relative, the Earl of Arran, would become Regent following James's death.

An interesting parallel can be drawn between the householders on whom Luther and his colleagues depended for the enforcing of religious education, and the Scottish nobility whom Gau entrusted with a similar responsibility. He charged the nobles and barons with being an example and ensuring that the 'evangel' was 'truly preached' and that the errant clergy, those 'blynd giders and pastors quhilk sekis bot the mylk and ye wow of the scheip' did not go unpunished (Pi^v).²⁴ The nobility, according to Gau, had a

²³ 'Hail, [Mary] full of grace, the Lord is with thee' is taken from the Angel Gabriel's greeting to Mary at the Annunciation (Luke 1:28), while 'Blessed are thou among women. And blessed is the fruit of thy womb' is taken from her cousin Elizabeth's greeting later in the same chapter (Luke 1:42).

²⁴ George Buchanan would say something similar in his 1542 *Baptistes*. See Chapter Four.

responsibility to secure the spiritual wellbeing of the people of Scotland. If the hearts of the people were blinded by the Catholic Church, the nobility of Scotland must lead them to the truth (Pviii^f). Gau would not be alone in this belief. In subsequent years, David Lindsay, George Wishart and John Knox all looked to the ruling elite to initiate religious reform. It was with this audience that the reform movement had its most lasting impact.

Gau's *Richt Vay* may not have been the only Protestant Scots language catechism to circulate in early sixteenth-century Scotland. *The Gude and Godlie Ballatis*, attributed to John Wedderburn of Dundee, also contain the text of a catechism, as well as the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, and the Creed in rhyming verse. Although the oldest surviving print edition of the *Ballatis* was published after 1560, it is highly likely that the text was available in manuscript form before Wedderburn's death in 1556. What is known is that by 1558 at least two Scottish reformers were using some form of vernacular catechism, whether in manuscript, print or even oral form, to teach the laity. In 1539 Dean Thomas Forret was tried for, among other things, teaching his parishioners Scots versions of the Creed, the Commandments and the Lord's Prayer. In April of 1558 Walter Mylne, an eighty-two year-old priest, was accused of heresy by the priest of Dysart, Fife. Summoned to appear before Archbishop John Hamilton he was executed for supporting clerical marriage, denying the validity of five of the seven sacraments, as well as the Real Presence in the Eucharist, and for preaching without the sanction of the Church.²⁵ Pitscottie claims that Mylne was arrested whilst in the home of a poor woman, instructing her in the Ten Commandments and how she should teach her children and 'bring thame vp in the feare of God'.²⁶ In short, he was teaching her how to catechise her household. Whether he was using a pre-existing vernacular version of a catechetical text or one of his own is unknown.

However, by 1558 the act of teaching someone the catechism in the vernacular was not a crime in and of itself. Six years previously, the Provincial Council of 1552, headed by Archbishop John Hamilton, commissioned the first official Catholic *Catechisme* in Scots.²⁷ Hamilton's *Catechisme* was considerably longer and more

²⁵ TAMO (1570), 1491-1492.

²⁶ Lindsay of Pitscottie, *Chronicles*, ii, 517-523.

²⁷ John Hamilton, *The Catechisme* (Edinburgh, John Scot, 1552), USTC 504714.

detailed than its Protestant Scots predecessor. In addition to extensive commentary on the Ten Commandments, Creed and Pater Noster, it also included detailed explanations of the seven Sacraments. Interestingly, there was only one mention of the Papacy in the text, and the word ‘Mass’ was avoided.²⁸ Furthermore, the section on the Lord’s Prayer contained no statement regarding to whom the prayer should be addressed. Whether the prayer was reserved only for members of the Trinity or whether it could also be addressed to the saints was a highly contentious issue at this time, particularly in St Andrews. John Foxe recorded that the doctors of the University and the Franciscans had ‘long agoe taught the people to pray the Pater noster to Saintes’ and ‘had great indignation’ when Protestant reformers challenged this teaching. In November 1551 one Friar Toittis preached a sermon in defence of addressing the Pater Noster to the saints. Foxe’s account claims that this oration served to divide not only the clergy of the town, but the lay people as well.²⁹ By excluding direct references to the papacy and the Mass, as well as refraining from addressing ‘To who[m] say you your Pater noster?’, Archbishop Hamilton and his colleagues deliberately side-stepped some of the most divisive religious issues of the day, intentionally casting their catechism in a conciliatory and inclusive light.

Unlike its Protestant counterparts, Hamilton’s *Catechisme* was never intended to be put into the hands of the laity. Only the clergy were to have direct access to the text. The Council observed that ‘the inferior clergy of this realm and the prelates have not, for the most part, attained such proficiency in the knowledge of holy Scriptures as to be able, by their own efforts, rightly to instruct the people in the Catholic faith and other things necessary to salvation, or to convert the erring’.³⁰ The reformers had long accused the Catholic clergy of ignorance and the Scottish Church recognised a degree of truth in these accusations. It also acknowledged that such incompetence was causing them to lose followers (‘the erring’) to the Protestants. Therefore the *Catechisme* was to be used by Church personnel as much for their own instruction as for the benefit of their flocks.³¹ However, the book was only to be handled by the clergy and was not to be lent out to laymen, except for individuals ‘worthy, grave, of good faith, and prudent’, who

²⁸ Ryrie, *Origins*, 99.

²⁹ *TAMO* (1570), 1489-1490.

³⁰ *Statutes of the Scottish Church*, 143-144.

³¹ *Statutes*, 144.

would consult it ‘for the sake rather of instruction than of any kind of curiosity’.³² Still, the majority of the laity were only to be barred from *reading* the *Catechisme*, not from hearing it. The secular clergy were to spend half an hour every Sunday and holy day reading to the congregation from the catechism. Special instructions stated that this was to be done before High Mass, in a loud and audible voice, with special attention to diction, and without diverting in any way from the text.³³ Those charged with this task were not to enter into it lightly and were expected to spend considerable time preparing and practising. Those who failed in their duties regarding the *Catechisme* would be fined.

The composition of the *Catechisme* presents some interesting insights into the state of religion in 1550s Scotland. As Alec Ryrie notes, the work drew on an unusual combination of texts, including traces of Henry VIII’s *King’s Book* (1543), as well as Martin Luther’s *Greater Catechism* (1529).³⁴ It appears as though the compilers may also have consulted Gau’s *Richt Vay to the Kingdome of Heuine*.³⁵ If so, this would be evidence that copies of *The Richt Vay* actually made it to Scotland. However, as Gau’s work was itself a compilation of many other works by various authors, including Luther, it is difficult to say whether the minute signs of Gau’s influence within the *Catechisme* might not rather have resulted from consultation of the original sources from whom Gau (and his own predecessors) borrowed.

An comfortable exhortation (1535)

John Gau was not the only Lutheran author interested in the devotional development of the Scottish laity. Two years after the publication of *The Rycht Vay*, another Scot, John Johnson released his *An comfortable exhortation: of oure moste holy christen faith and her frutes writte[n] (vnto the Christe[n] bretherene in Scotla[n]de) after the poore worde of God*. Bearing the false imprint of ‘Paris’, the book was probably printed in Antwerp. While addressed to the ‘bretherene in Scotla[n]de’, the anglicised Scots of the work indicates a larger English-speaking audience. James Cameron proposes that

³² *Statutes*, 145-6.

³³ *Statutes*, 146.

³⁴ Ryrie, ‘Reform without Frontiers’, 37. Henry VIII, *A necessary doctrine and erudicion for any chrysten man* (London, Thomas Berthelet, 1543), USTC 503414; Martin Luther, *Deütsch catechismus* (Nürnberg, Friedrich Peypus, Lienhard ZurAich, 1529), USTC 635696, VD16 L4338.

³⁵ For examples of similar wording and content see Appendix C in John Gau, *The Rycht Vay*, ed. A.F. Mitchell (STS, 1888), xlvi-xlvi.

Johnson's anglicised language, like that of John Knox, may also have been influenced by time spent in England.³⁶

The details of Johnson's life are scarce. He claimed to be a Professor of Holy Divinity, and it is possible that he was one of the 'Johne Johnsones' registered at St Andrews in the late 1520s. His claim to have been an eyewitness to Hamilton's execution supports this hypothesis.³⁷ Printed in 1535, clues within the text indicate that Johnson wrote *An comfortable exhortation* from exile abroad. It is possible that he was resident near his publisher. Regardless of his exact location, Johnson had in mind an absent audience for his book. In prose reminiscent of the apostle Paul's salutations to the Romans, Johnson laments his physical separation from his audience, the Christian brethren in Scotland mentioned in the title. He states his desire to be with them, but as that is not possible, they must be content with his writing to them (Aiii^v).

The majority of the treatise is composed of direct Biblical quotations, taken from the Tyndale New Testament, strung together with little or no analysis. The title states that the purpose of the treatise was to set forth the 'frutes' of the 'christen faith' 'after the poore [pure] worde of God'. Therefore, Johnson probably intended to allow the authority of Scripture to speak for itself. The rest of the text reiterates the basic tenets of Lutheranism. The sections that are not directly quoted from the Bible bear a striking resemblance to the basic 'Law and Gospel' arguments of Luther and Hamilton.³⁸ There was little need for added polemic, as Johnson was clearly writing to those already converted to Lutheranism, those who he referred to as 'saved' (Aiii^r). While the treatise rarely, if ever, mentions the Catholic Church by name, Johnson clearly distinguishes between those he believes to be 'faithful' and those who are 'unfaithful'. The 'faithful' are those who are justified by faith and are therefore 'at

³⁶ J.K. Cameron, 'John Johnson's *An Comfortable Exhortation of our Mooste holy Christen Faith and her Frutes*: An early example of Scots Lutheran Piety' in *Reform and Reformation: England and the Continent c.1500-1750*, ed. D. Baker (Oxford, 1979), 136, 142.

³⁷ Cameron, 'John Johnson', 137; John Johnson, *An comfortable exhortation of oure mooste holy Christen faith, and her frutes Writte[n] (vnto the Christe[n] bretherne in Scotla[n]de) after the poore worde of God* ([Antwerp, Johannes H. Hoochstratan], 1535), USTC 437737, NB 17112, Eiii^{v-r}. When possible, subsequent references will be made in the text.

³⁸ For example: 'Jesus Christ hath deliuered you from the lawe of synne and deeth. For what the lawe coule not doo in as moch as it was weake because of the fleshe that performed. God and sent his sonne in the similitude off synful fleshe and hy synne dampned synne in the fleshe that the righteuesness requirred of the lawe myght be fulfilled in you which walk not after the fleshe but after the spirit. It is God that iustifieth you who then shal condempne you.' Johnson, *Comfortable exhortation*, Ciii^v.

peace with God throw oure lorde Jesus Christ' (Av^r). Conversely, the 'unfaithful' seek salvation through their own works, and are given to 'advorice, fornication, onclennes, wanta[n]nes, ydolatrie, witchecraft, hatred, zeles, wraeth, stryfe, sedition, enuyinge, murder, drunckennes, glottony, and [sordid] lyfes' (Aviii^r).

While Gau's *Richt Vay* functions as a catechism, Johnson's devotional treatise has a very different tone. Divided into sections centered on eight major themes – faith, unfaithfulness, hope, despair, peace, love, patience and the mortification of the flesh – *An comfortable exhortation* reads more like a manual for sustaining one's faith under persecution. Indeed, the suffering of the faithful is a running theme throughout the work and Johnson took pains to remind his readers that the Devil walked among them, seeking to devour the righteous and tempt them into falsehood (Aiii^v). He warned them against unfaithfulness as it was 'the mother of all wice a[n]d synne' (Bi^v). It was a warning to be strong in their Protestant faith, even in the face of oppression. They were to take heart, Johnson stated, for God had promised to provide spiritual protection and deliverance (Civ^v). Therefore, the faithful must wait patiently for the coming of the Lord 'in theyr euyl and peralouse dayes' (Dii^v). Johnson likened his present day to that predicted by Christ in Mark 13 when 'the childerue shall ryse agenst father and mother and put them to deeth and ye salbe hated of all men for my name but whosoeuer shall continew vnto the ende shalbe saued' (Ei^r). His audience needed only to look around them, at the escalating religious tensions at home and abroad, to take his point.

The Protestant faithful were not only to expect ill-treatment for their faith, they were to accept it. Oppression should be considered an honour, not a trial. Johnson reminded his readers that the author of their faith, Christ, suffered death at the hands of His enemies, and that as His followers, they may be called to do the same (Dviii^r). In order to receive the reward of the Kingdom of Heaven, the faithful must be willing to follow in Christ's footsteps, even to the point of death. Johnson's readers had only to look back seven years to find an example of such sacrifice. In the only non-Biblical reference in *An comfortable exhortation*, pointed his readers to Patrick Hamilton (Ei^v). According to Johnson, who claimed to have been present at his execution, Hamilton was the perfect example of the suffering believer. Not only did he refuse to recant in the face of death, but he bore his tribulation with patience and grace (Eiii^{v-r}).

By elevating Hamilton as an example, Johnson took an ancient biblical concept and made it a contemporary reality. Persecution, even martyrdom, was still necessary, Johnson declared, ‘for excepte the wheate corne fall into the ground and dye it bydeth alone: yf it deye it brengeth forth muche frute’ (Ei^v). In recounting his own experience of the execution, Johnson testified to the powerful effects of Hamilton’s example. However, he warned his audience that Hamilton’s death was only the beginning. The men responsible for his execution were still on the prowl, seeking to devour the sheep of Christ’s true flock (Eiiii^{v-f}). Johnson warned his readers to beware not only of the physical harm these men could cause, but also of the inward, spiritual damage they could inflict. He advised them to be alert lest they fall victim to the ‘philosophy’ ‘tradicions’ and ‘ordinacio[n]s’ of the Catholic Church – including Lenten and Friday fasts, as well as the observance of holy days – which he claimed was ‘not after Christ’ (Fvii^{r-v}).

Quoting Ephesians 6, he encouraged his readers to ‘be stronge and stedfast in [their] faith’. Using the biblical language of the embattled and persecuted church to stimulate his audience, Johnson entreated his readers to prepare for battle, to put on the armor of God: ‘take ye shelde of faith wherwith ye maye quench all the fyrie dartes of ye wicked (Aiii^r).’ By 1535 Scottish Lutherans would have known something of the fires of the enemy. Although the number of people executed for Protestant heresy was comparatively low in Scotland and many more, like Johnson himself, resorted to flight and exile abroad, at least seven people were tried for holding unorthodox beliefs in the years immediately preceding the publication of Johnson’s treatise. Of those seven, four were executed.³⁹

From the relative safety of exile, Johnson may have been trying to stir up a fervour in his readers back home in Scotland. The ban on both vernacular Scripture and the importation of ‘heretical’ literature, as well as an increasing number of heresy trials, meant that the ‘fyrie darts’ were becoming a very real threat to the physical as well as spiritual health of Scottish Protestants. Johnson wanted to remind them of what they had come to believe, and encourage them to remain strong in their new faith during a time

³⁹ *Ibid.* According to Knox, Straton had been charged before with the refusal to pay the teind, for which he was excommunicated. This anticlericalism, however, did not mean he was an evangelical. Knox’s account goes on to detail how Straton only became a Protestant after his excommunication. The trial and execution described in Foxe occurs after this conversion.

of increasing persecution. On the appointment of Cardinal David Beaton as Archbishop of St Andrews in 1539, Johnson and his readers may have felt justified in preparing for an impending tribulation. Beaton's elevation ushered in a period characterised by an increase in heresy trials, the strengthening of the alliance with Catholic France, rising tensions along the border with Protestant England, as well as religious dissent within.⁴⁰ Between the cardinal's elevation in February 1539 and his assassination on 29 May 1546 at least fifteen Scots were executed for heresy.

The Confession of Faith (1548)

For his support of the cardinal's murder and his part in the subsequent seizure of St Andrews Castle, Henry Balnaves was taken as a prisoner to the Old Palace of Rouen, where, in 1548, he wrote his own Lutheran treatise on endurance under persecution: *The Confession of Faith, conteining how the troubled man should seek refuge at his God*.⁴¹ Addressed to 'his faithfull brethren, being in like trouble or more [a]nd to all true professours, and sauourers of the syncere worde of God', Balnaves sent the text to fellow prisoner, John Knox, who claimed that it brought him 'great confor[t] and consolation of [his] spirite'.⁴² Knox, in his turn, sent the manuscript on to Scotland. However, the text went missing until 1584, when it was found by Richard Bannatyne, Knox's secretary, and printed later that year in Edinburgh by Thomas Vautrollier.⁴³

While there is no evidence that the work circulated in Scotland before 1584, it does bear consideration as, following in the tradition of Johnson's *An comfortable exhortation*, Balnaves's treatise also centred on the doctrine of justification by faith and was meant to encourage and strengthen other Scottish Protestants suffering under duress (Aii^v). Like Johnson, he reminded his readers that persecution was an honour, stating that they were to consider their afflictions as 'the signs and tokens of the goodwill of God towards vs & not of Ire nor wrath' (Cv^r). Furthermore, he claimed, 'to the faithful these bodily afflictions and troubles are marueilous necessarie: for by them, the faith is tried and made more pretious the[n] gold, which is purified by the fire: for by many

⁴⁰ Knox, *History*, i, 25; Dawson, *Scotland Re-formed*, 143-145.

⁴¹ Henry Balnaves, *The Confession of Faith*, (Edinburgh, Thomas Vautrollier, 1584), USTC 509898.

⁴² Balnaves, *Confession*, Biii^v.

⁴³ Bannatyne claimed to have found the manuscript at Ormiston in Lothian 'in the handses of a child' who was playing with it. Balnaves, *Confession*, Aii^v. When possible, subsequent references will be made in the text.

troubles it is needefull to vs to enter in the realme of heauen, by firme and consta[n]t perseuering in faith, as sayth S[aint].P [aul]' (Diii^f). For Balnaves, as for Johnson, the sufferings of this world were but a small price to pay for attaining the glories of heaven.

The vernacular devotional works that survive from the early Scottish Reformation demonstrate a desire among reformers not only to persuade and convert their countrymen, but also to educate and encourage their coreligionists. Exiled Scottish Lutherans composed texts intended for the edification of their brethren at home and abroad. Protestant reformers throughout Europe stressed the importance of knowing and understanding what one believed. Martin Luther claimed that the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed contained all the fundamental information that a Christian needed to know. Taking this message to heart, John Gau produced his Scots translation *The Richt Vay to the Kingdom of Heuien* in order to give Scottish Lutherans a catechism. Equally important to the reformers was their expectation that their brethren might be able to hold on to their convictions under persecution, even when faced with death. Johnson and Balnaves both addressed this concern, penning spiritual survival manuals. All three texts were written abroad but intended for the benefit of those residing in Scotland. It might be considered hypocritical for Johnson and Gau, from the relative safety of exile, to encourage their readers to maintain beliefs that could cost them their lives. Balnaves, on the other hand, himself a prisoner, might be considered a more credible authority on the subject of sustaining one's faith under persecution. Credibility aside, these works highlight a poignant feature of the religious landscape in Scotland during the 1530s and 40s: the writers – and in the case of Gau and Johnson, their publishers and the merchants who would attempt to smuggle the printed works into Scotland – believed that there was an audience willing to invest in their Lutheran product. To what extent this represented their hopes rather than the realities of the situation, is nearly impossible to assess.

Devotional Music

Religious reformers of the early sixteenth century also recognised the educational potential of vernacular song. Music was a regular part of life and religious experience in the late medieval and early modern world. Vernacular songs were sung in the streets,

for entertainment in inns, at home by the fire and while working in the fields. Devotional songs were already part of folk religion and popular piety.⁴⁴ Music had a vitality and versatility that made it an ideal vehicle for spreading and sharing information. Aided by a tune and rhyme, a song was easier to remember than prose, and therefore extremely mobile. For this reason, vernacular songs fulfilled a number of social and cultural functions in early modern society. In many respects they were the mass media of the day. A means of sharing information within semi-literate society, songs were used to receive news from distant places, to provide moral and spiritual advice and to relate the events and happenings within a locality.⁴⁵

Recognizing the influence that music already occupied within their communities, religious reformers set to work adapting the medium to serve their cause. One of the earliest reformers to do so was Jan Hus, who, in the early fifteenth century, wrote a number of polemic songs supporting his reformist message. Following his death in 1415, new songs were written by the Hussite community, culminating with the first printed hymn-collection in Czech, in 1501.⁴⁶ Martin Luther also appreciated the power of music and its pedagogical as well as theological potential. Within a theological context, he saw music as a means by which humanity could communicate with God. As a pedagogical tool, music possessed great powers to proselytize, educate, and motivate. Consequently, Luther was keenly interested in providing hymns for the benefit of the laity, penning at least thirty-seven himself. In his preface to *The Wittenberg Hymnal* (1524), he wrote of his desire ‘to give an incentive to those who can do better’ to compile hymns ‘so that the holy gospel which now by the grace of God has risen anew may be noised and spread about’. He further laid out the pedagogical necessity of singing ‘spiritual songs and Psalms heartily to the Lord so that God’s Word and Christian teaching might be instilled and implanted in many ways’.⁴⁷

Luther’s theology of music was greatly influenced by the Old Testament book of Psalms, itself a collection of ancient songs, as well as other songs mentioned in the Bible. According to Luther, ‘next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest

⁴⁴ Burke, *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe*, 109; Oettinger, *Music as Propaganda in the German Reformation*, 19.

⁴⁵ Pettegree, *Culture of Persuasion*, 41-42.

⁴⁶ Robinson-Hammerstein, ‘The Lutheran Reformation and its Music’ in *The Transmission of Ideas*, ed. H. Robinson-Hammerstein, 161. *Pisně chval božských* (Praha, Jan Severýn, 1501), USTC 567003.

⁴⁷ Martin Luther, ‘Preface to *The Wittenberg Hymnal*’ in *LW*, liii, 316.

praise', possessing the power to heal the soul as well as to cast out Satan.⁴⁸ Luther was not alone in this belief. In 1559 a German pamphlet related the case of a young girl in Platten, Germany. The pamphlet claimed the girl had been possessed by an evil spirit that none of the local clergymen could exorcise. Finally, her family brought her into the church, where the congregation prayed and sang over her, and the spirit was driven out.⁴⁹ As Andrew Pettegree observes, there was an understanding that 'the Christian people in song possessed their own power to heal and make whole'.⁵⁰ Whether or not the incident happened as the pamphlet reported, the tract highlights the Lutheran belief in the supernatural potential of the singing of psalms and spiritual songs to heal individuals and to unite a community. It was only when the Platten congregation joined together to sing and to pray that those songs and prayers were effective. Although the words possessed power on their own, it was when those words were uttered in unison by the community, assembled together for worship, that they were most powerful. Group singing, particularly the singing of the Psalms, united the Christian not only to God and the community of contemporary believers, but to all who ever were or shall be members of the family of faith. Luther wrote that through the Psalms man 'receives assurance that he is in the company of the saints, and that all that has happened to the saints is happening to him, because all of them join in *singing a little song* with him, since he can use their words to talk with God as they did'.⁵¹

In addition to spiritual benefits, vernacular religious songs also possessed serious educational potential. Melody and rhyme served as excellent mnemonic devices, facilitating the retention of a song's words and message. This was further aided by a practice known as *contrafacta*, where tunes were borrowed from pre-existent sacred and profane repertoires. Written in the popular style or set to familiar tunes, these reformed songs reached all levels of society.⁵² In his 'Preface to *The Burial Hymns*' Luther admitted to using Catholic tunes for the songs, claiming that 'the melodies and notes

⁴⁸ Martin Luther, 'Preface to Georg Rhau's *Symphoniae Iucundae*' in *LW*, liii, 323.

⁴⁹ C.B. Brown, 'Singing the Gospel: Lutheran Hymns and the Success of the Reformation in Joachimsthal' (Unpublished Ph.D Thesis, Harvard University, 2001), 220.

⁵⁰ Pettegree, *Culture of Persuasion*, 49.

⁵¹ Martin Luther, 'Preface to Psalms' in *Martin Luther: Selections from His Writings*, ed. John Dillenberger, (New York, 1962), 40. [Emphasis mine]

⁵² Oettinger, *Music as Propaganda*, 1.

[were] precious. It would be a pity to let them perish'.⁵³ Other tunes were carefully selected, so that the new words not only matched the meter and rhythm of the old tune, but so that the original associations of the tune would not interfere with the new lyrics.⁵⁴ The Bohemian Brethren acknowledged the benefits of *contrafacta* in the foreword to their 1575 songbook, remarking that their 'singers took up [secular melodies] intentionally, in order that the people be attracted to a grasp of the truth more easily through familiar sounds'.⁵⁵ In addition to aiding memory, the recycling of tunes was also expedient in the sense that potential copyists would not need to go to the added trouble of providing musical notation. Therefore, tunes were identified by name in the title or through variations on the opening lines. As Christopher Marsh observed, the singer would 'remember the entire tune from its previous incarnations, and be able, perhaps with the help of friends, to fit the printed words to the recalled melody'.⁵⁶ Consequently, musical literacy was unnecessary, opening the media to a wider audience.

The Gude and Godlie Ballatis

At least one Scottish reformer was inspired by Luther's theology of music and his practice of turning popular songs to reformed use. John Wedderburn, along with his brothers James and Robert, has been credited with compiling the first Protestant songbook in Scots. Known more commonly as *The Gude and Godlie Ballatis*, the collection's full title is *Ane Co[m]pendious Buik of Godly psalmes and Spirituall Sangis, collectit out of sundrye partes of the Scripture, with sundrye uther Ballatis changeit out of prophaine sangis in godly sangis, for auoyding of sin and harlatry with augmentatioun of syndry gude & godlie ballatis*.⁵⁷ The collection contains doctrinal and polemical songs, mostly translations of German hymns or altered versions of popular songs, designed to educate and inform the laity in the theology of the reformed faith. Although the oldest known printed editions of *The Ballatis* date from after 1560, the

⁵³ Martin Luther, 'Preface to *The Burial Hymns*' in *LW*, liii, 327.

⁵⁴ Robinson-Hammerstein, 'Music', 155.

⁵⁵ Oettinger, *Music as Propaganda*, 5.

⁵⁶ C. Marsh, 'The Sound of Print in Early Modern England: The Broadside Ballad as Song' in *The Uses of Script and Print, 1300-1700*, eds. J. Crick and A. Walsham (Cambridge, 2004), 171.

⁵⁷ John Wedderburn, *Ane compendious buik of godlie psalmes and spirituall sangis* (Edinburgh, John Ross for Henry Charteris, 1578), USTC 508641. When possible subsequent references will be made in the text.

collection has long been attributed to the Wedderburns and is generally accepted to have been compiled sometime before their deaths in the 1550s.⁵⁸ Indeed, it is generally believed that the work existed in some form, either in print or manuscript, as early as 1546.⁵⁹ Knox states that on the night before Wishart was apprehended, he comforted himself by singing ‘the 51st Psalm, which was put in Scottish metre’.⁶⁰ It is conceivable that the version sung by Wishart was the one that appears in *The Ballatis*.

Although originally published anonymously, contemporaries named James, John and Robert Wedderburn of Dundee as the compilers, if not authors, of *The Gude and Godlie Ballatis*. Successive publishers, historians and archivists have perpetuated their joint authorship. However, this needs closer examination. Both James and John, the elder brothers, were known to hold strong Protestant convictions. Yet, while James, whose controversial plays have been discussed in Chapter Four, may have been involved in the project, albeit in a limited capacity, evidence suggests that the younger brother, Robert, never left the Catholic Church.⁶¹ Indeed, Robert is credited with writing *The Complaynt of Scotlande* (printed in Paris in 1550), a Catholic defence of Scotland against Somerset’s English Protestant propaganda.⁶² His involvement in the *Ballatis* project is highly questionable. Therefore, John is the most likely candidate for the role of principal compiler.

Like his brother James before him, John Wedderburn studied at St Andrews under Gavin Logie.⁶³ John received his BA in 1526 and his MA two years later.⁶⁴ His name appears with other alumni who were incorporated into the Paedagogium – later St Mary’s College – the same year that John Mair was teaching theology and philosophy, and Patrick Hamilton and George Buchanan were in attendance.⁶⁵ Along with John Johnson, John Wedderburn may have witnessed Hamilton’s execution. Upon his return to Dundee Wedderburn once again followed in his older brother’s footsteps, studying

⁵⁸ Currently, the oldest known existent edition of *The Ballatis* was published in Edinburgh by J. Scot in 1565 (USTC 516647), although A.A. MacDonald may have discovered an earlier edition dating to 1561/2. His research on this edition is forthcoming.

⁵⁹ Ryrie, *Origins*, 122; Wormald, *Court, Kirk and Community*, 187.

⁶⁰ Knox, *History*, i, 69.

⁶¹ Robert Wedderburn, *The Complaynt of Scotland*, ed. A.M. Stewart (Edinburgh, 1979), xvi.

⁶² For more on Robert’s authorship of *The Complaynt*, see *The Complaynt*, ed. Stewart, xvi-xx.

⁶³ Calderwood, *The History of the Kirk*, i, 142.

⁶⁴ *Early Records of the University of St. Andrews: The Graduation Roll 1413-1579 and The Matriculation Roll 1473-1579*, ed. James Maitland Anderson (Edinburgh, 1926), 118, 121.

⁶⁵ *Early Records*, 222.

under the reformist Friar Hewat. Around this time he took holy orders and is mentioned as the chaplain of St Matthew's Chapel in 1532. John, however, soon began professing reformed doctrine and, in 1538/9, following a charge of heresy, he fled to Wittenberg. It is not clear if he actually stood trial in Scotland, but his goods were seized by the crown, and after the payment of a small fee, transferred to his youngest brother Henry.⁶⁶ In Wittenberg, Wedderburn heard the teachings of Luther and Melancthon and, according to Calderwood, 'became verie fervent and zealous'. It was there that he translated a number of Luther's hymns, as well as the Psalms of David, into Scots. He also 'turned manie bawdie songs and rymes in[to] godlie rymes,' the bulk of which are believed to have become *The Gude and Godlie Ballatis*.⁶⁷ On the death of James V in 1542, John Wedderburn returned to Scotland. But he did not remain long, as he was 'againie pursued by the cardinall [David Beaton]' and fled to England, where he died in 1556.⁶⁸

Divided between catechism, metrical Scripture and polemical songs, the rhyming verses of *The Ballatis* presented the most basic Lutheran theology and introduced the audience to the doctrines of the reformed faith. Intended for individual and group edification, the overarching tone of *The Ballatis* suggests that the work was compiled for the benefit of the converted, although the simple, rhyming text would also have been conducive to proselytizing. The Lutheran influence on *The Ballatis* is most obviously found in the collection's theological overtones. Luther's teachings on 'justification by faith' and *sola scriptura* are among the most common themes presented in *The Ballatis*, as well as excerpts from his Catechisms. For example, 'Our Sauior Christ, King of grace' outlines a Lutheran understanding of the Eucharist, emphasizing the 'bodily' transformation of the bread and wine, but denying the 'substantial' change espoused by the Catholic doctrine of the Real Presence (Aviii'). The overwhelmingly Lutheran nature of the collection is also indicative of its early sixteenth-century origins. Later Scottish reformers, particularly in the 1550s and after, would heavily favour Genevan reform over that of Wittenberg.

⁶⁶ J.K. McGinley, 'Wedderburn, James (c.1495–1553)', *ODNB*.

⁶⁷ Calderwood, *History*, i, 143.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

Luther also had a considerable musical influence on the collection. Many of the songs resemble Luther's German anthems, and a large portion of *The Ballatis* are direct translations of Lutheran hymns.⁶⁹ 'Our Sauior Christ, King of grace', mentioned above, is a translation of Luther's '*Jhesus Christus unser Heyland*', which was a German translation of a Latin hymn, '*Jesus Christus nostra salus*' attributed to Jan Hus.⁷⁰ Other songs follow Luther's example of *contrafacta*. One song title informs the singer to use 'the tune of Baw Lula Low'.⁷¹ Another song, 'Allace that same sweit face', retains only the first line of a popular song, in order to designate the tune. Where the secular words sought the remedy for a broken heart, the reformed lyrics claim Christ as the only remedy for the sinfulness of mankind.⁷² In this instance, Wedderburn sought completely to replace the subject matter of the old song in the hearts and minds of the people. In Luther's forward to the *Geystliches Gesangk Buchlein* he stated his intention to 'wean [the young] away from love ballads and carnal songs and to teach them something of value in their place, thus combining the good with the pleasing, as is proper for youth'.⁷³ The printed, post-1560 Prologue of *The Ballatis* proclaimed a similar desire that 'ama[n]g zoung personis [...] quhen thay heir it sung into thair vulgar tou[n]g or singis it thame selfis with sweit melodie, then sal thay [...] put away baudrie & vnclene sangis'.⁷⁴ In practising *contrafacta*, German and Scottish reformers had a moralizing mission as well as an educational one.

Yet, while some profane songs lost all of their meaning through *contrafacta*, at other times the subjects may have changed while the meaning remained intact.⁷⁵ In these instances the tune became more than a simple vehicle for the words.⁷⁶ A prime example of this is the version of 'Rycht sore opprest' found in *The Ballatis* (Diii^v). In this instance, only a few words, distinguished in square brackets, were changed between the secular and the reformed lyrics:

Rycht sore opprest I am with panis smart,

⁶⁹ A.F. Mitchell, (ed.), *A Compendious Book of Godly and Spiritual Songs* (Edinburgh, 1897), xxxiii.

⁷⁰ Martin Luther, 'Jesus Christ, Our God and Savior' in *LW*, liii, 249.

⁷¹ Wedderburn, *Compendious buik*, Cvi^f.

⁷² H.M. Shire, *Song, Dance and Poetry of the Court of Scotland Under King James VI* (London, 1969), 29; K. Elliot and H.M. Shire (eds.), *Music of Scotland 1500-1700* (London, 1957), 151; and Wedderburn, *Compendious buik*, Div^v.

⁷³ Pettegree, *Culture of Persuasion*, 45.

⁷⁴ Wedderburn, *Ane compendious*, Ai^f.

⁷⁵ Shire, *Song, Dance and Poetry*, 26.

⁷⁶ Marsh, 'Sound of Print', 176.

Baith nicht and day makand my woful mone
 To God, for my misdeid, quhilk hes my hart, [To Venus quien, that ladie hes my
 heart]
 Put in sa greit distres with wo begone,
 Bot gif he [she] send me sum remeid anone,
 I list not lang my lyfe for till indure,
 Bot to the deide bowne, cairfull creature.⁷⁷

In this case, the tune's previous association with love themes was carried into the reformed ballad. Now, instead of the pagan goddess of Love, the subject has become the love of the Christian God for mankind. By maintaining the original theme, the tune added depth and meaning to the reformed lyrics.⁷⁸

The first twenty-one songs of *The Ballatis* contain musical paraphrases of Luther's Catechism including the Ten Commandments, the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and explanations of the sacraments of Baptism and Communion, as well as prayers to be said before meals. Also included in this section are songs outlining the birth, death and resurrection of Christ, as well as some of his teachings, taken from the book of Luke. The rest of the collection alternates between ballads, many of which are *contrafacta*, and paraphrases of Scripture, most notably of the Psalms and the Magnificat (Mary's song). The majority of these lyrics focus on mankind's fallen nature, his need for grace and the remedy provided through the love of God and sacrifice of Christ, as well as songs of thanksgiving and repentance.

In addition to these educational and devotional songs, there are also a number of songs intended to criticise the practices of the Catholic Church. 'Followis ane Carrel Contrair Idolatrie' criticises the veneration of images and prayers to the saints (Dvii^v-viii^r). Another song condemns the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory, calling it 'the fals fyre' (Lii^{r-v}). 'God send euerie Preist ane wyfe, and euerie Nunne a man' denounces the practice of clerical celibacy, reminding the singer (and their hearers) that 'Sanct Peter, quhome nane can reprove, His lyfe in Mariage led' (Liii^{r-v}). The song goes on to claim that it would be much better if the Church were to allow the clergy to live in the honourable state of marriage, rather than continue in the hypocritical practice of concubinage. Another song, 'Preistis, Christ beleue' entreats the Catholic clergy to

⁷⁷ Wedderburn, *Compendious buik*, Diii^v-Div^r. Secular words can be found in Elliot and Shire, *Music of Scotland*, 160.

⁷⁸ Marsh, 'Sound of Print', 180.

embrace the teachings of reform by leaving aside the doctrine of works and learning to preach (Lv^v-Lvi^f). The song also clerical ignorance, prayers to the saints, the veneration of images and the selling of indulgences. Finally, it promotes the use of the vernacular in the religious instruction of the laity (Lv^v-Lvii^f).

Along with their didactic and polemic purpose, *The Ballatis* were also intended to encourage Protestants facing persecution. As we have seen, although the early decades of Scottish religious dissent were relatively bloodless in comparison to reform movements abroad, the Catholic authorities were occasionally willing to execute individuals in their attempts to safe-guard orthodoxy, while many reformers fled abroad.⁷⁹ Wedderburn himself spent much of his adult life in exile and, like his fellow devotional writers Johnson and Gau, hoped to edify and encourage his brethren facing persecution at home. Many of the Psalms chosen for inclusion in *The Ballatis* reflect this aim. The paraphrase of Psalm LXXXI carries the theme of deliverance for eight verses, culminating with the assurance that ‘He sall deliuer the at neid, And saue thy lyfe from pestilence [...], His word of greit magnificence, Sall be thy buklar and thy beild’ (Fvii^f). Not only would God rescue those who trust in his Word and call upon his name, but he would protect them in ‘His pens’ and provide the weapons necessary for their defense through ‘His word’. Similar Psalms of perseverance in the face of persecution and the promise of deliverance comprise the majority of the metrical Psalms included in *The Ballatis*. Like Johnson and Balnaves, Wedderburn hoped to fortify and edify his brethren at home, to help them stay strong in their faith in the difficult days and years to come.

John Wedderburn was greatly influenced by Lutheran theology, but also by Luther’s theology of music. As we have seen, Luther believed that music was a means of establishing communication between mankind and the Almighty. He also anticipated the great potential of vernacular song for educating the laity, as well as inspiring and uniting reformed communities. The Christian people, united in song, were a spiritual force to be reckoned with. Following this example, John Wedderburn began compiling his vernacular collection as a means of presenting the faith and teachings of the reformers to his fellow Scots in an easily accessible manner. Using rhyme, metre and familiar tunes to assist in memorisation, *The Gude and Godlie Ballatis* were a unique

⁷⁹ For more on this, see Dawson, ‘Theatre of Martyrdom’.

didactic and devotional tool. The tone of the songs, and the inclusion of the Catechism in metre, implies that the text was primarily intended for the individual and group devotions of the converted.

Luther intended his songs to live in public spaces, as well as to be sung by church congregations.⁸⁰ While some Scottish reformers may have been inspired by Luther's idea, once again, the state of affairs in early sixteenth-century Scotland made it difficult to fulfill that potential. Unlike in Germany, in Scotland there was no stable Protestant church infrastructure. Any Scottish Lutherans singing together needed to do so in secret. This highlights yet another purpose for *The Ballatis* – to encourage fellow Protestants experiencing persecution. Due to limited printing opportunities in Scotland, it is likely that some of Wedderburn's songs circulated in manuscript, as well as orally, in the decades before 1560.

However, by the time Protestant congregations were allowed to gather publicly in Scotland and it was lawful to produce Scottish print editions of *The Ballatis*, the Scottish reform movement had abandoned Wedderburn's Lutheranism in favour of Calvinism, and metrical Psalms alone were the order of the day. Still, *The Ballatis* remained popular among the laity, going through at least six editions between 1565 and 1621. This is perhaps the ultimate testimony to *The Ballatis* effectiveness as a teaching tool and the special niche it filled in Scottish devotional life, as well as the extent to which a large portion of the laity in the mid-sixteenth century may have favoured a moderate, Lutheran style of reform.

Vernacular Bibles

Arguably, the most important books to come out of the sixteenth-century religious Reformations were vernacular Bibles. For all their differences regarding issues such as the nature of the Eucharist, the ordering of church governance, and what was and was not appropriate in a worship space, there was one thing all the major Protestant reformers (and some Catholic reformers) could agree on: the need for universal access to Scripture. Since the reformers believed that all theology, doctrine and practice must be tested against the Word of God, people needed to have the Bible in their own

⁸⁰ Pettegree, *Culture of Persuasion*, 50.

language.⁸¹ Furthermore, God revealed himself to mankind through Scripture. As Calvin wrote in his *Institutes*:

Scripture, gathering together the impressions of Deity, which, till then, lay confused in our minds, dissipates the darkness, and shows us the true God clearly. God therefore bestows a gift of singular value, when, for the instruction of the Church, he employs not dumb teachers merely, but opens his own sacred mouth.⁸²

The reformers took seriously the claim made in 2 Timothy 3:16 that ‘all scripture geuen by inspiracyon of God, is proffitable to teache, to improue, to amende and to instruct in ryghtewesnes’.⁸³ Therefore, in order that all Christians might see the truth of God’s Word for themselves and live by it, Scripture must be made available to all, not just the clergy and the doctors of the Church. Based on this belief, religious reformers throughout Europe called for the sanctioning and production of vernacular Bibles.

The followers of John Wycliffe (d.1384) produced manuscript English Bibles, leading the English Church to ban vernacular Scripture in the early years of the fifteenth century.⁸⁴ In Bohemia, early fifteenth-century Hussites called for vernacular worship and texts. Shortly after the Diet of Worms (1521) and his ultimate separation from the Catholic Church, Martin Luther translated the New Testament (1522), the Old Testament and the Apocrypha (1534) into the German language.⁸⁵ Around this time, vernacular Bibles also began circulating in France. In August 1523 the faculty of the Sorbonne deemed it necessary to condemn all editions of Scripture in French, Hebrew and Greek (including Erasmus’s New Testament).⁸⁶ By 1534, the French Waldensians had paid for the publication of Pierre-Robert Olivétan’s French Bible (known as the Serrières Bible).⁸⁷ Ten years later, John Calvin would revise and edit this text.⁸⁸ William Tyndale began printing his English New Testament in 1525, while the first

⁸¹ MacCulloch, *The Reformation*, 35.

⁸² John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Henry Beveridge (Grand Rapids, 1989), 64.

⁸³ *The Byble in Englyshe [The Great Bible]*, fol. lxxxv.

⁸⁴ MacCulloch, *Reformation*, 35-6.

⁸⁵ Martin Luther, *Das Neue Testament* (Wittenberg, Melchior II Lotter, 1522), USTC 627910; *Biblia beyder Alt unnd Newen Testaments Teutsch* (Augsburg, Heinrich von Augsburg Steiner, 1534), USTC 616844.

⁸⁶ Gordon, *Calvin*, 13. Desiderius Erasmus, *Novum instrumentu omne* (Basel, Johann Froben, 1516), USTC 678727, VD16 B4196.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 55; Pierre-Robert Olivétan, *Le nouveau testament* ([Basle, J. Walder], 1539), USTC 5573.

⁸⁸ Gordon, *Calvin*, 55.

complete English Bible was that of Miles Coverdale, printed in 1535.⁸⁹ Many of these publications were carried out illicitly, as the possession and production of vernacular Scripture was illegal in many European countries. For example, Tyndale could not produce his Bible in England, and therefore began printing his English New Testament in Cologne. However, it was unlawful in Cologne and production was brought to a halt due to a raid on the print shop. Tyndale escaped to Worms, where the first complete printed English New Testament came off the press in 1526.⁹⁰ Later editions were printed in Antwerp in 1534.⁹¹ But even Antwerp was not safe. Tyndale was arrested in 1535, tried for heresy and executed in 1536.⁹²

Vernacular Scripture in Scotland

While the possession of vernacular Scripture in early sixteenth-century Scotland was not specifically proscribed until 1532, owning and promoting Bibles in the common language arguably fell under the umbrella of Lutheran ‘heresyis or opunyeounes’ condemned in the anti-heresy legislation of 1525.⁹³ The Archbishop of Glasgow, Gavin Dunbar, certainly believed this to be the case when he grouped English New Testaments with other ‘heretical works’.⁹⁴ However, this did not prevent merchants and reformers from attempting to import banned materials into the kingdom. The Hackett Incident (1527), detailed in Chapter One, illustrates just how concerned Catholic authorities in England were regarding shipments of Tyndale’s New Testament headed for Scotland – and from there, potentially into England.

In 1532 Henry Forrest was executed in St Andrews for heresy, including the possession of an English New Testament. This charge may have been connected to restrictions enacted that year by the Scottish ecclesiastical authorities regarding the reading of Scripture. While the exact wording of this legislation has been lost, Martin Dotterweich has been able to reconstruct various aspects of the ban based on the epistolary exchange of Alexander Alesius and Johannes Cochlaeus regarding it. As far as is known, the ban did not specifically mention vernacular Scripture. However, it did

⁸⁹ Miles Coverdale, *The Bible* (Köln, E. Cervicornus & J. Soter], 1535), USTC 502736.

⁹⁰ William Tyndale, *The Newe Testament* (Worms, Peter II Schöffer, 1526), USTC 677266.

⁹¹ William Tyndale, *The Newe Testament* (Antwerpen, Merten de Keyser, 1534), USTC 410306.

⁹² D. Daniell, ‘Tyndale, William (c.1494–1536)’, *ODNB*.

⁹³ *RPS* 1525/7/32.

⁹⁴ Cited in Dotterweich, ‘Emergence’, 180.

limit biblical access to the clergy and the educated elite, and confined them to the Latin Vulgate. Alesius and Cochlaeus' debate began in 1533 when Alesius addressed an open letter to James V, entreating the king to overturn the Scottish Church's ban on vernacular translations of the Bible and other evangelical texts.

The German Catholic apologist Johannes Cochlaeus issued his own open letter, defending the orthodox position. The two academics exchanged two further letters on the subject.⁹⁵ But it was Cochlaeus who carried the day, backed by personal endorsements from Erasmus and Ferdinand, King of the Romans. The anti-heresy legislation of 1525 was re-enforced in June 1535. Four years later, in March 1539, Thomas Forret, vicar of Dollar, was arrested and charged with teaching a vernacular catechism to his parishioners. In an effort to defend his position, he produced an English New Testament. However, this was viewed as further proof of heresy and he was executed.⁹⁶

Forret was not alone in his desire to read the English New Testament in Scotland. In the same month that Forret and five others were executed for heresy, Thomas Howard, Duke of Norfolk was stationed at Berwick. On the 29th he sent a letter to Thomas Cromwell, claiming that 'dayly comith vnto me such gentlmen and such clerks, wich do flee oute of Scotland, as thay saye, for reding of the Scriptures in Inglysh'.⁹⁷ Furthermore, it would appear that evangelical and Protestant Scots were also doing something far more dangerous than simply possessing and reading banned Scripture: they were discussing it amongst themselves.

On 14 March 1541, Parliament enacted legislation against 'congregationis or conventculis' 'haldin in [...] housis [...] to commune or despute of the Haly Scriptoure'. The act further stated that only theologians appointed to the universities were allowed to dispute the Word of God. This harkened back to the legislation of 1525, which had stipulated that only academics at the universities could consult heretical literature. The new law also required anyone who knew the whereabouts of any heretics to turn them over to the authorities, 'under the pane to be punist as

⁹⁵ Alesius produced *Alexandri Alesii Scoti responsio ad Cochlei calumnias* in 1534, which was answered by Cochlaeus' *Pro Scotiae Regno Apologia Iohannis Cochlaei Adversus Personatum Alexandrum Alesuim Scotum* that same year.

⁹⁶ Pitcairn, *Criminal Trials*, i, 215.

⁹⁷ BL Cotton Caligula B/VII, f.236^v. Norfolk to Cromwell, 29 March 1539.

heretikis'.⁹⁸ The same punishment applied to anyone who aided or harboured the said heretics. This wariness concerning the discussion of Scripture would continue into the period after March 1543 when vernacular Bibles were permitted in Scotland.⁹⁹ When the Earl of Arran assumed control of the kingdom on behalf of the infant Queen following the death of James V, he instituted a number of reformist initiatives, among them the sanctioning of 'baith the New Testament and the Auld, in the vulgar tounge, in Inglis or Scottis, of ane gude and trew translatioun'.¹⁰⁰ The legislation, passed on 12 March, stipulated that the Queen's subjects would not be punished for possessing and reading vernacular Bibles on the condition that 'na personis despute, argoune or hald oppunionis' regarding said Scripture. The edict was proclaimed from the Market Cross in Edinburgh on the 19th.¹⁰¹ A month earlier, in a letter dated 17 February 1543, Arran had asked John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, to send an English bookseller into Scotland 'as for the Bybill, thair is nane to be gottin in out vulgar tounge in this realme'.¹⁰² While John Knox rejoiced in the government's decision at last to permit the Word of God, he lamented that, for many, owning the book was more for show than substance:

Then might the Bible be seen lying almost upon everie gentleman's table; the New Testament was careid about in manie men's hands. But some, who perhaps had not read tenne sentences in it, had it most commounlie in their hands; whould tuche their familiars on the cheeke with it, and say 'This booke hath lyin under my bed-feete these tenne years!' Others in a glorieing maner would say, 'O, how oft have I beene in danger for this book! How secreetlie have I stollin frome my wife at midnight to reade upon it!'¹⁰³

Although Knox bemoaned these claims as false sentiments intended to ingratiate the speaker with Governor Arran, they demonstrate the availability of vernacular Bibles in Scotland. Despite the earlier bans, the Scottish elite were able to procure the books quickly enough, and in significant numbers, to make them a fashion trend.

Yet, Arran's 'Godly Fit' was short-lived. The name refers to a period of time, not a seizure, despite the rapidity with which Arran reverted back to an orthodox

⁹⁸ *RPS* 1540/12/59.

⁹⁹ *RPS* 1543/3/25

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁰¹ *LP* xviii/1, 300.

¹⁰² *Hamilton Papers*, i, 430.

¹⁰³ Calderwood, *History*, i, 157.

position.¹⁰⁴ By December he was in Parliament denouncing heretics and all others holding ‘dampnable opinionis incontrar the faythe and lawis of halykirk’.¹⁰⁵ The same Parliament repudiated the Treaties of Greenwich with England and reaffirmed the Auld Alliance with France.¹⁰⁶ During the ensuing ‘Rough Wooings’, the English government mounted a religious as well as military campaign, sending Bibles and Protestant literature into Scotland in addition to soldiers. By late 1547, this appeared to have had some success in Dundee. Andrew Dudley, commander of the English garrison stationed at Broughty Craig, reported that the Dundonians were urgently asking him for English Bibles.¹⁰⁷ However, English involvement in the region began to decline in July 1548 with the Treaty of Haddington and Mary, Queen of Scots’ removal to France. Arran’s policy reversal did not explicitly revoke the legislation permitting vernacular Scripture, although it remained illegal to discuss the Bible outside of the universities and to possess Protestant literature.¹⁰⁸ Still, the legislation and threats of punishment did not keep Scottish Protestants from gathering to read and discuss Scripture. Over the course of the 1550s, two more men – Adam Wallace (1550) and Walter Milne (1558) – were executed specifically for giving unauthorised biblical expositions. In a July 1556 letter to the Scottish brethren Knox encouraged them to gather together once a week ‘for the conference of Scripture’, going so far as to declare such activities as ‘necessary’.¹⁰⁹ These meetings, Knox advised, were to include Bible reading, exhortation and prayer.

Murdoch Nisbet’s New Testament

For all that access to Scripture in the vernacular was a highly contentious issue in early sixteenth-century Scotland, there is only one surviving example from this period in the Scots language. Murdoch Nisbet (fl.1531-c.1559) produced a manuscript New Testament sometime around the turn of the sixteenth century.¹¹⁰ Nisbet, a notary from Loudoun, Ayrshire, was associated with the Campbells of Cessnock and the Lockharts of Bar – two families that would come to be known for their strong evangelical and

¹⁰⁴ Ryrie, *Origins*, 57.

¹⁰⁵ RSP 1543/12/63

¹⁰⁶ RSP 1543/12/31; 1543/12/33.

¹⁰⁷ SP 50/2 f.78, Sir Andrew Dudley to Somerset, 1 November 1547.

¹⁰⁸ RPS 1543/3/25; *Acts of the Lords of Council in Public Affairs*, 527-8, 2 June 1543.

¹⁰⁹ Knox, ‘Letter of Wholesome Counsel’ in *WK*, iv, 137-8.

¹¹⁰ BL Egerton 2880; Special thanks to Claire McLoughlin for obtaining images of the manuscript from the British Library.

Protestant sympathies, especially during the preaching ministry of George Wishart in the 1540s. Given his locality, Nisbet may also have had associations with the shadowy Lollards of Kyle, who were tried before James IV in 1494.¹¹¹

What is known of Nisbet is recorded in a questionable family history, compiled in the late seventeenth century, by the son of a Covenanting descendant. According to James Nisbet, Murdoch Nisbet joined the Lollards before 1500 and fled overseas during the reign of James V, taking ‘a Copy of the New Testament in Writ’. He was supposed to have returned to Scotland with other exiles before 1539. Nisbet went into hiding after two of his acquaintance, Jerome Russell and Alexander Kennedy, were executed for heresy in Glasgow on 1 March 1539. The family account claims he hid in a vault under his house until the regency of Mary of Guise, when he emerged from hiding in order to take part in some acts of iconoclasm.¹¹² The details of this account of flight, return and hiding are contentious. The only detail that can be ascertained with any certainty is that in the early decades of the sixteenth century, Murdoch Nisbet produced a manuscript Scots translation of a Wycliffite New Testament. A number of folios bear his unique notary’s mark.¹¹³

Dotterweich suggests that Nisbet may have begun his translation while abroad – where he would have had access to a Lollard New Testament and the leisure to copy it.¹¹⁴ However, given the Wycliffite associations of his home locality in Scotland, he may have had access to such a text in Ayrshire, and worked on his translation in secret there. It is unknown whether Nisbet intended his New Testament for private, small group use alone or if he intended to print it. However, the fact that he took the trouble to translate an English text into the Scots tongue indicates that, at the very least, he intended it to be read aloud in a small group setting. While literate sixteenth-century Scots could read English, translating an English text into Scots would facilitate the recital of the text.¹¹⁵

The body of the biblical text, as well as the introductions to the individual New Testament books, came from Wycliffe’s New Testament, which, in turn, borrowed from

¹¹¹ Dotterweich, ‘Book for Lollards’, 234.

¹¹² J. Nisbet, *A True Relation of the Life and Sufferings of John Nisbet in Hardhill* (Edinburgh, 1719), 3.

¹¹³ BL MS Egerton 2880, f.27^v, 39^v.

¹¹⁴ Dotterweich, ‘Book for Lollards’, 237.

¹¹⁵ Dotterweich, ‘Book for Lollards’, 238.

the Vulgate.¹¹⁶ At a later date various supplementary materials were added, possibly by Nisbet himself or a descendant. All of the additional matter can be found in Miles Coverdale's English New Testament (1537/8).¹¹⁷ These additions include an English translation of Luther's prologue to the New Testament (found at the beginning of Nisbet's text) and Tyndale's version of the *Prologe or preface vn to the pistle [sic] off Paul to the Romayns* (found at the end of the manuscript).¹¹⁸ Meanwhile, marginal glosses, cross-references and the summary of the books of the New Testament found at the beginning of the manuscript were taken directly from Coverdale.¹¹⁹

Although less careful in its execution, the handwriting of the 'Prologue to the New Testament' found in Nisbet's manuscript matches that of the body of the biblical text. Unfortunately, over time, the pages of the New Testament prologue have been damaged and the archival restoration of the pages and the modern binding of the whole manuscript make it extremely difficult to tell if the prologue was part of the original manuscript or a later addition. However, the slight variation in handwriting indicates that it was a later addition. The Wycliffite sections of the manuscript (the actual biblical passages and the brief introductions to each book) were written out with great care, while the translation of Luther's prologue, which comes before the biblical text, is markedly untidy – although in the same hand. Taken from Coverdale, the inclusion of this prologue indicates that the main text of the Nisbet New Testament was transcribed before the 1538 publication of Coverdale's annotated New Testament.¹²⁰ Similarly, Tyndale's 'Prologe to Romans', included towards the end of the manuscript, is written in a slightly different hand than the body of the biblical text.¹²¹ This discrepancy could indicate either Murdoch Nisbet himself as the scribe, writing later in his life, or the handwriting of another scribe taught to write following Nisbet's example. Either way,

¹¹⁶ Murdoch Nisbet, *The New Testament in Scots*, ed. T.G.Law (Edinburgh, 1903), ii, 1.

¹¹⁷ Miles Coverdale (trans.), *The New Testament* (Antwerp, Matthias Crom, 1538), USTC 410365, NB 4551.

¹¹⁸ BL Egerton 2880, f.4^v-7^r (Luther's prologue); f.235^r-251^r (Tyndale's preface). Luther, *Das Neue Testament*; William Tyndale, *A compendious introduccion, prologe or preface vn to the pistle off Paul to the Romayns* (Worms, Peter II Schoeffer, 1526), USTC 501937.

¹¹⁹ BL Egerton 2880, f.89^{r-v} (ex. marginal glosses and references); f.7^r-13^r (summary of books). For a detailed comparison of Nisbet's manuscript and Coverdale's *New Testament*, see Dotterweich, 'Book for Lollards', 237-245.

¹²⁰ Coverdale, *New Testament*, f.*vi^r-*viii^r. (Folio markings in the prefatory material of this Coverdale edition begin with an asterisk-like symbol. Alphabetical notations do not begin until the main body of the text.)

¹²¹ BL Egerton 2880, f.235^r-251^r.

the ‘Prologue to Romans’, like Luther’s prologue, was added after the initial transcription of the Wycliffite biblical text. Its placement at the end of the manuscript, rather than before the book of Romans, as it appears in Coverdale’s New Testament, is further indication of this later addition.¹²² Regarding the marginal cross-references and explanatory notations throughout the Nisbet manuscript, the handwriting, once again, differs slightly from the original hand, although it bears a resemblance to that of the other supplementary material.

This layering of various hands and different scriptural interpretations provides interesting insight into how a family of early Scottish Protestants read and interacted with the written Word of God. The great care with which the main text of the New Testament was copied (and translated from English into Scots), in comparison to the more hastily scribbled supplementary material, indicates the place of honour that Scripture occupied in the Protestant psyche. As discussed in Chapter Five, to the reformers the Word of God (both written and Incarnate) was everything and was very much alive. Knox would refer to the Word as ‘the beginning of lyfe spirituall, without which all flesh is dead in God’s presence, and the lantern to our fete, withou the brightnes whereof all the posteritie of Adam doeth walk in darkness; and [...] the foundacion of faith, withoute which no man understandeth the good wil of God’.¹²³ Not only was Scripture to be considered the sole basis for all doctrine and practice, it was also the believed to be primary means of entering into a dialogue with the Almighty. The Christian ‘spoke to God in prayer and [God] replied from the page’.¹²⁴ In light of this, it is evident that Nisbet approached his transcription with due reverence – writing out the words of the New Testament carefully and evenly, often with little flourishes of the letters or decorative capitals.¹²⁵ In comparison, the supplementary materials were transcribed with noticeably less attention to penmanship. After all, to the scribe the commentaries were but the words of men, compared to the text of the New Testament, which was the inspired Word of God.

¹²² Coverdale, *New Testament*, f.Diii^r-Evi^v.

¹²³ Knox, ‘Letter of Wholesome Counsel’ in *WK*, iv, 133.

¹²⁴ Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, 276.

¹²⁵ Clerical errors (such as the crossing out of incorrectly transcribed letters or phrases) are virtually non-existent.

Still, the words of men had their place. Protestant readers (and hearers) were encouraged to interact with biblical texts – to meditate on them, to think critically about them and to apply them to their own lives.¹²⁶ Conscientious translators, commentators and publishers provided study guides to aid the laity in their understanding, including marginal notations and informative glosses.¹²⁷ At least one contributor to the Nisbet manuscript felt that the text (and subsequent readers) would benefit from similar treatment. A prime example of the juxtaposition of the older Lollard translation and the newer Protestant interpretations can be found in John 6:54-57. The verses read:

Truly, treuly, I say to you, bot ye ete the flesch of mannys sonn, and drink his blude, ye sal nocht baue lif in you. He that etis my flesch, and drinkis my blude, has euirlasting lif, and I sal agane raise him in the last day. For my flesch is verray mete, and my blude is verray drink. He that etis my flesch and drinkis my blude, duellis in me, and I in him.¹²⁸

These verses were often used by the Catholic Church to support the doctrine of transubstantiation. In order to help the reader through a passage that might otherwise appear to contradict the Protestant understanding of the Eucharist, the compiler included Coverdale's explanatory note in the margin:

This chaptur speikis not of the sacrament of the body and blude of Crist, bot of the spiritual eating, namely, of faith quhilk is steadfastly to belief that Christ hes scheid his blude for us, els wer our chyldren dampned that ar nocht able to receaue the sacrament.¹²⁹

Similar marginal explanations are scattered throughout the manuscript. These were intended to alleviate any confusion that might arise from the reading of difficult passages as well as to provide deeper – specifically Protestant – analysis of various verses and biblical concepts. Scripture cross-references notated in the margins were intended to direct the reader to similar passages elsewhere in the Bible. Also scattered throughout the text are red crosses. These marks indicate the beginnings (full crosses) and the ends (half-crosses) of Scripture lessons consistent with the lectionary of the Sarum Missal.¹³⁰ Similar markings are found in Tyndale's New Testament and also can

¹²⁶ Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, 276.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 277.

¹²⁸ BL Egerton 2880, f.95^r.

¹²⁹ BL Egerton 2880, f.95^r; Coverdale, *New Testament*, Oiii^v.

¹³⁰ D.Daniell (ed.), *Tyndale's New Testament* (New Haven, 1989), xxxi.

be found in Coverdale's New Testament.¹³¹ These symbols provided a guide for non-sequential but structured Bible reading.¹³²

Overall, the manuscript bears all the hallmarks of a well-used book, passed down through generations of the Nisbet family – many of whom recorded their names on a blank page.¹³³ Whether Nisbet's manuscript translation had any impact beyond his immediate circle of friends and family is impossible to ascertain. From the late 1520s onward, the Scottish underground market for Bibles was dominated by English translations from the Continent, and later from England itself. We know that at least one shipment containing Tyndale's New Testament was destined for Edinburgh and St Andrews. The Hackett Incident highlights the degree to which the English authorities feared vernacular Bibles entering Scotland, suggesting that a cross-border black-market trade for such goods may already have been in operation. By the same token, the material appended to Nisbet's manuscript implies that Coverdale's New Testament was also circulating in Scotland after 1538. Following the Reformation Parliament of 1560, Tyndale, Coverdale and their fellows would be officially replaced by the Reformed favourite, the Geneva Bible. Thomas Bassandyne's Edinburgh reprint of the Geneva Bible in 1579 would be the first complete Bible to be printed in Scotland.¹³⁴

For all the importance placed on vernacular Scripture, Murdoch Nisbet's New Testament remains the only Scottish example to come out of the period under discussion. Scotland was a small market and a large book such as the Bible would have been dangerous to attempt before the 1543 legislation permitting vernacular Scripture. Even after 1543, such a venture would not have been cost effective, particularly when Scots could read more readily available Bibles in English. Consequently, as with much of the other reformist literature discussed in this study, Scottish Protestants were dependent upon writers and print houses abroad.

Conclusion

One of the greatest criticisms leveled against the Catholic Church by its evangelical and Protestant detractors was that of ignorance – both of the clergy and of the laity they

¹³¹ Tyndale, *Newe Testament*, USTC 410306; Coverdale, *New Testament*, USTC 410365.

¹³² Later Protestants would use the lectionary provided in the Prayer Book. Ryrie, *Being Protestant*, 275.

¹³³ *BL* Egerton 2880, 234^r.

¹³⁴ *The Bible and Holy Scriptures* (Edinburgh, A. Arbuthnot & T. Bassandyne, 1579), USTC 508897.

were charged with instructing. Consequently, it became a major goal among the reformers to ensure that the Protestant laity knew what they believed and why they believed it. To this end, they employed devotional literature, songs and vernacular Bibles to edify their brethren of all ranks and classes. In places such as Scotland, where governmental and institutional injunctions made the promotion of Protestantism difficult, and sometimes even deadly, vernacular pedagogical literature also served to encourage and motivate those facing persecution.

Intended for use by the already converted, these works were meant to be accessible, informative, uplifting and devout. Although legislation in 1525, 1535, 1541 and 1543 specifically condemned the discussion of Scripture by non-academics, Gau, Johnson, Wedderburn and Nisbet hoped that their readers (and singers) would find ways to gather together for instruction and mutual support. Those who could not assemble were encouraged to undertake private devotions and study. Indeed, Knox claimed that familiarity with the Word of God was

the onelye organe and instrument which God useth to strengthen the weake, to comfort the afflicted, to reduce to mercy by repentance such as have slydden, and, finally, to preserve and kepe the very lyfe of the soule in all assaultes and temptations.¹³⁵

Through knowledge and understanding of what they believed, it was hoped that Scottish Protestants could endure persecution. But more importantly, it was crucial to nurture the faithful, for this – not institutional and government legislation – was what would bring about the true reform of religion and society.

¹³⁵ Knox, Letter of Wholesome Counsel', in *WK*, iv, 133.

CONCLUSION

The works discussed here represent attempts to induce various Scottish authorities to take charge of the reformation of religion in the early half of the sixteenth century. To do so, the reformers employed different media when addressing different spheres of society. As early appeals fell short of their goals, the reformers began to address ever widening audiences. Initially, early Scottish reformers tried to operate within the kingdom's legal parameters by addressing the academic and clerical community within the universities. When these reasoned requests to reform the Church from within were rejected, evangelicals and Protestants turned to the monarch to determine the spiritual fate of his kingdom. However, courtly entertainments designed to petition as well as entertain the king proved ineffectual. Although James V kept the Scottish reformers – not to mention his uncle Henry VIII, the Pope and other European monarchs – guessing for most of his personal reign, he ultimately chose to maintain orthodoxy. Following the king's untimely death, the reformers (and their English allies) turned to the relatively new media of print to present their message to an elite audience beyond the exclusive circle of the royal court and to the broader Scottish public. In addition, publicly performed theatrics gave physical form to reformist ideologies. Although limited by locality and to a specific time, the dramatic medium was interactive in a way that most other media were not, and audiences would have been socially diverse. Sermons were marked by similar limitations of time and place. However, the forced itinerancy of the early preachers meant that their message was heard by geographically as well as socially diverse gatherings. In the climate of domestic and foreign unrest, and faced with opposition from the Scottish authorities, both temporal and ecclesiastic, reformers also felt it necessary to address the already converted. To that end, they produced materials intended to educate and encourage their brethren in their time of trial.

The systematic study of the media of early Scottish reform illuminates radiating circles of appeals, which, in turn, reveal a movement in search of effective endorsement and leadership. The early Scottish reform movement lacked a central leader – a homegrown Luther or Calvin – to guide and shape the theological agenda. Reform-minded individuals were left to piece together their own beliefs and embark on their own campaigns of persuasion. Still, in retrospect, these campaigns follow a natural course of development, beginning, like all European reformations, in the kingdom's

universities. When denied institutional endorsements from the academic community – and by extension, the Church authorities – university-educated reformers active within the royal court intensified their appeals to the king. When James closed that door, the reformers looked to the nobility. Governor Arran's 'Godly Fit' gave the reformers hope that they might have, at last, found the leader for whom they had been searching. However, Arran's about-face and Cardinal Beaton's return to power shattered their expectations. The movement briefly coalesced around the preacher George Wishart, whose ministry was gathering considerable support among the nobility. Although Wishart's execution left the reformists, once again, without a clear spiritual head, in the months that followed, the Protestant noblemen began to assert themselves.

Over the course of a decade, these men proved to be the most influential supporters of religious reform, eventually styling themselves as the Lords of the Congregation. In May 1559 the Congregation mobilised against the queen regent and her French allies, appointing Lord James Stewart – an illegitimate son of James V – and Archibald Campbell, Earl of Argyll, as their leaders.¹ In the civil war that followed, the Congregation eventually gained the upper hand – aided by the English. Their cause was further helped by Guise's death in June 1560. The Treaty of Edinburgh was signed in July, instituting the withdrawal of all English and French troops from Scotland. In August the Congregation's leaders called a parliament that declared Scotland a Protestant kingdom. They officially severed ties with the Papacy, abolished the Mass and adopted a Protestant Confession of Faith.²

The new leadership favoured Calvinism and set about instituting Reformed worship and practice within the kingdom. This preference would have come as something of a shock for earlier Scottish reformers. With the notable exceptions of David Lindsay and George Buchanan – whose contributions were of a more general evangelical bent – the works discussed in this thesis were overwhelmingly Lutheran in content. Some Zwinglian influences were introduced in sermons of George Wishart, as well as his translation of the Helvetic Confession. However, it was not until Knox's return in the late 1550s that the works began to take a distinctly Calvinistic turn. If the surviving literature is anything go by, the Scottish reformers of the 1520s, '30s and '40s

¹ Dawson, *Scotland Re-formed*, 205.

² Dawson, *Scotland Re-formed*, 212.

advocated a Lutheran reformation.³ Most of the early religious exiles fled to territories with Lutheran sympathies, including Denmark/Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands. The origins of works by Patrick Hamilton, Alexander Alesius, John Gau, John Johnson and John Wedderburn can all be traced to their writer's time in Lutheran lands. Early reformers were further influenced by religious developments to the south, as English reformers also favoured Lutheran theology at this time. Indeed, a number of Scottish Lutherans, like Alesius, initially sought refuge in post-Supremacy England and became involved in the religious discourse there. However, by 1546 the English Lutherans were edged out by a growing Reformed tradition.⁴ This shift would have implications north of the border, as well.

The year 1546 was also significant within the context of the broader European reformations. Luther's death in February 1546 and the outbreak of war in the Holy Roman Empire set in motion the shift from Wittenberg to Geneva as the centre of the Protestant Reformation.⁵ In 1549, after being freed from two years on the French galleys (following the re-capture of St Andrews Castle), John Knox went first to England – which, under Edward VI and his advisors was leaning towards Calvinism. Following Mary Tudor's accession, Knox and other exiles fled to Frankfurt. There, while serving as chaplain to the English exile community, Knox became involved in a theological dispute over the liturgy. He was asked to leave and headed to Geneva.⁶ Knox was greatly influenced by his time in Calvin's capital, a place he famously described the 'maist perfyte schoole of Chryst'.⁷ Upon his return to Scotland (briefly 1555/6 and permanently in 1559), Knox and the Calvinist confession he championed became pivotal, as he became the spiritual leader that the reform movement had lacked.

Recent work by John McCallum, Jane Dawson and Margo Todd has clearly demonstrated that religious change did not happen overnight following the Reformation Parliament.⁸ In the decades to come, the Reformed Kirk encountered opposition as it

³ Alec Ryrie discusses a similar trend in the early English Reformation: A. Ryrie, 'The Strange Death of Lutheran England', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 53/1 (January 2002), 64-92.

⁴ Ryrie, 'Strange Death', 91.

⁵ Gordon, *Calvin*, 180.

⁶ J. Dawson, 'Knox, John (c.1514–1572)', *ODNB*.

⁷ *WK*, iv, 240.

⁸ J. McCallum, *Reforming the Scottish Parish: The Reformation in Fife, 1560-1640* (Aldershot, 2010); Dawson, *Scotland Re-formed*; M. Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (Yale, 2002).

undertook the task of imposing its chosen brand of Protestantism on a largely Catholic population. Works of persuasion were still necessary to the reformers' efforts to replace the Catholic Church in the hearts and minds of the Scottish people, as well as to justify the actions of the Congregation. This time, however, the reformers had the support of the government infrastructure, as well as access to domestic printing presses. At last they were able to deploy the media of persuasion and propaganda in the same way their Continental brethren had been doing for decades.

Although the new Reformed Kirk repudiated the use of drama, other media were embraced. Print was immediately directed to the Protestant cause. Pamphlets defending the actions of the Congregation and polemic treatises directed against Catholic apologists flew off the Edinburgh presses of John Scott and Robert Lekpreuik. Robert Sempill's satirical verses in support of the reformers, well as his anti-Marian broadsides produced during the civil wars of 1567-1573 enjoyed wide circulation.⁹ Meanwhile, preaching became the central component of Reformed worship. As John McCallum has stated, the establishment of preaching ministries in Scottish parishes was the 'first, and most important task' of the newly reformed church.¹⁰ To this end, the Reformed Kirk issued the 'Book of Discipline' in 1560 and promoted the use of the Genevan Bible.¹¹ Other pedagogical works followed, including *The Forme of Prayers* (1562) and the *Scottish Psalter* (1564) – based on the English psalm books of Sternhold and Hopkins.¹² Robert Lekpreuik printed the first Scottish Gaelic publication – John Carswell's translation of the Genevan service book and Psalter, *Foirm na nurrnuidheadh* (1567).¹³ These works are but a sampling of the vast quantities of reformist materials that flooded

⁹ P.J. Bawcutt, 'Sempill, Robert (d. 1595?)', *ODNB*.

¹⁰ McCallum, *Reforming the Scottish Parish*, 11.

¹¹ 'The Book of Discipline' was first printed, together with the 'The Second Book of Discipline' and the Acts of the General Council by G.Thorp in Amsterdam in 1621 (STC 22015). The first complete Bible printed in Scotland was published by Alexander Arbuthnot & Thomas Bassandyne in Edinburgh in 1579 (USTC 508897).

¹² W.S. Reid, 'The Battle Hymns of the Lord: Calvinist Psalmody of the Sixteenth Century' in *Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies*, (ed.) C.S. Meyer (St Louis, 1971), 51. John Calvin, *The forme of prayers and ministration of the sacraments* (Edinburgh, Robert Lekpreuik, 1562), USTC 505965; John Calvin and Robert Lekpreuik, *The forme of prayers and ministration of the sacraments &c used in the English Church at Geneva, approved & received by the churche of Scotland whereunto are also added sondrie other prayers, with the whole psalmes of David in English meter* (Edinburgh, Robert Lekpreuik, 1564), USTC 506228; Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins, *Al such psalmes of David as Thomas Sternehold didde in his life time draw into English Metre* (London, Edward Whitchurch, 1549), USTC 504306.

¹³ John Carswell (trans.), *Foirm na nurrnuidheadh agas freasdal na sacramuinteadh, agas foirceadul an chreidimh Christuidhe andso sios* (Edinburgh, Robert Lekpreuik, 1567), USTC 515610.

the Scottish market after 1560. The Reformed authorities used these media to full effect in their ongoing campaign to undermine Mary, Queen of Scots and to override the influence of Catholicism. The persuasive and propagandistic literature of the early Scottish reformation paved the way for these later works. Although the reformers had at last succeeded in instituting religious change – *de jure* if not *de facto* – by 1560, the work of shaping opinion through works of persuasion was far from over.

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