Katie Barclay and Siobhan Talbott
New perspectives on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scotland: the Economic and Social History Society of Scotland Conference 2010

New Perspectives on Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Scotland: The Economic and Society History Society of Scotland Conference 2010

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The 2010 Economic and Social History Society of Scotland conference took place at the Apex Hotel, Dundee on 7 and 8 May on the theme of 'New Perspectives on Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Scotland'. It followed a Christmas event 'Scotland's Historians: the Development of Eighteenth-Century Historical Studies', where Professors Tom Devine, Allan Macinnes, Christopher Smout, Chris Whatley and Bruce Lenman reflected on developments within the field over their careers. The May conference was intended to expand this discussion into an exploration of the future of the field, concentrating on new researchers and new research. It was well attended with over sixty scholars at various stages of the academic life-course, from postgraduates to recent retirees. When the call for papers was drafted, the conference committee suggested the following six themes as a possible organising framework for panels: economic, social, gender/cultural, religious and political history and diaspora studies. The division of the field into these sections was reinforced by the keynote speakers who were each allocated a sub-heading and asked to reflect on the development of the field from that perspective. Yet, over the course of the event, the resistance of new research to such simplistic categorisation and the fluidity of ideas across traditional disciplinary boundaries became apparent. Despite this, these headings offer a useful structure for exploring the direction of the field of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scottish history.

One of the trends most evident across the two-day event was the influence of the cultural turn on the field of Scottish history. The cultural turn has generated mass interest in culture – a development which simultaneously expanded humanities disciplines to include

not only the narrow field of artistic or literary expression but also human interaction in almost every sphere of life. It focused historians on the production and dissemination of meaning through social and economic structures, practices and beliefs.[1] The popularity of this approach has long been recognised by the Economic and Social History Society of Scotland, whose renaming of their journal, *Scottish Economic and Social History*, to the *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* in 2005 reflected the inability of the category 'economic and social' to capture the vibrancy and diversity of current approaches to Scottish history, or the interdisciplinarity many new scholars are beginning to adopt.

The significance of cultural history to Scottish history of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was highlighted during the Society's conference by the wide-ranging work captured under its rubric. Katie Barclay's keynote paper gave an overview of this body of work, indicating that histories of the Scottish book trade, literature, reading, singing, balladry and oral culture are well-developed and ongoing and that studies of the relationship between language, whether Gaelic or Scots, and identity were increasingly popular, reflecting the significance of language to methodologies of cultural history.[2] She also reflected on the growing significance of studies of material culture to the field of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scottish history and the increasingly sophisticated methodologies for using material sources – a real strength of Scottish history reinforced by partnerships between academics

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[1] For discussion of form, implication and limitations of the cultural turn, see: V. E. Bonnell and L. Hunt (eds), *Beyond the Cultural Turn: New Directions in the Study of Society and Culture* (London, California University Press, 1999), and Peter Mandler, 'The Problem with Cultural History,' *Social and Cultural History,* 1 (2004), pp. 94-117 and responses by Hesse, Jones and Watt in *Social and Cultural History,* 2 (2004).

[2] Some examples include: M. Pittock, *Scottish and Irish Romanticism* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2008); L. Henderson and E. J. Cowan, *Scottish Fairy Belief: A History* (East Linton, Tuckwell Press, 2001); D. Horsburgh, 'When was Gaelic Scottish? The Origins, Emergence and Development of Scottish Gaelic Identity 1400–1750', in C. Ó Baoill and N. R. McGuire (eds), *Rannsachadh na Gàidhlig* (Aberdeen, An Clò Gaidhealach, 2002), pp. 231–42; J. Cruickshank, 'The Move towards Written Standard English in Eighteenth-Century North-East Scotland', *Journal of Irish and Scottish Studies,* 1, 2 (2007), pp. 71-84; R. A. Houston, *Scottish Literacy and the Scottish Identity: Illiteracy and Society in Scotland and Northern England, 1600-1800* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985); R. Sher, *The Enlightenment and the Book: Scottish Authors and Their Publishers in Eighteenth-Century Britain, Ireland, and America* (Chicago, Chicago University Press, 2006).

and museums across Scotland.[3] Barclay pointed to the importance of the spatial turn, where the potential for space to create social meaning, as much as space being given meaning by its users, has been influential to the discipline of history and has been manifested both in the growing importance of environmental history and in the new methodologies applied within studies of urban and rural space.[4]

Barclay's reflections on the field were borne out in several papers given across the weekend. Book and library history were represented by John Crawford's paper on the Scottish community library in the age of Enlightenment that incorporated not only the history of their development in provincial towns, but also used architectural and spatial theory to highlight how library buildings shaped the access and use of libraries within local communities.[5] Carrying on the theme of Enlightenment culture and space, Rosalind Carr gave a gender analysis of Edinburgh and Dundee's public debating societies, reflecting on

[3] Some examples include: S. Nenadic, *Laird and Luxury: the Highland Gentry in Eighteenth Century Scotland* (Edinburgh, John Donald, 2007), and several doctoral projects currently being undertaken at the University of Edinburgh, including those by G. Wilson, 'Portraits of Thomas Jefferson'; S. Lammie, 'A Small Family Firm in the Luxury Furniture Trade: Scott Morton & Co. 1880 – 1960', S. Tuckett, 'Weaving the Nation: Scottish Clothing and Textile Cultures in the Long Eighteenth Century'; C. Friend, 'The Social Life of Paper in the Long Eighteenth Century'; M. Ledford, 'Conduct Books to Novels: Popular Enlightenment in Literature in Britain and America, 1760 – 1830'. Two papers were presented at the 35th Annual Conference of the Social History Society, 30 March-1 April 2010 that also demonstrate the incorporation of material culture into mainstream historical studies: Gordon Pentland's 'Covenanting Material Culture and Popular Politics in Nineteenth-Century Scotland' and Mark Nixon,'s 'Material Culture and Gladstonian Liberalism'.
[4] For example: T.C. Smout, *People and Woods in Scotland: a History* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2003); M. Stewart and F. Watson, 'Land, the Landscape and People in the Nineteenth Century', in T. Griffiths and G. Morton (eds), *A History of Everyday Life in Scotland, 1800-1900* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2010), pp. 23-59; 'Scottish Towns and Urban Society in the Age of Enlightenment, c. 1745-1820', AHRC-funded research project, Department of History, University of Dundee.
[5] For more on the use of libraries within local communities see: V. Dunstan, 'Glimpses into a Town's Reading Habits in Enlightenment Scotland: Analysing the Borrowings of Gray Library, Haddington, 1732-1816', in *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, volume 26 (2006), pp. 42-59; M. Towsey, '"All the Partners may be Enlightened and Improved by Reading them": The Distribution of Enlightenment Books in Scottish Subscription Library Catalogues, 1750-c.1820', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 28, 1 (2008), pp. 20-43; M. Towsey, 'First Steps in Associational Reading: The Foundation and Early Use of the Wigtown Subscription Library, 1790-1815', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 103 (2009), pp. 455-95; D. Allan, 'Provincial Readers and the Book Culture in the Scottish Enlightenment: the Perth Library 1784-c1800', *Library*, 3 (2002), pp. 367-89.

women's inclusion as topics of discussion, but their exclusion as intellectual actors, and the ways in which this mirrored women's social positions more broadly. Her work emphasised the ways in which access to public societies incorporated men and excluded women from the shaping of the Enlightenment thought that would become central to the development of Scottish society and culture.

The social and cultural significance of the exclusion of women from shaping Enlightenment discourse was further highlighted in the work of Andrew Wells, who presented a paper exploring the ways in which eighteenth-century discourses of gender and race were constructed in the law court (a space dominated by white men) and how they impacted on the application of justice. Enlightenment culture was also at the heart of Nathalie Rosset's work on eighteenth-century Scottish towns. She argued that the idea of 'urbanity' – that is, a form of Enlightenment sociability and social conduct identified with urban culture – was also found within the provincial towns, where its meaning was negotiated as town dwellers tried to resolve tensions between the perceived loss of 'ancient communal practices' and the demands of modern town life.

Other papers presented at the conference demonstrated that these methodologies are not restricted to scholars of the eighteenth century. Leona Skelton's paper on insanitary nuisances in the seventeenth century highlighted the extent to which the local community drove the policing of the environment through regular complaints to local authorities, offering an alternative vision of town regulation from traditional top-down models of law enforcement – and highlighting the contested nature of urban space. Similarly Graham Chernoff's case study of the building of the Tron Kirk in mid-seventeenth-century Edinburgh demonstrated a multitude of relationships in the early modern community, from the tensions between local and international architectural influences to those between community demands and religious need, between the laity and the clergy, and between the people who

paid and those who built. Chernoff, like many of the speakers on the eighteenth century, saw the built environment (and thus the concept of space) as a central element in both shaping and demonstrating cultural meaning.

The branch of scholarship represented by these papers is indicative of the influence of the cultural turn, which precipitated a rethinking of the ways in which power relationships operated within society, highlighting the interactive and negotiated nature of power both within and between social groups. Enlightenment thought is no longer only viewed in terms of elite writers and their shared intellectual networks, but is now seen in terms of how its meanings were negotiated within Scottish society – both before and after it was written – how its authors were part of that culture, and the implications of Enlightenment thinking for social practice, justice and culture.[6] This methodology destabilised traditional lines of social power by dislocating Enlightenment thought from a narrow group of elite white men and placing it within Scottish society more broadly, where its meaning was less stable and more contested and where the seemingly transformative power of Enlightenment thought becomes problematic. Similarly, studies of social interaction within seventeenth-century Scottish towns, nobility and politics challenge simplistic vertical models of social, economic and political power. Power is now seen to flow up, down and across social platforms, constantly changing in nature as it meets resistance or acceptance (not to suggest, of course, that histories of institutional power were ever so naïve as to see power as entirely one-directional).[7]

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[6] Examples of an intellectual history of the Enlightenment include: Alexander Broadie, *Scottish Enlightenment: an Anthology* (Edinburgh, Canongate Books, 1997); Chris Berry, *Social Theory of the Scottish Enlightenment* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 1997). For more on the ways in which Enlightenment writings were received by a wider Scottish (and British) society, see: M. Towsey, *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment: Books and their Readers in Provincial Scotland* (Leiden, Brill, 2010); D. Allan, *Making British Culture: English Readers and the Scottish Enlightenment, 1740-1830* (London, Routledge, 2008).

[7] M. Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge: the History of Sexuality,* vol. 1 (London, Penguin Books, 1998), p. 92; P. Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1972).

This rethinking of social power relationships has forced a re-evaluation amongst historians of the traditional seats of power – the institutions of Church and state and networks of the social elite. Religious history, discussed at length in the keynote paper of Alasdair Raffe, is indicative of this change. Raffe highlighted that religious history has moved from a focus on high-church politics and the traditions and rituals of long-standing institutions to a focus on religious beliefs and practices both within and beyond such institutions, the interactions between them, and the competing belief structures evident in personal belief. He described this as a move from vertical to horizontal history and pointed to the change of name of the field from 'ecclesiastical or church history' to 'religious history' as evidence of this shift.[8] Raffe demonstrated that one of the notable outcomes of this rethinking has been the reintegration of religious history into histories of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scotland, beginning with Linda Colley's *Britons*.[9] He also advocated the need to place Scottish themes in international or comparative contexts – a theme that emerged from many of the papers presented at this conference. An incorporation of religion into the everyday required a re-evaluation of, amongst other things, the relationship between religious belief and Enlightenment, the role of religion in shaping political belief, and how religion framed social and personal outlooks. This shift had brought about a host of new questions, as belief has come to be understood as more than just church doctrine, but also superstition, the remnants of pagan culture and Catholicism in Reformation society, and the way that doctrine was adapted as it was applied to the everyday.[10] Yet, as Raffe noted, while this approach has

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[8] For further discussion of this see: P. Collinson, 'Towards a Broader Understanding of Early Dissenting Tradition', in P. Collinson, *Godly People: Essays on English Protestantism and Puritanism* (London, Hambledon Press, 1983), pp. 527-62.

[9] L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (London, Yale University Press, 2005).

[10] For example: M. Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 2002); M. Graham, *The Uses of Reform: "Godly Discipline" and Popular Behaviour in Scotland and France, 1560-1610* (Leiden, Brill, 1996).

been applied to the Scottish Reformation period, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in Scotland require further attention.[11]

Raffe may have taken heart from the inclusion of religion in a variety of papers presented during the conference. While there were no speakers who focused solely on religious practice, religious belief was central to several discussions. Chernoff's paper highlighted the way that religious belief shaped the structure of a major building project, the attitudes of those involved in its creation and, through church building, the architectural face of urban Edinburgh. Similarly, Nicola Cowmeadow's paper explored the importance of religion to the politics of the 1707 Union, and papers by Maureen Meikle and Laura Stewart in a panel exploring the British Civil Wars placed religious belief at the centre of their explanatory narratives. In this way, the influence of the cultural turn on religious history has unsettled disciplinary boundaries: political historians, amongst others, now regularly foray into religious studies, while, as Barclay and Raffe noted, popular culture (such as stories of witchcraft) is now the playing field of historians of religion.

A similar phenomenon can be seen in political history. Derek Patrick's keynote paper examined the changing nature of Revolution politics, focusing on the expansion of the political beyond traditional institutions in his discussion of the interactive relationships between royalty, the elite, parliament and the people across the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Patrick offered a critique of Patrick Riley's picture of late seventeenth-century Scottish politics, which led to characterisations of Scottish politicians as self-interested opportunists, motivated by wealth and ambition, and whose religious and political

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[11] Notable exceptions include: D. G. Mullen, *Women's Life Writing in Early Modern Scotland: Writing the Evangelical Self, c.1670-c.1730* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2003) and Alasdair Raffe's work, which includes: 'Presbyterians and Episcopalians the Formation of Confessional Cultures in Scotland, 1660–1715', *English Historical Review,* 125 (2010), pp. 570-98; J. Miller, 'Belief, Religions, Fears and Neuroses', in E. Foyster and C. A. Whatley (eds), *A History of Everyday Life in Scotland 1600-1800* (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2010), pp. 234-51.

preferences were associated more with opportunity than commitment.[12] Such interpretations have seen politics as relatively unsophisticated and typified by factional struggles and petty infighting, as opposed to the party structure that came to be associated with the English Parliament. Patrick, however, argued that from 1689 there were distinct political parties – these were relatively fluid, but were identified by firm religious and political motives. By the end of the century these were cohesive and more than capable of challenging the royal court, and, despite previous interpretations, Scottish legislation was not necessarily dictated from London.

The approach to political history used by Patrick was demonstrated in a number of other papers. Nicola Cowmeadow's analysis of the contribution of women to the 1707 Union suggested the need to look beyond traditional lines of power, highlighting that although there was no legitimate mandate for women's political involvement in the Union, noblewomen created a role for themselves that allowed for their participation in Scottish politics. Cowmeadow used the writings of Katherine, Duchess of Atholl to demonstrate how religion was used to frame and justify her involvement in family and national politics. In suggesting that an understanding of this engagement can lead to a more accurate portrayal of the involvement of noblewomen in wider Union politics, Cowmeadow commented on the importance of considering political, religious and social concerns in conjunction, and thereby advocating the interdisciplinary approach that characterised many of the papers given at this conference.

A similar approach was applied by Maureen Meikle in her exploration of the borders during the British Civil War. Her comparison of the economies of Newcastle and Sunderland during the 1640s highlighted the political importance of the Scottish Covenanters' campaigns in Northern England, and specifically pointed to the different consequences for these northern

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[12] P. Riley, *King William and the Scottish Politicians* (Edinburgh, 1979).

cities of their religious ties. That prominent Sunderland Puritans and Scottish Covenanters had maintained a dialogue from the 1630s was crucial to the welcome of the Covenanters into this city, whereas Newcastle, with its royalist tendencies, resisted the Covenanters' advances. As a result, Sunderland's economy benefited from the re-opening of the blockaded River Wear, and its role in equipping the Scots when overland supply lines were overstretched, whereas the River Tyne remained blockaded, preventing the residents of Newcastle from involving themselves in these lucrative economic developments. Meikle also examined relationships between natives and the Scottish army, highlighting the good relations that the Covenanters maintained with the people of Sunderland through marriages between soldiers and local girls, contrasting this with the fear the army instilled throughout County Durham and Yorkshire.

In adopting new approaches to governmental relationships, Laura Stewart also readdressed aspects of the relationship between Scotland and England during the Civil Wars, suggesting that a much closer relationship between Scotland's politicians and the English parliament, particularly in 1643, facilitated financial support for Scotland's army. In so doing, Stewart aimed to redefine the role played by the Scots in the British Civil Wars – moving away from assumptions of them as 'a monolithic group of religious fundamentalists' to considering the high level of competence demonstrated by their politicians. The paper raised the issue of Scotland's place within the British Isles through a focus on her role in the Civil Wars – a position, Stewart convincingly argued, that can only be fully understood by a focus on the political, military, fiscal and religious in conjunction, rather than the overwhelming focus on politics that has previously dominated such considerations.

That politics and religion should be studied in tandem was something highlighted throughout the conference. The contributions of Allan Kennedy, Kirsteen MacKenzie and John Toller considered the links between these disciplines during the Cromwellian and

Restoration periods. MacKenzie focused primarily on a re-consideration of the relative positions of Scotland and England under Cromwell, suggesting that the Scottish Covenanters embodied a 'feisty and positive' Scotland during this period, particularly in their open defiance of the Cromwellian regime and their desire to uphold traditional Scottish law and political codes of conduct. Kennedy's discussion of the transition from military to civilian government in Scotland during the early years of the Restoration period also drew on several of these themes, not least the need to consider the relationship between native Scots and the English who were settled in Scotland. He also suggested that the English occupation should be considered from social and economic, as well as political, perspectives. The accepted narrative, as described by Kennedy, has been that Highlanders viewed the Cromwellian garrisons with hatred, and that their removal in 1662 led to widespread rejoicing. However, by taking into account social and economic elements of the presence of these garrisons, Kennedy suggested instead that by 1662 the English soldiers present in these garrisons had become embedded into the fabric of local society and that their presence was largely accepted. The contributions that these soldiers made to the economic and social wellbeing of the Scottish highlands were both recognised and welcomed and, as such, their withdrawal proved to be a traumatic experience for local communities.

John Toller further developed these themes in his paper considering the interference of the Crown in Scotland's royal burghs in the period from the Stuart Restoration to the Glorious Revolution. Toller argued that an emphasis on the political, as well as assumption about the 'absolutist tendencies' of Charles II and James VII & II in Scotland, led to the side-lining of the Convention in previous histories.[13] By examining the work of the Convention,

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[13] See, for example, G. S. de Krey, *Restoration and Revolution in Britain: A Political History of the Era of Charles II and the Glorious Revolution* (Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2007); M. Goldie, 'Divergence and Union: Scotland and England, 1660-1707', in B. Bradshaw & J. Morrill (eds), *The British Problem, c.1534-1707: State Formation in the Atlantic Archipelago* (Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1996). Such views have been based on Lauderdale's own assessment of the situation – for a critique of this view see K. Brown & A. Mann, 'Introduction: Parliament in Politics in Scotland, 1567-1707', in K. Brown and A. Mann (eds), *The History of*

and particularly the role it played in parliament from this time, its importance in shaping the crown's attitudes towards Scotland's royal burghs can be understood more fully. All three papers in this panel embodied the impact of the cultural turn, applying new methodologies to evidence that has been widely available to scholars of the period. In considering the social and economic alongside the political, MacKenzie, Kennedy and Toller offer a new perspective on Scottish involvement in British politics during these volatile decades.

A field that has also seen the impact of the cultural turn is social history, although the relationship between the two is complex. Within the wider discipline of history, it is generally the case that cultural history has superseded social history as the predominant 'new' approach, but in many ways cultural studies continues the democratic potential that social history first provided in its opening up of new social groups and forms of analysis, including those of gender, race and class.[14] In some ways, however, as other branches of history – religious, political, cultural and economic – have expanded their horizons to incorporate broader social groups and spaces, we have all become historians of the social, and the distinction between the social and the cultural historian becomes more a matter of methodology than subject. Yet the methodologies of social historians continue to inform and stimulate debate in Scottish historical studies, as demonstrated by Karen Cullen's keynote paper on the social history of famine in Scotland, 1670-1800.

Cullen used methodologies from demography, in conjunction with traditional sources such as newspapers and the accounts of contemporary observers, to chart the continuing problem of famine to the Scottish population well into the eighteenth century. She discussed both the experiences of those suffering from a lack of food and the related problems of disease and unemployment. The responses from government, local authorities and the

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the Scottish Parliament Volume 2: Parliament and Politics in Scotland 1567-1707, (Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2005).

[14] For discussion, see Mandler, 'Cultural History'; for fields where social history is undergoing a resurgence see: J. M. Smith, *The French Nobility in the Eighteenth Century: Reassessments and New Approaches* (University Park, Penn State University Press, 2006), p. 5.

wealthy eventually created systems that reduced the demographic impact of famine by the nineteenth century. Her work demonstrates the strengths of social history in providing access to both the experiences of the poor and their relationship with other social groups in a time of crisis, offering alternative approaches to addressing the questions raised by the papers of Skelton, Chernoff and Rosset.

The significance of gender and race to the field of social history was highlighted at the conference by the significant number of people working in these areas, although as previously suggested, the work of many of these historians resists allocation to a particular field or methodological approach. Barclay's keynote paper highlighted the growth in women's and gender history in Scotland over the last decade, pointing to the growth in studies (especially for the eighteenth century) of women's work, women in political and economic life, women's reading and writing, and the development of masculinity studies.[15] Drawing on her own area of expertise, Barclay also pointed to the rethinking of family history, from a field that emphasised the role of kin to political and economic alliances, to one that explores the family space as a place where values were created, where personal relationships were consolidated and resolved, and where people experienced intimacy and

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[15] Some examples include: D. Simonton, 'Claiming their Place in the Corporate Community: Women's Identity in Eighteenth-century Towns', in I. Baudino, J. Carré and C. Révauger (eds), *The Invisible Woman: Aspects of Women's Work in Eighteenth century Britain* (London, Ashgate, 2005), pp. 101-16; R. Carr, '"I Will Now Think of Discharging This to My Lady Duchess": Female Correspondence and Scottish Political History, c. 1707', *Historical Reflections/ Réflexions Historiques*, 37, 2 (2011); R. Carr, 'Women and Darien: Female Participation in Scotland's Attempt at Empire, c.1696-1706', *Women's History Magazine*, Winter (2009), pp. 14-20; R. Carr, 'The Gentleman and the Soldier: Patriotic Masculinities in Eighteenth-Century Scotland', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 28, 2 (2008), pp. 102-21; Towsey, *Reading the Scottish Enlightenment*; M. Towsey, '"An Infant Son to Truth Engage": Virtue, Responsibility and Self-Improvement in the Reading of Elizabeth Rose of Kilravock, 1745-1815', *Journal of the Edinburgh Bibliographical Society*, 2 (2007), pp. 69-92; M. Towsey, '"Observe her Heedfully": Elizabeth Rose on Women Writers', in *Women's Writing*, 18, 1 (Special Edition): *Women Readers in Europe: Readers, Writers, Salonnières, 1750-1900* (2011); K. Glover, 'The Female Mind: Scottish Enlightenment Femininity and the World of Letters. A Case Study of the Women of the Fletcher of Saltoun Family in the Mid-Eighteenth Century', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 25 (2005), pp. 1-20; C. Spence, 'Women and Business in Sixteenth-Century Edinburgh: Evidence from their testaments', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 28, 1 (2008), pp. 1-19; S. Talbott, 'Scottish Women and the Scandinavian Wars of the Seventeenth Century' *Northern Studies*, 40 (2007) pp. 102-27; M. Rorke, 'Women Overseas Traders in Sixteenth-Century Scotland', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 25, 1 (2005), pp. 81-96.

emotion.[16] Women's and gender historians represented at the conference highlighted many of these themes: for example, Nicola Cowmeadow's study of elite women's role in Union politics, Cathryn Spence's study of women's credit networks in sixteenth-century Edinburgh, Rosalind Carr's exploration of the gendering of political clubs and Nathalie Rosset's consideration of the importance of masculinity to understanding 'urbanity'. Histories of family life were also explored under the rubric of political and economic networks by Anna Groundwater and Kathrin Zickermann, while race, gender and family intersected in Sonia Baker's and Anthony Cooke's works on the relationships between white slave owners and their black slave families in the Caribbean.

Nevertheless, the expansion in cultural, religious and social history is accompanied by a rejuvenation of more traditional approaches to the past, in particular concerning Scotland's economic history. Philipp Rössner's keynote paper considered the development of Scotland's customs system and the importance of this for Scotland's Atlantic trades in the first half of the eighteenth century. Rössner focused on the importance of the customs legislation introduced in Scotland at the Union of 1707, making use of the large amount of surviving statistical material pertaining to Scottish commerce and economic activity in this period. He offered convincing explanations as to why Scottish commercial interests following the 1707 Union became embedded in the re-export trade in tobacco to continental Europe, as the implementation of new customs legislation in Scotland after 1707 fundamentally altered patterns of Scottish overseas trade.[17] His work was complemented by the approach of Matt Greenhall, who used surviving statistical material to re-evaluate the economic relationship

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[16] K. Barclay, *Love, Intimacy and Power: Marriage and Patriarchy in Scotland, 1650-1850* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2011); E. Ewan and J. Nugent (eds), *Finding the Family in Medieval and Early Modern Scotland* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 2008).

[17] See P. Rössner, *Scottish Trade in the Wake of Union (1700-1760)* (Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2008); P. Rössner, *Scottish Trade with German Ports, 1700-1770: A Study of the North Sea Trades and the Atlantic Economy on Ground Level* (Stuttgart, Franz Steiner Verlag, 2008).

between north-east England and southern and eastern Scotland during the British Civil Wars, with substantial results.

However, some scholars of economic history have also begun to adopt social approaches. Several papers given at the conference emphasised that a new generation of economic historians are increasingly using methodologies from social history to investigate traditional economic problems, again highlighting the importance of cross-fertilisation between different historical disciplines. For example, the importance of the inclusion of women into understanding national economies has required the use of different types and categories of source evidence. Cathryn Spence's paper, for instance, used legal records to uncover women's roles in the debt and credit relationships that were prominent in the lives of Edinburgh's citizens in the first half of the seventeenth century. Spence discussed the important role women played in these relationships, in particular highlighting the differences in Scottish practice when compared to England – and in so doing, suggested the need to appreciate the distinctiveness Scotland maintained from England in this period. Spence's research also signals the importance of considering these relationships across social divides, as women of all marital statuses – primarily wives but also widows, servants and single women – and across all social and economic boundaries participated in debt and credit networks.

Siobhan Talbott's analysis of the ongoing commercial relationship between Scotland and France during the long seventeenth century – a period during which political and religious change and domestic and international conflict have often been assumed to have had a detrimental effect on trade – similarly highlighted the benefits of looking beyond the traditional sources used in studies of economic history. She argued that 'official' or statistical sources can at times offer a skewed vision of a country's overseas trading links and that an analysis of private documentation – such as the account books, letter-books and the

correspondence of the commercial agents who effected trade at ground-level – when used in conjunction with traditional source material can result in a more accurate picture of trade and economic status. In applying these methodologies and by examining the actions and relationships of individual merchants, factors, skippers and manufacturers – techniques pioneered by scholars in other arenas with significant results – Talbott argued that it is possible to prove that at times when official records suggest that certain commercial routes stagnated, commercial agents were able to adapt their trading methods to allow them to continue to flourish.[18]

Kathrin Zickermann's paper adopted a similar approach, focusing on the mercantile networks of one Scottish family – the Jollies of Prestonpans – in order to demonstrate the importance of understanding trade networks to economic history, and particularly investigations into pan-European trading interests. The activities of families who maintained widespread contacts in various European locations, such as the Jollies, and their facilitation of multilateral trade networks cannot be understood simply from an analysis of statistical records, yet they remain vital to our understanding of Scotland's overseas commercial interests.[19]

While Talbott and Zickermann advocated the need to integrate social methodologies into economic studies, other new perspectives demonstrated the need to integrate the

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[18] This approach has recently been advocated in: S. Haggerty, *The British-Atlantic Trading Community, 1760-1810: Men, Women and the Distribution of Goods* (Leiden, Brill, 2006); S. Murdoch, *Network North: Scottish Kin, Commercial and Covert Association in Northern Europe, 1603-1746* (Leiden, Brill, 2006) pp. 127-248; H. de Bruyn Kops, *A Spirited Exchange: the Wine and Brandy Trade between France and the Dutch Republic in its Atlantic Framework, 1600-1650* (Leiden, Brill, 2007); A. Macinnes, *Union and Empire: the Making of the United Kingdom in 1707* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 11; X. Lamikiz, *Trade and Trust in the Eighteenth-Century Atlantic World: Spanish Merchants and their Overseas Networks* (Suffolk, Boydell, 2010); K. Zickermann, 'Across the German Sea: Scottish Commodity Exchange, Network Building and Communities in the Wider Elbe-Weser Region in the Early Modern Period', (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of St Andrews, 2009); S. Talbott, 'An Alliance Ended?: Franco-Scottish Commercial Relations, c.1560-1713', (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of St Andrews, 2010); S. Talbott, 'Beyond "the antiseptic realm of theoretical economic models": New Perspectives on Franco-Scottish Commerce in the Long Seventeenth Century', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies* (forthcoming). Professor T. C. Smout raised the importance of such sources in his seminal work *Scottish Trade on the Eve of Union*, specifically the Russell Papers (National Archives of Scotland, RH15/106): Smout, *Scottish Trade on the Eve of Union*, pp. 99-115.
[19] Zickermann, 'Across the German Sea'.

political. Matt Greenhall, while remaining focused on a traditional, statistical economic analysis, convincingly argued for the importance of considering the contribution of economic issues to a political narrative which has thus far dominated discussion of the British Civil Wars. The contrasting approaches of Rössner and Greenhall on one hand, and Talbott and Zickermann on the other, emphasise the importance of a multi-disciplinary approach which considers economic, social and political methods in conjunction with each other. Further, all four contributions – as MacKenzie, Meikle and Spence – advocated the need for a re-evaluation of the relative importance of Scotland within a wider British economic framework; moving away from assumptions that Scotland, particularly when compared to England, remained significantly underdeveloped.

Intrinsically related to economic history, the current vogue for studies of the Scottish diaspora was apparent in many papers.[20] David Worthington's plenary pleaded a case for the consideration of the relationship of the Scots in and with Poland, arguing this nascent subject should attract further, thorough investigation.[21] Worthington's own research stems from the

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[20] Diaspora studies have recently seen a burgeoning scholarship, which was enhanced by the foundation of the Scottish Centre for Diaspora Studies at the University of Edinburgh in the Spring of 2008. There are numerous doctoral projects currently being undertaken within this centre, including those by M. Varricchio, 'English, Scottish and Welsh Immigrants to the United States, 1850-1940'; S. McCaslin, 'Transplantation of Scottish Enlightenment Culture to America'; S. Baker, 'Scots in Eighteenth-Century Grenada'; M. Dziennik, 'War, Empire and the Highland Soldier in British America, 1756-1783'; D. Ritchie, 'Irish Immigration and Scotland' and A. McKillop, 'Comparative perspectives on the Irish in Glasgow and Liverpool, c.1880-c.1930'; C. Bradford Bow, 'The End of the Scottish Enlightenment in the Transatlantic Context'. See also: A. Grosjean and S. Murdoch (eds.), *Scottish Communities Abroad in the Early Modern Period* (Leiden, Brill, 2005); Murdoch, *Network North*; D. Worthington (ed), *British and Irish Emigrants and Exiles in Europe, 1603-1688* (Leiden, Brill, 2010); S. Talbott, 'Communities on the Continent: Franco-Scottish Network Building in a Comparative European Context, 1560-1685' in M. Landi (ed), *L'Écosse et ses doubles: ancien monde, nouveau monde* (Paris, Rives, 2010) pp. 25-50; S. Subrahmanyam (ed), *Merchant Networks in the Early Modern World* (Aldershot, Ashgate, 1996); T. Devine, *Scotland's Empire and the Shaping of the Americas, 1700-1815* (Smithsonian Institution Press, 2004); T. Devine, *Scotland's Empire, 1600-1815* (London, Penguin Allen Lane, 2003); D. Dobson, *The Original Scots Colonists of Early America, 1612-1783* (Baltimore, Genealogical Publishing Co., 1989); D. Dobson, *Scottish Emigration to Colonial America, 1607-1785* (Athens, University of Georgia Press, 1994). Within this field, the effect that Scottish emigration and diaspora had back at home is also being explored: M. Harper (ed), *Emigrant Homecomings: The Return Movement of Emigrants, 1600-2000* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2005); D. Leishman, S. Murdoch, S. Talbott and J. Young (eds.), *Exil et Retour: Contextes et Comparaisons/Exile and Return: Contexts and Comparisons*: Études Écossaises, volume 13 (Grenoble, Université Stendhal, 2010). The proceedings of a symposium held by the Centre for Diaspora Studies at the University of Edinburgh, entitled 'Back to Caledonia: Scottish Return Migration from the Sixteenth Century to the Present', are being published in 2011 by John Donald Publishers, Edinburgh.
[21] Work on some aspects of the relationship between Scotland and Poland is available, although much of this is

abandonment in the late 1940s of what would have been the first full-length analysis of Polish-Scottish relations by the Polish scholar Wacław Borowy, and Worthington subsequently considered the variety of contributions of German, Polish and English-language studies that have enriched our understanding of the Scots in Central Europe. Throughout, he emphasised the importance of and need for detailed considerations of diaspora studies for our understanding of medieval and early modern Scottish history.[22]

The integration of diaspora studies to so many papers throughout the weekend highlighted its importance in understanding seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scottish society. Zickermann highlighted the importance of Scots families to overseas relations, and Talbott also suggested that a deeper understanding of the Scottish diaspora contributes to an understanding of Scotland's international commercial relationships – both of these papers demonstrating that without understanding the people involved the trading links themselves cannot be properly understood. The importance of diaspora studies was also raised in the discussion of Scottish politics: for example, Anna Groundwater's analysis of Scottish patronage networks after the 1603 Union of Crowns indicated the importance of personal connections and patronage networks to the relationship between Whitehall and Scotland under James VI & I, suggesting that the Scottish diaspora in England was essential to overcoming the tensions that emerged following the Union of Crowns.

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now outdated: T. Fischer, *The Scots in Eastern and Western Prussia* (Edinburgh, Otto Schulze & Co., 1903); S. Seliga and L. Koczy (eds), *Scotland and Poland; a Chapter of Forgotten History* (Glasgow, 1969); A. Bieganska, 'James Murray a Scot in the making of the Polish Navy' *Scottish Slavonic Review*, 3 (1984), pp. 1–9; A. Bieganska, 'Scottish Merchants and Traders in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Warsaw', *Scottish Slavonic Review*, 5 (1985), pp. 19–34; A. Bieganska, 'The Learned Scots in Poland: from the Mid-Sixteenth to the Close of the Eighteenth Century', *Canadian Slavonic Papers*, 43, 1 (2001); D. Dobson, *Scots in Poland, Russia and the Baltic States: 1550-1850* (Baltimore, Clearfield, 2000).

[22] From the mid-1930s Wacław Borowy (1890-1950) had been writing and publishing articles both in English and Polish concerning the Scots in early modern Poland. The full-length analysis had been entitled: *Anglo-polonica: wiadomości o niedokończonej pracy i zniszczonych materiałach = Anglo-polonica: mémoire sur un travail qui ne sera pas terminé et des matériaux qui ont été détruits* (Warsaw, 1947). Other publications include: W. Borowy, 'The Scots in Old Poland', *Scottish-Polish Society Publications*, II (Edinburgh, 1941); W. Borowy, 'Anglicy, Szkoci I Irlandczycy w wojsku polskim za Zygmunta III', in H. Barycz and J. Hulewicz (eds), *Studia z dziejów kultury polskiej* (Warsaw, 1949), pp. 293-313. For detailed discussions of Borowy's work, published after his death, see W. Rose, 'Waclaw Borowy: A Tribute', *The Slavonic and East European Review*, 29, 73 (1951), pp. 560-62; M. Kridl, 'Waclaw Borowy and his Role in Polish Literary Scholarship', *American Slavic and East European Review*, 10, 4 (1951), pp. 282-293.

Studies of the Scottish diaspora during the eighteenth century also tell us much about Scotland's relationship with the wider world. Sonia Baker's paper on Scottish plantations in the West Indies addressed issues of integration, focusing on marriage, children and the numerical increase in the 'mixed-race' community on the island of Grenada. Baker argued that a study of the wills and documents of white Scottish planters complicates (but not necessarily undermines) the story of cruelty and exploitation associated with slavery, by emphasising provisions made for the mixed-race children resulting from relationships with black slave women. Anthony Cooke expanded on these themes in a paper on Scotland's participation in the Atlantic slave trade of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Using a case study of the slave-trader Simon Taylor, Cooke discussed the use of wide-ranging networks in the success of his business, particularly in considering Taylor's Scottish contacts in Montrose, London, Kingston, Africa and the Caribbean. Cooke also considered the importance of individuals, including Taylor, in creating the financial dividends that Scotland received from this lucrative business. By focusing on the private documents of individuals, both Baker and Cooke's papers presented a more nuanced view of the subject of slavery than has been previously attempted by Scottish historians.[23]

At the close of each day of proceedings, the conference concluded with a roundtable discussion that teamed the keynote speakers with senior scholars, namely Allan Macinnes, Christopher Smout, Chris Whatley and Bruce Lenman. On the final day, discussion centred on the state of early modern Scottish historical studies and potential future directions. It was agreed that both the diversity of the papers and the vibrancy of discussion over the two days of the conference had demonstrated the growing strength of studies of seventeenth- and

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[23] D. Dobson, *Scottish Trade with Colonial Charleston 1683-1783* (Glasgow, Humming Earth, 2009); David Alston, '"Very rapid and splendid fortunes?": Highland Scots in Berbice (Guyana) in the early nineteenth century', *Transactions of the Gaelic Society of Inverness,* 63 (2006), pp. 208-367; M. Duffill, 'The Africa Trade from the Ports of Scotland 1706-66', *Slavery and Abolition,* 25, 3 (2004), pp. 102-22; D. Hancock, 'Scots in the Slave Trade', in N. Landsman (ed) *Nation and Province in the First British Empire: Scotland and the Americas, 1600-1800* (Lewisburg (PA), Bucknell University Press, 2001), pp. 60-93.

eighteenth-century Scotland. The panellists pointed to material culture studies, environmental history and comparative transnational history as significant areas of future research. The history of the family, not just as a subject but also as an agent in historical change, was noted as an underdeveloped area that had the potential to reconfigure the traditional narrative of Scottish history. Moreover, while there was some concern raised over the decline in economic history over the last decade, recent research by Greenhall, Rössner, Spence, Talbott and Zickermann suggests that this trend may now be reversing, driven in part by changing methodological approaches to the field. The shift in this, as in other fields discussed during the conference, emphasises the growing desire for interdisciplinarity in historical studies and, indeed, the results that new approaches are now producing demonstrates the viability of venturing beyond traditional methodological boundaries.

By design, this conference focused on developments in Scottish history, raising many questions regarding Scotland's position within a British, European and global framework. In what is a remarkable sign of the times, very few of the papers viewed Scotland in isolation. Instead, studies of the Scottish diaspora were prominent, including exploring the important effect that Scottish communities abroad had on their homeland, particularly in terms of economic repatriation and cultural exchange. It is clear that scholars are now increasingly reluctant to consider Scotland as separate from her wider relationships. This is in part a response to scholars' resistance to continue subscribing to the perception that Scotland was slow to develop and backwards in many areas. A distinct challenge to this now outmoded view was one of the central themes emerging from the conference and a positive, and rather assertive, development in the field.

The papers presented and discussions that took place at the Society's 2010 conference are evidence that seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Scottish historical studies not only remains in a healthy state, but also that the many approaches of a new generation of Scottish

historians are expanding the scope and significance of research on these centuries. The influence of the cultural turn, the fluidity between subject boundaries, the variety of sources and methodologies employed and the vibrancy of both the presentations and discussion highlighted the maturity of the field. The extent to which new research is resisting simplistic categorisation, and the willingness of scholars to allow the exchange of ideas across traditional disciplinary boundaries, suggests that there are many more new perspectives yet to be uncovered.