The Cambridge Companion to

THE SCOTTISH ENLIGHTENMENT

Edited by

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1   The contexts of the Scottish Enlightenment

I

There is no single context for the Scottish Enlightenment but there are several which were important. Let us start with the most basic, Scotland's geography, which made Scots poor but which also endowed them with the means of improvement and posed questions which the enlightened studied and sought to answer.

Of Scotland's 30,000 square miles less than 10 per cent was arable land in the eighteenth century. Somewhat more was comprised of grazing land of varying quality (more or less 13 per cent) and perhaps 3 per cent made up forest which was cuttable; perhaps a bit more was usable in some fashion.[1] The possible uses of this land were determined by altitude, by the kinds of soils, and by the micro-climates, of which Scotland has many.[2] Scotland was and would remain a poor country. Agricultural improvement, to produce both more food and the materials for industries (such as wool), was a concern which was recognised in the seventeenth century and grew in importance throughout the eighteenth century.

Physical geography informed the country's prospects in other ways. Scotland has long coastlines and Scots were an ocean-going people, but the river systems they possessed were not as useful for inland navigation as were those in England or France because of the short distances to the fall lines. Scottish waterfalls might power industry along the Water of Leith near Edinburgh and at New Lanark, but they did not generally become the sources for power in the early industrial revolution since the fall lines were often not located near enough to raw materials or to population centres. The solution to these problems for the Scots was the steam engine, coal and better

transport, but these developments had to wait until the first quarter of the nineteenth century. Fully exploited, they would largely benefit people in the middle of the country, those in or near Glasgow and Edinburgh. While not determining Scottish prospects, geography limited improvements while focusing attention upon what Scots needed to know to best utilise and improve their resources for agriculture and industry. Scots became chemists in order that they might find better fertilisers, bleaches and dyes for their fabrics, and geologists as they sought to find their mineral wealth. At the same time, they had to consider the social and political-economic changes required for improvements.

The land and the resource base limited the population which the country could carry. Despite emigration, the population rose from about 1,100,000 in 1700 to 1,625,000 in 1801 (c. 50 per cent).[3] People were distributed around the edges of the country, along the river valleys and in low-lying fertile regions where the best lands lay. In 1700, somewhat over a third lived in the Highlands and Islands. By 1800 the percentage was much less. By 1765, although many Highlanders were still monolingual in Gaelic, about 75 per cent of the whole population spoke a Scots of some description.[4] Perhaps 50 per cent lived in the central part of the country with the rest in the Borders and outlying areas. Scotland was a culturally diverse land because of its geography.

The land carried more people in the eighteenth century than it had before partly because of declining standards of consumption, but also owing to increased efficiency in land use and to changes in the structure of markets.[5] Still, there was a precarious balance; Malthusian thinning occurred in the 1690s, perhaps in 1740 and was threatened in the 1780s. Demographic pressures on resources can be lessened by finding more resources, by using what exists more efficiently or with new technologies or by lowering the level of population. All four strategies characterised the Enlightenment period.

Scots had long moved around within their country and had travelled abroad to seek work, often as mercenary soldiers. Such migrants, all over Europe, usually came from the poorest areas – in Scotland, the Highlands and Borders. Skilled migrants tended to come from Lowland areas and from the towns, of which Scotland had a relatively large number.[6] Indeed, it was surprisingly urbanised[7] and the proportion of city dwellers grew rapidly in the eighteenth

century. Moreover, within its burghs there were perhaps more schools than most Europeans enjoyed.[8] Scottish interest in education, particularly vocational education, rested on the fact that people, particularly men, had to leave to make a living. During the eighteenth century, 3,500 to 6,000 trained Scottish medical men left the country.[9] They were not the only educated men to do so. For the lower orders after 1707, the Empire provided opportunities in the army, navy and colonies. The export of people somewhat curbed population growth.

Scots had recognised by the 1680s that if the country were to prosper, men would need to be trained, the economy improved and science brought to bear on problems. Much of what the enlightened did only continued the plans and improvement schemes of men like Sir Robert Sibbald and his friends.[10] To reclaim land, find new mineral deposits, develop industries and new markets, to open fisheries and to increase trade were objectives not only of the late seventeenth century but throughout the Enlightenment. The enlightened continued to respond to constant underlying problems and sought the social changes which would allow meliorative changes.

II

Scotland had a complex religious-political-economic context which changed markedly between c. 1680 and 1800.

Scots were forced by worsening conditions towards the end of the seventeenth century to discuss the long list of causes for them.[11] Partly owing to wars, trade had been in a long decline.[12] Scotland was ceasing to be a viable state able to pay for its independence. Indeed, it could not be really independent while it was united to England through a common monarch. Religious tensions in the country were unresolved. In the 1690s all these problems were compounded by several years of famine and the costly failure of the effort to establish a Scots colony at Darien.

Between about 1690 and the Union of 1707, Scots discussed intensely their future as a nation. They debated the conditions under which economic growth might take place and considered both mercantilist and freer-trade solutions. The role of banks and the state in this process was canvassed. What was needed was more investment, more efficient industries[13] and larger markets. It was

clear to many by 1707 that the solution to Scottish economic woes was closer union with England and access to the English and imperial markets in which Scots were already successful interlopers.[14] Economics and politics went together, as they continued to do in the works of eighteenth-century Scottish social thinkers and political economists. The social theory of the Scottish Enlightenment was not just a set of ideas and practices principally imported from the south or from Holland and France; it had native roots in the country's problems and in the analyses and solutions proposed to deal with them by William Paterson, Sir Robert Sibbald, Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun and others. These would-be reformers, improvers and intellectuals were among those who began the processes of enlightenment, and there are clear links between their discussions and later writings and actions. The various schemes for a Council of Trade which John Law and others set out for Scotland between about 1690–1707 resonate still in the promotion by one of Law's sponsors, the 3rd Duke of Argyll, of the Board of Trustees for Arts, Fisheries and Manufactures, established in 1727, and in Argyll's banking schemes of 1728 and 1743. It is equally clear that this early literature was known to Hume and helped to shape his economic thought.[15]

If economic matters were one part of the political context, another concerned Scotland's relations with the English. What was needed was the settlement of long-standing political problems centring on power: who was to be king? What powers should he have? How should the state be constituted and run? What would, could, or should be Scotland's relation to England? Issues about the governance of Scotland were set out in a protracted debate involving the rights of the crown and of the estates in Parliament. Inseparable from these issues were questions about Scottish independence and about possible conditions of union with England. Scots explored many of the republican and civic humanist ideas held by men like Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun.[16] They also thought about the nature of their Highland and Lowland societies, of their state and its history, which seemed so different from that of the English. Freedom and its meaning, the sources of change, the limits which should be placed on power, the ways in which climate and manners created or influenced institutions, how those interacted – these were all themes which had been noticed by Scots between the appearance of Lord Stair's *Institutions of the Laws of Scotland* (1681) and the efforts to prepare a

well-researched narrative history of Scotland on which Sibbald's friends laboured in the early decades of the eighteenth century. These discussions, like the activities they provoked, reflected the pride which Scots felt in their past and the shame with which they regarded their present. Shamed by their apparent backwardness, but patriotically resolved to improve their circumstances in every way, Scots intellectuals, entrepreneurs and some politicians resolved to better conditions in their country. Their concerns led to the incorporating Union with England in 1707 and later to social theories and theoretical histories.

The first step to the permanent resolution of these problems came with the less than glorious revolution of 1689. This ended the reign of James VII, brought William and Mary to the throne and settled the succession in Scotland, England and Ireland. However, 1689 also brought conflict and produced an exchange of exiles as Jacobites[17] went often to the places from which triumphant Whigs returned. Union with England finally came in 1707, when it was entered into largely for economic advantages which were not forthcoming until after about 1725.[18] But this was not the end of the story.

Attempts were made to end the Union in 1712; other discontents fuelled the rebellions of 1715 and 1745. Politically, Jacobitism remained significant for another generation.[19] Religious and anti-union feelings, economic and political discontents coalesced around loyalty to the former ruling family. This partly reflected the differences between Highland and Lowland societies, but repressed Scottish Episcopalians everywhere held the Hanoverian regime and its established church to be illegitimate. Those feelings were shared by many who did not take up arms. Such sentiments also impelled men to consider over a long period the profound differences between the society of the Gaelic-speaking Highlanders, which seemed to outsiders archaic and disorderly, and that of their Lowland cousins, which seemed much more modern and polite. After 1745 moves were made to solve the Highland problem by ousting many of its leading families from their land and repressing the outward signs of clanship. This was to go hand in hand with the introduction of new industries and better agriculture, of towns and fishing ports, and of more soldiers to police the area. These policies largely failed, but they set off changes leading in time to the Highland clearances, the last great forced enclosure movement in Britain.[20] The consequences

for the Scottish Enlightenment were much theorising about society, social change and the nature of freedom.

The Union was an ongoing problem to the enlightened, who attempted to remain Scottish while assimilating aspects of English culture. For politicians, like the 3rd Duke of Argyll, this meant keeping as much of the old Scotland as one could, keeping Englishmen out of Scottish offices, and making the most of opportunities in Britain and the Empire. The melding of English administrative procedures in the collection of taxes and the management of affairs with Scottish ways, institutions and laws was never easy and was not fully accomplished until the time of Henry Dundas, who was nationally prominent by 1778. For others in the political classes, the Union entailed equality with the English when it came to opportunities and matters of honour, such as the acquisition of a militia to protect a country left relatively defenceless at the time of the Seven Years War. Scots never wanted to give up their Scottishness and were sensitive to English slights. They remained defensive about their society's accomplishments even while they tried to speak a more correct English and write Addisonian prose.[21] The enlightened felt these tensions and expressed their hopes by calling themselves 'North Britons'.

The Union also had religious consequences for Scots. The Kirk had been restored to the Presbyterians in 1690, but after 1707 it was clear that it could not continue its persecuting ways: Thomas Aikenhead, who was hanged for blasphemy in 1697, was the last to be so treated. By 1712, toleration of Episcopalians and others had been forced on Scots by English Tories and patronage rights had been returned to the gentry and the Crown. In the long run this made for a more docile church, but also one in which the men appointed to Church livings would become more moderate and enlightened in outlook as they came to resemble their patrons more than their pious parishioners. These clerics differed from those of an earlier ideal. By about 1730 the Kirk had begun to change, partly because Argathelian politicians[22] had saved the Glasgow Professor of Divinity, John Simson, from the efforts of evangelicals to discipline him for teaching his students that God was not only just but also loving, and for encouraging them to think for themselves. After the Simson case, the evangelicals were in retreat and would not be able to control the teaching of theology anywhere.[23] When the Moderate Party triumphed in the mid-1750s the Established Church, under the

administration of men like Edinburgh University's Principal William Robertson, could and did become an agency for enlightened change, sponsoring Highland surveys and, in 1779, even toleration of Catholics. The costs were continual dissension in the Kirk and the draining away from it of the very orthodox and rigid who joined splinter groups which had begun to form in the late 1720s and 1730s.

After the Union, Scots were not forced to think of themselves as a subject people. Their laws, universities and Kirk, like their manners and customs, remained different. However, by the 1730s, men like Henry Home, later Lord Kames, were hoping for a convergence of Scottish law and institutions with those of the English. Manners changed as more and younger men decided they wished to be North Britons. English standards of farming and of living were now what many Scots sought to emulate. Even the divinity taught at Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen and St Andrews, between c. 1710 and 1760, approached the liberal standards of the English Latitudinarians and Dutch Arminians from whom it was sometimes borrowed. The Union mattered very much; few enlightened Scots ever condemned it.

III

Power and control in Scotland were exercised through patronage as much as through the formal mechanisms of the state or church. Scotland's patrons, its political class, were familiar with conditions in eighteenth-century Europe, where patronage formed an important context for Enlightenment. Everywhere patronage worked to give local élites much more power than highly centralised states wanted them to have, or would allow when power could be gathered to a centre kept in touch with its regions through better communications and a more efficient use of force. One result of this was that the political regime imposed on Scots, particularly by Robert Walpole and the 3rd Duke of Argyll after about 1723, was one in which Scots were left largely to rule themselves – but with English supervision.[24]

Patrons were few in number because Scotland was governed by a very small class of landowners and merchants – perhaps 1,300 in 1700 and no more than double that number in 1800. This meant that when changes were perceived as good by those groups, they could come rapidly. Great men would be followed by those in their

queues, which were long. Tenants and dependents were forced to accept the wishes of their patrons. Without the endorsement and sanction of patrons, little happened. The men who counted most between about 1690–1710 included Sibbald's many friends and patrons – members of the Hamilton family, the Duke of Roxburghe, the Marquises of Tweeddale, Atholl and Montrose, the Earl Marischal and Earl of Cromarty, lesser landlords and politicians and professional men like himself.[25] By the early 1700s, the names of John and Archibald Campbell, successively the 2nd and 3rd Dukes of Argyll, have to be added to this list. Archibald was particularly important because of his personal interests.

The 3rd Duke, Lord Islay until 1743, was a book collector and omnivorous reader, a competent amateur scientist, an improver and banker, a botanist and gardener and a moderate, tolerant and secular-minded lawyer who had little use for evangelicals in the Church. Handling first the political interests of his family and then those of the Walpolean government in Scotland, he was, with the exception of a period of about four years, the chief patron of the country from about 1723 until his death in 1761.[26] He filled Scottish institutions not only with his own nominees but with men of whom he approved, men who, as time went on, became increasingly like himself. Among those whom he and his friends helped to offices were law lords like the younger Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun, Charles Erskine and Henry Home; men of letters such as Francis Hutcheson and Adam Smith; clerics like William Wishart II, William Robertson, John Home, Adam Ferguson, William Wilkie and George Campbell; and medical men, like the founders of the Edinburgh medical school and such successors as William Cullen and Joseph Black.[27] Argyll also patronised artists like William Adam and Allan Ramsay, senior and junior, and scientists and businessmen like Alexander Wilson and James Hutton. If anyone was the father of the Scottish Enlightenment, the 3rd Duke of Argyll deserves the title, because he did more than any other person to open careers to men of talent who then institutionalised enlightened ideas.

When Argyll died, he was followed by his nephew the 3rd Earl of Bute,[28] a man of the same kidney, and he in turn was followed by a collection of men of liberal views and scientific interests. By 1778, patronage power had fallen into the hands of the political machine of Henry Dundas, who could himself be enlightened when he found it

in his interest.[29] His close friends edited the influential periodicals *The Mirror* (1779) and *The Lounger* (1785). The success of the enlightened in Scotland derives, then, from their sponsorship by men who shared many of their views and had the power to impose their values and ideas on an often reluctant society.

IV

The wider world and its Republic of Letters provided another context for the Scottish Enlightenment. The traumatic crises of the late seventeenth century seemed to men in the Republic to be both complex and requiring action, whether they experienced these in Bordeaux, Edinburgh or elsewhere. What was needed were new methods and a determination to change. Such men, whether in London, Amsterdam, Paris or Oxford, helped to set the agenda for enlightened Scots. They wanted to survey and improve their countries. They saw renovated educational systems and the application of the sciences as keys to progress and change. They believed that a nation's past was worthy of study and presentation in modern narratives resting on critically researched sources. They were keen to create institutions, such as Royal Societies, and to use them in statist ways as development agencies. They were generally tolerant and worldly in attitude and eager to find the fruits of religion in good works. Scottish virtuosi in the late seventeenth century were part of this European world of virtuosi who communicated with one another, swapped seeds and information and who saw themselves as men who could restore some of Adam's original nature and make life better for all.

The signs of an outward-looking Scotland can be found in many places by the end of the seventeenth century. Work by Richard Simon was published in Edinburgh in 1685; some Scots were reading Pierre Bayle and Newton not long after.[30] Others were keenly interested in the medicine taught at Leiden or in English literature. The reading of Hume and of his friends around 1725 points to a familiarity with continental literature and thought.[31] Some Scots had been abroad as exiles; many others had been educated in Holland; still more had been on the increasingly popular grand tour which took them to Catholic as well as Protestant countries. Genteel Scottish professional men also had a long tradition of going abroad for their

educations in divinity, medicine and law, a tradition which continued in these fields until, respectively, the 1720s, 1730s and 1740s. Many Scots were more familiar with Holland and France than with England and knew Paris better than London. This changed over the course of the century, but even at the end of the eighteenth century, Scots were still very cosmopolitan. After about 1740 fewer studied outwith Scotland, and those who did usually went to London or Paris for medical training, but more went on the grand tour and more yet into the armed services. Their heritage, the Scottish present and their travels made them interested in innovations, emulative of other Europeans and not servile imitators of the English. Scots looked to London and the English for fashions, politics, literature and science, but we should never think of the Scottish Enlightenment as a set of ideas and practices principally imported from the south. Philosophical, medical and scientific ideas came from France and Holland as readily as from England; toleration and liberal theology were Dutch and Swiss as well as English; polite standards of taste owed as much to the French as to Addison.[32]

Increasing numbers of Scots also explored the rest of the world. They went to the Carolinas and to Delaware in the 1680s and over the ensuing hundred years to most of North America and the Carribean.[33] Africa[34] and the Far East opened to them after 1707. By the end of the century, India was absorbing many Scots.[35] Scots read travel literature with great interest and contributed important items to it: one thinks of Cadwallader Colden's *History of the Five Nations* (1727, 2nd edn 1747), William Douglass on New England (1756, 1757), and various accounts by soldiers of Indians, both American[36] and South Asian.[37] The Scottish experience in Russia evoked a wonderful book, John Bell's *A Journey from St Petersburg to Pekin, 1719–1722* (1763).[38] Later, James Bruce and Mungo Park produced books on Africa at which readers wondered. All of that fuelled the speculations of the conjectural historians and the social theorists.

V

The institutional context for the expression of the Scottish Enlightenment had almost completely come into being by the end of the seventeenth century, and what had not, was there by about

1730. University reforms in Edinburgh, sponsored in the 1680s by James VII, came to little,[39] but between 1690 and 1720, new chairs were added in humanity (Edinburgh and Glasgow), Greek (Glasgow, Edinburgh), history (Edinburgh, Glasgow) and mathematics (Glasgow, King's College, Aberdeen). Regenting (the instruction of an arts student by one master for the boy's entire university career) was abolished: at Edinburgh in 1708, at Glasgow in 1727, twenty years later at St Andrews, in 1753 at Marischal College and at the end of the century at King's. Professional education was strengthened by the addition of chairs of oriental languages (Glasgow, Edinburgh), ecclesiastical history (Glasgow, Edinburgh, St Andrews), law (two at Edinburgh, one at Glasgow), botany (Edinburgh, Glasgow), medicine and chemistry (Edinburgh) and medicine (Glasgow).[40] More chairs in law and medicine had been demanded and would be created when the country could afford them, and when patrons were strong enough to push them through or found it in their interest to create them. The universities tended to expand as patrons struggled to control the colleges.

These changes recognised a need for professional education but also paid some attention to polite subjects. They had the further effect of making the universities less seminary-like in nature and more open to new ideas. Newtonianism came in the wake of mathematicians and doctors, while the study of man and society derived from the moralists and lawyers. The universities steadily added to their libraries[41] and instrument collections.[42] By 1730, the universities were mostly formed and had a new generation of more forward-looking teachers than those of the 1710s and 1720s.

As those developments took place, the thinkers and improvers – one should not separate them too sharply – became numerous enough to change the institutional mix in the country. Scots had had intellectual clubs since at least the 1680s, but the first club which may have made any real difference to the country (none of the others had lasted long) was the Honourable the Improvers in the Knowledge of Agriculture in Scotland (1723–1746). This association of around 300 landowners and intellectuals interested in agriculture and its dependent industries provided a forum for the discussion of economic changes in a society still overwhelmingly agrarian. What may have mattered as much as its discussions and occasional publications were the demonstrated benefits of what it argued for. These

could be seen in the increased productivity of those estates which had begun to increase arable land through the introduction of more animals, better crop regimes, and the adoption of practices such as longer, restrictive leases.

The 1720s saw other important cultural initiatives. *The Caledonian Mercury* began publishing in 1720. Three years later the Edinburgh Assembly was revived, created to cater to the needs of upper-class youth and their parents.[43] The Musical Society, which had existed in some form since 1701, was 'formally constituted in 1728'.[44] A year earlier, in 1727, the Royal Bank of Scotland, an innovator in banking practices, was established. The Board of Trustees for Arts, Fisheries and Manufactures, the vehicle to which men like Lord Kames looked for the improvement of the economy, opened in 1728. In 1729 the Royal Infirmary was started in Edinburgh and in 1738 the foundation stone of a purpose-built hospital was laid. The Academy of St Luke, Edinburgh's first effort to create an art school, began teaching in 1729.[45] By 1731 Edinburgh had a Medical Society which produced the *Edinburgh Medical Essays* (1732–44) in six volumes. These announced to the world (in several editions) the importance of the Edinburgh Medical School, which can be said to date from 1726. The Medical Society soon ceased to function as a society, but it was followed by the Philosophical Society of Edinburgh (1737–83), which in turn became the Royal Society of Edinburgh (1783–). Many other adult and student societies followed, creating fora for the discussion of ideas and sometimes for action on them.[46] Some of these bodies also created significant libraries.[47] By 1737 Edinburgh had a theatre, although it did not get a proper building for some years. The city bustled as the most active centre of Enlightenment in Scotland.[48] What Edinburgh had was wanted elsewhere and was largely created, in some form, by the 1760s.

VI

Glasgow and Aberdeen provided other contexts for the Scottish Enlightenment. By around 1700 each had virtuosi who shared Sibbald's interests and had been in contact with him and others in Edinburgh and elsewhere. Despite some similarities, the three towns had differing enlightenments largely because they recruited their enlightened men from different bases and in differing numbers.

Aberdeen's came almost exclusively from the city's two small universities, King's College and Marischal College. The city's churches, its medical community and the area's gentry supplied a few others. At Glasgow, university men, merchants and lawyers were represented, along with some learned tradesmen. Such men were all present in Edinburgh but so, too, were others more peculiar to capital cities: military men, genteel judges, civil administrators and office holders. They were joined by noblemen and gentry who made the capital their resort and marriage market. This meant the development of differing interests, ideas and emphases in these diverse settings.

Aberdeen in 1700 was a port town of about 10,000 people; by mid-century it had grown to 22,000 and it would rise to 27,000 by the century's end. Until the mid-century, it had many members of the Scottish Episcopal Church who were sympathetic to Jacobitism. Men like the philosopher George Campbell had attended college with boys like George Hay, who was to become a Roman Catholic bishop in Scotland. Aberdeen lacked Glasgow's Presbyterian intolerance and had closer relations with the Baltic, France and London than did Glasgow. Aberdeen's enlightenment took a decisive turn around 1720 with the appearance at Marischal College of three young teachers – Colin Maclaurin, George Turnbull and Thomas Blackwell Jr.[49] Maclaurin arrived in 1717 to reinforce the Newtonian ideas which had been brought to the city ten years earlier by Professor Thomas Bower, MD; Maclaurin came with interests in Shaftesbury and modern philosophy. So too did Turnbull, who had been a member of Edinburgh's Rankenian Club and had corresponded with the deist John Toland. Turnbull believed that all knowledge and standards of taste and morality were based on experience; he later tried to demonstrate this claim in works on natural law, ancient art and education. Blackwell, the Marischal College professor of Greek, wrote important works on Homer, Greek mythology and Roman history and, like his colleagues, was impressed by Shaftesbury. Their most distinguished student was to be Thomas Reid, who, along with James Beattie and George Campbell,[50] would articulate the Scottish common sense philosophy partly in reaction to the immaterialism of George Berkeley and the more sceptical philosophy of David Hume, which they sought to refute in the interests of common sense and Christianity. Their philosophy was to become the distinctive

Scottish philosophical empiricism, and was taken by Reid to Glasgow, where he taught after 1764, and polished in Edinburgh by his protégés James Gregory and Dugald Stewart.[51]

By the 1750s, the Aberdeen enlightenment was best found in the Aberdeen 'Wise Club' or Philosophical Society (1758–73).[52] Its papers centred on the epistemic and moral topics made pressing by the sceptical writings of Hume, but they also show that the members were aware of and engaged with the works of many British and continental thinkers. Dr David Skene, the Club's best naturalist, supplied specimens to Linnaeus; a number of others learnedly debated the views of Buffon, organised observations of the Transit of Venus and discussed other scientific matters. There were discussions of genius, style, language, the characteristics of human nature and evidence. All these topics surfaced in the works they published. Later in the century, professors such as James Dunbar and Robert Hamilton made contributions to the study of society and political economy. Hamilton, a mathematician, and Patrick Copland, a natural philosopher, were useful to the burgh's manufacturers and businessmen, the first by doing the actuarial mathematics for the first of the city's insurance companies, the second as a consultant for manufacturers and the teacher of classes for artisans. Such men were concerned to be useful improvers, as is shown by the work of the Gordon's Mill Farming Club (1758–after 1765), to which several of them belonged.[53] This group listened to papers on agricultural experiments and discussed such things as leases and ploughs, roads and markets. Aberdonians, like the enlightened elsewhere, protested against slavery – James Beattie in lectures given from 1760 on – and some of them even favoured both the American and the French Revolutions. They also supported the Aberdeen Musical Society (1748–after 1800), which gave concerts in the town after 1753 and which could boast a local composer or two as well as a notable list of scores by Handel, Corelli, Gluck, Rameau and other Europeans. Aberdeen may have been small, but it had an enlightenment and it made lasting contributions through the philosophy of Thomas Reid and George Campbell, who also wrote a widely used rhetoric book and an ecclesiastical history which praised Gibbon.

Glasgow in 1700 had perhaps 12,000 people, a figure which had burgeoned to 80,000 by the end of the century.[54] This growth was attributable to the increase of trade and the industrial developments

which occurred as the shippers tried to find cargoes to send out in ships which would bring back sugar, tobacco, cotton and other goods which were processed in the city. This was a merchants' town, but the merchants had little to do with the polite professors until near the end of the century, and what brought them together tended to be not polite literature but science, which was useful. By 1800 Glasgow had developed two enlightenments: one oriented to the university, the other to the concerns of godly utilitarians. The first was not unlike Edinburgh's and found a large place for the moralists and academic scientists.

The Edinburgh-like enlightenment of the Glaswegians is best seen in the work of the Glasgow Literary Society (1752–c. 1803). This club listened to papers in which the scientific ideas of Maupertuis, Buffon, Linnaeus, and d'Alembert were discussed. It heard others reporting novelties such as Black's discovery of latent heat, T. C. Hope's discovery of strontium, or John Anderson's essays on firearms and how to improve them. (He was later to send a cannon to the French Revolutionaries.) There were papers and debates on language, the faculties of the mind, criticism, politics, history, education and much else. Most of Thomas Reid's work after 1764 was read to the Society, as were works published by other professors. William Richardson read poems as well as discourses. As much attention seems to have been given to continental thinkers as to the English. Beccaria, Buffon, Condillac, Rousseau and Voltaire – all occasioned papers by men who, in many cases, had met one or more of them.

This amalgam of polite literature, philosophy and science characterised the enlightenment of the university men, but Glasgow's other, rather different, evangelical enlightenment was supported by Professor Anderson and some local professional men and merchants. These Calvinists were, like Locke, willing to tolerate all but Catholics and atheists, whose political allegiance was not thought to be assured because their oaths could not be trusted. This enlightenment was less Tory than that of the Literary Society and supported the American rebels and, initially, the French Revolutionaries. These men hoped for more freedom in Britain, along with better and cheaper government. They tended to think that freer trade was good so long as theirs was not hurt. They had interests in science and improvements and thought that good letters and learning should always be useful and support true religion. The best guide to their

thinking is the published testament of John Anderson, which sought to establish in Glasgow another university which would provide more useful learning and train ministers for every denomination of Presbyterian worship in Scotland. This university was not created, but the University of Strathclyde is the successor to his foundation.[55] The views of Anderson and his friends were close to those of many in the American colonies, where Glaswegians found friends in men like John Witherspoon, an emigré who became President of what is now Princeton University and an American Founding Father.

Outside the larger towns there were few other centres of enlightenment. St Andrews University possessed some distinguished men, such as the historian Robert Watson and the liberal theologian George Hill, but the town seemed to have few others. Perth, by the 1780s, had a small group of local ministers and teachers gathered around the Morison Press. No other towns could claim an enlightenment. A few enlightened landowners, Sir James Steuart for one, worked from their estates, but most of the enlightened were associated with the largest towns, their club life and conviviality, their libraries and schools. The enlightenment everywhere was an urban movement and it was equally a movement dominated by men. In Scotland women shone only in the drawing room, at the keyboard and in the writing of poems and songs. They were in the background, and hardly formed any part of the intellectual gatherings, which were often in taverns. Also in that background, everywhere in Scotland, was natural and revealed religion. Like most of the enlightened in Britain, Scots were generally sincere Christians who found it virtually unthinkable that there might be no God requiring duties of us. David Hume, driven by the hatred of religious belief which informs most of what he wrote, profoundly differed in outlook from most of his contemporaries.

The contexts shaping the Scottish enlightenment differed from those elsewhere. Geography had made Scots poor, culturally diverse and unable to sustain an independent modern state. Poverty challenged men to pursue the sciences of nature, in order both to understand God's world and to improve their lives. Scots elaborated the sciences of man to understand and change social conditions both in Scotland and abroad. They did so mindful of the intellectual trends which influenced the European Republic of Letters, but also with

eyes on local conditions. Union with England changed them, but so did the ideas they found elsewhere or which they produced at home. By 1800, they could boast of an Enlightenment to which belonged several of the century's best philosophers, its most accomplished political economist and many notable social thinkers, important scientists and medical men, even rhetoricians and theologians. Scottish artists had been among the best portrait painters and architects of the time, with the Adam brothers even having an international style named for them. Scots had written textbooks which were used not only in Britain but also in continental and American universities. Their literary accomplishments resonated among the readers of romantic literature. Those things formed parts of a single development which had engendered excitement in Scotland; excitement marked the larger and unique context of the Scottish Enlightenment.[56]

NOTES

1   William Ferguson estimated that only a quarter of the Scottish land area 'was fit for cultivation of even the least rewarding kind', Ferguson, *Scotland: 1689 to the Present* (Edinburgh and London: Oliver and Boyd, 1968), 71; see also J. T. Coppock, *An Agricultural Atlas of Scotland* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1976); Ian D. Whyte, *Agriculture and Society in Seventeenth-Century Scotland* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1979), 19–22; T. C. Smout, 'The Great Caledonian Forest', in Smout, ed., *Nature Contested: Environmental History in Scotland and Northern England since 1600* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000).

2   Coppock, *Agricultural Atlas*, 9–22; Peter G. B. McNeill and Hector MacQueen, eds., *Atlas of Scottish History to 1707* (Edinburgh: Department of Geography, University of Edinburgh, 1996), 6–7, 14–22.

3   Ian D. Whyte, *Scotland Before the Industrial Revolution: an Economic and Social History, 1050–1750* (London and New York: Longman, 1995), 113.

4   Charles Withers, *Gaelic in Scotland, 1698 to 1981: the Geographical History of a Language* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1984).

5   A. J. S. Gibson and T. C. Smout, 'Scottish Food and Scottish History, 1500–1800', in R. A. Houston and I. D. Whyte, eds., *Scottish Society, 1500–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 59–84; see also their *Prices, Food and Wages in Scotland, 1550–1780* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

 6 I. D. Whyte, 'Population Mobility in Early Modern Scotland', in Houston and Whyte, *Scottish Society*, 37–58.

 7 Michael Lynch, 'Continuity and Change in Urban Society, 1500–1800', in Houston and Whyte, *Scottish Society*, 85–117; T. M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation* (New York: Viking, 1999), 106–7.

 8 R. A. Houston, *Scottish Literacy and Scottish Identity: Illiteracy and Society in Scotland and Northern England, 1600–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985); Donald J. Withrington, 'Schooling, Literacy and Society', in T. M. Devine and Rosalind Mitchison, eds., *People and Society in Scotland*, vol. 1, *1760–1830* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1979), 163–87; Whyte, *Scotland*, 175.

 9 This figure comes from my unpublished study of medical men in eighteenth-century Scotland.

10 R. L. Emerson, 'Sir Robert Sibbald, Kt, The Royal Society of Scotland and the Origins of the Scottish Enlightenment', *Annals of Science* 45 (1988), 41–72; R. L. Emerson, 'Did the Scottish Enlightenment Emerge in an English Cultural Province?', *Lumen* 14 (1995), 1–24; R. L. Emerson, 'Scottish Cultural Change 1660–1710 and the Union of 1707', in John Robertson, ed., *A Union for Empire: Political Thought and the British Union of 1707* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 121–44.

11 A convenient bibliography for part of this literature is *Anglo-Scottish Tracts, 1701–1714: a Descriptive Checklist*, compiled by W. R. and V. B. Mcleod, University of Kansas Publications, Library Series, 44 (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1979).

12 T. C. Smout, *Scottish Trade on the Eve of the Union, 1660–1707* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1963); Christopher A. Whatley, *Scottish Society, 1707–1830: Beyond Jacobitism, Towards Industrialisation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000).

13 It has recently been argued that much more freedom was actually attained by the businessmen of Edinburgh and other burghs during the eighteenth century; this made for efficiency, R. A. Houston, *Social Change in the Age of Enlightenment: Edinburgh, 1660–1760* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); for a discussion of the social base from which the century started in the capital, see Helen Dingwall, *Late Seventeenth-Century Edinburgh: a Demographic Study* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994).

14 T. M. Devine and Gordon Jackson, *Glasgow*, vol. 1, *Beginnings to 1830* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 69–85.

15 See R. L. Emerson, M. A. Stewart and John Wright, *Hume* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, forthcoming), ch. 6.

16   See John Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1985).

17   These were the supporters of the ousted king, James, whose name in Latin is Jacobus.

18   T. C. Smout, 'Where had the Scottish Economy got to by 1776?', in Istvan Hont and Michael Ignatieff, eds., *Wealth and Virtue: the Shaping of Political Economy in the Scottish Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 45–72, 46.

19   A convenient and readable source in the vast and dismal literature on the risings is Bruce Lenman, *The Jacobite Risings in Britain, 1689–1746* (London: Eyre and Methuen, 1980).

20   A. J. Youngson, *After the Forty-five: the Economic Impact on the Scottish Highlands* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1973); Eric Richards, *A History of the Highland Clearances: Agrarian Transformation and the Evictions, 1746–1886* (London: Croom Helm, 1982).

21   For the cost to Scottish literature in all this, see David Craig, *Scottish Literature and the Scottish People, 1680–1830* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1961); David Daiches, *The Paradox of Scottish Culture: the Eighteenth-Century Experience* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), ch. 1.

22   The political faction of the Dukes of Argyll was called 'the Argathelians'.

23   For Simson, see Anne Skoczylas, *Mr Simson's Knotty Case: Divinity, Politics and Due Process in Early Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 2001).

24   The best accounts of this are in John Stuart Shaw, *The Political History of Eighteenth-Century Scotland* (London and New York: Macmillan Press, 1999); and Eric G. J. Wehrli, 'Scottish Politics in the Age of Walpole' (Ph.D. diss., Edinburgh University, 1983).

25   Emerson, 'Sibbald'; passim.

26   R. L. Emerson, 'The Scientific Interests of Archibald Campbell, 1st Earl of Ilay and 3rd Duke of Argyll, 1682–1761', *Annals of Science* 59 (2002), 21–56; R. L. Emerson, 'The Library of the 3rd Duke of Argyll', forthcoming, *Bibliothek*, 2003.

27   R. L. Emerson, 'Medical Men, Politicians and the Medical Schools at Glasgow and Edinburgh, 1685–1803', in A. Doig et al., ed., *William Cullen and the Eighteenth-Century Medical World* (Edinburgh: Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh, 1993), 186–215; R. L. Emerson, 'Politics and the Glasgow Professors, 1690–1800', in Andrew Hook and Richard B. Sher, eds., *The Glasgow Enlightenment* (East Linton:

Tuckwell Press, 1995), 21–39; R. L. Emerson, *Professors, Patronage and Politics: the Aberdeen Universities in the Eighteenth Century* (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1992).

28 R. L. Emerson, 'Lord Bute and the Scottish Universities 1760–1792', in K. Schweizer, ed., *Lord Bute: Essays in Re-interpretation* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1988), 147–79.

29 See Michael Fry, *The Dundas Despotism* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1992).

30 The Scottish political discussions c. 1700 had a continental analogue in the discussions of French thinkers described by Lionel Rothkrug, *The Opposition to Louis XIV* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965). One of Simon's works was published in Edinburgh in 1685; see H. G. Aldis, *A List of Books Printed in Scotland Before 1700*, reprinted with additions (Edinburgh: National Library of Scotland, 1970), item 2608.

31 Emerson, 'Scottish Cultural Change'; Emerson, 'Did the Scottish Enlightenment Emerge in an English Cultural Province?'

32 Emerson, 'Scottish Cultural Change'; Emerson, 'Did the Scottish Enlightenment Emerge in an English Cultural Province?'

33 See Norman Feiring, ed., *Scotland and the Americas, 1600–1800* (Providence: John Carter Brown Library, 1995); Ned Landsman, ed., *Nation and Province* (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Presses, 2001); J. Ralph Randolph, *British Travelers Among the Southern Indians, 1660–1763* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1973).

34 David Hancock, *Citizens of the World: London Merchants and the Integration of the British Atlantic Community* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

35 Michael Fry, *The Scottish Empire* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 2001).

36 R. L. Emerson, 'American Indians, Frenchmen and Scots Philosophers', *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 9 (1979), 211–36.

37 C. G. J. Bryant, 'Scots in India in the Eighteenth Century', *Scottish Historical Review* 64 (1985), 22–41.

38 Bell's book was reprinted by Edinburgh University Press in 1965; see also Anthony Cross, *By the Banks of the Neva: Chapters from the Lives and Careers of the British in Eighteenth-Century Russia* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997); Cross cites numerous works by others who have written on Scots in Russia.

39 Hugh Ouston, 'York in Edinburgh', in John Dwyer, Roger Mason and Alex Murdoch, eds., *New Perspectives on the Politics and Culture of Early Modern Scotland* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1982), 133–55; Ouston, 'Cultural Life from the Restoration to the Union', in *The History of Scottish Literature*, vol. 11, ed. Andrew Hook (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987), 11–31.