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A Protestant Purgatory?: Visions of an intermediate state in eighteenth-century Scotland

ABSTRACT

The protestant afterlife is generally presented in binary terms, with departed souls going directly to either heaven or hell. However, the possible existence of an intermediate state for the dead was discussed by protestant theologians from the reformation onwards. This article traces the evolution of these debates in Scotland, with particular focus on the eighteenth century. The bishops Archibald Campbell, Thomas Rattray and George Innes produced tracts in support of the intermediate state. By the end of the century it had become a standard element of doctrine among the episcopalians, reflecting the formation of a more distinctive theological and liturgical identity, based on the teachings of the early church fathers. Presbyterians generally dismissed the idea as a papish conceit, but there were exceptions. Most notably, in the 1720s the minister William Ogilvie described a series of meetings with the ghost of Thomas Maxwell, Laird of Cool. His account framed the intermediate state as a sympathetic alternative to calvinist predestination, and spread to a wide audience when it was printed as a chapbook. As the episcopalian church declined and the Church of Scotland fragmented, there was greater scope for individuals to formulate their own theologies, potentially challenging traditional notions of what it meant to be a protestant.

Jurisdiction over the fate of the dead is perhaps the most important component of ecclesiastical authority. Since its establishment the christian church has used the concept of

post-mortem rewards and punishments to promote good behaviour. However, the precise details of the afterlife have been negotiated and renegotiated over the centuries. In the 1780s Elizabeth Steuart of Coltness, North Lanarkshire, penned a damning assessment: ‘The state of the dead is what is least known in the Christian church’.¹ Of course, had Steuart discussed this plaint with her local minister, he would probably have assured her that the matter was quite straightforward. He might well have offered a simplified explanation, still employed today: protestants identified two possible destinations after death, and catholics three. From at least the twelfth century, catholicism taught that unrepentant sinners were damned to hell, while the righteous ascended to heaven. For those in between, there was the fiery realm of purgatory.² Souls in purgatory were destined for heaven, but were first purified by a series of torments. The intercession of the living could speed up the process, and by the late medieval period a lucrative market had developed around indulgences and masses for the dead. In the eyes of the sixteenth-century reformers, this was evidence of the catholic church’s corruption. John Calvin termed purgatory a ‘deadly fiction of Satan’; the Church of England’s Thirty-Nine Articles dismissed it as a ‘fond thing vainly invented’.³ Protestant eschatology is usually viewed in twofold terms: souls proceed directly to either heaven or hell.

However, the idea of an intermediate state between heaven and hell was never cleanly erased from protestant society. In a discussion of Victorian religious culture, Geoffrey Rowell states that the notion of an intermediate state became increasingly important in the nineteenth century, ‘in contrast to the eschatology of previous generations’. The very term ‘intermediate state’, he continues, was ‘characteristic of the nineteenth century’.⁴ In fact, protestants had been producing defences of a middle state since the reformation, and by the eighteenth century it was a divisive issue within both English and Scottish religious communities. The phrase ‘intermediate state’ was in use from at least the 1670s.⁵ ‘Middle state’ was used synonymously. For some authors, ‘Abraham’s Bosom’ or ‘Paradise’ referred to an

intermediate state. The other popular term was ‘Hades’. The Greek ‘Hades’ appears eleven times in the New Testament. The King James Version translated the term as ‘hell’ in ten out of the eleven instances; in the last case it was rendered as ‘grave’.⁶ Defenders of an intermediate state argued that these were mistranslations, and that Hades was in fact a domain unto itself.⁷ For some theologians the intermediate state was a holding place for souls awaiting the Last Judgement. Others veered even closer to catholic doctrine, presenting the intermediate state as a place of purification.

This article argues that the concept of an intermediate state was more influential within eighteenth-century Scottish society than has generally been acknowledged. It was not only a Scottish concern—post-reformation English society saw lively discussions about the state of the soul after death, and early eighteenth-century Scottish works on the intermediate state were significantly influenced by English forerunners.⁸ However, the debate took on its own momentum north of the border, reflecting the particular circumstances of Scottish religious cultures. The first part of this article focuses on episcopalian discussions regarding an intermediate state, which have received almost no attention from historians.⁹ The eighteenth century was a difficult period for Scottish episcopalianism. Mistrusted (not unjustly) for its Jacobitism, the church was subject to prohibitive legislation. Membership dropped from a high point of maybe a third of Scots in 1689 to around 2.5% in the early nineteenth century.¹⁰ Unsurprisingly, studies of eighteenth-century Scottish theology have tended to focus on the more influential Church of Scotland.¹¹ Works on the episcopalians often prioritise politics, or discuss liturgical changes without reference to their theological framework.¹² Admittedly, episcopalian theological debates did not always make it into print. Of the three most significant episcopalian tracts on the intermediate state, two are in manuscript, and are practically unknown.¹³ Nevertheless, the intermediate state had real and lasting importance for episcopalian communities. The idea was particularly contentious in the 1720s and 1730s,

when it was tied to fraught debates about the practice of praying for the dead. Bishops, presbyters and congregations were drawn into a process of negotiation about the nature of Scottish episcopalianism. The concepts of an intermediate state and prayer for the dead emerged triumphant, reflecting the development of a more distinctive theological and liturgical identity.

The intermediate state was particularly interesting to episcopalians, but it also had broader relevance. While the debates among the episcopalians point to the evolution of an increasingly well defined episcopalian identity, the cases of presbyterian interest reflect an opposite process: as the Church of Scotland fragmented, there was growing scope for individuals to develop their own theologies, independently of kirk teaching. In the 1720s the Church of Scotland minister William Ogilvie set out his concept of an intermediate state. He employed a rather unusual medium: an account of his alleged meetings with the ghost of Thomas Maxwell, the Laird of Cool. This work later had wide circulation as a chapbook. Ghost stories were traditionally used to explore the nature of death and the afterlife, and Ogilvie's account capitalised on the popularity of the genre. Chapbooks might not always have been read as serious theological documents, but Ogilvie certainly impressed some of his audience. In the eyes of Elizabeth Steuart, he provided the elucidation the christian world had been waiting for, and she produced her own edition of the story. The doctrine of an intermediate state was also espoused by other presbyterians from the late eighteenth century, whether because it was considered scriptural, or because it offered a more sympathetic view of the afterlife than the calvinist binary of predesination. For eighteenth-century Scots of all religious persuasions, the intermediate state became a justifiable belief. Debates regarding an intermediate state reveal the evolution of eighteenth-century religious culture, and point to the often unappreciated layers of complexity in protestant understandings of the afterlife.

I

Although the early protestants cast out purgatory, there was no clear consensus on the fate of the soul after death. Martin Luther did not initially criticise purgatory as a doctrine, but only the venality surrounding it. By the mid-1520s he was denouncing purgatory, and proposing instead that the soul lingered in a state of insensibility until all souls were resurrected for the Last Judgement.¹⁴ This notion of ‘soul sleep’ was rejected by later Lutheran theologians, and attacked by Calvin in his *Psychopannychia* (1534). Calvin argued that the soul had a conscious existence in the period between death and the Resurrection. The souls of the elect resided in Abraham’s Bosom, a stepping stone on the way to heaven.¹⁵ This view was common among the early church fathers.¹⁶ Calvin was less clear regarding the souls of reprobates, but suggested that they, too, were kept waiting:

The lot of the reprobate is doubtless the same as that which Jude assigns to the devils: to be held in chains until they are dragged to the punishment appointed for them [Jude 6].¹⁷

Calvin’s vision of an intermediate state was clearly distinct from purgatory. There was no possibility that souls might progress from Abraham’s Bosom to heaven before the Last Judgement, and he opposed prayer for the dead. Nevertheless, his theology proved uncomfortable for later protestant thinkers. Historians are divided regarding the Church of England’s view on this matter, but the idea of a waiting ground for souls certainly met with opposition. According to Peter Marshall, English reformers recognised that the early fathers had differentiated Abraham’s Bosom and heaven, but preferred to use the terms synonymously.¹⁸ For Robert Prichard, it was an issue that split the reformers. He argues that

in the period from 1558 to 1660, conformists argued for an intermediate state of rest for the soul, whereas puritans ridiculed the idea. After the Restoration, ‘those who remained in the Church of England became more insistent on the intermediate period of waiting’.¹⁹ William M. Spellman provides an interesting analysis of latitudinarian approaches to the intermediate state, but confines the discussion to the seventeenth century, writing of the ‘unmourned passing of pateschatology’ towards the end of the century.²⁰ For Philip Almond and Laurie Throness, who focus primarily on the eighteenth century, most anglicans believed in a middle state.²¹ This intermediate state was in the calvinist tradition: a waiting ground for souls. A few individuals—such as Henry Hallywell—argued for a more purgatorial intermediate state, which allowed souls to progress and improve themselves, but this was very much a minority viewpoint.²²

The Scottish orthodoxy was more straightforward. Although Scotland followed calvinist theology, most presbyterian theologians did not even acknowledge that Abraham’s Bosom and heaven might be differentiated. Robert Rollock (1555–99), whom David Mullan describes as ‘perhaps Scotland’s pre-eminent theologian during the first eighty years of the Reformed kirk’, made no mention of Abraham’s Bosom.²³ He rejected the idea that the soul would sleep after death, insisting that ‘the soule lives, and sleepes not; it lives and shall live, in dispyte of all the world, either in paine, or, pleasure, for ever’. He also explained that souls could live only in either heaven or hell, which were therefore the only possible destinations after death.²⁴ The minister and Glasgow university professor Zachary Boyd (1585–1653) noted that angels would carry the soul to Abraham’s Bosom after death, but was using the term to mean heaven: he also explained that the Lord would ‘[send] his messenger Death for to fetch their Soules from their bodies ... unto his heavenlie Mansions, there for to banquet eternallie at his Table with *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob*’.²⁵ The Westminster Confession of Faith, which was adopted by the Church of Scotland in 1647, was explicit on this question:

The bodies of men after death return to dust, & see corruption: but their souls (which neither die nor sleep) having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them. The souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies: and the souls of the wicked are cast into Hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day. Beside these two places for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none.²⁶

Presbyterian sermons and religious texts from the later seventeenth and eighteenth centuries generally followed this pattern: the soul faced an immediate judgement after death, then proceeded to Abraham's Bosom (heaven) or hell.²⁷ Some authors mentioned the early fathers' belief in an intermediate state or prayer for the dead, but dismissed it as a mistake.²⁸

While the presbyterian orthodoxy was securely established, episcopalian culture was more open to alternative eschatologies. John Forbes of Corse (1593–1648), one of the group of theologians known as the Aberdeen doctors, was chair of divinity at King's College from 1620. He underlined the early fathers' belief in a separate state for souls in his *Instructiones Historico-Theologicae de Doctrina Christiana* (1645). However, he was not prepared to suggest that the living might influence the state of the dead, declaring that it is 'not safe for us to imitate the ancients' by praying for departed souls.²⁹ His distant kinsman, the bishop William Forbes (1586–1684), was more adventurous. Forbes graduated from Marischal College in 1601, and served as a minister in Aberdeen from about 1614. In 1618 he advocated for kneeling at communion before the General Assembly in Perth, and in the same year he defended prayer for the dead in a formal debate with Principal Andrew Airdie of Marischal

College. James Cooper and David Mullan note that although his views ‘would scarcely have been tolerated elsewhere in Scotland’, they found favour in Aberdeen: Aidie was compelled to resign in 1620, and was replaced by Forbes. Forbes went on to become bishop of Edinburgh in 1634, but died soon afterwards.³⁰ In 1658 his manuscripts were published by Thomas Sydserf, exiled bishop of Galloway, under the title *Considerationes Modestae et Pacificae*. This work trod a middle ground between catholicism and protestantism.³¹ Forbes rejected the notion of purgatorial fire, but wrote sympathetically of the early church fathers’ belief in a resting ground before the Last Judgement, where souls were ‘detained in certain hidden receptacles, either heavenly or exterior to Heaven’. He also suggested that the prayers of the living might help the dead to have their sins forgiven.³²

According to Douglas Kornahrens’s reading, prayer for the dead was generally accepted by Scottish episcopalians thereafter: ‘In terms of published work ... John Forbes of Corse is the *one dissenting voice* in the tradition of Scottish Episcopacy from the seventeenth century onwards’.³³ In fact, most episcopalians remained opposed to the practice. In the early decades of the seventeenth century, conformist ministers including Andrew Strachan, William Birnie and William Guild refuted prayer for the dead in print.³⁴ Guild (as well as other writers, such as William Struthers) also rejected the idea of a middle state, declaring:

wee have onlie two places mentionate in Scripture, whither soules goe immediatelie after death, to wit, a place of Comfort, which is Heaven, to the godlie; and a place of Torment, which is Hell, to the Wicked.³⁵

Despite the publication of Forbes’s *Considerationes*, discussion of the issue largely subsided in the second half of the seventeenth century, when episcopalians produced little theological writing. One exception was Gilbert Burnet (1643–1715), a Scotsman who became bishop of

Salisbury. Burnet recognised that the early fathers had prayed for the dead, but considered the practice unscriptural and reminiscent of purgatory, concluding that it was ‘no Imputation on our Church, that we do not in this follow a groundless, and a much abused Precedent, though set us in Ages which we highly reverence’.³⁶ With regard to an intermediate state he wrote:

The Scripture speaks to us of two States after this Life, of Happiness, and Misery; and as it divides all Mankind into good and bad ... so it proposes always the end of the one to be everlasting Happiness, and the end of the other to be everlasting Punishment, without the least hint of any middle State after Death.³⁷

Overall, prayer for the dead and the intermediate state were recognised concepts in the seventeenth century, but were broadly rejected, within episcopalian as well as presbyterian culture. It was in the first few decades of the eighteenth century that the episcopalian orthodoxy began to change.

In England around 1716, a dispute became prominent among the nonjurors, those bishops who denied the legitimacy of the government established after the 1688–9 revolution. This dispute centred around whether the communion office should include certain ceremonies, known as usages, which had been practices in the first five centuries of christianity. Prayer for the dead was one. The others were the mixed chalice (water mixed with wine in the eucharistic cup); an explicit epiclesis (or invocation of the Holy Ghost) in the prayer of consecration; and the prayer of oblation immediately after the prayer of consecration. The usages had been included in the 1549 Book of Common Prayer, but were judged unscriptural and removed from the 1552 and 1662 versions of the prayer book.³⁸ On the subject of prayer for the dead, the 1549 book included the line ‘Let us pray for the whole state of Christ’s church’. The 1552 version was amended to exclude prayer for departed souls,

proclaiming instead ‘Let us pray for the whole state of Christ’s Church militant here in earth’. The Scottish Book of Common Prayer, controversially imposed in 1637, included two of the usages (the prayers of oblation and invocation), but followed the 1552 book in the prayer for Christ’s church.³⁹ The revisions of the prayer book demonstrate that the usages had long been a controversial subject, but it was only in the 1710s and 1720s that they caused serious ruptures within religious communities. The English nonjurors split into two camps, the ‘usagers’ and the ‘non-usagers’. The usagers could count among their number three eminent Scottish divines, all of whom were living in England when the controversy was at its height: Archibald Campbell (c.1669–1744), James Gadderar (c.1655–1733) and Thomas Rattray of Craighall (1684–1743).⁴⁰

The dispute soon spread north of the border, spurred on by the efforts of Campbell, Gadderar and Rattray. In the years immediately following the 1707 Union, some Scottish episcopalians adopted the English Prayer Book, and occasionally altered it to bring the Communion Rite in line with the 1637 version.⁴¹ The 1637 Prayer Book was reprinted in 1712, and editions of the Scottish Communion Office were later published separately as ‘wee bookies’. The first appeared in 1722, giving the liturgy as it appeared in the 1637 book.⁴² The prayers of invocation and oblation thus filtered into mainstream Scottish episcopalian culture. The usages were popular in the north-east, but staunchly opposed in the capital. In 1721 the Aberdeen clergy elected Campbell as their bishop. The Edinburgh-based College of Bishops, established as a governing body in the previous year, refused to ratify the appointment unless Campbell would promise not to make liturgical innovations. Campbell refused, but held that his election was binding, and sent Gadderar to officiate over the region in his stead.⁴³ The issue lay dormant until February 1723, when the College ordered all episcopalian ministers to sign a declaration stating that they did not support the usages. By July they still had no subscribed formulas from Aberdeen.⁴⁴ The College and Gadderar reached a compromise the

following year: Gadderar could not openly promote the usages, but he was permitted to use the Scottish liturgy and to provide the mixed chalice privately. The College underlined that the words ‘militant here in earth’ were never to be omitted from the prayer for Christ’s church, however. This could be classed as a partial victory for the anti-usages party (indeed, Campbell considered Gadderar’s acquiescence a betrayal of the usagers’ cause), but the College bishops were fighting a losing battle.⁴⁵ By the terms of a 1731 concordat, all episcopalian ministers were permitted to use either the Scottish or English prayer book, implicitly sanctioning the prayers of invocation and oblation.⁴⁶ Thereafter, the 1735 edition of the prayer book included the line ‘Let us pray for the whole state of Christ’s Church’ without the addendum ‘militant here in earth’. The same pattern was followed in the 1764 liturgy, which was adopted as standard by the church.⁴⁷

The usages controversy was entangled with debates surrounding an intermediate state. As Campbell phrased it, ‘*Prayers for the Dead* suppose a *Middle State*, and a *Middle State* supposeth *Prayers for the Dead*’.⁴⁸ The year 1721 saw the publication of Campbell’s *The Doctrines of the Middle State between Death and the Resurrection*. This was a revised and expanded edition of a work he had first published anonymously in 1713, under the title *Some Primitive Doctrines Reviv’d: Or the Intermediate or Middle State of Departed Souls (as to Happiness or Misery) before the Day of Judgment*. The book set out Campbell’s vision of the intermediate state, or Hades. Campbell argued that the Roman Catholic doctrines of purgatory and limbo (*limbus patrum*) originated from the doctrine of Hades, but were corruptions of it. He clarified that whereas purified souls could move from purgatory to heaven, all souls were contained in Hades until the Last Judgement.⁴⁹ However, Campbell’s depiction of Hades included decidedly purgatorial elements. He explained that there were different mansions appointed for the righteous and the damned. The souls of the worst sinners were sent to the left, to await their final descent into hell. Those who repented on their

deathbeds went to the lower mansions on the right, their fate uncertain. Those who repented earlier, but did not have time to establish a fully virtuous life, were carried by angels to the right. From there they could progress, through a process of ‘purgation and purification’, to higher mansions.⁵⁰ This process involved some suffering, but it was ‘a *Pleasure* though a *Torment*’, quite distinct from the punishment of the damned.⁵¹ Pure souls travelled directly to the highest mansions, Paradise (or Abraham’s Bosom), where they could rest secure in the assurance that they would progress to heaven at the Last Judgement. Campbell argued that christians should pray for the last three groups of souls.⁵² Thereafter, he justified his vision of Hades in three lengthy sections. First he drew on scriptural passages from the old and new testaments. Next he presented evidence from early church fathers, including Clement of Rome, Justine Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Lactantius and Augustine. Lastly he turned to the ‘Judgement of several Great and Learned *Protestant Divines*, since the *Reformation*’.⁵³ Most of Campbell’s authorities here were Englishmen, but he cited Calvin and William Forbes. Campbell also devoted an appendix to Christ’s descent into hell—or, as he would have it, Hades.⁵⁴

Although he forsook anonymity in the second edition of the work, Campbell was not expecting it to be well received. He predicted that the book would be roundly condemned as part of an over-zealous reaction against anything reminiscent of popery.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, he endeavoured to engage a broad audience. He frequently discussed the attitudes and beliefs of the Church of England, but also addressed the Scottish presbyterians, and included Calvin ‘for the sake of those who are fond of his Authority’.⁵⁶ In addition, he made efforts to circulate his books. The Scottish bishop Henry Christie noted in a letter to fellow bishop John Falconer that ‘Mr Campbele did me the favour to send me the Middle State’.⁵⁷ The letter is undated, but as Christie died in 1718 it clearly refers to the first edition of the work. In August 1721 Campbell wrote to John Fullarton, the primus of the episcopal church, with the

news that ‘I lately sent you one of my Books of the Midle State etc’. Presumably this was the recently published second edition of the work. Campbell also noted that he had sent a copy to every member of the Scottish College of Bishops—even though, as he pettishly recorded, three of them had never written to him regarding their election.⁵⁸ John Arbuthnott, the fifth Viscount of Arbuthnott, kept Campbell up to date with the reception of his work. In May 1723 he wrote: ‘in Scotland they complain that they cannot get copies of your book to buy & others that they cannot get the copies they have subscribed’.⁵⁹ In November he declared that the lawyer John Ogilvie of Balbegno:

is a great admirer of your book & of the doctrines advanced in it, he therefore desires you to send him 20 or 30 Copies & he is to dispose of them for your behoof.⁶⁰

This Campbell duly did, although as of March 1725, Ogilvie had ‘had but indifferent success in disposing of them’.⁶¹ This was probably in part because the book’s price tag put it out of the reach of most Scots. A member of the Scots guards, Colonel Scot, paid thirteen shillings and two pence; James Graham, Duke of Montrose, seems to have bought two copies, and paid the substantial sum of two guineas (twenty-one shillings apiece).⁶²

The episcopalian community had mixed opinions regarding Campbell’s book. Henry Christie was uneasy, writing to Falconer that ‘however true the Doctrine he advances may be, there was no necessity for publishing it at this time’.⁶³ John Fullarton replied to Campbell in March 1722, some seven months after Campbell noted the dispatch of his book. He thanked Campbell for a ‘valuable book’, but added ominously: ‘God forbid you should have the least thought of comming down hie to sow sedition and raise a flam amongst us which could not but end wi our ruin’.⁶⁴ The next month Campbell was complaining to the Aberdeen divines

George and James Garden about the College, asserting that they were using his defence of ‘Purification after Death, A Middle State & Prayer for the Dead’ as an excuse to attack him.⁶⁵

North of Edinburgh, however, Campbell’s work met with a more favourable response. George Garden, writing to Robert Keith in 1721, said of Campbell’s book:

I do very much esteem it ... so that I am very hopefull that it may be of good Use to open the Eyes of many, & to let them see what it is to be a true Christian & to be indeed truly regenerated & born again wch if begun here must certainly be advanced & perfected hereafter.⁶⁶

Campbell’s fellow usagers probably helped to promote his ideas. In 1723 the presbyterian Robert Wodrow wrote to a fellow minister: ‘I hear from the North that Bishop Gatherer has been a second time there propagating his high flying Popish notions of real presence, middle state, &c, from Bishop Campbell’s book’.⁶⁷

Campbell’s work is best discussed alongside the two other episcopalian tracts on Hades from this period. The first of these tracts was by Thomas Rattray, one of Campbell’s fellow usagers. Rattray was a prominent theologian, and was appointed bishop of Dunkeld in 1732 and primus of the Scottish episcopal church in 1738. His tract was identified, and first discussed, by Douglas Kornahrens.⁶⁸ It takes the form of a letter of around 20,000 words, and an appendix in the region of 5,000 words. It is addressed only to ‘Sir’, and was ostensibly written in response to an enquiry Rattray had received. The letter was preserved by Bishop Alexander Jolly (1756–1838), who writes that his copy was transcribed from that of Bishop Alexander—presumably John Alexander, who succeeded Rattray as bishop of Dunkeld in 1743.⁶⁹ It is undated, but as Kornahrens argues, it may well come from late in Rattray’s career (perhaps the 1740s), given the ‘depth of thought and richness of reference’.⁷⁰ Rattray

set out five propositions:

Prop I. That the Body is not a thing adventitious to the Soul, a Prison fitted only to it's degenerate State, as the ancient Philosophers, who dreamed of a State of Pre-existence, imagined; but is indeed an essential, constituent Part of the Man....

Prop. II. That the proper Rewards & Punishments proposed by the Christian Religion, are not to take place, till after the Resurrection, & general Judgement....

Prop. III. That in the Interval betwixt Death & the Resurrection, the Soul is not in a State of Insensibility; but remains in certain invisible Regions in a separate State, expecting the Resurrection & Judgment....

Prop. IV. That the Christian Virtues are necessary, not only to entitle us to the Kingdom of Heaven, as the Reward promised on account of our obedience to the Commands of God injoining them; but farther also as Qualifications to dispose & fit us for the Enjoyment of the same....

Prop. V. That the Habits contracted in this life, & with which we depart out of it, are not extinguished altogether by Death, but that we carry them along with us into the State of Separation.⁷¹

Rattray used the first proposition to demonstrate that there could be no judgement immediately after death. It was the whole man, body and soul, that was to be judged. Therefore man could not be properly rewarded or punished until his body and soul were reunited at the Last Judgement.⁷² In the meantime, souls were contained in Hades. Rattray's depiction of Hades was similar to Campbell's. The righteous went to mansions on the right, and the damned to the left. In the highest mansions on the right the light of Christ shone continually, and souls were assured that they would pass on to heaven. Souls that were

‘darkened by the Remains of their Passions, & evil habits not thoroughly mortified’ were kept in lower mansions. The light of Christ shone more faintly there, and the souls might be in a state of suspense regarding their ultimate fate.⁷³ Like Campbell, Rattray argued that ‘the Remains of our evil Habits ... must be purged off after Death’, and that there was consequently a ‘Progressive Advancement, in the after state’.⁷⁴ He supported these propositions through reference to the teachings of the early church, including the ‘universal Practice of the whole Catholick Church from the Beginning; of praying for their deceased Brethren’.⁷⁵ He also drew on scripture and the judgement of more recent theologians.

The other tract was by George Innes (1717–81). Innes worked as a minister at Forres from 1742 to 1761, and in Aberdeen thereafter. He served as bishop of Brechin from 1778. His tract is about ten thousand words in length, and is entitled *The Primitive Doctrine: A Middle State of Happiness or Misery between Death & the Resurrection, Illustrated & Proved from the Holy Scriptures, & Shown to be Utterly Inconsistent with the Popish Doctrine of Purgatory*. It is undated, but Bishop Jolly, who preserved it, states that it was produced in Innes’s ‘younger years’.⁷⁶ It almost certainly pre-dates 1764, as Innes provides a quotation from the Scots Communion Office that matches the 1637/1735 editions, but differs slightly from that of 1764. The other clue regarding dating is Innes’s statement that ‘There is at present a prodigious Outcry raised against most of the Episcopal Clergy in this Kingdom as if they wanted to re-establish Popery’, and that ‘The Crime alledged is that they maintain an intermediate or Middle State of happiness & misery, between Death & the Resurrection, & in consequence of that pray for the Dead’.⁷⁷ Debate over the middle state seems to have peaked in the 1740s. Innes also attested that:

it is frequently urged by our Adversaries, that this Doctrine of a Middle State is quite unknown to the Church of England, that the Non-jurors in Scotland are the

only Persons who maintain it, in order to have the way for bringing back Popery.⁷⁸

This may have been a response to a 1743 pamphlet by James Dundass (discussed below), which argued that the Church of England opposed prayer for the dead and the middle state.⁷⁹

Innes's overall aim was to demonstrate that the 'truly primitive & Catholick Doctrine of a Middle State' was distinct from purgatory. Good souls, he explained, were held in 'a Mansion of Bliss & Happiness, Rest & Refreshment allotted for the Righteous, called in Scripture Paradise & Abraham's Bosom'. Wicked souls were held in a prison, where they were 'exposed to the violence of evil Spirits', and kept until the Last Day 'in Anguish & Misery'.⁸⁰ Innes did not seem to espouse Campbell and Rattray's purgatorial vision of the intermediate state, however. There was no mention of post-mortem progression, and he clarified that the righteous would not be subject to any torments after death.⁸¹ He supported his vision of the intermediate state with scriptural evidence, as well as by showing that 'this Doctrine of a Middle State has been taught & acknowledged by several very eminent Divines of the Church of England'. He also presented Calvin's view on Abraham's Bosom, 'for the sake of those presbyterians, who pretend an extraordinary Regard for their Father Jo: Calvin'.⁸² Finally, he argued for the lawfulness of prayer for the dead. He clarified that prayer for the dead was not to help the dead progress, but rather was to beseech God to hasten the Last Judgement, so that the dead could be admitted 'into the full Enjoyment & blissful Presence of Almighty God in the highest heavens'.⁸³ Innes's vision of Hades was not as unorthodox as Campbell's and Rattray's, but for opponents of the middle state it made little difference. The notion of an intermediate state was associated with catholicism, regardless of whether or not souls were allowed to progress.

Why did Campbell, Rattray and Innes produce these texts? In the eyes of their adversaries, it was popery. Crawford Gribben feels similarly, describing the eighteenth-century debates over prayer for the dead as ‘neo-Catholicism’.⁸⁴ This argument is not particularly convincing, however. Innes viewed Hades as a preservative against catholicism, declaring that it ‘quite destroys the Popish Purgatory’.⁸⁵ Campbell carefully distinguished between Hades and purgatory, and as an appendix to his book, supplied six treatises attacking Roman catholic theology. Nor were these tracts an attempt to garner more followers. As we shall see, congregations were apt to reject liturgical innovations. An intermediate state that allowed for post-mortem progression was a more sympathetic doctrine than a binary division between righteous and sinners. Campbell noted that immediate passage to heaven or hell would ‘send Millions of [impure] *Souls* into *Damnation* even after true *Repentance*, which I doubt not shall be *saved*’. But when explaining why the doctrine ought to be promoted, he focused instead on the scriptural basis of the intermediate state, the authority of patristic sources, and the challenge to catholic notions of purgatory.⁸⁶ Rattray and Innes were similarly motivated primarily by theological conviction, stemming from their biblical scholarship and veneration for the early church fathers. Returning to the practices of the primitive church was a way of demonstrating the purity of episcopalianism. Innes asked his readers to consider ‘Whether it is safer to follow the Judgement & Practice of the whole Church of Christ, in the first & purest Ages, or the opinion of John Calvin?’⁸⁷ Episcopalian culture was traditionally reverent of the early church fathers.⁸⁸ As we have seen, John Forbes of Corse and William Forbes took a particular interest in patristic sources. In the eighteenth century there was a fresh surge of enthusiasm for primitive practices. This aligns with the broader episcopalian interest in restoring the past, whether politically or theologically. However, it was not only a backwards-looking project. Discussions of an intermediate state were a way of formulating a

specifically episcopalian eschatology, based on patristic sources rather than Calvin or Knox, and carefully distinguished from either catholicism or presbyterianism.

Debates over prayer for the dead and an intermediate state also reached congregations. In 1727 James Raitt (*c.*1689–1777) became embroiled in a dispute with Bishop John Ochterlony, his joint incumbent at the Seagate Chapel in Dundee. Raitt was a supporter of the usages; Ochterlony, and the greater part of the Seagate congregation, were opposed. Raitt removed to Yeaman Shore with his followers, and thereafter there were two episcopal congregations in Dundee.⁸⁹ Conflict flared up again after Ochterlony's death in 1742. In 1745 the 'Gentlemen of the Seagate Congregation' published a detailed account of this dispute. Their tract offers interesting insights into the attitude of laypeople regarding questions of doctrine and ecclesiastical authority. It began with a condemnation of doctrines 'not founded on Scripture, but upon Tradition and Custom only', as well as a declaration that the Church of England is 'the most pure and primitive, of any Church in the World'.⁹⁰ The work then explained that after Ochertlony's death, the congregation appointed William Robertson (*c.*1700–*c.*1750) as their new minister. They soon found that they had been 'deceived and abused' in his character: Robertson was a usager.⁹¹ He began by omitting the words 'militant here in earth' from the prayer for Christ's church. The congregation objected. After Robertson asserted that he could not include the words because 'his Conscience forbade him', they reluctantly agreed to the change, on the condition that Robertson would not introduce any further liturgical modifications. Despite making a promise to this effect before all the heads of the families, Robertson went on to omit the commemorative clause when administering communion to himself (which accorded with the Scottish rather than the English liturgy), and to invoke the Holy Ghost during the prayer of consecration.⁹² He also made attempts to reunite the Seagate congregation with Raitt's followers at Yeaman Shore, and succeeded in obtaining an assurance (later rescinded) that he and Raitt might preach to one another's

congregations.⁹³

The congregation's rebellion was conducted in stages. First they sent their elected managers to Robertson, urging him to follow the English liturgy. They presented arguments from scripture: when Robertson suggested that the saints in Heaven prayed for the living, they countered with Isaiah 63:16 ('Abraham be ignorant of us'), and declared that Robertson's theology was a foundation 'for that most absurd Doctrine of the Papists, the Invocation of Saints'.⁹⁴ One gentlewoman took matters into her own hands; when James Raitt gave her the eucharistic bread without the commemorative clause, she said it herself. On being accused of trying to govern their superiors, the managers declared that they 'did not pretend to prescribe Rules', but that 'the Conditions we claimed were what the Church ordered'.⁹⁵ After several arguments, the congregation finally presented Robertson with a sederunt, declaring that they would not recognise his authority unless he agreed to use the English liturgy. When Robertson still refused to submit, they invited David Fife to become their new minister. Raitt, who had become Bishop of Brechin in 1742, announced that he would proceed against Fife if he settled in the region.⁹⁶ The congregation ignored his protests, and on 24 July 1743 a tense scene played out. Robertson, arriving at the church in his gown as usual, found David Fife installed in his pulpit. He turned and left, and thereafter devoted his services to Raitt's congregation. Raitt officially discharged Fife, but the latter declared that he 'by no means reckoned himself under any Obligation to obey', as Raitt was '*heterodox* in his Principles, and *schismatical* in his Practices'.⁹⁷ On 12 August 1743 the congregation dispatched a defiant letter repudiating Raitt's authority. Eight days later a group of five bishops (Raitt included) established themselves as a regular synod during a meeting in Edinburgh. They upheld Fife's deposition, a decision the congregation decried as stemming from 'real Prejudice and Partiality'.⁹⁸ In defiance of Robertson, Raitt, and the synod, the congregation maintained Fife as their minister until 1745, when the Jacobite uprising and

subsequent penal laws curtailed the conflict. The Seagate Chapel was closed in 1746, and the congregation joined a qualified chapel in 1749.⁹⁹

In an appendix, the congregation's tract set out a further objection to Robertson's ministry, on top of his support for the Scottish liturgy. He was said to have asked a gentlewoman of his congregation about her belief regarding the fate of departed souls. She declared that the righteous went directly to heaven upon death. Robertson then argued for an intermediate state, which she retorted was a way to 'dress up old *Purgatory* to us again'.¹⁰⁰ The tract noted that the doctrine of a middle state was set out in Archibald Campbell's book. After summarising Campbell's teachings, it declared that 'there will be found a pretty near Affinity betwixt this Doctrine and that of *Purgatory*'. It added that scripture acknowledged only two destinations for departed souls: heaven and hell.¹⁰¹ In a 1743 pamphlet in support of the Seagate congregation, the episcopalian minister James Dundass of Rossie and Longforan (c.1681–1751) recognised the importance of this issue. As well as arguing that the intermediate state was unknown to the English church, Dundass proclaimed that the ancients' belief in Abraham's Bosom, Paradise or Hades as a stepping stone to heaven was a 'groundless Conceit', and that biblical references to 'the Bosom of Abraham' meant only heaven.¹⁰² An anonymous 1744 pamphlet, generally attributed to Raitt, countered with a defence for prayer for the dead. Like Innes, Raitt held that the condition of the soul was 'fixt and unalterable to all Eternity', but argued that an intermediate state where souls awaited judgement had always been taught by the 'ablest and best' reformed divines.¹⁰³ While the Seagate case was not only about prayer for the dead and an intermediate state, these were central elements of the debate. Robertson's defiance in the face of his congregation's objections, and the congregation's rebellion, demonstrate the emphasis that both ministers and laypeople placed on doctrinal correctness. The congregation themselves declared that 'it is no Wonder that Mankind should be solicitous about a Business of so great Importance'.¹⁰⁴

In subsequent decades, episcopalian theological debate lost much of its vibrancy. By the penal laws of 1746 and 1748, nonjuring episcopalian ministers could only preach to four people at a time. They could not perform marriages or baptisms, and episcopalian laymen were prohibited from holding public office. Qualified status was open only to clergy ordained in England or Ireland (and thus outside of the authority of the Scottish bishops). The divide between north and south, apparent in the conflict between the Aberdeen bishops and the Edinburgh College, became even more entrenched. The south was dominated by the qualified, ‘English’ chapels; nonjurors remained in the north-east.¹⁰⁵ Doctrinally, too, there was a divide. The English chapels spurned the Scottish prayer book. Norman Sievwright (1728–90), minister of an English congregation in Brechin from 1749 to 1790, expressed the dominant view in a 1767 tract. Sievwright considered the usages to be ‘heretical’. He denounced the ‘uselessness and vanity’ of praying for departed souls, and criticised Raitt’s and Rattray’s defences of the practice.¹⁰⁶ The souls of the faithful, he insisted, went directly to heaven after death.¹⁰⁷

However, for the surviving nonjuring communities, the 1764 communion office solidified the place of prayer for the dead as a standard tenet of faith. According to the bishop Patrick Torry, of the fifty-eight non-juring congregations who held weekly services around the end of the eighteenth century, all but one used the 1764 communion office.¹⁰⁸ Furthermore, while the idea that souls could progress after death remained controversial, there was widespread support for an intermediate state that merely housed the souls of the righteous and damned. A 1765 catechism, reprinted in 1791 and attributed to George Innes, presented Hades as ‘that invisible Place, where departed Souls are kept from Death to Judgment’.¹⁰⁹ (An accusatory scrawl on the cover of the British Library’s edition identifies it as ‘episcopalian – almost Popish’.) Another 1791 catechism also discussed Hades, dividing it into two mansions: Abraham’s Bosom and Tartarus.¹¹⁰ The catechism emphasised that

nobody could move between these mansions, but gave a favourable account of prayer for the dead.¹¹¹ John Skinner, primus of the Scottish episcopal church from 1788 to 1816, defended the middle state in response to Norman Sievewright's attacks. In a published sermon, he described Hades as an intermediate holding ground for souls.¹¹² William Abernethy Drummond, bishop of Edinburgh in the late eighteenth century, seems to have likewise been sympathetic towards the doctrine. In 1745 he asked Bishop John Alexander to visit, and added:

I beg the favour that you'll bring in your Cloath bag some sermons as you promised me – the subjects I prefer are. Baptism, Confirmation, passive obedience, Death, judgement, the middle state &c.¹¹³

In the 1780s the concept of the intermediate state was exported over the Atlantic. Samuel Seabury was consecrated in Aberdeen in 1784, becoming the first American episcopal bishop. His edition of the Communion Office was published in New London (Connecticut) two years later. It was based on the Scottish liturgy, and included the prayer 'for the whole state of Christ's church'. In addition, Seabury wrote in support of the intermediate state, directing interested readers to the first edition of Campbell's work.¹¹⁴

After the penal laws were relaxed in 1792, qualified (English) congregations merged with the Scottish congregations. In the south especially, some of the old nonjuring congregations replaced the Scottish communion service with the English version.¹¹⁵ However, as episcopalianism recovered in the nineteenth century, the 1764 liturgy remained hugely influential.¹¹⁶ It formed the basis of the 1929 version, still in use, which includes prayer for the faithful departed. The intermediate state was also taught in nineteenth-century episcopalian sermons and periodicals.¹¹⁷

As a doctrine, the intermediate state thus emerged triumphant from the controversies of the first half of the eighteenth century. In explaining this success, we might look back to 1689. After disestablishment, Scottish bishops were effectively free to make theological innovations without reference to higher authorities, despite their allegiance to the Stuart pretenders.¹¹⁸ Loss of membership was also an important factor. Although episcopalians had been drifting away from the Westminster Confession since the Restoration, there was a limit to how far controversial ideas could develop when the church was catering to large swathes of Scottish society.¹¹⁹ By the 1720s, when only truly committed episcopalians remained in the ranks, there was more scope to evolve an eschatology that—for most Scots—reeked of popery. Congregations might still resist doctrinal modifications, but after 1748, even they were disbanded. These points perhaps explain why the usages party had more practical impact in Scotland than in England. Although the debates began south of the border, by the late eighteenth century the usages were viewed as a Scottish tradition.¹²⁰ Andrew L. Drummond and James Bulloch write that by 1792 the Scottish bishops ‘found themselves presiding over the last fragments of what had once been a great cause’, a church that a character of Walter Scott’s described as ‘but the shadow of a shade’.¹²¹ It is true that the church was in a very difficult position, but presenting it as the mere echo of what it had once been is somewhat misleading. The church underwent a process of reshaping over the course of the eighteenth century, making theological and liturgical modifications that had an enduring influence. By the end of the period, Scottish episcopalianism had a more clearly defined identity, and the doctrine of the intermediate state had an established place within one branch of protestant culture.

II

The episcopalian debates on an intermediate state attracted some wider attention. For presbyterians, they furnished an easy point of criticism. An anonymous 1724 pamphlet, attributed to Edinburgh minister and General Assembly moderator James Smith, accused ‘many’ of the episcopalians of leaning towards ‘*Popish* doctrines’, including ‘that there is an intermediate State of departed Souls betwixt Heaven and Hell, and consequently that there is Place to pray for the Dead’.¹²² A 1732 work by an anonymous Church of Scotland minister criticised patronage, claiming that it created a superior class of christians, and seemed to make a snide reference to Campbell’s book in the process:

some *Protestant Heritors* among us may be fond of this *middle State* betwixt Church-Officers and Christian People, and may possibly improve it as an Argument for that *middle State* in another World, they are lately become so fond of.

The author clarified that he was referring to the episcopalians, adding that ‘our honest *presbyterian* Heritors’ would resist inclusion in such a crowd.¹²³ The widely read John Willison lamented in 1744:

Ah, how wofully have [the Episcopal clergy] degenerated from the Principles and Practice of their Fathers! ... being strongly attached to Jacobite Principles and a Popish Pretender, they were thereby induced to entertain favourable Thoughts of other Popish Superstitions and Errors, which at length many of them began to vent and stand up for; such as, A middle State for Souls after Death, and Prayers

for the Dead.¹²⁴

Willison was based in Dundee, and so would have been aware of the recent disputes between Raitt, Robertson and the Seagate congregation. Also from Dundee was John Glas, who was deposed from the Church of Scotland in 1730, having founded the Glasite religious movement five years previously. Although the Glasites sought to restore apostolic practices, Glas opposed prayer for the dead.¹²⁵ In 1745 he wrote that Hades was ‘no more the Name of any Place with Gates, than it is the Name of a voracious Monster with insatiable Appetite and wide extended Jaws’. Instead the term referred to ‘the State of the human Soul separate from its own Body’. The souls of the righteous, he underlined, went to heaven after death.¹²⁶

However, while the episcopalian debates were known to their own congregations and to theological writers, it is unlikely that they had much broader reach. Reporting on his 1773 tour of Scotland with Samuel Johnson, James Boswell noted that the topic of the middle state came up during dinner-time conversation with Elizabeth Hamilton, the duchess of Argyll. Boswell and Johnson both seem to have believed in an intermediate state, and the latter offered to procure a copy of Campbell’s book for the duchess.¹²⁷ But it is highly doubtful that Campbell’s work commonly cropped up over dinner tables, given the marginality of eighteenth-century episcopalianism. There were, however, other means by which the concept of the intermediate state took on greater social relevance. In the mid-eighteenth century it was propounded in a popular chapbook, thus reaching a wider and more diverse audience. It also won the support of a small number of presbyterian theologians. The remainder of this section explores these discussions.

Theological speculation constituted one source of knowledge about the afterlife. Another source was purported eye-witness accounts, including the testimony of ghosts. Ghosts had largely been rejected by protestants after the reformation. James VI’s 1597

Daemonologie recast ghosts as demons, and Scottish theologians tended to follow his lead.¹²⁸

In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, however, there was renewed interest in supernatural stories. This followed an English pattern: accounts of witches, ghosts, and other supernatural phenomena were published as a defence against scepticism.¹²⁹ Educated men and women were prepared to treat ghost stories as legitimate sources of evidence. In fact, Campbell and Rattray both made use of ghosts when defending the intermediate state.

Campbell wrote:

I desire all those who believe that several *Dead People* have appeared again, to reconcile these *Apparitions* to the commonly received Doctrine of a *Soul's* going streight to the *Beatifick Vision*, or to *Gehenna* upon the *Death* of the *Body*, for it is not easy for me to conceive, that a *Wicked Soul* is *Released* from the proper *Hell of Torment*, once it is there, nor that a *Happy Soul* is turned out of *Heaven*, and banished from the *Beatifick Vision*, to appear upon Earth again upon any Occasion until the *Resurrection*.¹³⁰

In his text on the intermediate state, Rattray suggested that the 'haunting of Tombs' could be explained by the idea that dead souls remained attached to their old habits, and therefore desired to enter human bodies.¹³¹ He also preserved a Perthshire ghost story, about a murderer who was forced to linger in the form of a dog until he had persuaded a descendant to bury his victim's bones. Rattray wrote that the story 'leaves (I think) no ground of doubt to any man of sense'.¹³²

Stories of the supernatural were often explicitly concerned with the nature of the afterlife. Within popular tradition, it was commonly recognised that the souls of the dead might end up in fairyland. Fairyland was distinct from either heaven or hell, but was often

located within the same schema; by some traditions, a proportion of fairyland's inhabitants were swept away to hell each year.¹³³ In his 1692 *The Secret Commonwealth*, the episcopalian minister Robert Kirk recorded a folk belief that 'Fayrie-hills' were a dwelling-place of departed souls, in which they awaited the Last Judgement.¹³⁴ Questioning the dead about the nature of the afterlife was, moreover, a common trope in ghost stories. Some ghosts refused to speak of what followed death; others professed to have come from heaven or hell. Occasionally, ghosts gave more theologically dubious responses. A 1707 letter recorded an English story that had been passed on by the minister Archibald Lundie of Saltoun, Haddington. It concerned the ghost of a landlady, who appeared to ensure that a sum of her money was donated to the poor. On being questioned, she explained that she had been to neither heaven or hell, but was 'under great horror'. She passed to heaven when the business was resolved.¹³⁵ In 1811 the author Anne MacVicar Grant reported a story about a sister who was devastated by the death of her brother. She sat up every night to cry his name 'in frantic agony'. At length her brother appeared to her in his shroud, wet and shivering. He explained he had a long journey to make 'through dark and dreary ways' before he could come to the place of rest, and informed her that 'every tear thou sheddest falls on this dark shroud without drying'.¹³⁶

Stories of this sort hinted that there was an intermediate state. In most cases, however, this intermediate state was in the tradition of purgatory: souls journeyed through it on the way to heaven. By contrast, there was one eighteenth-century ghost story that offered a detailed and developed vision of the protestant conception of an intermediate state, where souls awaited the Last Judgement. This story had the legitimisation of coming from a Church of Scotland minister, and attained unprecedented levels of fame. It was penned by William Ogilvie (c.1688–1729), who was most likely the son of a covenanter. After serving as chaplain to the seventh dragoons in London, Ogilvie was admitted as minister of Innerwick,

East Lothian, in 1715.¹³⁷ The story described his meetings with the ghost of the Laird of Cool. ‘Cool’ (also Coul, Cule or Cuil) was derived from the Gaelic cùil, meaning a corner or nook, and several Scottish estates bore the title. This particular Cool was a small estate in the parish of Buittle, Galloway. From 1715 its laird was Thomas Maxwell, a lawyer. He was said to have a ‘tarnished’ reputation, having dealt dishonestly with his lands.¹³⁸ He died in January 1722; by February 1723 there were reports that his ghost had appeared to his ex-servant, William Sinclair.¹³⁹ The story was said to have circulated all over Dumfries.¹⁴⁰ Ogilvie discussed it with a fellow minister, and later informed some of his brethren that he had himself seen and conversed with the ghost.

The matter lay quiet until Ogilvie died in 1729. Then a manuscript account of his dealings with the Laird of Cool’s ghost was found in his desk, along with the instruction that it should be opened after his death. The manuscript was kept by the family, but a copy was made by an Edinburgh printer, and finally published in 1750 in Newcastle. The first Scottish edition was published in 1751, entitled *A Copy of Several Conferences and Meetings, &c. that Past betwixt the Reverend Mr. Ogilvie, Late Minister of the Gospel at Innerwick, and the Ghost of Mr. Maxwell Late Laird of Cool.*¹⁴¹ It described multiple meetings between the minister and the ghost. Cool stated that he had defrauded men of money during his life, and asked Ogilvie to explain his debts to his widow. Ogilvie objected, declaring that he would be thought ‘brainsick and mad’, and that his fellow ministers would suspect him of holding conferences with the devil.¹⁴² In defiance of traditional patterns for ghost stories, the chapbook ended without any resolution for the unhappy spectre. Ogilvie did, however, take the opportunity to question his ghostly visitor thoroughly regarding the estate of the dead.

Cool’s picture of the afterlife is a curious one. He explained that his body was ‘in the Grave rotting’, but he had borrowed ‘such a Body as answers me in a Moment, for I can fly as fast as my Soul can do without it’. His horse was his dead tenant Andrew Johnstoun.¹⁴³ He

refused to reveal whether he was in a state of happiness, but noted that he had not yet appeared before God or received any judgement. Ogilvie reminded him that it was generally believed that a private judgement took place immediately after death, before the Last Judgement. Cool, however, objected:

No such Thing, no such Thing, no Tryal till the last Day: The Heaven which good Men enjoy immediately after Death, consists only in the Serenity of their Thoughts, the Satisfaction of a good Conscience, and the certain Hope they have of an Eternity of Joy when that Day shall come. The Punishment or Hell of the wicked immediately after Death, consists in the dreadful Things of their awakened Conscience, and the Terror of facing the great Judge, and the sensible Apprehensions of eternal Torments ensuing; and this bears still a due Proportion to the Evils they have done, when they were living.¹⁴⁴

While waiting for the Last Judgement, the spirits of righteous men might be set out on errands ‘to guard and Comfort, and to do other special Services to good People’.¹⁴⁵ Cool explained, too, that those who were not truly wicked, but had given little thought to ‘the Concerns of Eternity’, were ‘not so much under the Load of the Divine Displeasure, as they are *out of His Graces and Favours*’. Such people, he argued, might have been beset by many ills—poor education, a lack of good society, the pressures of daily work, unfit ministers. God, as the embodiment of ‘pure and perfect Reason’, would take these factors into account. Cool concluded with the declaration that ‘men’s Faces in this World are not more various and different, than their Conditions are after Death’.¹⁴⁶ This was a far cry from the stark calvinist division between elect and reprobate, and Ogilvie was dubious. He noted that Cool’s picture seemed contrary to scripture, and pointed out in particular:

I find by the Parable of Dives and Lazarus, that one was immediately carried up by the Angels to Abraham's Bosom, and the other thrust down to a Place of Torment.

Cool explained that this account was metaphorical, demonstrating that a man could be miserable during his life and happy thereafter, or vice versa.¹⁴⁷ Although Ogilvie questioned Cool's views within the story, he ended by sanctioning them, proclaiming:

I do not know, Coul, but thro' the Information given to me, you may do as much Service to Mankind, as the Redress of all the Wrongs, you have mentioned would amount to, &c.¹⁴⁸

Ogilvie was writing soon after the publication of Campbell's book. However, there is no indication that he was aware of episcopalian debates on the intermediate state. He made no mention of the biblical accounts of Hades, or the judgement of early church fathers. Ogilvie's evidence for the intermediate state was twofold. First there was the testimony of the ghost. As noted above, this kind of empirical 'evidence' for an afterlife had become popular in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, in part because scientific culture was increasingly prioritising direct experience and observation over reliance on scripture.¹⁴⁹ Ogilvie may have used the ghost in an effort to protect his own reputation, and perhaps also as a way of appealing to a popular audience, building on public interest in William Sinclair's account. Second, Ogilvie presented a moral argument for the intermediate state. A rational and just God would distinguish between confirmed sinners, and those ignorant folk who had 'as great [a] Liking both to Him, and to Heaven, as their gross understandings were capable of'.¹⁵⁰ As

such, the dead would not be immediately sifted into heaven or hell. The account implied that departed souls could purge their earthly sins in the intermediate state, as Cool himself was attempting to do.

After being printed as a chapbook, the story circulated widely. It was published in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Dumfries. The introduction to the 1892 version states that it was ‘eagerly bought by all and sundry from the Flying Stationers who hawked it about the country’.¹⁵¹ Frank Miller has identified nine editions from the eighteenth century and fifteen to seventeen from the nineteenth century.¹⁵² In the 1770s there was a debate in the *Edinburgh Weekly Magazine* about whether or not ghosts existed. One man, writing under the initials C. G., declared:

the story of Maxwell of Cule’s re-appearance soon after death ... was a most nottour and flaming story not many years ago, and he continued to fright many for some time, till at last he found one Mr Ogilvie ... who had the courage to hold sundry conversations with his re-appearance, and to write down a number of particular facts and circumstances, which were printed, published, and sold in the streets of this, and sundry other market towns in Scotland, England, and Ireland.¹⁵³

Numerous nineteenth-century publications referred to the popularity of Cool’s ghost, or mentioned the story with the obvious assumption that it would be familiar to readers.¹⁵⁴

While the popularity of the story is undeniable, the impact of its theological message is difficult to measure. The *Weekly Magazine*’s contributor C. G. noted only that a ‘good and instructive moral’ could be drawn from the story, and made no comment on Cool’s description of an intermediate state.¹⁵⁵ However, as we have seen, ghost stories as a genre

reflect an enduring concern with the estate of the dead. The *Laird of Cool's Ghost* presented a clear, detailed and appealingly sympathetic vision of the afterlife. The idea that its audience simply ignored its theological teachings is implausible. Certainly, there is evidence that some readers attended to Cool's account of the afterlife. The Methodist founder John Wesley, who himself taught the doctrine of an intermediate state, reprinted the story in his *Arminian Magazine* in 1785.¹⁵⁶ Nineteenth-century spiritualist groups were similarly interested. Most spiritualists held that the dead existed in an intermediate realm, the spirit world, where they went through a process of gradual improvement. Ogilvie's story fitted this template well, and was duly retold.¹⁵⁷

One particularly sympathetic eighteenth-century reader was Elizabeth Steuart of Coltness (d. 1803), 'Aunt Betty' to the Whig politician Henry Erskine.¹⁵⁸ She discovered the story in the mid-1770s, and soon concluded that Ogilvie was the 'most perfect man in his time'.¹⁵⁹ She explained that:

The greatest men in every age have endeavoured to give the living world some account of the dead; but Mr. Ogilvie's relation of Cool's Ghost puts them all to shame: all other attempts are poor, mean, grovelling, and earthly.¹⁶⁰

Steuart implored Ogilvie's daughter, Henrietta, to allow her to publish a version of the story with commentary. Henrietta refused, pointing out that the chapbook had been 'hackney'd about & despised'.¹⁶¹ Steuart circulated her commentary among friends instead, and her nephew published the work by her instructions in 1808, after both she and Henrietta had died. Steuart declared that her aim was to demonstrate the importance of securing God's forgiveness before death, rather than 'to explain to mankind the Laws of a separate state'.¹⁶² Nevertheless, she considered that God's purpose in sending Cool was to educate Christians

about the estate of the dead, and much of her commentary was dedicated to discussion of this theme.¹⁶³ Like many of the nineteenth-century spiritualists, Stuart was influenced by the doctrine of the Swedish theologian Emanuel Swedenborg: her version of the Laird of Cool's ghost included a commentary on Swedenborg's 1758 *A Treatise concerning Heaven and Hell*. Swedenborg held that the dead were judged in the World of Spirits, a half-way house between heaven and hell.¹⁶⁴ Stuart did not uphold his idea that a Last Judgement had already taken place, but wrote:

It is long since I was convinced, that our seperated stat, first on our Death, is like the Purgatory of the Roman Catholics; all who die goes down to the infancy of these Invisible Elements, that worked in our vessels, when alive, & produced, all our words & thought & action. In these Invisible Elements, we are taught, purified & Educated, & made fit, to act our part in the new heavens & the new Earth; & there we mount through the various stages of Government & be made angels & ministrating spirits, to Christ, who has under taken the redemption, of the world.¹⁶⁵

Dead souls combined with those 'Invisible Elements' that underlay all of creation, becoming 'in a manner both omniscient and every where present'. The stars and planets, Stuart postulated, were 'filled with the souls of departed men'.¹⁶⁶ Like Ogilvie, she did not refer to other authorities. She made brief reference to scripture, but her interpretation of the intermediate state stemmed primarily from her own sense of religious truth, as guided by her personal experience of the divine spirit. Alexander Fergusson observes that she shrugged off church doctrine in a letter to a minister, declaring that 'my religion was not taught of men'.¹⁶⁷ In explaining the faith she put in Ogilvie's account, she wrote:

For my own part, all the revelations God had given me of his laws, both moral and divine, came in upon my mind, to evidence the truth of all that it contained.¹⁶⁸

Ogilvie and Steuart were discussing a broadly similar doctrine to those episcopalians who wrote of Hades. However, their approach was very different. For the episcopalians, defending the intermediate state was a way of adhering to primitive tradition, and obeying an authority that they considered to be more valid than sixteenth-century theologians. Episcopalian tracts on the intermediate state reinforced confessional boundaries, distinguishing episcopalianism and catholicism, and carving out a unique liturgical culture. Ogilvie and Steuart were breaking away from earthly authorities, and presenting a vision of the afterlife that was founded primarily on their own ideas of divine justice. They had little interest in doctrinal precision, and downplayed the importance of confessional divides. Ogilvie attacked the ‘impious Treachery’ of those ministers who taught their flocks that all that was necessary for salvation was to ‘be of such or such a Party’, while Steuart openly avowed that her vision of the intermediate state was close to the Roman catholics’.¹⁶⁹ Ogilvie and Steuart were out of kilter with mainstream theological thinking, but this was a period of growing theological flexibility. In the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries there was a rise in mystical groups who followed in the tradition of the Aberdeen doctors, aiming to heal the rifts within the Church of Scotland.¹⁷⁰ John Simson, the minister and Glasgow university professor who was prosecuted for unsound doctrine in the 1710s and 1720s, was an advocate of a more inclusive church and more benevolent deity.¹⁷¹ In the latter half of the eighteenth century, the kirk increasingly drifted away from rigid calvinism. There was less emphasis on predestination, and the notion of a benevolent God became widespread.¹⁷² While the Westminster Confession orthodoxy remained established, there was growing room to develop

doctrines based on personal conviction or reasoning, rather than traditional theological wisdom.

In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries the intermediate state won more presbyterian advocates. George Campbell, principal of Aberdeen's Marischal College from 1759, defended the doctrine in his 1789 translation of the four gospels. He focused primarily on issues of translation from Hebrew and Greek, ultimately arguing that Hades was a domain unto itself, not a synonym for hell. He did not endorse the idea of purification in the middle state, but concurred with the dominant episcopalian position at the time, presenting a view of Hades as a waiting ground for souls where there was 'in a lower degree, a reward of the righteous and a punishment of the wicked'.¹⁷³ His fellow biblical scholar James MacKnight, who was appointed as moderator of the General Assembly in 1769, wrote that the souls of the dead would ascend to heaven only after the Last Judgement, as

the power and veracity of God will be more illustriously displayed in the view of angels and men, by raising the whole of Abraham's seed from the dead at once, and by introducing them into the heavenly country in a body, after a public acquittal at the judgment, than if each were made perfect separately at their death.¹⁷⁴

Other Church of Scotland advocates included the Edinburgh-born George Bennet, who wrote a defence of the intermediate state in 1800, and Archibald Watson of Glasgow, who preached on the doctrine in the 1840s.¹⁷⁵

The concept of an intermediate state appealed especially to those who, like Ogilvie and Steuart, desired to promote a more sympathetic view of the afterlife. George Gilfillan and Fergus Ferguson discussed the doctrine in the 1840s and 1870s respectively. Gilfillan

preached in Dundee as part of the United Secession Church, a denomination that had been established in 1820. In 1847 it merged with the Relief Church to form the United Presbyterian Church; Ferguson was a member of this latter denomination, and was based in Glasgow. Both men rejected orthodox conceptions of the afterlife, condemning the idea of eternal punishment—a doctrine that, in Gilfillan’s words, ‘makes God a monster’.¹⁷⁶ Gilfillan published an 1843 sermon on ‘Hades, or the Unseen’, which argued for an intermediate state with compartments for the wicked and righteous. The sermon went through three editions, and attracted several hostile reviews.¹⁷⁷ The Dundee presbytery investigated, but acquitted Gilfillan of wrongdoing after he proffered ‘candid concessions and explanations’.¹⁷⁸ Ferguson argued that there was an intermediate state in which ‘infants and heathen’ would have scripture read to them, giving them the chance to secure salvation after death. The case went from presbytery to synod, and was widely publicised, but Ferguson was ultimately permitted to continue in his position.¹⁷⁹ This laxity on the part of the ecclesiastical authorities only increased with the outbreak of the First World War: amid concern over the fate of dead soldiers, support for an intermediate state flourished across denominations.¹⁸⁰ While the idea remained on the fringes of religious society, it had an enduring impact on ministers and congregations.

III

In eighteenth-century Scotland, the concept of an intermediate state took on a new significance. The idea had traditionally been dismissed as a catholic deceit, and certainly, the intermediate state remained synonymous with purgatory in the minds of many eighteenth-century thinkers. However, there was growing support for a protestant version of the

intermediate state, where the souls of both the righteous and the wicked awaited the Last Judgement. For some theologians, the reality of this state was evidenced by scripture, and perhaps by the writing of the early church fathers. George Campbell was a particularly prominent presbyterian champion of biblical justifications for an intermediate state. It was among episcopalians, however, that the idea had most traction. The episcopalian church was heavily marginalised in the eighteenth century, but this meant that there was scope for significant doctrinal innovation. As described by Archibald Campbell and Thomas Rattray, the intermediate state functioned similarly to purgatory, cleansing and purifying souls. While this remained an uncomfortable idea for most episcopalians, the concept of a separate holding state for souls, and the practice of praying for the dead, became orthodox. These doctrines had an enduring influence on episcopalian society, both within Scotland and further afield.

Some advocates of an intermediate state placed less emphasis on scriptural justifications, and more on the idea of divine benevolence. Most depictions of the intermediate state offered a relatively nuanced view of salvation, allowing for different gradations of sin, and the prospect of post-mortem progression. William Ogilvie's story of the Laird of Cool's ghost was the first Scottish work to use divine mercy as the main justification for the intermediate state. Stories of supernatural phenomena commonly explored the nature of death and the afterlife; the chapbook of *The Laird of Cool's Ghost* tapped into this tradition, and made Ogilvie's vision accessible to a wide audience. Elizabeth Steuart may not have been a representative reader, but she demonstrates that the chapbook at least had the potential to inspire independent thinking on the nature of the afterlife. In the nineteenth century there were continued attempts to assuage anxieties around death through the doctrine of the intermediate state, and it was perhaps at its most popular during the First World War. Eighteenth-century formulations of a sympathetic intermediate state were not mainstream, but the idea proved a persistent undercurrent within religious thought.

While the eighteenth century did not see the kind of interdenominational conflict that had marked the preceding two centuries, it was a period of internal fragmentation. As both presbyterians and episcopalians negotiated how best to move forwards as a church, old sureties came under challenge. Belief in an intermediate state could signify an embrace of past authority, revered above the protestant reformers. It might also represent a drive to break away from all temporal authorities, and to formulate a conception of life after death that prioritised human emotional needs. Recurring in various forms in the eighteenth century and beyond, the doctrine of an intermediate state indicates the persistent anxieties surrounding conceptions of post-mortem recompense, and stands as a caution against overly simplistic models of the protestant afterlife.

¹ Notes in William Ogilvie, *Narrative of Four Conferences Between the Ghost of Mr. Maxwell, of Coul, and the Rev. Mr. Ogilvie, Minister of Innerwick*, ed. Elizabeth Steuart (London, 1808), 117.

² The importance of the twelfth century is underlined in Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, trans. Arthur Goldhammer (London, 1984), pt. II. For a discussion of earlier development, see Isabel Moreira, *Heaven's Purge: Purgatory in late antiquity* (Oxford, 2010).

³ John Calvin, *Calvin: Institutes of the christian religion*, ed. J. T. McNeill, trans. F. L. Battles, 2 vols (Philadelphia, 1960), i. sec. III.5.6, 676; E. J. Bicknell, *A Theological Introduction to the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England*, 3rd edn, rev. H. J. Carpenter (London, 1955), 276.

⁴ Geoffrey Rowell, *Hell and the Victorians: A study of the nineteenth-century theological controversies concerning eternal punishment and the future life* (Oxford, 1974), 215–16. Rowell's views have proved influential among other scholars; see, for example, Michael Wheeler, *Heaven, Hell, and the Victorians* (Cambridge, 1994), 75–8; Martin Spence, *Heaven on Earth: Reimagining time and eternity in nineteenth-century British evangelicalism* (Eugene, OR, 2015), 149; Michael Snape, 'Civilians, soldiers and perceptions of the afterlife in Britain during the First World War', in P. D. Clarke and Tony Claydon (eds), *The Church, the Afterlife and the Fate of the Soul* (Woodbridge, 2009), 376–7.

⁵ For example, [Henry Layton], *Observations upon Mr. Wadsworth's Book of the Souls Immortality* (London, 1670), 13, 165, 173.

⁶ It is rendered as 'hell' in Matt. 11:23, 16:18; Luke 10:15, 16:23; Acts 2:27, 31; Rev. 1:18, 6:8, 20:13, 14. In 1 Cor. 15:55 it is given as 'grave': 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?' Abraham's Bosom and Paradise appear less frequently as destinations for the dead. The former term is presented only once, in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Luke 16:19–31. The latter appears in Luke 23:43 (Christ's assurance to the penitent thief that 'To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise'), as well as in 2 Cor. 12:4 and Rev. 2:7.

⁷ For a particularly extensive explanation, see Archibald Campbell, *The Doctrines of a Middle State between Death and the Resurrection* (London, 1721), 180–96.

⁸ On debates about purgatory see Peter Marshall, *Beliefs and the Dead in Reformation England* (Oxford, 2002), ch. 2; more generally, but particularly on mortalism, see P. C. Almond, *Heaven and Hell in Enlightenment England* (Cambridge, 1994), esp. ch. 2; B. W. Ball, *The Soul Sleepers: Christian mortalism from Wycliffe to Priestley* (Cambridge, 2008); on the intermediate state, see below.

⁹ Archibald Campbell's work on the intermediate state is discussed in Almond, *Heaven and Hell*, 77–80, but only with reference to the English context. There are some useful comments in Douglas Kornahrens, 'Praying for the christian departed: a brief view of the doctrine and practice in Scottish episcopacy', *Theology in Scotland* 18 (2011) 47–79.

¹⁰ Rowan Strong, *Episcopalianism in Nineteenth-Century Scotland: Religious responses to a modernizing*

society (Oxford, 2002), 1, 15–16, 19.

¹¹ For example, T. F. Torrance, *Scottish Theology: From John Knox to John McLeod Campbell* (Edinburgh, 1996); A. L. Drummond and James Bulloch, *The Scottish Church, 1688–1843: The age of the moderates* (Edinburgh, 1973); J. R. McIntosh, *Church and Theology in Enlightenment Scotland: The popular party, 1740–1800* (East Linton, 1997); A. C. Denlinger (ed.), *Reformed Orthodoxy in Scotland: Essays on Scottish theology 1560–1775* (London, 2015); S. D. Fratt, ‘Scottish Theological Trends in the Eighteenth Century: Tensions between “Head” and “Heart”’, unpublished Ph.D. thesis (University of California, 1987).

¹² For example, I. B. Cowan and Spencer Ervin, *The Scottish Episcopal Church: The ecclesiastical history* (Ambler, PA, 1966); Gavin White, *The Scottish Episcopal Church: A new history* (Edinburgh, 1998); Kieran German, ‘Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Jacobitism in the North-East of Scotland, 1688–1750’, unpublished Ph.D. thesis (University of Aberdeen, 2010); T. N. Clarke, ‘The Scottish Episcopalians, 1688–1720’, unpublished Ph.D. thesis (University of Edinburgh, 1987); Charles Hefling, ‘Scotland: episcopalians and nonjurors’, in Charles Hefling and Cynthia Shattuck (eds), *The Oxford Guide to The Book of Common Prayer: A worldwide survey* (Oxford, 2006), 166–75.

¹³ The first is by Thomas Rattray, and is held at St. Andrews, St Andrews University Library [StAUL], MS. Dep. 19/14/1 (George Hay Forbes Collection). The second, by George Innes, is at Edinburgh, National Records of Scotland [NRS], CH 12/21/10 (Episcopal Church Records). There is another, incomplete copy at CH 12/32/31. On Rattray’s tract see Kornahrens, ‘Praying for the christian departed’, 58–60. I am not aware of any discussion of Innes’s.

¹⁴ G. M. Juhász, *Translating Resurrection: The debate between William Tyndale and George Joye in its historical and theological context* (Leiden, 2014), ch. 3.

¹⁵ John Calvin, ‘Psychopannychia’, in T. F. Torrance (ed.), *Tracts and Treatises in Defense of the Reformed Faith*, 3 vols (Grand Rapids, 1958), iii. 413–90; Calvin, *Institutes*, ii. sec. III.25.6, 997–8. See also Yosep Kim, *The Identity and the Life of the Church: John Calvin’s ecclesiology in the perspective of his anthropology* (Eugene, 2014), 78–81.

¹⁶ See L. J. Van Der Lof, ‘Abraham’s Bosom in the writings of Irenaeus, Tertullian and Augustine’, *Augustinian Studies* 26 (1995) 109–23; A. L. Clayton, ‘Hades’, in Everett Ferguson (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 2nd edn (New York, 1997), 503–5.

¹⁷ Calvin, *Institutes*, ii. sec. III.25.6, 998.

¹⁸ Peter Marshall, ‘“The map of God’s word”: geographies of the afterlife in Tudor and early Stuart England’, in Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall (eds), *The Place of the Dead: Death and remembrance in late medieval and early modern Europe* (Cambridge, 2000), 121.

¹⁹ R. W. Prichard, *The Nature of Salvation: Theological consensus in the episcopal church, 1801–73* (Urbana, IL, 1997), 141–4, at 143.

²⁰ W. M. Spellman, ‘Almost final things: Jeremy Taylor and the dilemma of the anglican view of the dead awaiting resurrection’, *Anglican and Episcopal History* 63 (1994) 35–50, at 50. ‘Pareschatology’ is the study of ‘next to last’ things, or the temporary fate of the soul after death. It is contrasted with eschatology, the study of last things, or the final destiny of the soul.

²¹ Almond, *Heaven and Hell*, 39; Laurie Throness, *A Protestant Purgatory: Theological origins of the Penitentiary Act, 1779* (Aldershot, 2008), 57.

²² See Almond, *Heaven and Hell*, 76–7.

²³ D. G. Mullan, *Scottish Puritanism, 1590–1638* (Oxford, 2000), 19.

²⁴ Robert Rollock, *Lectures upon the First and Second Epistles of Paul to the Thessalonians* (Edinburgh, 1606), 208; Robert Rollock, *Lectures, upon the History of the Passion, Resurrection, and Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ* (Edinburgh, 1616), 118, 162.

²⁵ Zacharie Boyd, *The Last Battell of the Soule in Death* (Edinburgh, 1628), 918, 23–4.

²⁶ ‘The Westminster Confession of Faith, 1646’, in R. Tudur Jones, Arthur Long and Rosemary Moore (eds), *Protestant Nonconformist Texts, Vol. 1: 1550 to 1700* (Aldershot, 2007), sec. XXXII.1, 189.

²⁷ For example, Hugh Mackail, *The Last Publick Sermon, Being a Faithful and Free One, Preached by Mr. Hugh Mackaile* (Edinburgh, 1749), 41; James Durham, *The Blessedness of the Death of Those That Die in the Lord* ([Glasgow?], 1681), 70; Robert Fleming, *The Fulfilling of the Scripture, in Three Parts*, reprint of 1681 3rd edn, 2 vols (Glasgow, 1801), ii. 131; James Webster, *Select Sermons Preach’d on Several Texts* (Edinburgh, 1723), 122; Ralph Erskine, *The Happy Congregation: Or, the Great Gathering of the People to Shiloh* (Edinburgh, 1726), 34–6; William Crawford, *Zion’s Traveller: Or, the soul’s progress to heaven*, 2nd edn (Edinburgh, 1743), 117, 127.

²⁸ Patrick Simson, *A Short Compend of the Historie of the First Ten Persecutions Moved against Christians, Divided into III Centuries*, 3 vols (Edinburgh, 1613–16), i. sigs O2–O3; Alexander Pitcairn, *The Spiritual Sacrifice* (Edinburgh, 1664), 234–7; [Thomas Forrester], *Causa Episcopatus Hierarchici Lucifuga* (Edinburgh, 1706), 73–5.

- ²⁹ Kornahrens, 'Praying for the christian departed', 51.
- ³⁰ James Cooper, 'Forbes, William (1585–1634)', rev. D. G. Mullan, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/9847; accessed 8 Jun. 2018].
- ³¹ *Ibid.*; D. G. Mullan, 'Theology in the Church of Scotland 1618–c.1640: a calvinist consensus?', *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 26 (1995) 595–617, at 600–2.
- ³² William Forbes, *Considerationes Modestae et Pacificae Controversiarum de Justificatione*, ed. G. H. Forbes, 2 vols (Oxford, 1850-6), ii. 88–195, at 97.
- ³³ Kornahrens, 'Praying for the christian departed', 54.
- ³⁴ Andrew Strachan, *Vindiciae Cultus Divini* (Aberdeen, 1634), 11–12; William Birnie, *The Blame of Kirk-Buriall, Tending to Perswade Cemiteriall Civilitie* (Edinburgh, 1606), ch. XVII; William Guild, *Ignis Fatuus: Or, the elf-fire of purgatorie* (London, 1625), 47.
- ³⁵ William Guild, *A Compend of the Controversies of Religion* (Aberdeen, 1627), 145; William Struthers, *Christian Observations and Resolutions* (Edinburgh, 1628), 45.
- ³⁶ Gilbert Burnet, *An Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England* (London, 1699), 225–6, at 226.
- ³⁷ *Ibid.*, 220.
- ³⁸ B. D. Spinks, *Liturgy in the Age of Reason: Worship and sacraments in England and Scotland 1662–c.1800* (Farnham, 2008), 120; D. J. Kennedy, *Eucharistic Sacramentality in an Ecumenical Context* (Farnham, 2013), 52–4; M. M. Davis, "'Ask for the Old Paths': Johnson and the nonjurors", in J. C. D. Clark and Howard Erskine-Hill (eds), *The Politics of Samuel Johnson* (Basingstoke, 2012), 113–17.
- ³⁹ Joseph Ketley (ed.), *The Two Liturgies, A.D. 1549, and A.D. 1552* (Cambridge, 1844), 87, 270; Gordon Donaldson, *The Making of the Scottish Prayer Book of 1637* (Edinburgh, 1954), 189, 198–9.
- ⁴⁰ Dates and basic biographical details for eighteenth-century episcopalian ministers are taken from D. M. Bertie, *Scottish Episcopal Clergy, 1689–2000* (Edinburgh, 2000).
- ⁴¹ Spinks, *Liturgy in the Age of Reason*, 126–7; Hefling, 'Scotland', 169.
- ⁴² Kennedy, *Eucharistic Sacramentality*, 54–5; Alasdair Raffe, 'Presbyterians and episcopalians: the formation of confessional cultures in Scotland, 1660–1715', *English Historical Review* 125 (2010) 570–98, at 596; Alasdair Raffe, *The Culture of Controversy: Religious arguments in Scotland, 1660–1714* (Woodbridge, 2012), 51, 142–8.
- ⁴³ Rowan Strong, 'Campbell, Archibald (c.1669–1744)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/4475; accessed 8 Jun. 2018]; Tristram Clarke, 'Gadderar, James (c.1655–1733)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004) [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/10266; accessed 8 Jun. 2016].
- ⁴⁴ German, 'Aberdeen, Aberdeenshire and Jacobitism', 84, 95.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 95–6.
- ⁴⁶ John Dowden, *The Annotated Scottish Communion Office: An historical account of the Scottish communion office* (Edinburgh, 1884), 79.
- ⁴⁷ *The Communion Office for the Use of the Church of Scotland* ([Edinburgh?], 1735), 16; Dowden, *Annotated Scottish Communion Office*, 128; Hefling, 'Scotland', 171–2.
- ⁴⁸ Campbell, *Doctrines of a Middle State*, 162.
- ⁴⁹ Campbell, *Doctrines of a Middle State*, 42, 136, 194–5.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, xx, 57.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 14.
- ⁵² *Ibid.*, xviii–xix. This was particularly reminiscent of St Augustine, who argued that prayers for the dead were of no use to the damned, but could benefit those who were neither unquestionably good nor irredeemably bad. See Almond, *Heaven and Hell*, 78–9.
- ⁵³ Campbell, *Doctrines of a Middle State*, 157.
- ⁵⁴ The idea that Christ descended into hell or Hades for the three days between his death and resurrection is hinted at in the New Testament, for example Matt. 12:40; Acts 2:31; Eph. 4:9. It was a common belief among the early fathers, and was upheld by the Apostles' and Athanasian Creeds. See W. S. Babcock, 'Harrowing of hell', in Everett Ferguson (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 2nd edn (New York, 1997), 509–11.
- ⁵⁵ Campbell, *Doctrines of a Middle State*, i–ii.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, xiv, x, 191, 157.
- ⁵⁷ NRS, CH 12/12/411: Henry Christie to John Falconer, n.d.
- ⁵⁸ NRS, CH 12/12/282: Archibald Campbell to John Fullarton, 15 Aug. 1721.
- ⁵⁹ NRS, CH 12/12/51: John Arbuthnott to Archibald Campbell, 3 May 1723.
- ⁶⁰ NRS, CH 12/12/57: John Arbuthnott to Archibald Campbell, 18 Nov. 1723. See also CH 12/12/60, John Arbuthnott to Archibald Campbell, Jan. 1724.
- ⁶¹ NRS, CH 12/12/61: John Arbuthnott to Archibald Campbell, 1 Mar. 1725.

- ⁶² NRS, CH 12/12/51: Arbuthnott to Campbell; NRS, GD 220/6/1193 (Montrose Muniments), fos 12-13, Jun. 1720. On the pricing and affordability of books in this period see Alastair J. Mann, *The Scottish Book Trade, 1500-1720: Print commerce and print control in early modern Scotland* (East Linton, 2000), 207–8.
- ⁶³ NRS, CH 12/12/411: Christie to Falconer.
- ⁶⁴ NRS, CH 12/12/708: John Fullarton to Archibald Campbell, 19 Mar. 1722.
- ⁶⁵ NRS, CH 12/12/286: Archibald Campbell to George and James Garden, 28 Apr. 1722.
- ⁶⁶ NRS, CH 12/12/757: George Garden to Robert Keith, 11 Dec. 1721.
- ⁶⁷ Robert Wodrow, *The Correspondence of the Rev. Robert Wodrow*, ed. Thomas McCrie, 3 vols (Edinburgh, 1842-3), iii. 70–1.
- ⁶⁸ W. D. Kornahrens, ‘Eucharistic Doctrine in Scottish Episcopacy, 1620–1875’, unpublished Ph.D. thesis (University of St. Andrews, 2008), 111; Kornahrens, ‘Praying for the christian departed’, 58–60.
- ⁶⁹ StAUL, MS. Dep. 19/14/1, sec. ‘An Appendix’, 14.
- ⁷⁰ Kornahrens, ‘Praying for the christian departed’, 58.
- ⁷¹ StAUL, MS. Dep. 19/14/1, letter on intermediate state, 1, 5, 10, 33, 34.
- ⁷² *Ibid.*, 5.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.*, 19–20, 24, 50, at 50.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 21.
- ⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 24.
- ⁷⁶ NRS, CH 12/21/10, sec. *Primitive Doctrine*, 1.
- ⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 28, 3.
- ⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.
- ⁷⁹ James Dundass, *An Impartial Enquiry into the Rise and Progress of the Ancient Usage of Prayers for the Dead* (Edinburgh, 1743), 27–34.
- ⁸⁰ NRS, CH 12/21/10, sec. *Primitive Doctrine*, 3, 6.
- ⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 7.
- ⁸² *Ibid.*, 20–1.
- ⁸³ *Ibid.*, 8; see also 22.
- ⁸⁴ Crawford Gribben, ‘Scottish theological literature, 1560–1707’, in Ian Brown *et al.* (eds), *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature, Vol. 1: From Columba to the Union* (Edinburgh, 2007), 236.
- ⁸⁵ NRS, CH 12/21/10, sec. *Primitive Doctrine*, 3.
- ⁸⁶ Campbell, *Doctrines of a Middle State*, vii, vx–vxi.
- ⁸⁷ NRS, CH 12/21/10, sec. *Primitive Doctrine*, 21.
- ⁸⁸ Mullan, ‘Theology in the Church of Scotland’, 613–16; Nicholas Thompson, ‘Where was your church before Luther? History and catholicity in early seventeenth-century Aberdonian theology’, in A. C. Denlinger (ed.), *Reformed Orthodoxy in Scotland: Essays on Scottish theology 1560–1775* (London, 2015), 81. For a thorough survey of the anglican approach to the church fathers, see Jean-Louis Quantin, *The Church of England and Christian Antiquity: The construction of a confessional identity in the seventeenth century* (Oxford, 2009).
- ⁸⁹ Bertie, *Scottish Episcopal Clergy*, 115.
- ⁹⁰ Gentlemen of the Seagate Congregation, *A True Narrative of the Case between the Episcopal Congregation of the Seagate of Dundee, on the One Part; and Bishop Raitt with the Reverend Mr. William Robertson, on the Other* (Edinburgh, 1745), 3, 5.
- ⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 8.
- ⁹² *Ibid.*, 8, 9–10, 12. See Donaldson, *Making of the Scottish Prayer Book*, 69.
- ⁹³ Gentlemen of the Seagate Congregation, *True Narrative*, 13–14, 23.
- ⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 12.
- ⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 17–18, 14.
- ⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, 20, 23–5.
- ⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 28–9.
- ⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 34, 45.
- ⁹⁹ Bertie, *Scottish Episcopal Clergy*, 552.
- ¹⁰⁰ Gentlemen of the Seagate Congregation, *True Narrative*, 47.
- ¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 48.
- ¹⁰² Dundass, *Impartial Enquiry*, 17–18, 30–3, at 18.
- ¹⁰³ [James Raitt], *An Instructed Historical Account of the Settlement in the Episcopal Congregation of Dundee in 1727* ([Edinburgh?], 1744), 45, 44.
- ¹⁰⁴ Gentlemen of the Seagate Congregation, *True Narrative*, 1.
- ¹⁰⁵ Strong, *Episcopalianism in Nineteenth-Century Scotland*, 17–18.
- ¹⁰⁶ Norman Sievwright, *Principles, Political and Religious: Or, a preservative against innovations in politics and religion* (Edinburgh, 1767), 170–210, at 189, 192.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 181.

¹⁰⁸ Christopher Knight, 'The anglicising of Scottish episcopalianism', *Records of the Scottish Church History Society* 23 (1989) 361–77, at 366.

¹⁰⁹ George Innes, *A Catechism: Or, the principles of the christian religion* (Edinburgh, 1765), 20.

¹¹⁰ In Greek mythology, Tartarus was a realm of punishment for the wicked. For some authors, Elysium and Tartarus were the two compartments of Hades. It was also described, by Homer and others, as being as far beneath Hades as earth was below heaven. See D. Felton, 'The dead', in Daniel Ogden (ed.), *A Companion to Greek Religion* (Oxford, 2007), 93; A. E. Bernstein, *The Formation of Hell: Death and retribution in the ancient and early christian worlds* (Ithaca, NY, 1993), 37–8. The term occurs once in the New Testament, at 2 Peter 2:4: 'For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell [Tartarus], and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment' (King James Version).

¹¹¹ *Catechetical Instructions: Or, the church-catechism* (Edinburgh, 1791), 28–9. See also *A Catechism to Be Learned by Children* (Aberdeen, 1799), 17.

¹¹² John Skinner, *A Letter to Norman Sievwright M.A.* (Aberdeen, 1767), 65–80; John Skinner, *A Course of Lectures, Delivered on the Six Sundays in Lent* (Aberdeen, 1786), 44–5.

¹¹³ NRS, CH 12/23/469: William Abernethy to John Alexander, 13 Jun. 1745. Drummond also defended the usages. See, for example, W. A. Drummond, *Remarks upon the Second Part of Principles Political and Religious* (Edinburgh, 1768), 14–20.

¹¹⁴ Samuel Seabury, *Discourses on Several Subjects*, 2 vols (New York, 1793), i. 223–7 (Campbell referenced at 226).

¹¹⁵ Knight, 'Anglicising of Scottish episcopalianism', 366.

¹¹⁶ See Brian Douglas, *A Companion to Anglican Eucharistic Theology, Vol. 1: The reformation to the 19th century* (Leiden, 2012), 378–9; Strong, *Episcopalianism in Nineteenth-Century Scotland*, 25–6.

¹¹⁷ For example, Daniel Sandford, *Sermons Preached in St. John's Chapel, Edinburgh* (Edinburgh, 1819), 123–5, 306–13; 'Review: *Things after Death: Three Chapters on the Intermediate State*', in *Scottish Magazine, and Churchman's Review*, Mar. 1848, 147–9.

¹¹⁸ Alasdair Raffe, 'Scotland', in Jeremy Gregory (ed.), *The Oxford History of Anglicanism, Vol. 2: Establishment and empire, 1662–1829* (Oxford, 2017), 153–5. I am grateful to Dr Raffe for allowing me to read a version of this chapter before publication.

¹¹⁹ On the first point see Raffe, *Culture of Controversy*, 48–9, 132.

¹²⁰ Strong, *Episcopalianism in Nineteenth-Century Scotland*, 18.

¹²¹ Drummond and Bulloch, *Scottish Church*, 30.

¹²² [James Smith?], *A Letter to a Gentleman in the Country* (Edinburgh, 1724), 16–17.

¹²³ *The Overture Anent Planting Vacant Parishes* (Edinburgh, 1732), 31.

¹²⁴ McIntosh, *Church and Theology*, 32; John Willison, *A Fair and Impartial Testimony: Essayed in name of a number of ministers, elders, and christian people of the Church of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1744), 98.

¹²⁵ On the Glasites see J. H. Smith, *The Perfect Rule of the Christian Religion: A history of Sandemanianism in the eighteenth century* (Albany, NY, 2008).

¹²⁶ John Glas, *A View of the Heresy of Aerius* (Edinburgh, 1745), 50, 54.

¹²⁷ James Boswell, *Boswell's Life of Johnson, Vol. 5: The tour to the Hebrides and the journey into North Wales*, ed. G. B. N. Hill, rev. and enlarged by L. F. Powell, 2nd edn (Oxford, 1964), Oct. 25, 356; on Boswell's belief in a middle state, Appendix D, 562; on Johnson's belief, Davis, "'Ask for the Old Paths'", 133.

¹²⁸ See Martha McGill, *Ghosts in Enlightenment Scotland* (Woodbridge, forthcoming, 2019), ch. 1.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, ch. 2; Sasha Handley, 'Reclaiming ghosts in 1690s England', in Kate Cooper and Jeremy Gregory (eds), *Signs, Wonders, Miracles: Representations of divine power in the life of the church* (Woodbridge, 2005), 345–55; Jo Bath and John Newton, "'Sensible Proof of Spirits": ghost belief during the later seventeenth century', *Folklore* 117 (2006) 1–14.

¹³⁰ Campbell, *Doctrines of a Middle State*, xvii.

¹³¹ StAUL, MS Dep. 19/14/1, letter on intermediate state, 37.

¹³² NRS, GD 377/448 (Hope Family Papers): Thomas Rattray [to Robert Mercer?], 31 Dec. 1730. See also Maurice Fleming, *The Ghost O' Mause: And other tales and traditions of east Perthshire* (Edinburgh, 1995); McGill, *Ghosts in Enlightenment Scotland*, 71–2.

¹³³ Lizanne Henderson and E. J. Cowan, *Scottish Fairy Belief: A history* (East Linton, 2001), 19–20, 80–1.

¹³⁴ Robert Kirk, 'Robert Kirk's *The Secret Commonwealth* and his "A Short Treatise of the Scottish-Irish Charms and Spells"', in Michael Hunter (ed.), *The Occult Laboratory: Magic, science, and second sight in late seventeenth-century Scotland* (Woodbridge, 2001), 85.

¹³⁵ McGill, *Ghosts in Enlightenment Scotland*, 61–4.

¹³⁶ A. M. Grant, *Essays on the Superstitions of the Highlanders of Scotland*, 2 vols (London, 1811), i. 178–82, at 181.

- ¹³⁷ Frank Miller, 'The Laird of Coul's Ghost: a Galloway chap-book', *Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History & Antiquarian Society* 3rd ser., xiv (1927) 259–72, at 259–60; Hew Scott, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ*, new edn, 7 vols (Edinburgh, 1915–28), i. 140. On Cool's ghost see also McGill, *Ghosts in Enlightenment Scotland*, 72–7.
- ¹³⁸ P. H. McKerlie, *History of the Lands and Their Owners in Galloway*, 5 vols (Edinburgh, 1870–9), iii. 273.
- ¹³⁹ NRS, CH 12/12/755, CH 12/16/251; Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland [NLS], Wod.Lett.Qu.XIX (Wodrow manuscripts), fos 283–284.15: Thomas Mark to Robert Wodrow, Feb. 1723. These versions are a little different to Ogilvie's summary of the case; see McGill, *Ghosts in Enlightenment Scotland*, 72–4.
- ¹⁴⁰ Stuart (ed.), *Narrative of Four Conferences*, 30, 36.
- ¹⁴¹ Miller, 'Laird of Coul's Ghost', 262–6.
- ¹⁴² William Ogilvie, *The Laird o' Coul's Ghost*, ed. J. F. S. Gordon (London, 1892), 47–53, 63.
- ¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 24.
- ¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 25–6.
- ¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 32–3.
- ¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 29–30.
- ¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 30–1.
- ¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 64.
- ¹⁴⁹ See Euan Cameron, 'Angels, demons and everything in between: spiritual beings in early modern Europe', in Clare Copeland and Jan Machielsen (eds), *Angels of Light? Sanctity and the discernment of spirits in the early modern period* (Leiden, 2013), 20, 50–1; Sasha Handley, *Visions of an Unseen World: Ghost beliefs and ghost stories in eighteenth-century England* (London, 2007), 35.
- ¹⁵⁰ Ogilvie, *Laird o' Coul's Ghost*, 28.
- ¹⁵¹ J. F. S. Gordon, 'Introit', in Ogilvie, *Laird o' Coul's Ghost*, vi–vii.
- ¹⁵² Miller, 'Laird of Coul's Ghost', 266–72.
- ¹⁵³ *Weekly Magazine, or Edinburgh Amusement*, 16 Apr. 1772, 74.
- ¹⁵⁴ For example, W. G. Stewart, *The Popular Superstitions and Festive Amusements of the Highlanders of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1823), 38; James Miller, *St. Baldred of the Bass: A Pictish legend; The siege of Berwick: A tragedy; with other poems and ballads* (Edinburgh, 1824), 282–3; 'Rustic controversies no. VII: will o' the wisp Wednesday', *Fraser's Magazine for Town and Country*, Jul. 1841, 24.
- ¹⁵⁵ *Weekly Magazine*, 16 Apr. 1772, 74.
- ¹⁵⁶ 'A Strange Account', *Arminian Magazine*, Jul.–Aug. 1785, 378–81, 416–20, at 420.
- ¹⁵⁷ J. H. Jung-Stilling, *Theory of Pneumatology*, trans. Samuel Jackson (London, 1834), 453–60; 'The Rev. Mr. Ogilvy and the Laird of Cool', *Spiritual Magazine*, Jul. 1866, 329–32.
- ¹⁵⁸ Alexander Fergusson, *The Honourable Henry Erskine, Lord Advocate for Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1882), 369–87. Sometimes her name is given as Elizabeth Steuart-Barclay.
- ¹⁵⁹ Notes in Ogilvie, *Narrative of Four Conferences*, 1, 113.
- ¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 22.
- ¹⁶¹ NLS, MS 10785.
- ¹⁶² Elizabeth Steuart, 'To the reader' in Ogilvie, *Narrative of Four Conferences*, v.
- ¹⁶³ Notes in Ogilvie, *Narrative of Four Conferences*, 30.
- ¹⁶⁴ On Swedenborg see Ernst Benz, *Emanuel Swedenborg: Visionary savant in the Age of Reason*, trans. Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke (West Chester, 2002).
- ¹⁶⁵ NLS, MS 10786.
- ¹⁶⁶ Notes in Ogilvie, *Narrative of Four Conferences*, 155, 99.
- ¹⁶⁷ Fergusson, *Honourable Henry Erskine*, 375.
- ¹⁶⁸ Notes in Ogilvie, *Narrative of Four Conferences*, 1.
- ¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 29.
- ¹⁷⁰ M. B. Riordan, 'Mysticism and Prophecy in Scotland in the Long Eighteenth Century', unpublished Ph.D. thesis (University of Cambridge, 2015), ch. 3.
- ¹⁷¹ Anne Skoczylas, *Mr Simson's Knotty Case: Divinity, politics, and due process in early eighteenth-century Scotland* (Montreal, 2001), 64, 342, 92–9.
- ¹⁷² J. M. Suderman, 'Religion and philosophy', in Aaron Garrett and J. A. Harris (eds), *Scottish Philosophy in the Eighteenth Century: Morals, politics, art, religion* (Oxford, 2015), 196–238; C. G. Brown, *Religion and Society in Scotland since 1707* (Edinburgh, 1997), 178–84; Torrance, *Scottish Theology*, 233–46; C. G. Brown, 'Protest in the pews: interpreting presbyterianism and society in fracture during the Scottish economic revolution', in T. M. Devine (ed.), *Conflict and Stability in Scottish Society: 1700–1850* (Edinburgh, 1990), 87.
- ¹⁷³ George Campbell, *The Four Gospels, Translated from the Greek: With preliminary dissertations, and notes critical and explanatory*, 2 vols (London, 1789), i. 206–41, at 230.
- ¹⁷⁴ James MacKnight, *A New Literal Translation from the Original Greek of All the Apostolic Epistles*, 4th edn, 4

vols (London, 1809 [1795]), iii. 536.

¹⁷⁵ George Bennet, *Olam Haneshamoth: Or, a view of the intermediate state, as it appears in the records of the old and new testament* (Carlisle, 1800); John Smith, *Our Scottish Clergy: Fifty-two sketches, biographical, theological, and critical* (Edinburgh, 1848), 379–86.

¹⁷⁶ R. A. Watson and E. S. Watson, *George Gilfillan: Letters and journals, with memoir* (London, 1892), 355; Fergus Ferguson, *Additional Statements in Defence of my Doctrinal Position and in Vindication of my Plea for Doctrinal Reform* (Glasgow, 1878), 66.

¹⁷⁷ J. W. Ebsworth, 'Gilfillan, George (1813–1878)', in Leslie Stephen and Sidney Lee (eds), *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 63 vols (London, 1885–1900), xxi. 350.

¹⁷⁸ Watson and Watson, *George Gilfillan*, 72.

¹⁷⁹ Ian Hamilton, *The Erosion of Calvinist Orthodoxy: Seceders and subscription in Scottish presbyterianism* (Edinburgh, 1990), ch. 4, 130.

¹⁸⁰ J. L. MacLeod, "'Greater Love Hath No Man Than This': Scotland's conflicting religious responses to death in the Great War", *Scottish Historical Review* 81 (2002) 70–96, at 84–8.