Creating a Godly Society: Witch-hunts, Discipline and Reformation in Scotland

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What does Alison Dick have to do with John Knox? Or, for that matter, what does John Knox have to do with Alison Dick, or any of the other women charged and sometimes executed, as witches in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Scotland? The traditional answer has been "not much."[1] Indeed, historians who study John Knox, the demagogic preacher who helped bring a particular kind of reformation to Scotland in the mid-sixteenth century, tend to be different historians than those who study witches in Scotland and the extensive witch-hunt which happened in that country. Knox continues to be studied by church historians. Accused witches such as Alison Dick are studied largely by social historians and sociologists. Thus the relationship between Knox and Dick, and thus between the Reformation and the accusation of witches, has not always been fully explored. Yet, I would argue, witch-hunting was directly related to the kind of reformation which came to Scotland and arose out of that reformation. The witch-hunts were not just a coincidence. They were one aspect of the general impulse to reformation throughout Europe, and particularly the vision of reform that came to Scotland. In considering this topic, this article is divided into three sections. The first explores changes in our understanding of the European witch-hunts in general, both in their historical developments and in events in our times which have shaped the questions historians have asked. The second section of the paper will focus directly on Scotland and the Scottish witch-hunt, as well as the increasing understanding of church discipline. The third section poses three questions

as areas for future consideration and research to understand better the relationship between witch-hunting and the reformation in Scotland. This article is very much a conceptual piece, one that both explores the historiography and suggests future areas of research.[2]

Changing Understandings of the European Witch-hunts

Hugh Trevor-Roper's extended essay in 1967 is a good place to begin a discussion of how an understanding of the European witch-hunts has changed.[3] The title of the essay said a great deal. What was going to be studied was all of Europe. What was being discussed was a craze, whether understood as a fad, or as something bizarre. Since Trevor-Roper's essay the exploration of the witch-hunts in Europe has become a significant field of academic inquiry and has produced a vast literature. Yet some of the themes articulated in the essay continue to influence the general imagination, both of historians and the public. As James Sharpe has noted, Trevor-Roper's article stands, not as the beginning of the new phase of creative and rich investigation into the European witch-hunts, but as the end of an older phase.[4]

New themes have been developed and there has been an attempt to see witch-hunting within its historical context. One indication of the growth of this field of enquiry is the publication of *Palgrave Advances in Witchcraft Historiography* in 2007. The book contains twelve essays exploring historiographical developments and the different approaches historians and others have taken to exploring and understanding what are generally called the witch-hunts, be they the perceived role of science and medicine in ending the hunts, or the way historians have dealt with the issue of gender.[5]

Several general surveys have been published, notably Brian Levack's *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, which has reached a third edition.[6] Major monographs have been published, dealing with the witch-hunt in particular geographic areas, or with particular issues such as intellectual developments, gender, or the process of witch-hunting.[7] There have also been several important essay collections published, including *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries* (1990), which explored how witchcraft was experienced in various countries of Europe such as Hungary, Iceland, Estonia, and others that often do not receive serious consideration.[8] Among English-language historians, "Europe" too often has been considered to be France and Germany, with

Scotland thrown in to help distinguish the continental pattern from the English experience. Too often, as well, North Americans continue to see the entire witch-hunt in Europe through the lens of the particular events that occurred in Salem, Massachusetts. There have been an explosion of research and interpretations, and it is understandable that those who work in cognate fields may not have recognized how much has changed in our understanding of the European witch-hunts over the last fifty years. Those of us who study the European witch-hunts also have to take some responsibility for not always communicating these changes effectively.

Our understanding of the events that are thought of as the European witch-hunts has changed from the days when Trevor-Roper spoke of a craze. While debate continues in many areas and around particular topics, certain trends are clear. First, there has been a move away from seeking mono-causal explanations for the witch-hunts. We no longer look to one factor, be it ergot poisoning, hallucinogens, or other single factors to explain the entire reality of the European witch-hunts. Instead, historians generally seem to accept Brian Levack's distinction between preconditions and particular events which triggered a witch-hunt.[9] Before witch-hunting was possible certain preconditions, such as particular beliefs about witches and judicial structures and laws, had to be in place. At the same time, these could be present without a witch-hunt necessarily taking place and indeed this was the case in many parts of Europe which did not see extensive witch-hunting despite sharing the same intellectual ideas and legal structures. It is thus necessary to also consider what led to or triggered witch-hunts in a particular time and place. These triggers might be a regional or national calamity (for example, famine or war) or could be more local and arise out of local tensions. This move away from simple explanations has been quite significant.

A second major change has been in understanding the numbers involved. These have declined dramatically from the eighteenth-century estimate of six to nine million executions to the current estimate of 100,000 to 200,000 cases, with approximately 40,000 to 50,000 executions.[10]

A third change that should be noted is that some of the earlier theories and arguments of feminist scholars have not proved universally applicable. While witchcraft was and remains a highly gendered crime, the reason for this is more complex than simple fear of women and their power, or the accusation of large numbers of midwives.[11]

Fourth, the complexity of the witch-hunt in Europe has been

recognized and described. It is no longer the continent (which tended to mean parts of Germany and France) with its massive witch-hunts versus England, which did not have these hunts. Instead, work on many of the countries of Europe has led to the realization that witch-hunting on the scale seen in England – an isolated accusation against one witch in her village – happened throughout the continent, and may indeed have been the normative pattern. It is the mass hunts that now strike one as more anomalous. Rather than seeing England as distinct from the rest of Europe we need to see it as one of many variations on a similar pattern.[12]

One final and significant change is that witch-hunting has now become recognized as a renaissance and reformation phenomenon, as something situated within the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, not in the earlier, medieval period. Historians have shown that the massive medieval witch-hunts did not happen.[13] Therefore, witch-hunting cannot be understood as the last gasp of medieval superstition, but must be understood as a product of these later centuries. This is certainly not an exhaustive list yet it makes the point that, as historians have done more detailed studies, the understanding of the European witch-hunts has changed significantly.

Historians arrive at interpretations not only in light of changing understandings of the past, but also as a result of changing circumstances in the times in which they write. For an earlier generation of historians McCarthyism was one of the best analogies when considering the witch-hunts. We now, tragically, have much better parallels, specifically with several prominent situations in North America where individuals have been accused of the ritual sexual abuse of children, often involving satanic rights, despite the incredible details recounted and the lack of any physical evidence that such crimes occurred. David Frankfurter has made a compelling case for these being seen as modern parallels to what was witnessed in early modern Europe.[14]

A second change has been the discussion and debates about torture – its effectiveness as well as what constitutes "torture" – has become a current affairs topic, not one for arcane historical comment. Finally, historians used to look to Africa and anthropologists who studied primitive tribal groups to understand witches, belief in witchcraft, and related ideas, even though witch-hunts among many of these groups was rare. In recent years, something similar to the European witch-hunts has affected much of Africa, as western technology and faiths affect that continent in a new way.[15] The context out of which researchers consider the European witch-

hunts has altered.

Changing Understandings of the Witch-hunt in Scotland

These changes in the understanding of the European witch-hunt obviously shape an understanding of any of the regional variants, including the witch-hunt that took place in Scotland. The modern study of the witch-hunt in Scotland really began with the publication of Christina Larner's *Enemies of God* in 1981.[16] In this pioneering work, Larner explored the Scottish witch-hunt surveying its geographic spread, its chronology and numerous topics including the driving forces behind witch-hunting and why women were accused as witches. This crucial book contributed not only to our understanding of the witch-hunt in Scotland but to the broader discussion of the European witch-hunt. The book was so influential that few scholars initially heeded Larner's own call that more research needed to be done. Her early death also removed an excellent scholar from the field. Thus it was only twenty years later, beginning roughly in 2000, that significant new works began to appear. However, as I've argued previously in an historiographic article entitled "*Enemies of God* Revisited," the way in which this literature developed – with scholars working in isolation from each other and then publishing their findings almost at the same time – prevented us from seeing how much of our understanding of the witch-hunt had evolved in the almost thirty years since the publication of *Enemies of God*.[17] There has been a tendency for each scholar to tell the story his or her own way without always clearly pointing the reader to the places where there is considerable debate or where some of the main themes developed by Larner have been challenged.

One of the significant changes discussed in "*Enemies of God* Revisited" centred around the early origins of the witch-hunt in Scotland, in particular the role played by the Scottish King James VI (later also James I of England). It seems clear that witch-hunting did not begin with James VI bringing continental demonological beliefs to Scotland in 1590. There was already a witch-hunt underway, and it is also unclear that James ever encountered those beliefs.[18] Another theme the article explored was the debate about the role the central government played in witch-hunting. Did the central government play a key role in driving witch-hunts as Julian Goodare (who continues to follow Christina Larner's contention that it was the central government which drove the witch-hunt) has argued, or did

the central government restrain witch-hunting as Brian Levack has contended?[19] The role of torture in the Scottish witch-hunt was also explored.[20] Finally, the chronology of the witch-hunt was re-examined. The significant point here is that, while Larner noted a massive witch-hunt in 1597, the number of known cases is far smaller.[21] When we note this lower number, it becomes clear that the vast majority of witch-hunting in Scotland did not take place until the mid-seventeenth century, specifically in two peaks witch-hunts in 1649/50 and 1661/1662. These would have been in the middle of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, or the civil wars that affected Scotland, England and Ireland from 1638 through to 1660. More precisely the 1649/50 hunt came at the time when a radical wing of the Presbyterian movement was in charge of Scotland after the passage of the Act of Classes. The hunt in 1661 and 1662 coincides with the restoration of the Stuart monarchy. This different understanding of when the major witch-hunts in Scotland actually occurred has not yet been adequately addressed in the literature.[22]

Historians have continued to explore various themes related to the Scottish witch-hunt, resulting in additional important works. *Witch-Hunting in Scotland* (2008) an edited collection of some of the crucial essays by Brian Levack, has provided an excellent overview of his important contributions to an understanding of the witch-hunt in Scotland.[23] P.G. Maxwell-Stuart has published extensively in the field of European magic and witchcraft and related areas, including an important look at the massive witch-hunt which occurred in 1661-1662, *An Abundance of Witches* (2005).[24] Another important collection of essays has been published. The volume, *Witchcraft and Belief in Early Modern Scotland* (2008), includes articles on folk belief, charms and charmers, demonic possession, the devil, witch-hunting in Gaelic speaking areas, and a comparative look at the Scottish witch-hunt within the European context.[25] These and other essays,[26] have continued to expand our understanding of the witch-hunt in Scotland.

At the same time, certain themes require further investigation. Until quite recently, very little had been published related to the extensive hunt that occurred in 1649-1650, one of the two largest witch-hunts. Thankfully, historians are beginning to focus on research in this area and publish their results.[27] Given the considerable research already completed, the primary challenge for Scottish historians will be to analyse what we know about the witch-hunt and placing this effectively within the broader historical context.

While the changing understanding of the origins of the Scottish witch-hunt, of the role of torture, of the chronology, and of the role of central government were all addressed in the article "*Enemies of God* Revisited," one theme which did not receive adequate attention was our changing understanding of the role of the church in the Scottish witch-hunt. Enemies of God was a pioneering study. As a result, there were certain key questions to which Christina Larner gave ambiguous answers including the role the church played in the witch-hunts. Larner noted that the church had a role. At the same time Larner tended to suggest that the greater role – and thus key to witch-hunting – was the local nobility, the lairds.[28] Without their active participation, witch-hunting could not have taken place. They were the ones who had to obtain a legal commission from the government in Edinburgh to put an accused witch on trial. They were the ones who manned the courts, and oversaw the legal process – and witchcraft was of course a criminal offence. All of this was and is true. The active support of the local nobility and burgh officials was crucial if there were to be legal prosecutions. But, one need not conclude from this that it was the lairds who drove the witch-hunt; rather, once a suspected witch had been unearthed they were crucial in bringing that person to a legal punishment. It was the church, and church courts which were the key participants in the initial investigations of accusations of witchcraft. It was in the Kirk sessions, the church courts located in the local community, where we often find the initial accusations against a witch appearing. Alison Dick, to return to her, was first named in a Kirk session in Kirkcaldy as a suspected witch.[29] The church played a vital role in beginning the entire process.

An important link thus exists between the Reformation and witch-hunting, between church discipline and witchcraft accusations. Recent work has made it clear how crucial church discipline in Scotland was at the time.[30] One notable aspect of the Scottish Reformation was its attempt to create a godly society, to correct various forms of social (mis)behaviour and root out sin. Key to this were the system of church courts, beginning with the Kirk sessions, and then going up through the Presbyteries and Synods to the General Assembly. An effective structure was put in place which brought before the church all deemed to be sinners, whether that was because of holding a public argument in the High Street, skipping church services, having sex outside of marriage, or knowing various charms and cures. Witchcraft accusations form a smaller subset of these latter cases. The church wished to eradicate all of the traditional appeals

to extra-human interventions, and replace these with only approved churchly prayers, or with acceptance of God's inscrutable will. A godly community prayed. Godly people did not seek the assistance of the fairies, or know cures and charms, or seek help from the village witch. It is here that the link between the Reformation and witch-hunting exists. Witch-hunting was a somewhat natural outgrowth of the project of church discipline which sought to create a godly society.

Discipline did not require an interest in demonology. Belief that the Devil gave witches their power could be accepted as a basic reality (a precondition) without this automatically leading to witch-hunting. One of the fascinating realities discovered while studying the 420 different incidents of witchcraft allegations in Fife, was how the local clergy, despite being highly educated, seemed either unaware or disinterested in demonological theory of the kind contained in the *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486) and similar treatises. Kirk session records do not contain constant indication of the kinds of concerns we have been told those interested in witches in seventeenth-century Scotland were obsessed with, that is, belief in the demonic pact, sabbats, and copulation with the Devil.[31] These are the factors, we have believed, which led to the severity of the witch-hunt in Scotland. Yet in Kirk session records from Fife these rarely occur. These kinds of beliefs usually come – when they come – later in the trials.[32] The concern in the Kirk sessions was with godly behaviour and with the creation of a godly community. And thus, I would argue, the witch-hunt in Scotland needs to be seen as a feature of the reformation, not something that just happened to occur at roughly the same time. Social historians need to better understand the religious dimensions of the reformation, and church historians need to take into account where this project of creating a godly society ultimately led. We are starting to do this, but this is an area where we need to consider the relationship between these two realities.

Questions for Future Research on the Reformation and Scottish Witch-hunt

It is clear that over the last fifty years our understanding of the European and Scottish witch-hunts has undergone a significant change. This article has also argued that within the field of Scottish studies, these changes have not always been recognized and, as a result, we continue to see the witch-hunt and the reformation as separate fields of historical

enquiry, rather than as vitally interrelated. In beginning to explore these relationships, several questions need to be considered. The first question is quite simple: is the term "witch-hunt" appropriate to describe all of the accusations of witchcraft in the period from roughly 1560 to 1710? There clearly were witch-hunts in Scotland which we can identify. What I mean by "witch-hunt" in this context is those times when people actively sought out witches – with the emphasis on "hunt."[33] These happened in Scotland.

But not all of those who ended up being accused, or even executed, were swept up in a hunt. There are two realities that need to be considered. The first is that many of the "hunts" were more broad than deep. Each village, when asked, could name its witch. But the process we imagine where the circle of accusations expands rapidly (an accused witch was interrogated, further names were sought, officials then interrogated the named accomplices and forced them to confess and then name others, and so on and so on) does not seem to have gone on in all cases; indeed, the kind of cases we imagine where everyone in a village suddenly became a suspect may have been unusual.[34] Even in what we might determine are "hunts" it seems that those named already had a bad reputation, and few without bad reputations were named. The accusers didn't stay within a village and suspect everyone (hence my use of the term "deep") but seem to have gone "broad," going to the next village and interrogating the woman or women with bad reputations in that village. It is worth testing to see if, when hunts occurred, this dynamic of a broad rather than a deep witch-hunt is more evident. But while we need to understand what the dynamic of a "hunt" was, it is worth remembering the second reality that the evidence shows many situations where there was no "hunt" at all. Rather, there was an incident. And when that incident happens, the individual in the community who everyone believed to be a witch was brought before the Kirk session and dealt with. In many cases no other individuals were named. And what is fascinating, as already noted, was that these women lived in the communities for years and the accusations against them went back for years before these cases developed. Historians describe this. But have we given enough careful consideration to what this might mean? What are the implications of this? Why weren't Kirk sessions more active in hunting known witches? Why are those who are victims of the suspected witch waiting so long before coming to the Kirk session with their fears?

A second question we need to consider concerns how we've mapped the witch-hunt in Scotland. Historians have spent considerable time

counting witchcraft accusations in Scotland.[35] But what are we counting? We find witchcraft accusations in the secular courts, through commissions to put a witch to trial, in burgh courts, as well as in other sources such as literary references. These account form a significant percentage of the cases. Church court records are another major place where we find references to many, many cases, particularly in the Kirk session and presbytery records. The survival of all of these records, and in particular the local Kirk session minutes is crucial. Is the portrait of the witch-hunt determined then by what records have survived? Fife is an area where we are aware of many witchcraft accusations, but is also an area where many Kirk session records have survived. In contrast, in the Wigtown area in the South West of Scotland we have very few witches.[36] We also do not have surviving Kirk session records for the crucial period of the mid-seventeenth century. So, what are we really counting: witches, or the witches we know of, because the records have survived?

This leads to one final and related question which needs to be further explored. Historians have long noted that what we are studying when we are looking at witchcraft accusations is not the prevalence of the practice of witchcraft but where and when the laws against it were enforced. But while we note it, we may also forget this along the way. What if we were to begin with the assumption that in every village and burgh in Scotland women were actively practising cures and charms, threatened their neighbours if they didn't get their way, cursed and blessed, acted (and I'm reluctant to use this word because I'm afraid that it might be misunderstood) as a witch?[37] How does that change our portrait of what was going on at this time? One thing it might help us recognize is that what was changing in this period was not behaviour but the understanding of what acceptable behaviour was. This returns us to the entire idea of the imposition of discipline, of a godly community and the link to the Reformation. Furthermore, this approach might help us to realize how feared and powerful witches were in these communities. If people were reluctant to name the witch, what does that say? This was what happened in the case of Alison Dick. She first appeared as a suspected witch in 1621. The Kirk session appealed to the community for information about her yet no information was provided. After a public dispute with her husband twelve years later in which they each accused each other of evil actions suspiciously like witchcraft, they were both brought before the Kirk session to face these charges. This time the session seems to have treated the case more seriously. Alison Dick was warded or imprisoned.[38] The

result was that information came forward, all pointing to Alison acting as a witch, cursing and threatening. She and her husband were executed as witches as a result.

As we study and teach about the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, historians need to talk about Alison Dick and John Knox. The reformation imagined by the latter led years later to the trial of the former. There seems to have been a broad change in piety and expectations across Europe, and the attack on traditional forms of magic and traditional cures seems to have been a part of that broader attempt to re-imagine and reconstruct how the average person should live out their Christian faith. Many scholars are noting this change.[39] By looking at the links between reformation and witch-hunting in one context, Scotland, further light will be shed on our broader understanding of not only the Scottish reformation but the reformation as a whole. Where church historians often focus on theological issues and changes in belief, these changes in piety and expectations and behaviour, may be every bit as crucial. What was the reformation attempting to do? What were some of the factors motivating it? One cannot, I would argue, consider these questions adequately without looking at what was done in the parishes and what was expected of the average member of the Christian community (a term with a very different meaning then from how we would understand this now). Church discipline, including the discipline of suspected witches, was a vial part of that program in Scotland. This attempt to create a godly society needs to be considered by both church historians and social historians.

Endnotes

1. One fairly recent exception is Julian Goodare, "John Knox on Demonology and Witchcraft," *Archiv fur Reformationsgeschichte* 96 (2005): 221-45. Comments on this article will be noted later.

2. This paper is very much the thoughts of someone who has once worked intensely on this particular topic, returning to that topic after time away. One potential down-side of this is that there may be various relevant articles which I have not yet discovered or noted. My apologies in advance. At the same time, the process of sketching out ideas, even writing a text, and then modifying these ideas and text as one becomes aware of more recent historical scholarship, has been a valuable one.

3. The article has appeared in a variety of different places. H.R. Trevor-Roper, "The European Witch-Craze of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries," in *Religion, the Reformation and Social Change and Other Essays,* ed. H.R. Trevor-Roper (London: Macmillan Press, 1972): 90-192.

4. James Sharpe, *Witchcraft in Early Modern England* (London: Pearson Education, 2001), 8. The phrase "witch-craze" predates Trevor-Roper, but its use is suggestive of a continuing approach.

5. Jonathan Barry and Owen Davies, eds., *Palgrave Advances in Witchcraft Historiography* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).

6. Brian P. Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 3rd ed. (Harlow, UK: Pearson/Longman, 2006). Other surveys include G.R. Quaife, *Godly Zeal and Furious Rage: The Witch in Early Modern Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1987); and Joseph Klaits, *Servants of Satan: The Age of the Witch Hunts* (Bloomington, IL: Indiana University Press, 1985).

7. It is possible to provide only a selective list of some of the major works in the field of the European witch-hunts. Those who are interested may want to begin with the various articles in Barry and Davies, eds., *Palgrave Advances in Witchcraft Historiography*. Other key works, not referenced elsewhere in this paper, would include: Stuart Clark, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Robin Briggs, *Witches and Neighbors: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (New York: Harper Collins, 1996); James Sharpe, *Instruments of Darkness: Witchcraft in Early Modern England* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1996), and Gary K. Waite, *Heresy, Magic and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003).

8. Bengt Ankarloo and Gustav Henningsen, eds., *Early Modern European Witchcraft: Centres and Peripheries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990). Another important collection of essays is Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester and Gareth Roberts, eds., *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe, Past & Present Publications* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

9. Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe*, 3. The book's structure reflects this division, with chapter 2 and 3 exploring the intellectual and legal foundations or preconditions and later chapters, particularly chapter 6 and 7, looking at the specific experiences when witch-hunts took place.

10. Various estimates exist. The estimate in the text comes from Raisa Maria Tovio, "The Witch-Craze as Holocaust: The Rise of Persecuting Societies," in *Palgrave Advances in Witchcraft Historiography*, 100. Similar estimates can be found in Sharpe, *Witchcraft in Early Modern England*, 6; and Levack,

The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern England, 20-24.

11. Katharine Hodgkin, "Gender, Mind and Body: Feminism and Psychoanalysis," *Palgrave Advances in Witchcraft Historiography*, 182-85.

12. English exceptionalism dominated early discussions of the European witch-hunt in the English language. James Sharpe's work in particular has challenged this idea (*Witchcraft in Early Modern England*, 12).

13. Norman Cohn, *Europe's Inner Demons* (Sussex: Sussex University Press, 1975), Chapter 7; and Richard Kiekhefer, *European Witch Trials: Their Foundations in Popular and Learned Culture, 1300-1500* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1976), 16-18.

14. David Frankfurter, *Evil Incarnate: Rumors of Demonic Conspiracy and Ritual Abuse in History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006).

15. It is surprising that the recent witch-hunts in sub-Saharan Africa have not received more comment, particularly given their similarity to the European witch-hunts of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

16. Christina Larner, *Enemies of God: The Witch-Hunt in Scotland* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1981).

17. Stuart Macdonald, "Enemies of God Revisited: Recent Publications on Scottish Witch-Hunting," *Scottish Economic and Social History* 23, no. 2 (2003): 65-84. This edition of the journal appeared in March 2005.

18. P.G. Maxwell-Stuart, "The Fear of the King Is Death: James VI and the Witches of East Lothian," in *Fear in Early Modern Society*, eds. William G. Naphy and Penny Roberts (New York: Manchester University Press, 1997); and Jenny Wormald, "The Witches, the Devil and the King," in *Freedom and Authority: Scotland C.1050 - C.1650: Historical and Historiographical Essays Presented to Grant G. Simpson*, eds. Terry Brotherstone and David Ditchburn (East Linton, UK: Tuckwell, 2000).

19. On the role of the state in driving the witch-hunts, see Larner, *Enemies of God*, 60; and Julian Goodare, "Witch-Hunting and the Scottish State," in *The Scottish Witch-Hunt in Context, ed. Julian Goodare* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 139. The role of the central government in limiting witch-hunting is made Brian P. Levack, "State-Building and Witch Hunting in Early Modern Europe," in *Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*, eds. Jonathan Barry, Marianne Hester, and Gareth Roberts (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 100; and Brian P. Levack, *Witch-Hunting in Scotland: Law, Politics and Religion* (New York: Routledge, 2008).

20. Levack, "State-Building," 105-106. See also Stuart Macdonald, *The Witches of Fife: Witch-Hunting in a Scottish Shire, 1560-1710* (East Linton: Tuckwell, 2002), 123-42; and Stuart Macdonald, "Torture and the Scottish Witch-Hunt: A Re-Examination," *Scottish Tradition* 27 (2002): 95-114.

21. There is a significant difference between the two graphs of the Scottish witch-hunt in relation to the 1597 hunt. Larner, *Enemies of God*, 61, records 200 known cases and projects the possibility of another hundred, for a total in the area of 300 cases. Macdonald, *Witches of Fife*, 20, records 83 known cases, and estimates a few more for a total of under 100. See also Macdonald, "Enemies of God Revisited," 73. Most recently, the graphs based upon the Survey of Scottish Witchcraft have noted 111 cases in 1597, which still makes it significantly smaller than the major hunts in the seventeenth century. Lauren Martin and Joyce Miller, "Some Findings from the Survey of Scottish Witchcraft," in *Witchcraft and Belief in Early Modern Scotland,* eds. Julian Goodare, Lauren Martin, and Joyce Miller (Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008), 57.

22. One important article beginning to do this was recently published: Lauren Martin, "Scottish Witchcraft Panics Re-Examined," in *Witchcraft and Belief in Early Modern Scotland*.

23. Levack, *Witch-Hunting in Scotland: Law, Politics and Religion*.

24. P.G. Maxwell-Stuart, *An Abundance of Witches: The Great Scottish Witch-Hunt* (Gloucestershire, UK: Tempus, 2005).

25. Goodare, Martin, and Miller, eds., *Witchcraft and Belief in Early Modern Scotland*.

26. Many of the recent articles are contained in Goodare, Martin, and Miller, eds., *Witchcraft and Belief* (2008). Other recent articles include: Michael Wasser, "The Privy Council and the Witches: The Curtailment of Witchcraft Prosecutions in Scotland, 1597-1628," *Scottish Historical Review* LXXXII, no. 1 (2003); Julian Goodare, "The Scottish Witchcraft Act," *Church History* 74, no. 1 (2005); Lizanne Henderson, "The Survival of Witchcraft Prosecutions and Witch Belief in South-West Scotland," *Scottish Historical Review* LXXXV, no. 1 (2006); and Goodare, "John Knox on Demonology and Witchcraft." The challenge for Goodare, "John Knox on Demonology" is, as noted in his article, 221, that demonology and witches were not a major feature of Knox's theological or historical writings. The methodology used in the article is more traditional and focused on theology than the approach I am recommending which, following Michael Graham and Margo Todd, focuses a great deal of attention on the practical program of discipline and how this was carried out.

27. John R. Young, "The Scottish Parliament and Witch-Hunting in Scotland under the Covenanters," *Parliaments, Estates and Representation* 26, no. 1 (2006). A doctoral thesis on the 1649-1650 hunt was recently completed at the University of Strathclyde by Paula Hughes, and publications arising from this will soon be appearing.

28. Larner, *Enemies of God*, 84-85. Larner suggested a computer study of the names of the lairds who appeared in various commissions, 87, which indicates again that they, not the ministers, were crucial actors. More on this complicated issue can be found in Macdonald, "*Enemies of God* Revisited," 71.

29. Macdonald, *Witches of Fife*, 145.

30. Michael F. Graham, *The Uses of Reform: 'Godly Discipline' and Popular Behavior in Scotland and Beyond, 1560-1610* (New York: E.J. Brill, 1996); and Margo Todd, *The Culture of Protestantism in Early Modern Scotland* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002). This theme is also explored in *Witches of Fife*, 183-190.

31. One possibility is that while demonological beliefs were discussed as part of the session meeting, they were not recorded in the minutes. While possible, I would suggest this was unlikely. We do have cases – although as noted in the text not many of them – where demonological beliefs are indicated.

32. Stuart Macdonald, "In Search of the Devil in Fife Witchcraft Cases, 1560-1705," in *The Scottish Witch-Hunt in Context*, ed. Julian Goodare (New York: Manchester University Press, 2002): 33-50.

33. This is explored in Martin, "Scottish Witchcraft Panics Re-examined," 121.

34. The idea that witch-hunting takes on an impetus of its own that is very difficult to stop is well expressed in Robert Rapley, *Witch Hunts: From Salem to Guantanamo Bay* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2007). The book is a fascinating case study of justice gone awry. My comment would be that the case studies of "witch-hunting" used in the book (Salem, Bamberg and Wurzburg, Loudon) were atypical even in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Most cases in Scotland do not seem to fit this model.

35. The first significant attempt to catalogue Scottish witchcraft cases was George F. Black, *A Calendar of Cases of Witchcraft in Scotland 1510-1727* (New York: New York Public Library and Arno Press, 1938). A major step forward was Christina Larner, Christopher Hyde Lee, and Hugh McLachlan, *A Sourcebook of Scottish Witchcraft* (Glasgow: Sociology Department, University of Glasgow, 1977). The project used a computer database of the time to catalogue cases. This resource was updated several years later, with

additional information and cases added. This was published as a CDROM as Stuart Macdonald, *Scottish Witch-Hunt Data Base, Toronto* (2001). The most recent project has been the extensive work done by Julian Goodare, Lauren Martin, Joyce Millar and Louse Yeoman which has produced the online resource The Survey of Scottish Witchcraft, 2003, http://www.shc.ed.ac.uk/Research/witches/. Comments on the findings from the Survey can be found in Martin and Miller, "Some Findings from the Survey of Scottish Witchcraft."

36. Macdonald, *Witches of Fife*, 22-23, notes only 8 cases from Wigtown, making it one of the counties in Scotland with the fewest witchcraft cases. See Henderson, "Survival of Witchcraft Prosecutions" for these cases and those in the neigbouring counties. Martin, "Scottish Witchcraft Panics Re-examined," discusses a different aspect of this issue focusing on the different results one obtains counting the number of accusations versus counting the number parishes where accusations were taking place.

37. This point is well articulated in P.G. Maxwell-Stuart, *Witch Hunters: Professional Prickers, Unwitchers & Witch Finders of the Renaissance* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: Tempus, 2003), 39-40, 170.

38. Macdonald, *Witches of Fife*, 145-153.

39. This theme was explored in Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge MA: Belknap Press of the Harvard University Press, 2007), 80-89.