

John Glas and the Development of Religious Pluralism in Eighteenth-Century Scotland

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This article discusses John Glas, a minister deposed by the Church of Scotland in 1728, in order to examine the growth of religious pluralism in Scotland. The article begins by considering why Glas abandoned Presbyterian principles of Church government, adopting Congregationalist views instead. Glas's case helped to change the Scottish church courts' conception of deposed ministers, reflecting a reappraisal of Nonconformity. Moreover, Glas's experiences allow us to distinguish between church parties formed to conduct business, and those representing theological attitudes. Finally, Glas's case calls into question the broadest definitions of the 'Scottish Enlightenment', drawing attention to the emergence of pluralism.

This article uses the case of John Glas, who was deposed from his ministry in the Church of Scotland in 1728, to examine the growth of religious pluralism in Scotland. What little has been written about Glas focuses largely on the small sect that he founded, the Glasites, otherwise known as Sandemanians, which existed until the late twentieth century. In this scholarship, Glas is portrayed as the Scottish originator of Congregationalism, after the failure of English-inspired Independency in the seventeenth century. This article takes a different approach, and seeks to identify Glas's wider impact on Scottish Protestantism. His struggle with the courts of the Church of Scotland had a formative influence on the Presbyterian clergy's willingness to recognise Churches beyond the

EUL = Edinburgh University Library; NRS = National Records of Scotland, Edinburgh; ODNB = *Oxford dictionary of national biography*; RPS = *Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707*, ed. Keith M. Brown and others, <<http://www.rps.ac.uk/>>; RSCHS = *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*; UoD = Archive Services, University of Dundee

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establishment, and on the development of parties within the Kirk. Glas's story was not marginal, but was connected to processes that were reshaping Scottish society, creating the pluralistic and tolerant culture associated with the Scottish Enlightenment.

Born in 1695, John Glas grew up in Fife and Perthshire, studying for his MA degree at the University of St Andrews, before training in divinity at the University of Edinburgh.¹ In 1719 he was ordained to the Angus parish of Tealing, six miles north of Dundee. That he was settled in a parish at the early age of twenty-three reflected both his intellectual gifts and the continuing shortage of ministers in the Church of Scotland, which had been re-established on a Presbyterian basis in 1690. Glas's familial background gives a remarkable illustration of the caste-like qualities developed by the early modern Scottish clergy.² Glas was the fifth in an unbroken line of fathers and sons to enter the ministry. His maternal grandfather, father-in-law and two brothers-in-law were also parish ministers. There was every reason to predict that Glas, who at the time of his ordination was unexceptionally orthodox in his Presbyterian views, would remain a loyal servant of the Church. In the mid-1720s, however, he abandoned the Kirk's principles of ecclesiastical government, rejecting the idea of a national Church in covenant with God, in which the civil magistrate had considerable authority over religious affairs. Instead, he came to understand the Church as a purely spiritual body, with no earthly organisation above the level of the congregation. He linked his change of mind to his struggles with zealously Presbyterian parishioners.³ However, the controversy that led Glas to Congregationalism involved ministers and lay people in the Angus region as a whole.

When Glas commenced his ministry, nearly all Scots were Protestants and most conformed to the established Church of Scotland. Small populations of Catholics dwelt in the highlands, north-east lowlands and the south-west.⁴ The tiny Scottish Quaker community was concentrated in Aberdeen and parts of Lanarkshire.⁵ Centred on the south-west, there were several overlapping networks of dissenting Presbyterians, each claiming descent from the Cameronians, a radical group of the 1680s. The Presbyterian

¹ The biographical information in this paragraph is drawn from: John Thomas Hornsby, 'John Glas (1695-1773)', unpubl. PhD diss. Edinburgh 1936, pt 1, and Derek B. Murray, 'Glas, John (1695-1773)', *ODNB*, <<https://www.doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10798>>.

² Cf. Rosalind Mitchison, 'The social impact of the clergy of the Reformed Kirk of Scotland', *Scotia* vi (1982), 1-13 at p. 5.

³ John Glas, *A narrative of the rise and progress of the controversy about the national Covenants*, Edinburgh 1728, 2, 5-7.

⁴ Clotilde Prunier, *Anti-Catholic strategies in eighteenth-century Scotland*, Frankfurt-am-Main 2004, 27, 29-31; James Darragh, 'The Catholic population of Scotland since the year 1680', *Innes Review* iv (1953), 49-59 at p. 53.

⁵ George B. Burnet, *The story of Quakerism in Scotland, 1650-1850*, London 1952.

dissenters' numbers were small, but they had considerable influence over members of the Kirk.⁶ In the region of Glas's parish, however, the principal Nonconformists were episcopalians, men and women who refused to accept the Presbyterian settlement of 1690, and remained loyal to the bishops and clergy of the Restoration Kirk and their successors. Most episcopalians were Jacobites, and the defeat of the 1715 rising weakened their influence. Though episcopalian congregations would remain in Angus throughout the eighteenth century, the number of worshippers slowly declined.⁷ Meanwhile, the ministers of the Presbyterian Church, who had only gradually gained control of the region's parishes after 1690, began to operate in Angus with effectiveness comparable to that of their brethren in Presbyterianism's southern heartlands. But while the Kirk's ministers in Angus and other regions aspired to make Scotland a uniformly Presbyterian country, Glas would force them to acknowledge that this was an impossible goal in the political climate of eighteenth-century Britain.

Scottish Presbyterians of the early eighteenth century tried hard to preserve the unity of their Church. In doing so, they aspired to build a godly nation, bound together by a Church performing vital social functions, as the organiser of education and poor relief and the enforcer of moral discipline. Moreover, Presbyterians in this period were conditioned by their memory of the 1650s, when Presbyterianism split into two parties, and the Restoration period, when the Cameronians separated themselves from the mainstream. After the revolution of 1688–90, the Church's leaders particularly emphasised the enforcement of doctrinal orthodoxy. In 1690 the Scottish parliament explicitly approved the Calvinist Westminster Confession of Faith as part of the ecclesiastical settlement.⁸ Thereafter, the church courts expected new entrants to the ministry to subscribe the Confession.⁹ In 1711 the general assembly introduced a formula to be signed by newly licensed preachers and ministers receiving ordination, requiring them to state that they 'sincerely own and believe the whole doctrine' of the Confession, and would 'assert, maintain, and defend' the theology, worship and government of the Church'.¹⁰

⁶ Colin Kidd, 'Conditional Britons: the Scots Covenanting tradition and the eighteenth-century British state', *EHR* cxvii (2002), 1147–76; Douglas W. B. Somerset, 'Notes on some Scottish Covenanters and ultra-Covenanters of the eighteenth century', *Scottish Reformation Society Historical Journal* vi (2016), 87–130.

⁷ Alasdair Raffe, 'Scotland', in Jeremy Gregory (ed.), *The Oxford history of Anglicanism*, II: *Establishment and empire, 1662–1829*, Oxford 2017, 150–9; Tristram N. Clarke, 'The Scottish episcopalians, 1688–1720', unpubl. PhD diss. Edinburgh 1987.

⁸ *RPS* 1690/4/43.

⁹ Alasdair Raffe, 'Presbyterians and episcopalians: the formation of confessional cultures in Scotland, 1660–1715', *EHR* cxv (2010), 570–98 at pp. 586–7.

¹⁰ *Acts of the general assembly of the Church of Scotland, M.DC.XXXVIII.–M.DCCC.XLII*, Edinburgh 1843, 456.

Among the religious debates witnessed by Glas during his education and early years in the ministry were several attempts to police the boundaries of orthodoxy. John Simson, professor of divinity at Glasgow University, was twice prosecuted over allegations of erroneous teaching. The general assembly relieved him of his duties in 1727, though the assembly's final sentence of 1729 allowed him to retain his salary.¹¹ More important to Glas's case was the controversy over *The marrow of modern divinity*. This seventeenth-century theological text was republished in Edinburgh in 1718, but in 1720 the general assembly condemned it for propagating several errors, including antinomianism, the belief that elect Christians are not subject to the moral law. For several years the *Marrow* was zealously defended and reviled by opposing groups of ministers.¹² The debate reflected an emerging disagreement among ministers about how to remain true to the principles of the Westminster Confession while fervently urging the conversion of the Scottish people.¹³ Glas engaged in this Evangelical endeavour, and he came to believe that his conception of Church government was part of the truth that he was obliged to preach. Glas thought that he had obtained crucial insights for the correct understanding of Christianity. To his detractors, however, he inflicted yet another assault on the cherished uniformity and harmony of the Kirk.

Glas has been studied in detail by historians of Scottish Independency and its transatlantic influence. Their works typically treat him as an isolated individual, a combative polemicist whose new sect gained a few followers, and influenced other, still smaller, Independent Churches.¹⁴ Scholars concerned with the broader currents of religious life place Glas's deposition in the context of a series of secessions from the eighteenth-century Church of

¹¹ Ibid. 591–3, 607–8; Anne Skoczylas, *Mr Simson's knotty case: divinity, politics, and due process in early eighteenth-century Scotland*, Montreal 2001.

¹² David C. Lachman, *The Marrow controversy, 1718–1723: an historical and theological analysis*, Edinburgh 1988.

¹³ Stewart Mechie, 'The theological climate in early eighteenth century Scotland', in Duncan Shaw (ed.), *Reformation and revolution: essays presented to the Very Reverend Principal Emeritus Hugh Watt*, Edinburgh 1967, 258–72. For a more detailed discussion see Stephen G. Myers, *Scottish federalism and covenantalism in transition: the theology of Ebenezer Erskine*, Cambridge 2016, ch. ii.

¹⁴ Hornsby, 'John Glas', parts of which were published as his 'The case of Mr John Glas', *RSCHS* vi (1936–8), 115–37, and 'John Glas: his later life and work', *RSCHS* vii (1939–41), 94–113. See also his 'The teaching of John Glas', *Evangelical Quarterly* xii (1940), 154–71; Derek Boyd Murray, 'The social and religious origins of Scottish non-Presbyterian Protestant dissent from 1730 to 1800', unpubl. PhD diss. St Andrews 1977; Lynn A. McMillon, *Restoration roots*, Dallas, Tx 1983, ch. iii; Derek B. Murray, 'The influence of John Glas', *RSCHS* xxii (1984–6), 45–56; and John Howard Smith, *The perfect rule of the Christian religion: a history of Sandemanianism in the eighteenth century*, Albany 2008, ch. i. Perhaps the least 'denominational' study is David G. Mullan, 'The royal law of liberty: a reassessment of the early career of John Glas', *Journal of the United Reformed Church History Society* vi (1997–2002), 233–62.

Scotland.¹⁵ But historians have not yet recognised his impact on the appearance in Scotland of more positive attitudes towards religious diversity. To examine how Glas contributed to the development of religious pluralism, this article proceeds in four stages. We first analyse the arguments leading to Glas's deposition from the ministry. I then show that the trials of Glas and his ally Francis Archibald changed the way in which the Scottish church courts conceived of deposed ministers, which reflected a shift in how the courts regarded Nonconformist religious groups. The article then argues that Glas's struggles with the church courts cast new light on the nature of Scottish ecclesiastical parties, a second dimension of religious pluralism. Finally, we conclude by assessing what the case tells us about social and intellectual change, in the Angus region and in Scotland as a whole.

I

To understand why Glas changed his mind about Church government and rejected the views of his Presbyterian brethren, it is necessary to begin with two of the debates shaping religious politics in Angus at the time of his ordination. First, there was a radical critique of the Church as insufficiently true to Presbyterian principles, and too much compromised by its alliance with the civil authorities. These views originated with the separatist groups that presented themselves as heirs of the Cameronians. Members of these groups complained that the Church had abandoned the National Covenant (1638) and the Solemn League and Covenant (1643), and held that the post-revolution monarchs were illegitimate because they had not sworn the Covenants. The Anglo-Scottish union of 1707 seemed to have sacrificed Presbyterian principles by subjecting Scotland to a parliament containing bishops. The oath of abjuration, imposed on Scottish clergy in 1712, appeared to require Presbyterians to accept the centrality of the Church of England to the British constitution. About a third of Presbyterian ministers refused to take the oath, and though many swore after its text was revised in 1715 and 1719, the effects of the controversy could still be felt in the early 1720s.¹⁶ Arguments about the oath, like

¹⁵ Among more recent works see especially William Ferguson, *Scotland: 1689 to the present*, Edinburgh 1968, 131–2; Andrew L. Drummond and James Bulloch, *The Scottish Church, 1688–1843: the age of the Moderates*, Edinburgh 1973, 45–7; Andrew T. N. Muirhead, *Reformation, dissent and diversity: the story of Scotland's Churches, 1560–1960*, London 2015, esp. pp. 106–7; and Stewart J. Brown, 'Protestant dissent in Scotland', in Andrew C. Thompson (ed.), *The Oxford history of Protestant dissenting traditions*, II: *The long eighteenth century*, c. 1689–c. 1828, Oxford 2018, 139–59 at pp. 153–4.

¹⁶ Alasdair Raffe, *The culture of controversy: religious arguments in Scotland, 1660–1714*, Woodbridge 2012, 82–92.

those prompted by Glas's attitudes, agonised ministers and enthralled large numbers of pious lay people within the Church, as well as among the dissenting Presbyterians.¹⁷ The part of Scotland most obviously affected was the area around Dumfries, where three ministers formed their own presbytery in a challenge to the Church's legitimacy.¹⁸ But the oath was not only of concern in the south. Newly installed as the minister of Tealing and 'expecting to find no such Thing in this Country' (i.e. Angus), Glas was surprised to hear his parishioners complaining that the Church neglected the Covenants, and that it was compromised by the abjuration oath.¹⁹

The second dispute reflected the importance of episcopalian Nonconformity in Angus. In the period before his death in 1723, James Trail, one of the Presbyterian ministers of Montrose, was vilified by zealous Presbyterians in and around the town. The root of his difficulties seems to have been his cordial relationships with local episcopalians, to whom he promised a donation to support the building of an episcopalian meeting house in Montrose.²⁰ The presbytery of Brechin and synod of Angus and Mearns investigated; after his death, however, the courts agreed to exonerate him and expunge the case from their records.²¹ According to Glas, some of the region's ministers took the opportunity presented by the allegations against Trail to emphasise their own Presbyterian credentials, preaching up the Covenants and their anti-episcopalian message. These sermons, together with disagreements about the way in which the presbytery found a replacement for Trail in Montrose, encouraged lay people to regard many of the clergy as lukewarm in their commitment to Presbyterianism.²² Alexander Walker, schoolmaster of Arbroath, adopted Cameronian principles and abandoned the Church, though he was prepared to have his child baptised by Francis Archibald, minister of Guthrie and the most vocal supporter of the Covenants among the Angus clergy.²³

¹⁷ For evidence of significant lay interest in eighteenth-century theological debates see also Luke Brekke, 'Heretics in the pulpit, inquisitors in the pew: the long Reformation and the Scottish Enlightenment', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* xlv/1 (Fall 2010), 79–98.

¹⁸ Alasdair Raffe, 'The Hanoverian succession and the fragmentation of Scottish Protestantism', in Nigel Aston and Ben Bankhurst (eds), *Negotiating toleration: dissent and the Hanoverian succession, 1714–1760*, Oxford 2019.

¹⁹ Glas, *A narrative*, 3.
²⁰ Synod of Angus and Mearns, minutes, 1720–6, NRS, CH2/12/5, pp. 181–2; [James Gray], *The naked truth, or two letters*, [Edinburgh] 1729, 9–10; Hew Scott, *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae: the succession of ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation*, revised edn, Edinburgh 1915–50, v. 414; Mullan, 'Royal law of liberty', 245–8.

²¹ Synod of Angus and Mearns, minutes, NRS, CH2/12/5, pp. 181–3, 324–5; synod of Angus and Mearns, minutes, 1726–36, NRS, CH2/12/6, p. 34.

²² Glas, *A narrative*, 7–8.

²³ Synod of Angus and Mearns, minutes, NRS, CH2/12/6, pp. 60–4, 65–6.

The Angus ministers' sermons in favour of the Covenants, and the laity's preference for strictness among the clergy, prompted Glas to re-examine the principles of his Church. He was soon persuaded that seventeenth-century Scots had behaved inappropriately in seeking to enter a covenant with God. National covenanting was usually defended as an imitation of the practice of Old Testament Israel,²⁴ but Glas argued that the New Testament gave Christians no warrant to replicate what was a purely Jewish institution. Moreover, the Covenanters and their eighteenth-century admirers overlooked Christ's declaration that his kingdom 'is not of this world' (John xviii.36). Unlike the inhabitants of ancient Israel, in which commonwealth and Church were one, Christians were united by their membership of a purely spiritual Church, of which Christ was the head. The Covenanters had erroneously located the Church on earth, making willingness to swear, rather than faith in Christ, the measure of membership. And because the Covenants presented the Church as an earthly kingdom, they granted to the secular powers authority over religion that Christ had never intended them to possess. Whereas the Covenants allowed for the propagation of religion by force, Glas maintained that the only legitimate way of extending Christ's kingdom was to witness for the truth.²⁵ Crucially, he also argued that the sole earthly authorities in the Church were individual congregations; he thus held that the Kirk's presbyteries, synods and general assemblies existed by virtue of human rather than divine law.²⁶

Glas cited few non-scriptural authorities, presenting his views as the product of a personal and unmediated analysis of the Bible. But his opponents claimed that he was unoriginal, and that he had taken his ideas about the Church from the seventeenth-century English Independents.²⁷ Observers also argued that Glas drew on Benjamin Hoadly, bishop of Bangor, whose hugely controversial sermon of 1717 on 'My kingdom is not of this world' questioned the concept of an established Church

²⁴ [James Hog], *A letter, wherein the scriptural grounds and warrants for the Reformation of Churches by way of Covenant, are succinctly considered and cleared*, Edinburgh 1727, esp. pp. 5–6.

²⁵ For his earliest printed statements of these views see Glas, *A narrative*, 17–44; *A letter from a lover of Zion, and her believing children, to his intangled friend*, Edinburgh 1728; and *The testimony of the king of martyrs concerning his kingdom*, Edinburgh 1729, esp. pp. 70, 190. Similar ideas were expressed in letters probably written by Glas and published in [James Adams], *The Independent ghost conjur'd: being a review of three letters clandestinely sent to a minister in the presbytery of Dundee*, Edinburgh 1728.

²⁶ See [John Glas?], *An explication of that proposition contained in Mr Glas's answers to the synod's queries*, Edinburgh 1728, 42, 55–7, 61, and *The speech of Mr John Glas before the commission of the general assembly*, Edinburgh 1730, 8–9, 12.

²⁷ T[homas] A[yton], *The original constitution of the Christian Church*, Edinburgh 1730, third pagination sequence, esp. p. 81; [Adams], *Independent ghost conjur'd*, esp. p. iv.

supported by the civil authorities.²⁸ Compared to Hoadly and many Independents, however, Glas's arguments rested on a more radical use of typology: the analysis of symbolic representations in the Bible. For Glas, there was a fundamental difference between the earthly kingdom of the Jews and Christ's spiritual kingdom.²⁹ Glas's Presbyterian brethren echoed most early modern Protestants in emphasising continuities between Old Testament Israel and the Christian Church. According to John Willison, minister of Dundee, the '*Jewish Church-State, their Covenant Relation, National Assemblies, Subordination of Judicatures, Uniformity of Worship, and Union in Government ... by Divine Donation are graciously bestowed upon the Christian Church*'.³⁰ Glas denied this claim. The institutions described in the Old Testament provided no model for Christians. Since the New Testament did not sanction national covenanting, an established Church or the religious duties of the magistrate, these phenomena had to be seen as corruptions of pure Christianity.

Glas acted on his new-found principles in several ways. As was the norm in eighteenth-century Scotland, Angus parishes celebrated communion annually, preceding and following the service with days of sermons given by a team of local ministers.³¹ Beginning in 1725 Glas repeatedly used the pulpit on these sacramental occasions to explain his attitudes towards church government, explicitly correcting the ministers who preached alongside him. Glas thus proclaimed his views beyond his own parish, reaching a wide lay and clerical audience.³² He also persuaded Francis Archibald, who sympathised with the Cameronian conception of Church and State, to adopt his Congregationalist notions instead.³³ In July 1725, moreover, Glas started meeting with the godly men and women of Tealing as a society for prayer and discussion. Previous historians have exaggerated the extent to which this organisation differed from other prayer societies within the Church of Scotland; its members did not yet separate from the Kirk and they do not seem to have celebrated the Lord's Supper monthly. Nevertheless, the society's minutes suggest that Glas

²⁸ [Adams], *Independent ghost conjur'd*, 67–8, 78; [John Willison], *A defence of national Churches*, Edinburgh 1729, 188–214; Benjamin Hoadly, *The nature of the kingdom, or Church, of Christ*, London 1717; Andrew Starkie, *The Church of England and the Bangorian controversy, 1716–1721*, Woodbridge 2007.

²⁹ Mullan, 'Royal law of liberty', 255–62.

³⁰ [Willison], *Defence of national Churches*, 50.

³¹ See especially Leigh Eric Schmidt, *Holy fairs: Scotland and the making of American revivalism*, 2nd edn, Grand Rapids, MI 2001.

³² Glas, *A narrative*, 11–15, 52–62; [Hugh Maxwell], *Memorial concerning the affair of Mr John Glas*, Edinburgh 1730, 13; Robert Wodrow, *Analecta: or, Materials for a history of remarkable providences* (Maitland Club, 1842–3), iii, 323.

³³ Glas, *A narrative*, 15–17, 79–80; synod of Angus and Mearns, minutes, NRS, CH2/12/6, pp. 94–5.

allowed it to supplement the role of the kirk session in deciding who could participate in communion.³⁴ Indeed, Glas became stricter than his brethren in barring the ungodly from the Lord's Supper. Attending a communion service in Guthrie, Archibald's parish, some of Glas's Tealing parishioners insisted on communicating at their own table, separating themselves from the impious locals.³⁵

Glas's behaviour soon provoked his brethren to begin a formal investigation of his principles.³⁶ In October 1726 the ministers of Dundee presbytery urged Glas to stop preaching against the Covenants and Presbyterian government.³⁷ When he refused, the synod authorised the presbytery to assess the evidence against him.³⁸ The presbytery prepared a report on Glas's errors, and then consulted with the commission of the general assembly in Edinburgh about how to proceed.³⁹ The commission advised that Glas should be asked to re-subscribe the Confession of Faith and the formula of 1711, which he had signed at his ordination. This he declined to do, complaining that the formula obliged him to declare that Presbyterianism was founded on the word of God, and objecting to the powers of the magistrate recognised by the Confession.⁴⁰ The case passed to the synod, which required Glas to answer written queries intended to elucidate his views. Finding that he held Independent positions, the synod suspended him from the ministry on 18 April 1728.⁴¹ Glas appealed to the general assembly, alleging various irregularities in the synod's procedure, but failed to abide by the sentence and stop preaching. The commission of the general assembly dismissed his appeal, and Dundee presbytery investigated his breach of the suspension.⁴² Responding to his disobedience, the synod deposed him from the ministry on 17 October 1728.⁴³ Glas appealed against this further sentence, but his deposition was upheld by the commission of the

³⁴ Book of membership lists, letters and hymns, UoD, Acc409, Box 6/22, pp. 152–9; cf. Hornsby, 'John Glas', 12–13, and McMillon, *Restoration roots*, 21.

³⁵ Glas, *A narrative*, 166–76, 222–3; synod of Angus and Mearns, minutes, NRS, CH2/12/6, pp. 62–3.

³⁶ For a fuller narrative of the process see Hornsby, 'Case of Mr John Glas', 121–33.

³⁷ Glas, *A narrative*, 75–6; [Maxwell], *Memorial*, 13–14.

³⁸ Synod of Angus and Mearns, minutes, NRS, CH2/12/6, pp. 66–8.

³⁹ Presbytery of Dundee, minutes, 1725–31, NRS, CH2/103/10, pp. 127–35, 159–64; commission of the general assembly, minutes, 1726–32, NRS, CH1/3/19, pp. 147–8.

⁴⁰ Presbytery of Dundee, NRS, CH2/103/10, pp. 171–4; Glas, *A narrative*, 212–14.

⁴¹ Synod of Angus and Mearns, minutes, NRS, CH2/12/6, pp. 87–8, 89–93, 98–100, 102–3.

⁴² [John Glas], *A continuation of Mr Glass's narrative*, Edinburgh 1729, 10–23; commission of the general assembly, NRS, CH1/3/19, pp. 199, 214; presbytery of Dundee, NRS, CH2/103/10, pp. 197–200, 201–24, 228–36.

⁴³ Synod of Angus and Mearns, minutes, NRS, CH2/12/6, pp. 117, 118, 122–4.

general assembly in March 1730.⁴⁴ Glas continued his ministry, soon settling in Dundee, where his support was greatest. Churches affiliated to Glas were formed in other Scottish and English towns, and there were around 1,000 Glasites by the 1770s.⁴⁵ Under the influence of Glas's son-in-law, Robert Sandeman, the sect gained further adherents in New England.⁴⁶

II

Glas was subjected to a gruelling judicial procedure and formal deposition from the ministry. Scottish observers worried that Independents in England and New England might see him as a martyr for their principles.⁴⁷ Recognising these concerns, the synod carefully stated that Glas was deposed not because he was a Congregationalist, but because he threatened to make a schism in the Church.⁴⁸ The action against him was thus predicated on a traditional notion: that a diversity of opinions among ministers or the people was dangerous because it would lead the Church to fragment.⁴⁹ As we saw earlier the post-revolution Church of Scotland took great pains to preserve doctrinal uniformity, and thereby to prevent schism. Nevertheless, Glas's trials engendered a significant and hitherto unrecognised shift in attitudes among the Kirk's clergy about the validity of ministers and organised religious groups beyond the establishment.

Up to and including Glas's case, every time that the post-revolution Church deposed a man from the ministry, it asserted that he no longer had a right to conduct religious services in any circumstances. In 1701 and 1705 the general assembly deposed ministers, respectively the episcopalian George Garden and the dissident Presbyterian John Hepburn. In both instances the assembly claimed to 'depose' the offending cleric 'from the office of the ministry, prohibiting and discharging him from exercising the same, or any part thereof, in all time coming'.⁵⁰ The lower courts

⁴⁴ [Glas], *Continuation of Mr Glass's narrative*, 144–5, 154–71; commission of the general assembly, NRS, CH1/3/19, pp. 367–9.

⁴⁵ Membership lists of the Glasite Churches, 1760s–80s, UoD, Acc409, bundle 25/1.

⁴⁶ See especially Smith, *Perfect rule of the Christian religion*, chs iv–v.

⁴⁷ Wodrow, *Analecta*, iv, 71; *The correspondence of the Rev. Robert Wodrow*, ed. Thomas M'Crie (Wodrow Society, 1842–3), iii, 459.

⁴⁸ Synod of Angus and Mearns, minutes, NRS, CH2/12/6, pp. 102, 122; [Maxwell], *Memorial*, 43, 57–9.

⁴⁹ For discussion see Alexandra Walsham, *Charitable hatred: tolerance and intolerance in England, 1500–1700*, Manchester 2006, esp. pp. 54–5; and John Coffey, *Persecution and toleration in Protestant England, 1558–1689*, Harlow 2000, ch. ii.

⁵⁰ *Acts of the general assembly*, 308 (quotation), 386 (where there was a minor verbal amendment).

often employed different phrases, but with the same categorical meaning. In 1703 the presbytery of Kirkcudbright ‘simpliciter [i.e. simply] depose[d]’ the radical Presbyterian John McMillan ‘from the sacred office of the Ministry’.⁵¹ In its sentence of deposition against Glas, the synod of Angus and Mearns copied the assembly’s phrasing of 1701 and 1705.⁵² The synod used identical terms when, in January 1729, it deposed from the ministry Francis Archibald, who continued to hold principles that he had learned from Glas.⁵³

In March 1730, when the commission of the general assembly considered Glas’s appeal, some members – apparently those associated with William Hamilton, the Edinburgh professor of divinity – proposed a compromise. If Glas were prepared to resign his living at Tealing, they suggested, the commission would overturn his deposition from the ministry, and ‘satisfy themselves with Declaring that he is no Minister of this Established Church’.⁵⁴ The effect would be to recognise that Glas had left the Kirk, but continued to be a Christian minister. A few members of the commission might have favoured still greater leniency. The liberal Presbyterian Robert Wallace thought that Glas’s views justified neither simple deposition nor removal from the Church.⁵⁵ Nevertheless, a majority of the commissioners favoured upholding the synod’s sentence and deposing Glas from the ministry as such.⁵⁶ But in November 1730, when Archibald’s appeal came before the commission, the supporters of compromise won the day. A majority voted to reverse the synod’s sentence of deposition, recognising Archibald’s right to preach as an Independent minister. But a motion to restore him to his parish was defeated, ‘In respect that according to Our Constitution he cannot be a Minister of this Established Church’.⁵⁷ Archibald had the commission’s blessing to continue his ministry, but he had to do so outwith the Kirk.

The solution offered in the case of Glas and reached in Archibald’s appeal reflected widespread sympathy for the two men, especially

⁵¹ Presbytery of Kirkcudbright, minutes, 1700–7, NRS, CH2/526/1a, p. 206. See also synod of Dumfries, minutes, 1691–1717, NRS, CH2/98/1, p. 469; presbytery of Dumfries, minutes, 1710–26, NRS, CH2/1284/5, p. 215.

⁵² Synod of Angus and Mearns, minutes, NRS, CH2/12/6, pp. 118, 123.

⁵³ *Ibid.* pp. 129, 134.

⁵⁴ Commission of the general assembly, NRS, CH1/3/19, pp. 367–8; Wodrow, *Analecta*, iv. 187–8, 262.

⁵⁵ Robert Wallace, ‘A speech in behalf of Mr Glass of Tealing, designed to have been delivered before the Commission of the General Assembly March 1730 but never delivered’, EUL, La.II.620¹⁷, fos 52r–55r.

⁵⁶ Commission of the general assembly, NRS, CH1/3/19, pp. 368–9.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.* pp. 463–6, quotation at p. 466. Recognising the innovative nature of this decision, the general assembly of 1731 refused to approve the commission’s action: register of the general assembly, 1730–4, NRS, CH1/1/33, pp. 200–1; Wodrow, *Analecta*, iv. 262.

beyond Angus.⁵⁸ More fundamentally, the final resolution of Archibald's process distinguished between the ministry of the Church of Scotland, and the ministry as such. Despite the existence since 1690 of episcopalian dissent, the Church had never previously recognised such a distinction. In 1695 the Scottish parliament allowed episcopalian clergy who swore allegiance to King William to remain in their parishes, without requiring them to co-operate with the established Church's courts.⁵⁹ As with George Garden in 1701, however, the Kirk continued to assert that it could remove episcopalians from the ministry. Garden did not recognise the church courts' jurisdiction over him, and remained active as a clergyman.⁶⁰ Glas was not behaving in an unprecedented way when he continued to preach in spite of his suspension. Nevertheless, he defended his conduct with unusual clarity, claiming to act as a 'Minister of Christ' rather than a minister of the Church of Scotland.⁶¹ Baptising the child of the separatist Alexander Walker, who then lived in Edinburgh and had not sought baptism from its ministers, Archibald said that he did so as a minister of the universal Church. In its refusal simply to depose Archibald, the commission added its weight to these arguments.⁶²

The commission's reasoning about Archibald set a precedent that the Church was to follow in the future when dealing with disobedient ministers. In November 1733, when Ebenezer Erskine and three other ministers signalled their intention to secede from the Church, the commission responded as it had done to Archibald. Though some members of the commission voted to depose the four from the ministry, a large majority preferred to remove them from their parishes, declaring them no longer ministers of the Church.⁶³ After 1730, when the assembly resolved on the deposition of ministers, its sentences – though otherwise written as in 1701 and 1705 – explicitly applied 'within this Church' only.⁶⁴ And Glas himself was to benefit from the Church's new recognition of dissenting ministers. In 1739 the assembly reversed the commission's decision of 1730 against Glas, restoring 'him to the Character of a Minister of the

⁵⁸ *A letter to the honourable ___ ruling elder, containing an argument for the reponing of the Reverend Mr Francis Archibald to his charge*, [Edinburgh? 1730].

⁵⁹ RPS 1695/5/186.

⁶⁰ Stuart Handley, 'Garden, George (1649–1733)', ODNB, <<https://www.doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/10351>>.

⁶¹ [Glas], *Continuation of Mr Glass's narrative*, 72–3.
⁶² *Reasons and grounds of protestation and complaint, synod of Angus and Mearns, against the commission of the general assembly, for their conduct and sentence in the affair of Mr Francis Archibald*, Edinburgh 1731, esp. pp. 4, 11. Archibald was probably influenced by the concept of 'indefinite ordination' developed by radical Presbyterians in the Restoration period: Robert Wodrow, *The history of the sufferings of the Church of Scotland from the Restoration to the revolution*, ed. Robert Burns, Glasgow 1828–30, ii. 346.

⁶³ Commission of the general assembly, minutes, 1733–9, NRS, CH1/3/22, pp. 69–70.

⁶⁴ *Acts of the general assembly*, 654–5, 710.

Gospel of Christ and to the Exercise of that Holy Function, But Declaring notwithstanding thereof that he is not to be esteemed a Minister of the Established Church of Scotland'.⁶⁵ These developments did not indicate that ministers had abandoned their desire to prevent schism. But the Church had nevertheless taken an important step towards recognising religious pluralism.

III

Though he was driven out of the Church of Scotland, the controversy surrounding Glas tells us much about a second aspect of religious pluralism: parties within the established Kirk. The formation of parties in the eighteenth-century Scottish Church has hardly been studied for the period before the 1750s. Much of the existing literature stresses the significance of debates about lay patronage – the right of the crown and other, mostly aristocratic, patrons to select ministers for vacant parishes – in the emergence of parties. The Moderate party, the most organised group in the eighteenth-century Church, formed in the 1750s from a campaign to implement disputed decisions of the general assembly in favour of ministerial candidates chosen by lay patrons. As well as a commitment to enforce the law, members of the party shared a cultural agenda of improving the social and intellectual standing of the Scottish clergy.⁶⁶ Once a recognised network of Moderates had appeared, it became common to refer to their opponents as the 'Popular party'. Aside from a dislike of ecclesiastical lay patronage, however, its adherents had less in common; the most detailed study of the party questions its coherence.⁶⁷ Nevertheless, historians stress the common Evangelicalism of Popular party ministers.⁶⁸ More specifically, the Popular party has been characterised as those ministers, especially of the generation born in the 1710s and early 1720s, who were inspired – rather than alienated, as their Moderate contemporaries were – by the Evangelical revivals at

⁶⁵ Register of the general assembly, 1739–42, NRS, CH1/1/40, pp. 118–19.

⁶⁶ Richard B. Sher, *Church and university in the Scottish Enlightenment: the Moderate literature of Edinburgh*, 2nd edn, Edinburgh 2015, chs i–iii. See also Thomas Ahnert, *The moral culture of the Scottish Enlightenment, 1690–1805*, New Haven 2014, ch. iii; and Ian D. L. Clark, 'From protest to reaction: the Moderate regime in the Church of Scotland, 1752–1805', in N. T. Phillipson and Rosalind Mitchison (eds), *Scotland in the age of improvement*, Edinburgh 1970, 200–24.

⁶⁷ John R. McIntosh, *Church and theology in Enlightenment Scotland: the Popular party, 1740–1800*, East Linton 1998, 19–22.

⁶⁸ Jonathan M. Yeager, *Enlightened Evangelicalism: the life and thought of John Erskine*, New York 2011, 5; Sher, *Church and university*, 36; Ahnert, *Moral culture*, ch. iv.

Cambuslang and Kilsyth in 1742.⁶⁹ The revivals stimulated the development of a strong Evangelical wing within the Kirk, helping it to withstand the competition for godly worshippers offered by the Secession Church after its formation in the 1730s.⁷⁰ Important for our purposes, Glas's opponent John Willison preached at Kilsyth and would long remain an inspiration to Evangelicals.⁷¹

If Evangelicalism and patronage were the forces driving the development of parties from the 1740s, what about the earlier period? We can begin by noting that the very idea of party division had long been a source of unease and distaste for Scottish Protestants. Just as ministers feared schism, so they were reluctant to accept that discrete groups might exist within the Church. Describing the general assembly of 1701, Robert Wodrow expressed this traditional attitude. The 'odious names of Court and Country party is feared to have gotte in among' the assembly's members, Wodrow wrote, referring to alignments in the Scottish parliament. 'I pray God may prevent rents in this poor Church', he continued.⁷² Twenty-five years later, Glas and his allies expressed similar discomfort about the appearance of parties in the Church. A pamphlet favouring Glas complained that ministers frequently 'exalt themselves, framing Parties and Factions in a most carnal Way, to carry on their own Ends in Judicatures, and bearing inveterate Prejudice against them who oppose them, or will not joyn them'.⁷³ Glas particularly blamed this behaviour on Willison. A difference of opinion emerged in the presbytery of Dundee over the settlement of the vacant parish of Liff, and Glas found himself on the same side as Willison. According to Glas, Willison attempted 'to form them, that stood with him in that Matter, into a standing Party for him in the Presbytery'. Glas, however, asserted that he 'was never fond of such Clubbing', and refused

⁶⁹ Ned C. Landsman, 'Presbyterians and provincial society: the Evangelical Enlightenment in the west of Scotland, 1740–1775', *Eighteenth-Century Life* xv (1991), 194–209, and 'Witherspoon and the problem of provincial identity in Scottish Evangelical culture', in Richard B. Sher and Jeffrey R. Smitten (eds), *Scotland and America in the age of Enlightenment*, Edinburgh 1990, 29–45, esp. p. 32; Yeager, *Enlightened Evangelicalism*, 32–8.

⁷⁰ Arthur Fawcett, *The Cambuslang revival: the Scottish Evangelical revival of the eighteenth century*, London 1971, ch. xi; Mark A. Noll, 'Revival, Enlightenment, civic humanism, and the evolution of Calvinism in Scotland and America, 1735–1843', in George A. Rawlyk and Mark A. Noll (eds), *Amazing grace: Evangelicalism in Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States*, Montreal 1994, 73–107 at pp. 94–5.

⁷¹ McIntosh, *Church and theology*, 32–3. See also Keith Edward Beebe, 'Introduction', in *The McCulloch Examinations of the Cambuslang revival (1742)*, ed. Keith Edward Beebe (Scottish History Society 6th ser. v–vi, 2011), i, pp. xix–xxiii, xlvii–xlvi.

⁷² *Early letters of Robert Wodrow, 1698–1709*, ed. L.W. Sharp (Scottish History Society 3rd ser. xxiv, 1937), 154.

⁷³ *The humble thoughts, of some sober and judicious Christians, concerning the affair of the Reverend Mr John Glas*, [Edinburgh] 1728, 8.

to be Willison's 'Follower'.⁷⁴ If we might attribute these statements to Glas's prickly self-importance, he nevertheless soon found that he had enemies in the presbytery. After his deposition, Glas claimed that he was the victim of a small and zealous party that had campaigned against him. He thought that Willison was central to the whole affair.⁷⁵ James Gray, one of Glas's opponents, admitted that the prosecution had brought him into closer alliance with Willison.⁷⁶ Certainly members of the presbytery and synod were not unanimous in the case; indeed, a group of ministers entered a formal dissent from the synod's sentence of deposition.⁷⁷

If Glas plausibly accused Willison and others of organising against him, several observers alleged that Glas himself was associated with a party: the supporters of the *Marrow of modern divinity*. After the general assembly of 1720 condemned that book, its chief advocates co-ordinated a response in the form of a *Representation and petition* to the following assembly. The twelve signatories to this document effectively constituted a party within the Church, and were often referred to as the 'Representers' or 'Marrow brethren'. Because the brethren held parishes as far apart as Fife and Selkirkshire, they necessarily had a degree of organisation, as well as a theological identity.⁷⁸ Glas's opponent James Adams, who had begun his polemical career as a critic of the *Marrow*, depicted Glas and Archibald as acolytes of the Representers who had lately followed their own course.⁷⁹ Some of Glas's sympathisers concurred with this interpretation, and asserted that Glas and Willison had agreed that an advocate of the *Marrow* should be settled at Liff.⁸⁰ When Dundee presbytery investigated Glas's principles, it alleged that some of his sermons so much emphasised divine grace as to deny that worshippers must be contrite and repent of their sins. The presbytery thus suggested that Glas taught antinomianism, an error that many associated with the *Marrow*.⁸¹

In fact, whatever his views about the *Marrow*, it seems that Glas had little or no contact with the Representers before 1726. That September he received a letter from one of their spokesmen in Fife, Ebenezer Erskine, after a mutual acquaintance read Erskine one of Glas's letters. Erskine was aware of the controversy in Angus, but was then unacquainted with Glas. Erskine's letter

⁷⁴ Glas, *A narrative*, 15, 45. See also Hornsby, 'John Glas', 15.

⁷⁵ [Glas], *Continuation of Mr Glass's narrative*, 155, 159, 168, and *A further continuation of Mr Glas's narrative, containing his remarks on a late print, entitled, a defence of national Churches*, [Edinburgh? 1729], 1. ⁷⁶ [Gray], *Naked truth*, 12.

⁷⁷ [Glas], *Continuation of Mr Glass's narrative*, 144, 151–3.

⁷⁸ *The representation and petition of several ministers of the Gospel, to the general assembly, Edinburgh 1721*; Lachman, *Marrow controversy*, 278–84; Myers, *Scottish federalism and covenantalism in transition*, 31–2.

⁷⁹ [Adams], *Independent ghost conjur'd*, pp. iv, 54–5.

⁸⁰ *Humble thoughts*, 4, 12.

⁸¹ Presbytery of Dundee, NRS, CH2/103/10, pp. 134–5, 162–3.

praised Glas's Evangelical efforts, and expressed cautious sympathy with his reservations about the Covenants. Soon afterwards Glas met with Erskine, his brother Ralph and James Wardlaw, also Fife Representatives, but they disagreed about the nature of faith, a crucial matter in the controversy over the *Marrow*.⁸² Furthermore, Glas reportedly objected to what he saw as the Marrow brethren's laxity in admitting communicants to the Lord's Supper.⁸³ When the assembly and commission considered Glas's appeals, the Marrow brethren of southern Scotland expressed sympathy for him, while their associates in Fife opposed him, perhaps because their contact in 1726 had become a matter of dispute in the pamphlet controversy.⁸⁴ We can probably infer that Glas, whatever he said to Willison about parties, had been open to the possibility of allying with the Marrow brethren, and appeared to his opponents to be the sort of man who would join their faction.

From our discussion of Glas's experience we can suggest a few conclusions about the nature of church parties in eighteenth-century Scotland. We can distinguish two types of party: those formed to conduct business in the church courts, and those representing a strain of theological opinion. Of course, a party – such as the one allegedly gathered by the Evangelical Willison – might do both things. But thinking about these two functions helps us to recognise the differences between, first, groups such as Professor Hamilton's that attempted to manage the general assembly on behalf of the crown, and, second, the Marrow brethren. The Moderates were more like the first type of party; the Popular party resembled the second. Parties seeking to win majorities in the general assembly often depended on the backing of leading secular politicians.⁸⁵ It is unclear whether such favour was necessary for a party of business in the local and regional courts. Parties of theological principle, by contrast, tended to attract popular supporters. This was true of the clergy who refused the abjuration oath, the Marrow brethren and the Seceders. Willison allegedly courted popularity among the godly laity.⁸⁶ Glas himself gained a following, but soon found himself leading not a party within the Church, but a new sect outside of it.

IV

We can conclude with two more general arguments about cultural change in eighteenth-century Scotland. First, the controversy over John Glas offers

⁸² Glas, *A narrative*, 71; [Maxwell], *Memorial*, 62–4; John Glas, *Remarks upon the memorial of the synod of Angus against Mr Glas*, Edinburgh 1730, 8–14. The original letter from Erskine to Glas is in UoD, Acc409, bundle 18.

⁸³ *Humble thoughts*, 12.

⁸⁴ Wodrow, *Analecta*, iv. 126, 135–6; Hornsby, 'Case of Mr John Glas', 132.

⁸⁵ See Henry R. Sefton, 'Rev. Robert Wallace: an early moderate', *RSCHS* xvi (1966–8), 1–22, and 'Lord Ilay and Patrick Cuming: a study in eighteenth-century ecclesiastical management', *RSCHS* xix (1975–7), 203–16.

⁸⁶ *Humble thoughts*, 4–5.

a fresh perspective on the view that the northern half of Scotland was generally conservative in the early modern period. Proposed by Gordon Donaldson as long ago as 1965, this venerable interpretation continues to stimulate critical discussion.⁸⁷ Whatever its validity for Aberdeenshire, Banffshire, Moray and the highlands, Donaldson's inclusion of Angus in the 'conservative north' is highly questionable, at least in Glas's time. The people of Angus were more reluctant to adopt Presbyterianism after 1690, and more likely to be Jacobites and episcopalians than their contemporaries in southern districts. But it is misleading to describe all supporters of Jacobitism – a movement for the violent overthrow of the post-revolution regime – as conservatives, even if many clung to traditional attitudes.⁸⁸ Still more problematic is the assumption that episcopalians were inherently conservative. From the early eighteenth century, many episcopalian clergy adopted in their services the set forms of the English liturgy. As their Presbyterian rivals pointed out, this was a departure from the Scottish pattern of extemporaneous worship, observed by episcopalians in the Restoration period. The title of John Willison's first pamphlet, *Queries to the Scots innovators in divine service* (1712), reflected his belief that the episcopalians were making changes, while the Presbyterians were preserving the *status quo*.⁸⁹ The same point might be made about the episcopalians' experiments with new liturgies and ecclesiastical structures in the following decades, and their drift away from Calvinist theology.⁹⁰

If Angus was religiously conservative in the early eighteenth century, then, it was not because of the significant population of episcopalians. As Glas commented, it was his Presbyterian brethren, with their regard for the Covenants, who looked backwards. By preaching about the Covenants, the Angus ministers hoped to gain the favour of lay people who prioritised strictness and orthodoxy. Glas presented his rival preaching

⁸⁷ G. Donaldson, 'Scotland's conservative north in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 5th ser. xvi (1966), 65–79. The most recent discussions include Andrew Mackillop, 'Riots and reform: burgh authority, the languages of civic reform and the Aberdeen riot of 1785', *Urban History* xlv (2017), 402–23 at p. 403; Kelsey Jackson Williams, 'The network of James Garden of Aberdeen and north-eastern Scottish culture in the seventeenth century', *Northern Studies* xlvii (2015), 102–30; and Barry Robertson, 'The Covenanting north of Scotland, 1638–1647', *Innes Review* lxi (2010), 24–51.

⁸⁸ See Daniel Szechi, 'Scottish Jacobitism in its international context', in T. M. Devine and Jenny Wormald (eds), *The Oxford handbook of modern Scottish history*, Oxford 2012, 355–69, and Allan I. Macinnes, 'Applied Enlightenment: its Scottish limitations in the eighteenth century', in Jean-François Dunyach and Ann Thomson (eds), *The Enlightenment in Scotland: national and international perspectives*, Oxford 2015, 21–58.

⁸⁹ [John Willison], *Queries to the Scots innovators in divine service, and particularly, to the liturgical party in the shire of Angus*, [Edinburgh?] 1712.

⁹⁰ Raffe, 'Presbyterians and episcopalians', 580–8, and 'Scotland', 153–5.

campaign as an attempt to wean the laity off their obsession with Presbyterian principles, and instead to impart true Christianity.⁹¹ If many of his ideas had been rehearsed by others before him, Glas was nevertheless an original voice in Scotland. Rather than being generally conservative, therefore, Angus was a region in which competing versions of Protestantism – some customary, others innovative – were vigorously proposed. Far from remaining bound by traditions, this part of the north prefigured the pluralism that would later develop elsewhere in Scotland.

Finally, Glas's case allows us to reflect on recent interpretations of the Scottish Enlightenment. While some historians continue to characterise that phenomenon in terms of secular thought, it is now more often defined broadly, so as to include trends in theology.⁹² There was a 'religious Enlightenment' in Scotland, scholars argue, which centred on the Moderates, but also influenced their rivals in the Popular party.⁹³ Unlike their coreligionists in Geneva, Ireland, colonial America and England, however, few of Scotland's enlightened Presbyterians openly opposed subscription to man-made Confessions of Faith. Indeed, there was so little discussion of subscription that Colin Kidd has called what there was 'Scotland's invisible Enlightenment'.⁹⁴ And yet Glas and Archibald made no attempt to hide their objections to subscription. Reflecting on the Kirk's requirement that candidates for ordination sign the Westminster Confession and the formula of 1711, Glas denounced 'that notable Usurpation of the Royal Prerogative of Jesus Christ, in imposing Terms of Access to the Ministry of the Gospel, which Jesus Christ never required'.⁹⁵ A letter probably written by Glas, but published by an opponent, maintained that 'A natural Power in Societies to prescribe, impose and make Men swear Terms of religious Communion, is a Contradiction to all Religion, which cannot subsist where Conscience is violated'.⁹⁶ Archibald did not go so far in his opposition to subscription, but nevertheless refused to sign. Before he would consider putting his name to the formula, he requested that it be made compatible with the 'true Christian Liberty of every particular Congregation of Christians, and

⁹¹ Glas, *A narrative*, 2–4.

⁹² For a narrow definition see John Robertson, *The case for the Enlightenment: Scotland and Naples, 1680–1760*, Cambridge 2005, ch. i. For a very broad alternative see Ahnert, *Moral culture*, 13–14.

⁹³ Sher, *Church and university*; Yeager, *Enlightened Evangelicalism*; Ahnert, *Moral culture*, chs iii–iv.

⁹⁴ Colin Kidd, 'Scotland's invisible Enlightenment: subscription and heterodoxy in the eighteenth-century Kirk', *RSCHS* xxx (2000), 28–59 (Glas is mentioned at p. 48, but not his hostility to subscription), and 'Subscription, the Scottish Enlightenment and the Moderate interpretation of history', this *JOURNAL* lv (2004), 502–19.

⁹⁵ [Glas], *Continuation of Mr Glass's narrative*, p. ix.

⁹⁶ [Adams], *Independent ghost conjur'd*, 5.

even every particular disciple of Christ'.⁹⁷ Glas and Archibald won little support for their views about subscription, though Robert Wallace privately agreed with them.⁹⁸ A more typical response was that of James Gray, who defended Confessions of Faith, writing that he could not 'see how any honest Man should quarrel' with their use.⁹⁹ Adding to their concerns about the Arminian errors of the episcopalians, and the Evangelical anti-nomianism of the Marrow brethren, Glas gave mainstream Presbyterians another reason to retain subscription as a test of ministers' orthodoxy.

Glas, with his opposition to clerical subscription, could perhaps be included in a discussion of Scotland's religious Enlightenment. And yet his campaign for liberty of conscience resembles those of the sixteenth-century Reformers and seventeenth-century Independents. His case thus casts doubt on the utility of the most capacious definitions of 'Enlightenment'. Accordingly, this article has examined Glas so as to draw attention to a fundamental, but often neglected, process: the development of pluralism. Glas contributed to the eighteenth-century fragmentation of Scottish Protestantism, and offers new insights on the appearance of parties within the established Church. More subtly, his case played a decisive role in encouraging the clergy to accept the diversity that was taking shape around them.

⁹⁷ Synod of Angus and Mearns, minutes, NRS, CH2/12/6, p. 95.

⁹⁸ Robert Wallace, 'A letter to a reverend clergyman in Scotland concerning submission to the Church', c. 1730, EUL, La.II.620¹⁷, especially fo. 26r. Wallace had reached these views independently long before Glas's case: 'A little treatise against imposing creeds or confessions of faith on ministers or private Christians as a necessary term of laick or ministeriall communion. Written before the year 1720', EUL, La.II.620¹⁸.

⁹⁹ [Gray], *Naked truth*, 39.