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Scots in Habsburg Service, 1618-1648 (review)

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The Scottish Historical Review, Volume 85, Number 1: No. 219, April
2006, pp. 152-154 (Review)

Published by Edinburgh University Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/shr.2006.0013>

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worth repeating, of course, but his reading of the Letters does not generally advance our understanding of these documents. This section of the book also includes brief discussions of the two marriage contracts and the Casket Sonnets. In the latter, he rightly notes a similarity in tone with Letters III, IV, V, and VI, but otherwise his abbreviated treatment of the poems consists wholly in pointing out lines that Mary could not possibly have written—because they do not fit her circumstances—and those that would be incriminating if authentic.

MacRobert provides a set of illustrations, some of which readers might have encountered before: portraits of the major figures, the sketch of the murder scene at Kirk o'Field, and, somewhat more curiously, photographs of Provand's Lordship in Glasgow, where Mary may have lodged in January 1567. Appendices helpfully reproduce the variant texts of the Casket Letters, Sonnets, and marriage contracts between Mary and Bothwell. The author includes a handwritten translation in English of Letter V, which recently came to light in the Public Record Office, though he does not comment on its discovery (SP 53/2/64). He does not seem to know, however, about a transcript in Scots of Letter III at the British Library (Add. MS 48027, fol. 276^{rv}), nor of a copy of the Casket Sonnets preserved among the Lennox papers at Cambridge University Library (Oo.7.47, fols. 46^r-49^r), both of which might have led to fuller commentary on these items. One technical matter is worrying: MacRobert does not follow conventions of quotation. Although he usually signals his source, inverted commas are used inconsistently if at all, making it difficult for the reader to judge where quoted material begins and ends, or even what material is paraphrased and what quoted directly.

MacRobert finally determines that 'It is too simplistic to hold that the Casket Letters were either completely authentic or entirely forged. There is, however, sufficient evidence to endorse the view that there was extensive manipulation and forgery'. With this in mind, he suggests 'new lines of enquiry' by calling for more investigation into Darnley's possible plots against Mary and further consideration of Bothwell's motives in keeping such a collection of documents in the first place. Here, the author raises legitimate concerns, and especially in the latter case he identifies a logical crux in the entire Casket Letter fiasco. MacRobert brings to his project a genuine spirit of curiosity, a desire for historical accuracy and an ability to imagine numerous conflicting scenarios. The greatest obstacle to his success is that he has entered a debate whose urgency has passed. Perhaps it is time to replace the traditional form and purpose of the Casket debate—can exegesis of these documents settle the question of Mary's character?—with larger explorations into the politics of rhetorical and textual strategy in the sixteenth century.

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Scots in Habsburg Service, 1618-1648.

By David Worthington. Pp. 330.

ISBN 90 04 13575 8.

Leiden: Brill. 2004. EUR 96.00.

It may be unfair to commence a review of David Worthington's book, a work scrupulously detailed and graphically revealing as only a few of the more recent titles in the scholarship of The Thirty Years' War have been, by referring to an equally meticulous study, edited by Steve Murdoch in 2001. For the latter's *Scotland and the Thirty Years' War, 1618-1648* received meagre applause, provoking the resistance of certain German historians by reassessing this peculiarly

'German' matter of scholarly debate from a distinctively Scottish, or Scoto-British, perspective. It is to be feared, however, that Worthington's own work, a pioneering study that almost uniquely provides a detailed chronology and exhaustive glossaries on this subject, will provoke similar knee-jerk responses; for it specifically foregrounds the complex networks of diplomatic initiatives that Scots were involved in as part of their services to the Austrian and Spanish branch of the House of Habsburg. It also draws attention to the melding of religious and political motivations into an inspiring Scottish identity abroad that expressed itself in loyalty to the Scottish-born 'Winter Queen', Elizabeth Stuart, amid a conflict that arguably affected the lives of people in places as remote as Salem and Nova Julia. In this it follows naturally on from Murdoch's *Britain, Denmark-Norway and the House of Stuart, 1603-1660* (2003) and Alexia Grosjean's *An Unofficial Alliance: Scotland and Sweden, 1569-1654* (2004), for both of these studies are largely devoted to the commitment of tens of thousands of Scots in the service of Scandinavian monarchs ostensibly fighting for the cause of Elizabeth Stuart.

It would be hard to deny that Worthington's study demonstrates a quality and scope of research which introduces an additional, and no less interesting, perspective to this subject—that of those fewer, but remarkably influential, Scots fighting on the Habsburg side in the conflict. Consulting archives in Spain, Belgium, Austria, and the Czech Republic and, needless to say, in Britain as well, 'in order to account for the activities of Scots in this vast region of the European mainland' (p. 11), Worthington carefully reconstructs the political cosmos of the Imperial courts in Vienna and Madrid wherein Scotsmen fulfilled their diplomatic, military or advisory roles with varying degrees of success. While concisely describing from start to finish the interconnected historic processes which sparked off the war between the newly-elected King of Bohemia (Frederick V, the Count Palatine) and the Austrian Habsburg Emperor (Ferdinand II) in 1619, Worthington assesses the activities of Scottish clients of the Habsburgs in the context of their endeavours and achievements abroad. By way of example, great transparency is given to the lives of a group of Scottish expatriates, exiles, and sojourners, who gained advancement in Habsburg service. Independently but simultaneously, staunch men such as William Semple in Madrid, James Maxwell in Brussels, and Walter Leslie in Vienna, played important roles in Imperial policy and intrigue prior to and during the war.

On the premises of an ever-persistent multi-layered perspective that correlates to questions concerning controversial issues such as the "Wars of the Three Kingdoms", the "pro-Palatinate initiatives" or the "Scottish Catholic cause abroad", the study is able to elucidate those hitherto-obscure relations and activities between Imperial Europe and Scotland, while, at the same time, providing insights into the conflicting views of British political and regal controversies that they engendered. To facilitate the progress of the book towards a convincing set of conclusions, it is divided into two parts. This bifurcation notwithstanding, Worthington succeeds in drawing a colourful picture of the Spanish and Austrian Habsburg political landscape that became 'home' to several Scotsmen, 'wandering throughout the continent in search of employment'—indeed, *Scotus ubique latet*.

As a preliminary (Chapter 1), Worthington ventures a substantial synopsis of the pre-history of Scottish activities in Central, Western and Southern Europe up to 1618 without covering the largely accredited Scottish contacts with Scandinavia, France and northern parts of the Netherlands. He reveals that the historical relationship between Scotland and the Habsburg empire had long been in existence, and that it had attracted Scotsmen for various reasons (exile, travel,

education, missionary work, diplomacy, etc.) to embark on a journey to the continent.

In the first part, comprising Chapters 2 to 4, prominence is given to Colonel William Semple, Father Hugh Semple and their circle of Scottish Hispanophiles in Madrid. As *gentilhombre de la boca* to Philips II, III and IV in Madrid, William Semple eagerly encouraged the Spanish crown in the 1620s to revive the Armada ethos in order to launch a naval campaign against the three Stuart kingdoms. Semple hoped that this foray would result in the re-Catholicisation of his native shores. Father Hugh Semple, S.J., a permanent resident in Spain since 1614, who made efforts to open a Scots seminary in Madrid in the prospect of a Spanish match between Charles I and the Infanta in 1623, entered diplomatic service at a later stage of the war when he was employed to promote a settlement of the Palatine issue that haunted the relationship between Spanish Habsburg and the Stuart kingdoms. Albeit a non-partisan commitment to Elizabeth of Bohemia, the former Princess Palatine, Scottish efforts in this direction were hampered by the shifting interests of the Imperial court in Madrid. On the other hand, a further reason for this is traceable in an inner Scottish conflict 1625-33, raging between militancy against the Stuart political cause in terms of the Palatinate and a feeling of loyalty to king and country that clearly forbade such thinking. It goes without saying that the death of William Semple in 1625 delivered a major blow to the Hispanophile fanatics and Scottish nationalists in Spain, since the loss of the living quintessence of protest necessarily weakened their cause.

Such brief references to highly interconnected aspects in this book cannot, of course, give a sufficient impression of the great richness of material and argument characterising Worthington's approach. However, as regards the Spanish Habsburg court in Madrid, it becomes evident from his account that the gradual nullification of Scottish influence with the Spaniards by the end of the conflict in 1648 was due to an inability to promote a bilateral programme with the Spanish that was favourable and acceptable to the parties involved. Unsurprisingly, Worthington has traced a similar development in terms of the Stuart-Austrian Habsburg relationship. In the second part, which consists of Chapters 5 to 9, his cynosure is Walter Leslie and his circle. Leslie's career in Austrian-Habsburg service is spectacular. Among his meritorious actions for the Imperial court in Vienna, the involvement in the assassination of Wallenstein in 1634 retrospectively appeared to be the most conspicuous. Above all, there is little reason to think that Leslie and his fellows were more successful than their cousins in Spanish service in the same period of time. Following Walter Leslie and John Gordon in their pursuit of support for the Palatine issue and in their search for court patronage and future employment, Worthington not only outlines the personal dimension of each individual in this conflict through specific examples but he also provides a clear insight into the capabilities of each individual Scot concerned to "play" his part in the cosmopolitan, international world of the Imperial courts of the Austrian and Spanish branches of the House of Habsburg. It is, moreover, this conception of the overlapping of the microcosmic fears, hopes, and plans of the individuals in service, with the macrocosmic reactions of the Imperial courts, that strengthens the credibility and readability of this study. That Worthington's footnotes and glossaries concerning the 'previously ignored' will also stimulate further enquiries in adjacent fields of research should scarcely need saying.