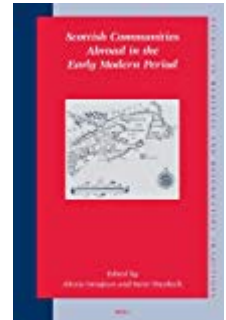


Alexia Grosjean, Steve Murdoch. *Scottish Communities Abroad in the Early Modern Period*. Leiden: Brill, 2005. xx + 393 pp. \$199.00, cloth, ISBN 978-90-04-14306-7.



Reviewed by David Worthington

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In a sister volume to this publication, Steve Murdoch concluded that kith and kin connections provide a key in explaining expatriate Scottish activity in Scandinavia and the Baltic region during the early modern period. In this book, however, Alexia Grosjean (who has published similarly groundbreaking work in this field) and Murdoch not only show the Scots to have "embedded" themselves at the group level in these host societies, but explore the notion of Scottish communities having been formed in the "near," "middle" and "far" abroad between 1560 and 1720.[1] These communities could be both of the spatially limited type based, for instance, on shared locality of residence, employment or place of worship, or of a more abstract kind. In fact, the essays included here focus generally on particular and specific northern, central and western European locations, excepting in one instance, where a broad survey of the Americas is provided. In confirming the volume's scope and relevance internationally, it is encouraging to read the conclusion, a thought-provoking piece co-authored by Thomas O'Connor, the leading scholar of Irish connections with early modern Europe, Solvi Sogner, the

Emeritus Professor of Early Modern History at the University of Oslo, and Lex Heerma van Voss, a Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Social History in Amsterdam.

As T. C. Smout points out in his foreword, Scottish emigrants to Atlantic and Antipodean destinations have continued to receive more attention than the similarly vast body that went to Europe, an eastwardly movement which preceded and, to some extent, overlapped with the trans-oceanic one. Smout describes this book as "surely the biggest single advance in the field" since the publications of Thomas Fischer in the first decade of the twentieth century (p. xii), an assertion that is too modest, considering, for example, one maverick publication of the 1960s, and the hugely important, if still under-valued, book which he has himself edited on this theme.[2] Aside from the pioneering work of Marjory Harper, however, it is indeed surprising to consider how rare it is that attempts have been made in recent years to draw out common themes relating to the Scots at a global level.[3] T. M. Devine's *Scotland's Empire 1600-1815* (2003) addresses the importance of the

east-west shift that led Scottish emigrants gradually away from Europe and, via Ireland, towards the Americas. Yet, as its title suggests, Devine's book is weighted towards involvement in empire alone.

Grosjean and Murdoch's book is split into three parts. The first section covers aspects of Scottish expatriate life in three expansive regions. Following this is a second section on "located" communities: five case studies of a province, a much smaller geographical region or else a city. The final part covers, in a more metaphysical sense, "communities of mind and interest" (p. 277). Many of the contributions emerge from a workshop which took place at the University of Aberdeen. Perhaps as a result, all the authors show an awareness of the need to place their conclusions in a wider context, seeing scope for comparison with, for instance, the Swiss, Dutch and Irish emigrant traditions.

Especially interesting for this reader, in part 1, is Patrick Fitzgerald's contribution. Fitzgerald concludes that Scots settlers in seventeenth-century Ireland were not so much a "people apart" or a demographic group very much confined to "the North" of that island as a dispersed collection of people of many different backgrounds, an issue elaborated on in detail with regard to the town of Sligo. Consequently, and also curiously (this being the first essay in the book), it is this chapter that refers least to "community," dealing much more with the idea of "colonial spread" (p. 32). David Dobson offers a clear, chronological account of the progress of Scottish movement to the Americas, from the first Nova Scotia project through to the beginnings of mass recruitment for the Hudson's Bay Company, exploring a large variety of other locations and endeavors along the way, while also emphasizing involvement in empires besides the British. Waldemar Kowalski offers an informative and suitably cautious account, contextualizing the Scottish presence within Poland-Lithuania, and providing some very useful mate-

rial in tabular form on an individual palatinate, that of Sandomierz in Little Poland.

In the second part, the trailblazing work by Rimantas Žirgulis on the "lost colony" of Scots in Kėdainiai (Kiejdany) in Lithuania is particularly impressive. In this chapter, an array of material, including later Lithuanian poetry, allows the author to bring from the shadows the multi-national aspects of the town's history. Douglas Catterall's essay is full of pertinent assertions too, for instance, as regards the Livingston family, who connect the Scottish community in Rotterdam with Scottish settlement, via service to the Dutch, in North America (p. 188). Nina Østby Pedersen's well-researched piece on the city of Bergen highlights the tenacious presence of Scottish burgesses there despite xenophobic attacks from Hanseatic merchants (pp.137-138). By way of contrast, as Grosjean and Murdoch show, following the establishment of the city of Gothenburg in Sweden, Scots (including some notable female examples) were supported in many cases by means of initial tax exemptions and positions on the city council (p. 209). Lastly, Kathrin Zickermann expertly covers the English staple port of Hamburg, a community that is shown to have had a marked "British" aspect.

It is striking that four of the eleven chapters deal with the United Provinces, and that three of these are placed within the third section. To this reader, further reference to Scots at Catholic and/or Huguenot institutions in pre-1685 France (a theme covered by John Durkan in Smout's aforementioned 1986 classic) would have offered an interesting contrast. Furthermore, the point that is made in the conclusion, that Scottish Protestants largely emigrated to Protestant locations and Irish Catholics to Catholic parts of Europe, seems to downplay the very long (and, to some extent, lasting) history of contacts between Scotland and France, the southern Netherlands and the Italian peninsula (p. 390). Nonetheless, Ginny Gardner and Esther Mijers provide substantial chapters

which show the complexity of the Scottish religious and intellectual links with the northern part of the Low Countries, with Gardner addressing the nature of Scottish Calvinist identity in exile, while Mijers's description of the Dutch intellectual centers of Utrecht, Leiden, Groningen and Franeker as constituting a "sixth Scottish university" (p. 326) is convincing. Andrew Little extrapolates some important conclusions from sources relating to the Dutch maritime world (p. 372).

The gaps that inevitably remain are, in a way, a testament of the strength of this volume. Grosjean and Murdoch postulate that further studies in the modern-day Ukraine and Belarus might lead to fruitful results. Certainly, a kaleidoscopic range of "Scottish communities abroad" have been interpreted here, as they should be, within multi-national, multi-ethnic settings. Sociological models are employed effectively by the editors (pp. 2-3, 22), who acknowledge that community members could be "atypical of the place where they come from," besides there being cases where Scottish emigration did not lead to the establishment of a *Scottish* community (p. 20). Such humility shows the degree of thoughtfulness that went into the volume, the fruits of long and arduous work, which will surely inspire others to research further in the field.

Notes

[1]. Steve Murdoch, *Network North: Scottish Kin, Commercial and Covert Associations in Northern Europe, 1603-1746* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); and Alexia Grosjean, *An Unofficial Alliance: Scotland and Sweden 1569-1654* (Leiden: Brill, 2003).

[2]. T. C. Smout, ed., *Scotland and Europe, 1200-1850* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1986); and Gordon Donaldson, *The Scots Overseas* (London: Hale, 1966).

[3]. Marjory Harper, ed., *Emigrant Homecomings: The Return Movement of Emigrants, 1600-2000* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2005).

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