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Presbyterians and Episcopalians: the Formation of Confessional Cultures in Scotland, 1660–1715*

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Abstract

This article examines the formation of distinct presbyterian and episcopalian confessional cultures in Scotland in the period 1660 to 1715.

Encouraged by institutional upheavals, generational change and controversy, Scotland's presbyterians and episcopalians came to hold opposing views on Church government and theology, and to worship in different ways. In terms of ecclesiology, the episcopalians became increasingly committed to *iure divino* principles, while their opponents upheld divine right presbyterianism. In theology, the episcopalians departed from the presbyterians' orthodox Calvinism. The groups also diverged over piety and worship, with many episcopalians adopting the Anglican liturgy, while the presbyterians practised affective spirituality and extemporary prayer. The emergence of confessional cultures, which has been overlooked by previous historians, was of fundamental importance in late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century Scottish religious life.

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