

Jacqueline Rose. *Godly Kingship in Restoration England: The Politics of the Royal Supremacy, 1660–1688*.

Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. ix + 320 pp. \$99. ISBN: 978-1-10701-142-7.

This is an excellent book. That it is also a first book may be noted in passing, but the voice that emerges from the volume under review is already authoritative. A part of that authority derives from the fact that *Godly Kingship* addresses a period much longer than its subtitle suggests. Rose devotes an opening chapter of more than sixty pages to elucidating the highly contested development of ideas of royal supremacy from 1530 to 1660. This then allows her to discuss the events of the Restoration period in the longterm framework they require. Insistent reference is

made to the extent to which those thinking, writing, preaching, and debating during the reigns of Charles II and James II were “negotiating the Tudor inheritance” (24). But Rose’s authority as a historian is also a product of her historiographical insight. Taking ultimate inspiration from J. G. A. Pocock’s emphasis on the dominance of “political theology” in early modern England, Rose is unafraid to chide a range of major scholars — from Quentin Skinner through Conrad Russell and Claire Cross, William Lamont through John Spurr — for a variety of sins, whether downplaying religious ideas, failing to tease out the contradictions inherent in those ideas, or overstating the extent of ideological agreement or of a particular skein of thought. This is a brave book.

After the long introductory chapter tracing the development of the royal supremacy from the 1530s onward, Rose pursues a thematic structure for her chosen Restoration period. Five chapters look in turn at the responses of different institutions or groups to the supremacy: parliaments, clergy, Protestant dissenters, anticlerical writers, and Catholics. The range and variety of discussion is refreshingly broad and deep. I was particularly struck, in the wake of much controversial recent historiography, by how convincing Rose’s discussion of James II and the supremacy is: “James’s policy was neither ‘Catholic modernity,’ nor Enlightened freedom of religious choice. Instead, he used Tudor means to his religious ends, crushing the Anglican Church and helping Catholics and Dissenters through exploiting the royal supremacy. James did not need, and did not use, foreign models of Catholic Reformation, for his English prerogatives sufficed” (231). The last sentence begs to have “discuss” placed after it in an examination paper.

The central theme of *Godly Kingship* is so important that the previous absence of such a monograph for the Restoration period initially seems mysterious. Then the reader’s eyes are drawn down to the notes — blessedly still at the bottom of the page (thank you, CUP) — and the reason becomes clear. Only someone prepared to do an enormous amount of painstaking work in a wide variety of difficult sources could have written this book. Rose is fortunate to benefit from the prior labors of Mark Goldie, Jeffrey Collins, and Justin Champion, to name but three of the most significant scholars interrogating the connection between political thinking and religion in later seventeenth-century England. Nevertheless, she makes the most of the sound foundations she inherits, while building whole new wings that are very much her own. Particularly strong use is made of legal records — both individual cases, and the tracts of key figures like Hale — and the treatises of theologians from many strands of opinion within the Church of England. Much of this material is knotty when not downright thorny. The synthesized results bear comparison in their forensic clarity and significance to the recent work of Paul Cavill on early Tudor parliaments, Alan Cromartie on constitutional thinking before the Civil Wars, or Jean-Louis Quantin’s work on the seventeenth-century Church of England’s engagement with patristic texts.

Occasional comments in the footnotes, and a recent journal article, suggest that Rose’s next book will be on counselling kings in early modern England. In an era of steadily increasing pressure to publish as quickly as possible — not least for

internal promotion — this reviewer's eagerness to read Rose 2.0 is tempered by the hope that she will not rush things. *Godly Kingship* offers an impressively high benchmark for everything that follows.

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