

the door is open, however so slightly, to freedom, advancement, and integration” (76). Sanneh’s analysis thus elucidates the difficulties embedded in comparative studies of African and New World slavery and abolitionism.

Overall, the essays collected here present a thought-provoking, if somewhat uneven, intervention in the age-old debate about slavery, abolitionism, and progress. While some essayists attempt to revive the spirit of Lecky, arguing that British abolitionism provides an instructive instance of moral progress in history, others pull apart the very terms of the debate, demonstrating the futility of attempts to conceive of moral progress as a transhistorical force.

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NEIL YOUNGER. *War and Politics in the Elizabethan Counties*. Politics, Culture and Society in Early Modern Britain series. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012. Pp. 304. \$95.00 (cloth).

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This fine first book from Neil Younger, now at the University of Essex, speaks to two distinct audiences and will be read with interest by both. One is the growing group of military historians who are interested in the role of war in the development of the state. The other are those Tudor and Stuart historians interested in local and national governance.

Younger begins with the surprisingly simple, but often overlooked, observation that between 1585 and 1603 Elizabethan England was constantly at war—in the Netherlands, in France, in Ireland, and at sea (although that last arena receives scant coverage here). Given the strength of the literature positing an intimate relationship between the strains of war and the development of more centralized states, it seems natural to examine more carefully what happened to the Elizabethan state during those eighteen years of war. His specific lens is the national-local relationship, represented here by the council, on one hand, and gentry/aristocratic county officials, on the other, primarily as mediated by the office of the county lord lieutenant. The first chapter fleshes out the basic processes of county-council relations in wartime and traces the revival and expansion of the lieutenancies (and their deputies) after 1585. Here and elsewhere, Younger’s work is based on deep research in national and local archives, a thoroughness that showcases the highly variable and even personality-dependent outcomes. The lieutenancies were at the center of the council’s efforts to create more reliable responses from the counties, but they were also “intended to limit the risk of overly high-handed rule by tying the practice of government into the political nation’s perception of what was acceptable” (239). The men were chosen not only because of their reliability to the regime but also because of their ties to the counties. At least within central England (the situation differed in Wales, Ireland, and the North), they were not men imposed from the outside. Younger follows up in the next chapter with the next logical question. If the lieutenant became the channel for council demands, how did the counties respond? His answer runs against the grain of much of the historiography. His careful survey of the evidence finds that the gentry and the political public at large understood and supported the demands of defense, helped along by the ad hoc and flexible attitudes of the council, further moderated through a lieutenancy that emphasized persuasion over coercion, and buttressed by a national program of legitimation. In operation, “this was no conventional modernisation. . . . The lieutenancy remained highly ad hoc. . . . [But] habits of authority were formed and reinforced, and chains of command were forged” (89).

The next three chapters examine specific military activities and how well or poorly the counties met the national need. Younger covers in turn the militia, the levying of troops for service

abroad, and war taxation as conducted by the lieutenant. Each chapter is an effective and thorough review of the problem, narrated both chronologically and thematically, and each emphasizes above all the variability in the results. Personalities mattered. Local sense of the threat mattered. Mobilization, of militia, of levies, and of taxes, was an ongoing process of negotiation between local authority and the national government, but throughout Younger finds that relationship lubricated by a general agreement that the threats and the needs were real. He further finds, again, against much of the historiography, that the results were surprisingly positive. The militia was ready (mostly); thousands of troops were raised and equipped for service abroad; substantial, but not backbreaking, funds were raised locally through the lieutenants; and the regime did not collapse into rebellion or bankruptcy. For all of these issues, Younger provides specific numbers and useful tables. In the end, the Elizabethan military system effectively married national interest to local willingness in an era of defensive war. It did so via locally sensitive but reliable lieutenants and via a flexible approach to the strategic situation. This flexibility, however, militated against creating permanent strong national institutions. Ad hoc was good enough.

Younger's conclusion returns to his two audiences. For the war and state formation crowd, he concludes that the Elizabethan state did experience some centralization, but it was not authoritarian, and institutionally it proved only temporary. It did, however, "acculturate" the populace to higher levels of central interference—if that interference was properly legitimated by the regime's motives and behavior. For those interested in Tudor government, Younger first modifies our understanding of the militia and of the English army. The former was less bumbling than usually portrayed; the latter less composed of scum and villainy than often thought. As for governance, he downplays the supposed crisis of the 1590s and finds no move toward authoritarian rule, but rather a continued, nuanced, flexible, and ad hoc management of local officials. In essence, the Elizabethan council was more subtle and sophisticated than its Stuart successors in finding ways to co-opt the county elite and preserve their support.

As a military historian, I was deeply pleased with this book. It is not concerned with fortifications, shipbuilding, cannon founding, or tactics and strategy (except briefly in terms of the council's competence in preparing against the armada). It is nevertheless an extremely important examination of the politics and logistics of mobilization. Enabled by a relatively strong archival record and a thoroughly matured historiography, Younger poses exactly the right questions about the links between the state and the soldier (or the militiaman, or the local taxpayer). His detailed narrative emphasizes the variability and evolutionary nature of change in the face of the pressures of war. That said, his particular lens elides other changes that might support a different narrative of centralization, particularly the changes in governance in the composite monarchy outside England, as well as the professionalization and institutionalization that took place in the navy—the primary arm of national defense. The final word on England's status as a "fiscal-military" state in the late sixteenth century must marry those issues to Younger's excellent work here.

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