

(likely starved to death, although the report was that he starved himself), his dead body repeatedly displayed for all to see.

Scholarship on the Lancastrian revolution often takes sides. Traditionally, historians have followed Lancastrian propaganda in seeing Richard II as a tyrant and Henry as a liberator. More recently, a counternarrative has developed, claiming that Richard was not so bad, and Henry a cunning and perjuring usurper. *Henry IV* leaves one with the impression that no one was a hero: yes, Richard II was arbitrary and tyrannical, but so were the Appellants who sought to rein him in in the 1380s—and so was Henry himself, as he needed to be. Given-Wilson insists that 1399 did *not* represent an important reason that England later failed to become absolute monarchy; in fact, Henry's kingship benefited from Richard's buildup of it. Henry, however, was simply more astute than Richard, cultivating an image of Christian piety and chivalric prowess; breaking his word judiciously, propagandizing mendaciously (and effectively); being stingy, at least with the granting of titles' *not* helping himself to his subjects' patrimonies; and in general "keeping his friends close and his enemies afraid" (531). In other words, a century before Machiavelli, Henry was well aware of some practical ways to retain his throne in tough times.

And tough they were. Henry's dependence on the Lancastrian affinity meant that many subjects felt excluded from power, and bad harvests, financial problems, and the persistent rumor that Richard II was still alive prompted many of them to rebel against the king: Owain Glyn Dwr, Henry "Hotspur" Percy, and Archbishop Scrope were only the most famous. The decisive Battle of Shrewsbury (1403) should have ended the opposition, but it just kept coming; Henry's shocking execution of Scrope in 1405 should have destroyed his remaining legitimacy, but instead the action seems to have established his seriousness and quieted things down. Henry "perfected the art of falling and falling without ever quite hitting the ground" (277); as well as being Machiavellian, he seems to have enjoyed a great deal of Napoleonic luck.

Unlike previous biographies of Henry IV, Given-Wilson's deals with the years 1406–13 in some detail. These were also the years in which he king suffered a series of debilitating illnesses (punishment, some said, for his execution of Scrope), but his council, under Archbishop Arundel and then his own son Prince Henry, bought his regime a certain stability and solvency. These conditions allowed him to concentrate on long-term projects like the defense of Guyenne from French encroachment, negotiation of marriage alliances for his sons, or the attempted healing of the Great Schism or the even remoter possibility of going on crusade. It was also during this time that Henry's interests in such things as polyphonic music, books (Given-Wilson claims he is the real founder of the English royal library), and cannon manifested themselves. Although he never quite escaped the stench of being a usurper, he died in his bed and passed the crown on to his own son—a victory of sorts, even if the prince and he did not always get along.

Henry IV is informed by a wealth of scholarship and, especially for subjects like possessions, movement, or finances, is tied closely to record sources. It does not constitute a history of England in the early fifteenth century, but it does deal widely and perceptively with many aspects of governance during Henry's reign, such as court and household, Parliament, the church, Lollardy and anti-clericalism, espionage, economic policy, national identity, and (of course) warfare. Its style is compelling and its illustrations clear. It is an excellent work and a fitting addition to the English Monarchs series.

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RICHARD HUSCROFT. *Tales from the Long Twelfth Century: The Rise and Fall of the Angevin Empire*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Pp. xxii, 305. \$50.00 (cloth).
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Though Richard Huscroft's *Tales from the Long Twelfth Century: The Rise and Fall of the Angevin Empire* is a work for nonspecialist readers, it is an excellent book. Huscroft's hope

is to bring the Norman and Angevin periods in English history to a wider, nonspecialist audience by embedding the broader narrative within biographical studies of a range of individuals. In this he succeeds completely. While Huscroft does not offer academic originality or new insights for readers of this journal, he provides an excellent overview based on a thorough knowledge of the primary sources for advanced undergraduates or graduate students looking for a useful and well-written narrative of the Norman and Angevin period.

Huscroft's subjects are not just kings, as might have been expected. Instead, he uses characters often sidelined or even passed over in academic works to cast light on politics, religion, and society, as well as to recount the chronological history of the Norman and Angevin kings. Aristocratic mentalities and relations with kings are explored through Hugh Bigod, Earl of Norfolk in the mid-twelfth century, and William de Briouze, who before his fall and his wife and son's terrible deaths, was a favorite of King John's. Bigod's motives in changing sides during the civil wars of Stephen's reign are well explained in terms of his need to maintain his family's status and lands, and even a loyalty to the Angevin cause, rather than as purely self-serving. Briouze's fate at the hands of John is given more nuanced treatment by the recognition that he had himself risen at the expense of others and had supported the regime which would eventually ruin him. Huscroft uses Henry I's son William Aethling, who drowned with the White Ship, and Henry II's son the Young Henry not only to examine the political difficulties faced by heirs to the throne in this period but also to explore issues of status and standing, courts and households, aristocratic culture from contemporary literature to the cult of the tournament, and the expense of the aristocratic lifestyle. Huscroft follows Joan, daughter of Henry II, through her marriages to William of Sicily and Raymond of Toulouse and her brother Richard's I proposal to marry her to al-Adil, Saladin's brother, to take the reader through Mediterranean cultural history, the crusades, Angevin political history in southern France and northern Spain, and the religious lives of aristocratic women. Herbert of Bosham and Stephen Langton allow Huscroft to engage with the schools of Paris and cults of saints as well as conflicts between church and state and the political theories of the period.

Also impressive is Huscroft's grounding in current scholarship and how alive he is to complex and difficult issues. Magna Carta, English engagement with Ireland, "empire," "chivalry," and the experience of aristocratic and royal women all receive nuanced and sophisticated consideration. Magna Carta's failure in its own time, and the importance of the seventeenth century rather than the thirteenth to its modern status are made clear, but Huscroft also emphasizes that while its clauses were "narrow, local and specific; often they are obscure and highly technical," still it "albeit falteringly, enunciated embryonic notions that later grew into fundamental principles" (221). Unlike the authors of many popular histories—and academic works, too—Huscroft also genuinely considers the Angevin "empire" rather than writing a history of England with a brief nod to the kings' continental possessions. The Lusignan family of Poitou, the counts of Angouleme, and the barons of Brittany are crucial to understanding the unraveling of the realm under John, and their history and motives are well explored here. So, too, is Fontevrault's importance as a religious center for the Angevin family.

A nonspecialist reader coming to this book with absolutely no knowledge of this period might struggle—there is no broad introduction of the Norman Conquest for instance, but even the most basic awareness would be enough to make it valuable to undergraduate students. The different perspectives and alternative histories that Huscroft offers also emphasize that there is no meta-narrative of this period, but many different ones. His use of them might, perhaps, have the added benefit of encouraging students to think beyond their textbooks to academic journals, essay collections, and conference proceedings, where they can find more specialized versions of the same. There are few footnotes beyond citations of primary sources, but each chapter has a good basic bibliography. Perhaps prepped with something like John Gillingham and Ralph Griffith's *Medieval Britain: A Very Short Introduction* (2000) for a basic narrative, and with Robert Bartlett's *England and Normandy under the Angevin*

Kings (2002) to follow up and to provide the academic depth and detail, *Tales from the Long Twelfth Century* is an exciting and engaging narrative full of insight from which students would gain much. For readers of this journal who have not looked at this period since their undergraduate days and for specialists, too, Huscroft tells a great story with verve, insight, and an eye for the telling anecdote, and his book serves as a reminder that what we do in our profession can be fun, too.

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MARK A. HUTCHINSON. *Calvinism, Reform and the Absolutist State in Elizabethan Ireland*. Religious Cultures in the Early Modern World 20. London: Pickering & Chatto, 2015. Pp. 219. \$120.00 (cloth). doi: 10.1017/jbr.2016.133

The appearance of Mark Hutchinson's *Calvinism, Reform and the Absolutist State in Elizabethan Ireland* is a welcome thing. Scholars have long realized that there is something important about the way English political culture found expression in Tudor Ireland. In short, the way Englishmen acted in the sister kingdom and the way they practiced government there, while obviously affected by the particular challenges they faced, disclosed otherwise undeclared assumptions in English political thinking. The queen's officers in Ireland have often been crudely characterized as nasty, brutish, and, in the case of Sir Richard Bingham, short. Thankfully Hutchinson, although he sees their understanding of sovereignty as but "one step behind Hobbes's *Leviathan*" (64), avoids such condescension. There are no caricatures here, although there may be a tendency to see too much consensus.

Hutchinson's complex argument seeks to present Ireland as a crucible for developing concepts of *the state* in the anglophone world. While he seeks to chart the development of an emerging Calvinist ideology concerning government in Tudor Ireland, arguing that historians have neglected the *evangelical motive* in government there, his preeminent concern is the desire to make an intervention in the broader history of European early modern political thought, especially as related and narrated by Quentin Skinner in his *Foundations of Modern Political Thought* (1978). To this end Hutchinson proposes that English use of the abstract term *the state* occurred precociously in Ireland and suggests, to use a term he does not employ himself, the occurrence of something of a paradigm shift in English thinking on faith and government over the 1570s, 1580s and 1590s, a shift that, he argues, achieved form and clarity in Ireland. His explanation of this phenomenon is complex. He surmises that the English officers and magistrates who administered the regime in the sister kingdom were suffused in Calvinist modes of thinking, which led them to come to a broad consensus that Ireland had failed as a godly community and that the consciences of the Irish, both Gaelic-Irish and English-Irish, were inherently corrupt. Consequently, they came to deem the Irish incapable of receiving efficient grace and thus sought to hold aloof from Ireland's totally depraved polity. In the absence of a community of conscience and grace, all that was left to the English servitors was the maintenance of the state, abstractly conceived. But this was not merely a reaction to their environment, "Irish government," he precipitately asserts, "clearly took its cue at some level from the French political philosopher Jean Bodin and the absolutist position detailed in his *Six Books of the Commonwealth*" (64). Central to Hutchinson's thesis is the notion that because of this gravitational pull, the use made of the term *the state* by Her Majesty's officers in Ireland drew a clear distinction between a more institutional sense of abstract sovereign authority and the actual person of the prince. Hutchinson, in a further assertion, suggests that they were brought to the use of this formula because "the prince's distance