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Scotland in the Age of Two Revolutions.

By Sharon Adams and Julian Goodare (eds). Pp. xiii, 254.

ISBN: 9781843839392 (hbk).

Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2014. £65.00.

DOI: 10.3366/nor.2018.0149

Any book dedicated to Professor David Stevenson commands our attention and *Scotland in the Age of Two Revolutions* is no exception. Given the current state of scholarship on British and Scottish history, this collection of essays, edited by Sharon Adams and Julian Goodare, has a difficult job to do. While later-twentieth-century scholars tended to emphasise the complicated religio-political dynamics of Britain's three kingdoms, recent work has sought to focus, once more, on each kingdom from a more local, individual perspective. As the introduction to this volume suggests, the intention here is to try to navigate a path between these contrasting approaches by exploring Scotland in this period on its own terms—as the editors put it, 'the history that the Scots themselves made during the seventeenth century' (p. 1)—without disregarding the fact that there was a 'British' dimension to much of what happened in Scotland after 1603.

The volume is principally framed around the contention that, in order to better understand seventeenth-century Scotland, we should eschew the (Anglo-Scottish) dates 1603 and 1707, in favour of 1638 and 1689. Although the former *caesurae* are not insignificant, these latter dates have greater resonance not only because they correlate to Scotland's 'two revolutions', but also because they meant more to contemporary Scots than perhaps the years signifying dynastic or parliamentary union. Having defined the basic terms—that we should change the emphasis in how we view Scottish affairs in this period—the introduction then moves to a discussion of the central themes and problems underpinning the volume: the contested (and overlapping) nature of monarchical and parliamentary authority; church government; religious toleration; radicalism and conservatism. In short, at heart, this is really a book about power.

Following the introduction come a further eleven essays, with some useful figures and tables; a list of key events; and a summary of further reading, broken down by chapter—a helpful assist to undergraduate students of Scottish and British history. The essays themselves are arranged chronologically, spanning the period from the inception of the dual monarchy to the turn of the century. Groundwater, Theiss and Tuckett are concerned with the period before 1638; Goodare contemplates the nature of the 1638 revolution; Adams and McCormack consider the 1650s; Lee and Erskine deal with Restoration-related matters; and the essays by Raffe, Rayner and Watt explore 1688 and beyond. However, while they map onto a chronological framework, the topics that the essays address and the questions that they ask also intersect with some of the most pressing issues which concerned Scotland throughout this revolutionary century, including—although not limited to—the relationship between the centre and

the localities (Groundwater, Theiss, McCormack and Rayner); the role of the episcopate (Tuckett); the nature of revolution (Goodare); how Scotland responded to the regicide (Adams); the question of allegiance (Lee); changing understandings of royal power (Raffe); and how economic stability might be achieved (Watt).

Although the volume keeps its eye firmly on Scotland, where necessary, some of the essays draw upon appropriate scholarship on England and Europe, shedding light on Scottish developments without completely losing sight of the bigger picture. For instance, Anna Groundwater considers James VI/I's clever attempt to reconceptualise the Borders as the 'Middle Shires', as a way of smoothing the path to Anglo-Scottish union. More importantly, Groundwater raises the possibility that the shires might have acted as a harbinger of the wider problems faced by Charles I in the later 1630s in his (mis-)management of the dual monarchy. As she suggests, important lessons might have been learned from the shires about the difficulties of transposing 'one government policy onto two separate regions, with two distinct administrations' (p. 36). This was a situation that required careful handling and, in developments which perhaps prefigured those of 1637 in Edinburgh, religion in the shires could be a catalyst when added to underlying administrative and legal divisions.

Similarly, the character of the 1638 revolution is tackled by Julian Goodare, who provides a thoughtful analysis, asking whether the Scottish revolution really was a revolution in the strictest sense, engaging with modern (and, to a lesser extent, early modern) definitions of 'revolution' and showing its impact on Scotland's—and England's—development thereafter, as well as comparing it with other revolutionary episodes. Taking on post-revolution Scotland, Sharon Adams looks for evidence of republicanism, questioning an earlier claim by Maurice Lee Jr that, unlike in England, Scottish republican sentiment was absent in this period. One of Adams' key contributions is to show that, although Scotland did remain a monarchy in 1649, the work of the Covenanters ensured that it 'did not need a kingless republic to achieve political liberty' (p. 114).

Alasdair Raffe's study of the character and use of state oaths both before and after 1688 gives his perspective on matters of allegiance and loyalty in the context of the revolution, while also foregrounding the contradictions inherent in oath-taking. Exploring oaths of allegiance and the 1681 Test Oath, Raffe makes the convincing case that, in prohibiting certain able individuals from holding public office if they refused to swear an oath, governmental authority was potentially undermined. Paradoxically, at times of governmental instability, oaths were one way of binding subjects to their leaders. Moreover, the coronation oath required of William and Mary in 1689 addressed 'a significant anomaly created by the union of the crowns' (p. 178), meaning that the monarch now had to acknowledge certain realities in *Scottish* political life, before being able to exercise royal power. Oaths, as Raffe explains, provide a new prism through which to consider the nature – and radicalism – of Scotland's revolution of 1688–90.

As with any collection which seeks to integrate the work of well-established and emerging scholars, it is not always possible to get it absolutely right. Occasionally, one has the impression that some of the work here has yet to be fully conceptualised and is not quite certain of its place in the volume. In addition, one might have expected a little more relating directly to the 1660s and 1670s. Yet, this is as much a reflection of the range of directions in which early modern Scottish (and British) scholarship is currently heading, as it is a criticism of the volume itself. Indeed, on reading this volume, we now have a much clearer idea of the state of play in this particular branch of Scottish historical research.

In summary, overall, this book does exactly what it sets out to do—namely, to present us with some of the latest research being carried out on seventeenth-century Scotland and to add nuance to what we already know. While providing important new material which enriches our understanding of the country, the century and its revolutionary processes, the volume also demonstrates that the decision to focus on one kingdom does not need to be an introspective enterprise, with no relevance beyond narrow borders. While casting the spotlight on Scottish affairs, *Scotland in the Age of Two Revolutions* also reminds us how Scotland both responded to and shaped its broader context. In so doing, it definitely has something fresh to tell us about the tensions between politics, religion, society, economy and the law in one of early modern Europe's most complex composite monarchies.

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Ideas of Monarchical Reform: Fénelon, Jacobitism and the Political Works of the Chevalier Ramsay.

By Andrew Mansfield. Pp. ix, 238.

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Born in Ayr in July 1686, the Chevalier Andrew Michael Ramsay is an odd figure in early modern European intellectual history. Under the influence of his Episcopalian mother, who abhorred the Calvinist dogma of predestination, Ramsay entered the University of Edinburgh where he imbibed deism. He then moved to the University of Aberdeen and soon associated himself with the so-called Garden Circle led by James and George Garden, two leading ministers of the Scottish Episcopal Church. His membership in this society had a decisive impact on Ramsay's life, both spiritually and politically. In it he not only learned of French mysticism but, more importantly, began to take an interest in politics and Jacobitism in particular. In early 1710, after briefly serving as tutor to the children