

---

# NORTHERN STUDIES

---

*The Journal of the Scottish Society for Northern Studies*

Volume 55

General and Modern History Editor  
KATHRIN ZICKERMANN

Medieval History Editor  
SARAH THOMAS

Reviews Editor  
TOM FAIRFAX

Copyeditor  
JANE THOMAS

Production Editor  
JANET E. KAY

2024

# Contents

## THE NINETEENTH HERMANN PÁLSSON LECTURE (2023)

*Terry Gunnell*

High Seat Pillars and the Settlement of Iceland: Fact, Fake News or Folklore? ..... 1

## WINNER OF THE MAGNUS MAGNUSSON ESSAY PRIZE (2023)

*Iain D. Cameron*

'Farmers, Fishermen and Ferryloopers': the Influence of the Scottish Presbyterian Church on Northern Isles Society and Culture in the Late Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries ..... 25

## ARTICLES

*Clare Downham*

The Origin of the Kingdom of the Isles and *Caithréim Chellacháin Chaisil* ..... 37

*Aonghas MacCoinnigh*

All Utterly Barbarous? Gille-Chaluim Garbh, Laird of Raasay, and a Sixteenth-Century Gaelic Poem from the Fernaig Manuscript ..... 52

*Thomas Brochard*

The Baltic and North Sea Region in Scottish Burgh and Notarial Records, 1500-1700 (Part Two) ..... 79

*Alexia Grosjean and Steve Murdoch*

Tracing the Settlement of Scottish Immigrants in Early Modern Stockholm ..... 101

## REVIEWS

*Carola Huttmann*

Dougie Strang, *The Bone Cave: A Journey through Myth and Memory* (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2023). ISBN-10: 1780278357; ISBN-13: 9781780278353 ..... 131

*Marian Toledo Candelaria*

Neil McGuigan, *Máel Coluim III 'Canmore': An Eleventh-Century Scottish King*. Edinburgh: John Donald, 2021. ISBN: 9781910900192 ..... 135

*Cassidy Croci*

Benjamin Allport, Rosalind Bonté and Hans Jacob Orning (eds), *Networks in the Medieval North: Studies in Honour of Jón Viðar Sigurðsson* Turnhout: Brepols, 2023. ISBN: 9782503602387 ..... 139

*Harriet Clark*

Desmond Seward, *The Greatest Viking: The Life of Olav Haraldsson* Birlinn: Edinburgh, 2022. ISBN: 9781780277950 ..... 143

*Dirk H. Steinforth*

Tim Clarkson, *A Mighty Fleet and the King's Power: The Isle of Man AD 400 to 1265* John Donald / Birlinn: Edinburgh, 2023. ISBN: 9781910900802 ..... 147

*Rebecca Tyson*

Philippa Byrne and Caitlin Ellis (eds) *Maritime Exchange and the Making of Norman Worlds*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2023. ISBN: 9782503602172 ..... 150

*Emma E. Horne*

Alasdair C Whyte with Katherine Forsyth and Simon Taylor, *Glasgow's Gaelic Place-Names*. Birlinn Origin: Edinburgh, 2023. ISBN: 9781839830464 ..... 154

*Tane Moorhouse*

Robert Armstrong, *Royalism and the Three Stuart Kingdoms: Ideas in Action in the Wars of the 1640s* Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023. ISBN: 9783031420993 ..... 156

*Robert Armstrong*

*Royalism and the Three Stuart Kingdoms:  
Ideas in Action in the Wars of the 1640s*

Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2023

ISBN: 9783031420993

SINCE THE emergence of the New British Historical framework in the 1990s, an approach which stresses the need to integrate the national histories of the British Isles, historians such as Conrad Russell (1991), David Scott (2004) and Allan I MacInnes (2005), have made significant inroads into synthesising the previously separate national accounts of the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, ca.1637-1660. This has led to significant comparative studies of the period's three radical national-confessional movements: Scottish Covenanters; Irish Catholic Confederates; and English Parliamentarians. Yet, apart from Barry Robertson's (2016) evaluation of elite Scottish and Irish royalism, this approach has failed to materialise within royalist scholarship – despite a significant growth in English, Irish, Scottish and Welsh historiography. Robert Armstrong's *Royalism and the Three Stuart Kingdoms: Ideas in Action in the Wars of the 1640s* (2023), therefore provides the first comprehensive political and intellectual examination of the royalist movement to incorporate an analysis of all three of the Stuart Kingdoms. This assessment is provided through a thoughtful examination of abstract royalist political theory and its practical application.

The monograph is divided into four thematically arranged chapters, along with a preface and conclusion, with its chronological parameters set between ca.1642 and ca.1646. Chapter One sets out the shared fundamental philosophical values and practical actions of Stuart royalism across the British Isles. However, it also stresses that the movement should not be viewed as an “undifferentiated British royalism”, but, rather, a movement with nationally nuanced political, social, and religious variations (p. ix). Chapter Two assesses the reconfiguration, revitalisation, and ultimate failure of Scottish royalism from ca.1641-1645. Chapter Three, through an examination of Irish and English affairs, highlights the importance of formal and informal mechanisms of peace-making to royalist efforts to reacquire allegiance to the king. Finally, Chapter

Four turns to a textual analysis of royalist political treatises published in Oxford, political treatises published in Oxford between ca.1642 and ca.1646, to examine royalism as a prescriptive doctrine. This is pursued through an evaluation of texts written by three Church of Ireland bishops, each of whom had different national origins – John Bramhall (English), Griffith Williams (Welsh), and John Maxwell (Scottish).

Armstrong utilises a traditional methodological approach to political and intellectual history, focusing upon ‘high’ political events and the mentalities of royalist elites. Consequently, this research does not offer an assessment of ‘popular’ royalism. While this exclusion is unfortunate, it is understandable given the underdeveloped state of Irish, Scottish and Welsh ‘popular’ historiography, and the need to preserve a feasible comparative structure.

The principal strength of this book lies in its innovative comparative structure. This enables a thorough overview of royalism across the British Isles and a concise analysis of national historiographies. The evaluative strength of this text is particularly evident within chapters one and three, through Armstrong’s assessment of honour and loyalty as the basic moral foundations of royalism – made tangible through social practices such as oath-swearing and royal pardons – and in his discussion of peace-making processes within Ireland and England. Moreover, this approach enables Armstrong to include a detailed integration of Welsh historical context and historiography into his analysis within Chapter One – a history otherwise often overlooked within standard ‘New British History’ accounts of the mid-seventeenth century.

This comparative amalgamation of historical context and historiography, naturally, however, results in the title repeating many of the arguments put forth by previous research. For instance, Andrew Lind (PhD, 2020), Lloyd Bowen (2013) and Sarah Ward Clavier (2021) have highlighted that Scottish, and Welsh, royalism had specific national traits. Similarly, Armstrong’s contention, in Chapter Four, that royalist doctrine was a prescriptive political and religious framework echoes the prior findings of David Smith (1994), Jerome de Groot (2004), and Lloyd Bowen (2013). However, references to these works, apart from that of Clavier, are absent within their relevant chapters. Moreover, this approach results in this research relying too heavily on the use of secondary and printed primary sources, as well as primary materials compiled by nineteenth-century antiquarians. Therefore, this title should not escape criticism for its lack of archival research.

Nevertheless, the key assets of this monograph – bringing historiographical arguments together into one resource, and, through a comparative assessment, nuancing and strengthening the credibility of previous scholarly arguments – ensures it remains valuable. For instance, within Chapter Four, Armstrong

produces the insightful statement that royalists attempted to craft “a grammar of obedience” (p. 110). This definition advances the writings of Smith, de Groot, and Bowen, and will undoubtedly benefit future scholarship. In addition, Armstrong recognises the importance of the Treaty of London, 1641, as a significant Anglo-Scottish constitutional settlement that had a critical impact on the development of royalist movements across the British Isles. Comparatively, previous research, such as that by Lind (in Langley, 2020), has solely focused upon the significance of the treaty – be it England or Scotland.

Another key strength of this title is its detailed analysis of the interactions between abstract royalist philosophy, and royalism in practice. In this regard, the text provides a groundbreaking evaluation of the importance of peace-making processes to the theoretical and practical functioning of the royalist cause. Armstrong makes the substantial claim that, to royalists, less formal mechanisms of peace-making, such as the provision of royal pardons or political rewards to those prepared to re-integrate into the royalist cause, were not subordinate to formal negotiation processes (p.62). Hence, Armstrong rightly highlights that these methods were inherent in rehabilitating individuals to the service of the king. As such, Armstrong makes the astute observation that “it serves best not to too readily shuffle actions into the categories of the pragmatic as against the principled” (p.62). Thus, the book’s excellent examination of the interactions between royalist thought and action ensures that Armstrong’s work challenges reductive, moralistic conceptions of high politics.

Unfortunately, the timeframe selected for this research, ca.1642-1646, undermines the otherwise balanced nature of Armstrong’s three-kingdoms evaluation. Armstrong justifies his concentration on this period by stating that this was “when the war was at its height in England” and that “this was the kingdom where royalism was most readily identifiable, and most potent” (p.2). This disregards the fact that royalism became an identifiable movement across the three kingdoms from ca. 1638, emerging as a reaction against the signing of the National Covenant and the threat this posed to royal authority, social order and royalist identities. For example, Mark Fissel (1994) has showcased that royalist mobilisation efforts throughout the Bishops’ Wars of ca.1639-40 attempted to raise forces from across the entire British Isles.

Similarly, this Anglo-centric timeframe causes Armstrong to argue that “the reinvention of Scottish royalism [ca. 1641-1643] set English royalism free to be patriotic” (p.58) and embrace anti-Scottish tendencies. Whilst this assessment is correct, the lack of integration of events prior to 1642, inaccurately suggests that anti-Scottishness was not a part of English royalism until after the entry of the Covenanters in the English Civil War in 1643. Conrad Russel (1991) and Lloyd Bowen (2013) have shown that anti-Scottish sentiment emerged from

the outset of the Covenanting revolution. Moreover, this timeframe prevents this title from integrating its excellent analysis on the Anglo-Scottish Treaty of London (ca.1641) within its wider assessment on the importance of peace-making processes to the royalist movement. This is because the discussion of this treaty is outwith the structural confines of the book, so it only receives mention within Chapter Two to provide necessary context for Scottish affairs. Ultimately, the use of a more expansive and inclusive timeframe would have enhanced Armstrong's three-kingdoms approach. Whilst Armstrong comes close to realising Morrill's (1999) holistic vision of New British History, his structural decisions instead fulfil Keith Brown's (1993) concern that the use of a 'New British Historical framework' would centralise English history and relegate the histories of the other Stuart nations to a subsidiary role.

A further issue is that the figures from which Armstrong derives his argument that royalism was a prescriptive movement - Bramhall, Maxwell, Williams - are skewed in their personal biases. This is because they represented a very narrow political and doctrinal outlook of royalism - one associated with the uniformist, Anglican Episcopalian reforms of William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury. As Leonie James (2017) has highlighted, throughout the 1630s, Laud's foremost agents of reform within the Churches of Ireland and Scotland were, respectively, Bramhall and Maxwell. Consequently, the selection bias inherent within Armstrong's fourth chapter, ignores recent scholarly insights that have highlighted how the movement contained a spectrum of ideological factions (Barry Robertson, 2016; Andrew Lind in Langley, 2020). Thus, whilst Armstrong's definitional claim regarding royalists attempts to form "a grammar of obedience" remains valuable for a certain strain of royalism, it does not, necessarily, reflect the entire spectrum of royalist thought.

Yet, despite these flaws, Armstrong should be commended for providing the first comparative assessment of seventeenth-century royalism across the British archipelago, for his valuable examination of how royalist thought and practical actions interacted, and for his succinct summary of developments within royalist scholarship. Due to this text's intricate discussion of seventeenth century political events and philosophy, extensive use of non-modernised primary quotations, and its omission of a bibliography, this text might be less accessible to the public than desired. Nevertheless, its potential use for academic and undergraduate research is evident. As such, Armstrong's monograph provides a useful introductory text for future royalist research.

*Tane Moorhouse  
University of Dundee*