

The Plight of Pygmy Nations; Wales in Early Modern Europe

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“The Welsh were never subject to any but God and the King, and that none showed their allegiance more than the Welsh.” - Sir William Williams.

Once upon a time, historical writing on early modern Wales reflected a kind of imperial optimism, and the story told was one of benevolent absorption into a greater British entity. In reaction, a grimmer narrative portrayed the 250 years after the Act of Union as a time of betrayal, when the elites were seduced into imperial loyalties, while the older culture was scorned and trampled, to be saved only by the fierce loyalty of the common people. Clearly, Wales occupied a special place in early modern Britain, in that it avoided the religious, political and ethnic catastrophe which befell its Celtic neighbor Ireland, yet failed to emulate Scotland by preserving any kind of legal or political identity, however vestigial. Though it never faced the near genocidal conditions of Ireland, yet it conspicuously failed to be a nation in its own right. In a Greater British perspective, therefore, we see Wales more in terms of what it failed to become rather than what it actually was. I want to suggest though that if we consider the situation of Wales against a wider European canvas, then the Welsh experience emerges as a remarkable success story, as something rich and strange. In no other comparable nation or sub-nation was official policy anything like as favorable to the minority culture as in Wales, nor were local elites so enthusiastically integrated into the national whole while keeping so large a sense of national identity and cultural pride. In Wales, too, the official state religion served to bolster rather than suppress local identity. There were many reasons for this distinctness, but above all, I want to stress the thoroughly successful use of royal institutions and ideology to provide a political focus for Welsh elites.

I. Incorporating Wales

Being a Welsh historian can pose the danger of parochialism - you may know the cutting remark about the poet who was “world famous, in Wales.” On the positive side, to understand Welsh history is to be sensitized to some currently pressing historical and cultural issues, about the relationship between ethnicity and nationhood, between language, class and religion. These problems are as unresolved in the contemporary Balkans as they are, perhaps, in Quebec or California. A Welsh standpoint also makes one suspicious about the way in which the major nations of Europe construct their fundamental historical narratives. These are usually teleological tales in which such irrelevancies as Wales, Languedoc, Bavaria, and Catalonia ultimately attain their proper position as units within

“true” or “real” national units, acquiring thereby the appropriate language and class structure.

Wales offers a splendid case-study of exactly how one of these smaller units was incorporated within a larger British whole, and it was a remarkably strange process, which in a European framework, emerges as far odder than Welsh historians often suggest. Wales was radically different from England, above all in language, far more so than say Languedoc from France, and these differences absolutely did not diminish following the political union of the sixteenth century. And yet there was no nationalist reaction, which might strike us as bizarre from our post-Enlightenment perspective: we know intuitively that a Volk with its Sprach should have national consciousness, and a tendency to seek national self-determination. In the seventeenth century however, this equation was far from obvious. Though ethnic identity was defined in terms of language, political self-consciousness could easily be satisfied through the structures of dynastic kingship, and a concurrent ideological system expounded with triumphant success through the pageantry, propaganda and mythology of the Renaissance monarchy. Wales in fact became the first region of the British Isles to develop an ideology of “British” unity based on loyalty to the monarchy and the Protestant cause. It was the “Ancient Britons” who thus pioneered “Britishness,” and the Stuarts exploited this synthesis brilliantly for their own ends.

To illustrate this theme, I’d like to use a specific incident which occurred in October 1642 at the Marquess of Worcester's castle at Raglan, in Monmouthshire, when the twelve year old Charles, Prince of Wales, arrived to muster support and money for the king's cause from his principality. Now, Raglan at this point was a remarkable place, where the Marquis was probably the richest man in Britain. His son and heir was experimenting with steam engines and hydraulics, which he used to power amazing special effects in the gardens, and also in spectacular pageants. His wonders included “a garden ornament which opened its mouth and replied to questions in several languages” - I am sure that Welsh was one of them! He also used his special effects deliberately to terrify local Puritans: when they came to search the castle for arms in 1641, he arranged for spectacular rumbling and echoing effects, while servants ran around yelling “Look to yourselves my masters, for the lions are got loose. ” The Parliamentarians never stopped running, and did not turn their heads until the castle was out of sight.

I have no exact idea what he laid on for his royal visitors some months later, but I assume it was stunning. Surrounded by Worcester's tapestries “full of lively figures and ancient British stories,” the courtiers were presented with the traditional Welsh drink *metheglin*. Bardic poetry and Welsh prophecy undoubtedly formed part of the entertainment, as both were especially cultivated in the Somerset family. It would be noted after the castle's fall in 1646 to Parliamentary forces that “Never was there an old house so pulled down by prophecies, ushered into its ruin by predictions, and so laid hold upon by signs and tokens.” In this ultra-patriotic atmosphere, Charles heard “loving and loyal” speeches, asserting that the Britons were “the true remaining and only one people of this land.” They would therefore do their patriotic duty to help “upon any lawful design to the maintenance of justice, piety and religion, and defend their persons from all malignants and enemies.”

Now, I'd suggest that what is happening here is rather remarkable. The ideology being invoked looks as if it should be nationalist, and that to us suggests separatism, but the conclusion is resolutely unionist. In this thought-world, the more fiercely one asserts local values, local culture and local particularism, the more one is declaring loyalty for Crown and nation. Moreover, I wonder where else in Europe at this time one could so proudly assert the value of a local and, to be frank, a fringe language, as a symbol of national unity?

Perhaps no political system has ever been as successful as Renaissance monarchy in overcoming the difficulties of persuading a diverse group of races and nations to live together in one state. Absolute kings tended also to be cosmopolitan kings. Now, that praise of monarchy will sound like a very bad joke from the perspective of Ireland, where the same period that witnessed the happy merger of Wales also saw some of the bloodiest civil warfare anywhere in Europe, especially in the 1590s, and where ethnic tensions were notorious. The key variable, however, was religious. In the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries, multi-ethnic and multi-linguistic states were perfectly viable and even flourishing entities, except and unless political mistakes allowed an equation to be drawn between ethnicity, language, and dissident religion, at which point God and King were at odds, and catastrophe was likely. Ireland was the best-known example of this, but Europe in these years offers some examples of both the benevolent Welsh pattern, and far more of the venomous Irish model.

We might discuss this in terms of what was a familiar cliché in Victorian England, namely the idealized harmony of "cottage, throne and altar." However saccharine it sounds, it could work in the sense that when throne and altar clearly represented the interests and the cultural aspirations of the common people, the "cottage," the resulting alliance was very difficult to overcome, and highly resilient against any upstart elite. In early modern Wales, the three, miraculously, held together. In Ireland, and in much of Europe, they did not.

II. Why Not Nationalism?

The position of Wales within the early modern British state can be discussed in terms of negatives. Between about 1560 and 1790, there were no distinctively Welsh risings or insurrections, and nationalism or separatism plays no role in what riots or disturbances did occur. No fortifications or military roads survive to mark the progress of redcoats on their way to stamp out the last smouldering vestiges of revolt in Snowdonia or the Prescelly hills. The very absurdity of such images suggests the extent to which we take for granted the political integration of Wales into Britain.

This observation is all the more surprising when we take account of linguistic and cultural factors. Seventeenth century Wales was England's oldest and oddest colony, perhaps the most thoroughly "other" and Celtic society in the British isles. During the seventeenth century, at least ninety percent of the people of the thirteen traditional counties spoke Welsh with some fluency, and the usage spilled over the border into Herefordshire and Shropshire. Not until the present century would the proportion have fallen below sixty percent, a pattern of survival far superior to that of either Irish or Scottish Gaelic. The ethnic self-recognition derived from linguistic unity provided the basis for some kind of national awareness, if not active nationalism. Historical scholarship provided the potential

for a nationalist rhetoric and political culture that could, in theory, have had quite explosive consequences. Yet it simply didn't. That fact is significant for what it implies about the stability of the emerging British state, as the Welsh made up perhaps eight percent of the population of "England-and-Wales" in 1680. If nationalistic sentiment had indeed been a significant force in Wales, Stuart regimes might have faced the terrifying prospect of a hostile and restive colony across a long and indefensible border, with the chance of foreign foes or domestic rebels capitalizing on this "nearer Ireland."

In contemporary writings, Wales was generally recognized as a "country," though that did not in itself carry the modern implications of nationhood, and might rather suggest the geographical connotations we find in the "west country," or perhaps *pays*. However, there are cases where "country" and "countrymen" are used in the sense of ethnic self-identification, as in "our Welsh country." Assertions of pride or patriotism transcended class boundaries. In contrast to later stereotypes, boasts of Welshness and Welsh loyalty often stemmed from gentle and aristocratic families whom one might expect to be thoroughly integrated into English society, including those who lived on or over the border. In 1632, the author of a Welsh Grammar called the Earl of Worcester one "who does not hesitate to speak Welsh and to cherish and magnify it in a clearly British manner," while Sir Edward Stradling of Glamorgan was perhaps "the chief cherisher of our Welsh language in south Wales." In Glamorgan during the 1630s, the very wealthy gentry family of Lewis of Van employed three tutors for their children, one each for the Latin, French and Welsh tongues. Not until the end of the century did the gentry and aristocracy cease to patronize manifestations of traditional Welsh culture such as bardic poetry or the music of the harp. Throughout the century, ethnic identity and loyalty were most clearly expressed in cultural matters, above all in history and antiquarianism. In 1661, Percy Enderbie's book *Cambria Triumphans* emphasized the ancient Welsh roots both of the British monarchy, and of some leading aristocratic families of England. This intensely patriotic work was patronized by an impressive list of magnates from southern Wales and the borders: Lord Powis, Lord Herbert of Cherbury and the later Marquess of Worcester, as well as great gentry like the Monmouthshire Morgans, the Glamorgan Stradlings and Lewises.

At the end of the century, some of the best testimony to the strength of Welsh cultural patriotism comes from the correspondence of Edward Lhuyd the antiquary, one of the greatest linguistic scholars of either the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, and in fact he spans those eras magnificently. Lhuyd was collecting Welsh materials for the 1695 revision of the classic text *Britannia*, and sought subscribers for his own *Archaeologia Britannica* (1707). Lhuyd himself was staunchly Welsh, affirming that he was no Englishman, "but an old Briton." The local responses to his queries and researches indicate the existence of real and widespread enthusiasm for Welsh antiquities among large sections of the gentry and clergy, including most of the leading lay magnates in Wales. "Welsh" and "British" were used synonymously in contemporary usage, implying that the Welsh were identical with the "ancient Britons," with all that implied for their prior rights of occupancy in the island of Britain. In the process of historical explanation, antiquaries would produce some remarkably radical manifestations of national resentment, as the story they recounted involved the crushing of Welsh aspirations by English and Norman overlords, generally through deceit and treachery. The potency of this theme was enhanced by its religious dimension, as the invaders had also destroyed the native Celtic church of Wales. This was seen as a primitive

lost ideal, and Protestants claimed that the apostolic Celtic church had been suppressed by Rome because of its proto-protestantism. In one form or another, the malleable notion of the Saxon yoke can be traced as a potent influence in Welsh political culture from the sixteenth century through the nineteenth.

III. Welshness and Britishness

And yet, active nationalism was lacking. Despite my remarks, Welsh political life was wholly oriented to British conditions and realities, a tendency indicated by the terms used for national identification. The same individuals who would proudly describe themselves as "Welsh" in personal correspondence saw no contradiction in using the word "English" in any political context, for example, in commending the nation's armed forces during wartime. By the seventeenth century, the elite political culture of every Welsh region was based on the monarchy and the Church, and the assumptions and mythology which had developed around these fundamental principles. I emphasize this point: When Welshness was employed as a polemical weapon in political and ideological argument, the goal was far more likely to be the assertion of British unity than Welsh separatism, with the monarchy as the primary focus of loyalty.

Undoubtedly the policies of the Tudor dynasty had assisted this identification, and it is not difficult to understand the strong vested interest which Welsh elites had in the success of the united British monarchy. The Welshness of the Welsh church also merits emphasis, especially as it contradicts ancient stereotypes. Fortunately for the Anglican establishment, the vernacular prevailed at an early date, and from the 1540s there was a series of projects to translate liturgical services and other documents. In 1563 - a date that should be commemorated as one of the key moments in the building of the British state - Parliament ordered the publication of the Bible in Welsh, a work entrusted to the four Welsh bishops and to their colleague at Hereford. The Welsh soon had a prayer book and New Testament in their own language, creating the possibility for a wholly Welsh liturgy. By 1588, William Morgan sponsored the publication of a complete Bible in Welsh, one of the crucial moments in Welsh culture. The Morgan bible is given credit for maintaining and disseminating high standards of literary Welsh. From the sixteenth century through the nineteenth, services in Welsh churches were in Welsh; and until the late Stuart periods, most of the bishops were Welsh-born and Welsh-speakers.

Protestant loyalties and self-preservation were inextricably bound up with the fate of the ruling dynasty, throne tied to altar, and both Protestantism and the monarchy now became integral components of Welsh political ideology. In the sixteenth century, Welsh history and Arthurian precedent were enlisted into the cause of asserting the imperial independence of the Tudor Protestant state. The Stuarts presented themselves as legitimate heirs of this "British" monarchy, in which task they were supported by courtiers like the Herberts and Somersets. Incidentally, the courts of both the first two Stuarts were, so to speak, crawling with Welshmen. Under James I, it was Sir William Maurice of Clennau who was credited with establishing the name of "Great Britain," just as Dr. Dee had recently invented the "British Empire." Welsh genealogists placed Stuart kings firmly in the succession of Welsh monarchs and heroes. Enderbie's *Cambria Triumphans* traced the

pedigree of Charles II to the tenth century law-giver Hywel Dda, source of most of the royal lines of medieval Wales.

The royal cult of Welshness focussed on the person of the Prince of Wales, a linkage at least as old as Henry VII's choice of the name "Arthur" for his eldest son in 1486. The suggestion was clearly that the "princes" were successors not just to the independent monarchs of medieval Wales, but also to the more speculative predecessors derived from Arthurian romance and Geoffrey of Monmouth (on whom Percy Enderbie drew copiously). The association of the princely title with Welsh identity and tradition is rarely emphasized by historians discussing post-Tudor Wales, but it was critically important during the seventeenth century, especially when James I was anxious to develop the "British" symbolism to justify his rule over the three kingdoms. Successively, he invested two of his sons as Prince of Wales - Henry in 1610, Charles in 1616 - and on both occasions, the ceremonial drew heavily on Welsh imagery; the mountain of "Craig-Eriri," and a plethora of "goats and Welsh speeches." Incidentally, these festivities were often designed by Inigo Jones, that remarkable Welshman with a Spanish Jesuit name. Charles' elevation was marked by a "solemnity" at Ludlow, the seat of the Council in the Marches and thus the nearest thing available to a "Welsh capital." During Charles' personal rule of the 1630s, "ancient British" themes ran rampant in the masques and entertainments by Thoimas Carew and others - see for example his *Coelum Britannicum* of 1634, with all its prancing Picts and Druids, and Charles and Henrietta Maria as the apotheosis of the restored and united Britannia. We've already seen the culmination of this Celtic royalism in the Raglan events of 1642.

Another apparent outbreak of patriotic sentiment occurred in 1695 and 1696 following William III's grant of crown lordships in north Wales to his favorite, the Earl of Portland. Portland would thus become a "Dutch prince of Wales," and the issue brought together all shades of anti-Court opposition. One outspoken critic was Robert Price, hailed in opposition pamphlets as a "bold Briton," whose speeches defended *Gloria Cambriae* against a tyrannical monarchy. These texts cited the Welsh rights and liberties usurped by the English crown and church over the centuries, and quoted Sir William Williams' remark that "The Welsh were never subject to any but God and the King, and that none showed their allegiance more than the Welsh."

These outbursts seem proto-nationalistic - although note that the boast is that the Welsh are uniquely loyal to the British monarchy. But once again, the rhetoric is complex, and Price reminded William's court that "I would have you consider we are Englishmen, and must like patriots stand by our country, and not suffer it to be a tributary to strangers." There was no contradiction in his claiming simultaneously to be "English," "Welsh," a "Briton," and a "patriot," an ideological contortion that is made possible only by the dynastic loyalty which subsumed Welshness into "Britishness." While the two countries never approached the structure of a true "composite monarchy" on Continental lines, at least the princely cult kept a Welsh political identity in being. The tradition can be traced into the next century, with the opposition "patriot" propaganda associated with the court of Prince Frederick in the 1730s. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, furthermore, the "composite monarchy" notion is manifested in the tradition of ethnically based elite military

units pledged to defend the person of the king or the prince, the Scots Guards, Irish Guards, and so on.

We will often find this apparent paradox. Welsh patriotism was a theme in a remarkable variety of political causes, often employing a rhetoric with strong nationalistic undercurrents; but these were ignored in practice. This especially applies to the celebration of the popular holiday of St. David's Day, which became the partisan weapon of various British political causes. In the 1640s, the feast acquired strongly royalist associations, natural enough in view of the puritan hostility to saints' days of any kind. Later in the century, the celebration of "Wales" became especially attached to the person of the Prince of Wales. But who exactly was this Prince? Jacobites naturally had their own views on this question after 1688, and held appropriate pro-Stuart celebrations on the first of March. The political rhetoric was predictable, but it is interesting that the Jacobites felt that the festival was worth stealing. In response, Whig groups like the London-based Society of Ancient Britons held their own counter-demonstrations to assert Hanoverian claims after 1714. Welsh causes and issues were subsumed into the political divisions of a wider Britain.

Throughout this period, and well into the eighteenth century, a Welsh nation owed its primary loyalty to both a church and a monarchy that they believed to be thoroughly Welsh, creating a system in which the use of the minority language itself became an act of loyalism rather than dissidence.

IV. A European Setting

To set these British events in context, we might hypothetically project some of our Welsh realities onto a European setting. Just imagine asking a French historian if that government ever contemplated a vernacular liturgy for its Breton or Occitan subjects. Even less likely, try finding a Continental government coexisting happily with a fervently loyal local elite, which happened to speak a minority language, and which happily cultivated that minority culture. Focus, indeed, on the decade of the 1640s, when Welsh cultural pride and patriotism were mined so enthusiastically by the Stuarts for the purposes of imperial nationalism. What was happening elsewhere in Europe at this time? Under the strain of war and fiscal crisis, the great powers were staggering, and in some cases, nationalist voices were being heard. Portugal broke free from Spain in 1640, and Catalonia revolted at this time. Meanwhile, the French government was continuing its prolonged struggle to reduce the provincial liberties of Brittany, and as we will see, the small nation of Bohemia was at just this time undergoing a cultural catastrophe quite reminiscent of Ireland's. Generally, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were a dreadful time for the "pygmy nations." Europe's major empires progressively grew and consolidated, a trend that culminated in the destruction of Poland from the 1760s onwards, while internal policies tended to reduce or abolish local autonomy.

To understand these long term trends, the changing role of monarchy must be appreciated. Virtually all the powers of seventeenth century Europe were to some degree composite states, and they comprised diverse populations, many of whom had recent memories of independent statehood, monarchy or even empire. The French had Breton and Occitan; the Spanish Catalan and Basque; even the Netherlands had four or five languages in

the early seventeenth century (Dutch, French, Oosters, Frisian, Low German); and pockets of Wendish and other Slavic tongues survived in Brandenburg and neighboring German states. In retrospect, it is exceedingly difficult to imagine how these larger states maintained their existence. Why did catastrophes like those experienced in Spain in the 1640s not occur more frequently? Why did the various nations not seek to escape from their respective captivities? We remember the description of Czarist Russia as the “prison house of nations.”

Of course, the answer in many cases is rather like that of the Welsh, that small nations had no need to “escape” as long as their basic customs, religion and language were respected, and as long as they retained at least the fiction of participation in the monarchy. While everyone knew that the overlord of Bohemia or Hungary was a German-speaking Habsburg emperor, there was the comfort that at least he had been duly elected King of Bohemia, King of Hungary, and maintained the appropriate courts and traditions in those lands. Generally speaking, the Habsburgs or Bourbons, like the Stuarts, recognized the importance of respecting those diverse identities - or did so at least until the end of the sixteenth century. You may remember Charles V, who spoke French to men, Italian to women, Latin to God, and German to his horse. Charles’s nephew Maximilian II even learned Czech.

Where things went wrong, and what turned Welsh conditions into Irish, was the matter of religion, and the sense of absolute necessity that whatever their dress or language, all must share the same religion as the ruler. In Wales, matters were simple: the state church was the religion of the monarchy, which was also that of the nation, and was offered in the familiar language: what could be simpler or saner? Cottage, throne and altar lived in harmony. In Ireland, however, matters were very different, and in most of Europe, the seventeenth century was a time of religious wars and conquests. In Ireland, Protestants were the oppressors, but elsewhere the sides were reversed. In the Empire, the militant new Catholicism which penetrated the upper classes from the 1580s had a devastating effect on older ideas of local autonomy and local cultures. The conflict first became apparent in Inner Austria at the end of the sixteenth century, where the region of Styria became a testing ground for a vision on monolithic orthodoxy enforced by expulsions and bookburning. As the Habsburgs forced the elites to convert, so the process of reconversion proceeded apace, supported by the papal shocktroops of the Jesuit order, and Prince Ferdinand. The Styrian pattern provided a blueprint for later campaigns, most dramatically in Bohemia. Here, the Empire’s need to crush Protestantism in the 1620s led to Ferdinand’s centralizing revolution, in which the traditional contract between king and people was revoked, the native aristocracy uprooted, and a new German elite imported. Meanwhile, a constitutional revolution destroyed the autonomy of local institutions, including the power of the Diet to regulate residence in the kingdom, and the German language now, for the first time, enjoyed equal status with Czech. Nor did Bohemia retain the right to “assent” to the new emperor, as the sovereign now ruled by heredity alone. By 1651, the regime was declaring that “all must be of the Catholic religion, and no non-Catholic shall be suffered.” The nation’s population fell by perhaps a half between 1618 and 1648.

The cultural consequences were appalling - and in astonishing contrast to the vernacular triumphs of contemporary Wales. From the 1620s, the Jesuits led an attempt to

extirpate the Czech culture associated with Protestantism, and Sir George Clark has written that "In no modern language are so many books known to have disappeared." As Derek Sayer has commented, "The written word was. . . ruthlessly controlled." The Jesuit Antonin Konias (1691-1760) compiled a "Key" of suspicious or prohibited books, basically anything written in Czech between 1414 and 1635, and this Key became the main censors' manual. Konias himself boasted of having burned thirty thousand books over a career of thirty years wandering the Bohemian countryside. Though an alternative Habsburg/Catholic Czech patriotism did emerge, it was a flawed and contradictory invention, and even the leading defenses of the Czech vernacular were written in the safe medium of Latin. Czech was seen as hostile to the church and the dynasty, just as totally as the Welsh language was seen as a firm buttress of the established order in Britain. The age of Antonin Konias was also that of Edward Lhuyd and Theophilus Evans!

Nor was the Bohemian experiment the last of its kind. In the 1660s and 1670s, Hungary fought desperately to avoid a similar "Bohemian solution," to "put the Hungarians into Czech trousers." In the process, the rebels encountered some of the nearest Continental analogies to the Tudor wars in Ireland, and the 1670s are known in Hungary as the "ten dark years." The imperial adviser Cardinal Kollonics is said to have conceived a plan whereby the Hungarian nation would be rendered "first obedient, then destitute, and finally Catholic." The response was savage: by 1682, the nationalist rebel Imre Thokoly was seeking a treaty with the Muslim Turks rather than face subjection by the Catholic Habsburgs. Though peace was restored in Hungary, Germanization proceeded apace. During the following century, the proportion of Magyar speakers fell from 80 to 40 percent of the population.

Religious conformity of necessity demanded political uniformity, and the destruction of the comforting fig-leaf of dual monarchy. Next came the repeal of local liberties and customs, and a stigmatization of native language and culture. In this context, a Catholic state had perforce to be a centralized monarchy, administered by and for German-speakers, which it essentially remained until 1848. The monarchy, meanwhile, emphasized traditions and myths that were devotional rather than territorial, associating Habsburg rulers with images of the Virgin Mary and the Blessed Sacrament. The Baroque architectural glories that we associate with the Prague of the later seventeenth century and early eighteenth century should properly be seen as the physical manifestations of an ideology of occupation, and of cultural subjection. As with Jacobins, Bolsheviks, or any modern totalitarian party, the quest for religious uniformity demanded the obliteration of local regimes and regional distinctions. As in Ireland, devotional monarchy was the fatal enemy of local cultures and symbols.

And although the religious and political labels are reversed, we can see a close parallel in the eighteenth century, when very different ideologies demanded both political and cultural conformity. Enlightenment political thought associated local privileges and liberties with the abuses of "feudalism," and this trend culminated in the French Jacobin rule of the 1790s. Among the more severely persecuted were the Bretons, who stubbornly retained the traditional identification of religion and monarchism, and Brittany's people and culture suffered terribly at the hands of the Jacobins.

V. Conclusion

I have used the British experience to explore a number of possible models of national integration, both optimistic and pessimistic, and a number of lessons might be drawn. Undoubtedly, the creation of a distinctively Welsh church was a remarkable achievement, which did much to ensure that one of the most linguistically alien and distinctive components of any European state achieved political integration with astonishingly little difficulty or unrest. However, the central conclusion concerns the role of monarchy itself. Though individual kings might make disastrous and intolerant decisions, the institution of monarchy offered the potential to satisfy an astonishingly broad range of cultural aspirations, and permitted very diverse ethnic and linguistic groups to see a given dynasty as the epitome of their nation, no less than the national state. When we study the rituals, pageantry and mythology of kingship in this period, we are not merely considering the rather precious pastimes of the court elite, but the central reality of statecraft.

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