

which the Jacobite threat, especially in its cultural and ideological manifestations, demanded a response from Hanoverian propagandists and so influenced their representation of the regime. Glickman, too, is one of the few contributors to devote any serious attention to Scotland, casting some light on the distinctiveness of the Hanoverian relationship with that kingdom. In the light of recent interest in “three kingdoms” history, especially among early modernists, it is perhaps surprising that this volume does not include any more sustained attempt to engage with the relationship between the Hanoverian monarchy and its other kingdoms. Such a contribution would undoubtedly have added further dimensions to the “various and often conflicting ways in which it presented itself to the outside world and in turn was portrayed by other groups” (22). However, this omission should not distract from the achievements of an impressive volume, which makes an important and original contribution to eighteenth-century political history. It is precisely the kind of volume that will remind historians why they can only lament the demise of Ashgate Publishing.

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MATTHEW LOCKWOOD. *The Conquest of Death: Violence and the Birth of the Modern British State*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017. Pp. 404. \$85.00 (cloth).
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Matthew Lockwood’s brilliant *Conquest of Death: Violence and the Birth of the Modern British State* takes aim at—or, perhaps better, seeks to complement—the “bellecist” interpretation of the rise of the modern state. Charles Tilly, Michael Mann, and John Brewer are the leading exponents of the view (to which I belong) that state competition demanded increases in fiscal extraction, thereby creating the bureaucratic bones of state power. Lockwood argues that statehood, seen in Weberian terms as the monopoly of violence, has an internal dimension that needs to be considered quite as much. His analysis of early modern English data, drawn largely from five counties, is so convincing that we now need to think about the rise of the modern state in entirely different terms.

In the first chapter, Lockwood is concerned with the restrictions to violence perpetrated by overmighty subjects. The third book of Adam Smith’s *Wealth of Nations* (1776) had claimed that great aristocrats lost their power when cities were able to provide goods, at times as trivial as silver shoe buckles, on which they could spend all their money—rather than spending it upon retainers. This is a gorgeous theory, but one always felt it to be wrong. Lockwood is altogether more convincing. The Tudors restricted retaining, carefully at first, and added to it recruitment for local affairs amongst the newly educated gentry, the control of weapons, the creation of armed forces no longer dependent on feudal levies, and much more vigorous activity of permanently centralized courts. But this chapter almost stands alone, for the rest of the book is a hymn of praise to a seemingly unlikely and certainly hitherto neglected figure: the coroner.

Coroners investigated deaths, and in so doing they produced a mass of evidence that Lockwood interprets with enormous skill. He makes three central claims. First, coroners had considerable powers, and they were, at least in comparative perspective, relatively thick on the ground—eighteen were present at a single moment in sixteenth-century Sussex. They were recruited from those with means, usually landed, and they were literate and so able to read handbooks of advice. The position was largely unpaid, but it seems not to have led to much corruption—or so one of the many ingenious data sources, a huge analysis of seventeenth

and eighteenth century newspapers, seems so suggest. Second, the coroners were highly effective. For one thing, they were highly skilled at assembling evidence—a matter on which Lockwood concentrates because he is keen to refute the view that cases could not be accurately determined before the appearance of modern forensic skills. For another, juries were selected with great skill, joining those with local knowledge with others from the large area so as to ensure a measure of impartiality. Crucially, Lockwood demonstrates in chapter 4, “One Concept of Justice,” that all of this led to an increase in central state power. Jury members were anyway attached to the central state, and any sign of communal standards triumphing led coroners to overrule their juries. Further, coroners played important roles as bearers of evidence in other courts, thereby ensuring the further penetration of the tentacles of the state. All of this paints a picture of a high level of surveillance of the local population by a state linked and working through the natural party of order in country and city. Third, coroners were themselves subjected to continual surveillance on the part of the central state, largely through Star Chamber and King’s Bench, with a large role being played by the Royal Almoner. Such surveillance had an obvious cause: the possibility of the crown gaining forfeits in the case of certain crimes.

If in the main part of the book Lockwood offers a slightly static picture of this powerful trinity—personnel, the ability to detect, and oversight from the center—at work between about 1530 and 1640, in the last chapters he is more concerned with variation. For a little more than a century after the conflict between king and parliament central control weakened, not least due to the abolition of Star Chamber. But Lockwood is able to show that the work of coroners was by then so deeply implicated in social life that it continued more or less unabated. The monopoly of violence had been achieved and he sees no weakening of state power. This case is made especially powerfully in a sociologically very sophisticated chapter in which he reviews the frequently made claim that there was a crisis of violence, driven by economic need, in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, followed by a decline in violence thereafter. The rise in violence was probably the result of better reporting of crime, that is, an artifact of statistics, and it is very unlikely that homicides in particular were related to economic need; equally, the decline may well be best explained by the period in which coroners did their work in the relative absence of central control. A final substantive chapter looks at the legislation of 1752, going on to calculate its effects. Pay for all cases considered (not just as previously only for homicides) and for travel encouraged coroner activism; oversight remained, but it was more often in the hands of justices of the peace.

One of Max Weber’s claims concerned the difference between law in England and on the continent, and one would love to have this investigated properly by historians. Lockwood makes a start in his conclusion, suggesting that there may well have been no difference—in so doing allying himself with the view of Smith and David Hume. Still, more comparative research here is needed—and it is made possible by having the English building block analyzed so impressively.

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PETER MARSHALL. *Heretics and Believers: A History of the English Reformation*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017. Pp. 672. \$40.00 (cloth).
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Peter Marshall’s *Heretics and Believers: A History of the English Reformation* is quite an impressive book. Marshall tells the story (or better, stories) of the English Reformation at a level of