

are a limiting condition of postlapsarian moral identity.

Poole's conclusion separates his argument from both reader response theory and from the received "Christian Tradition" as defined by Patrides and other intellectual historians. Poole reminds us that the Milton presented in *Milton and the Idea of the Fall* is dynamic and "potentially dangerous," even when "located against a background of countless other dynamic, potentially dangerous projects" (195). In measuring Milton against his primarily sectarian religious contemporaries, the book's thesis complicates itself unnecessarily. On the one hand, radical theologies and narrative versions of the Fall frame Milton's own rendering, yet they are also disconnected from it. As Poole notes, "Milton is in general very suspicious of all the types of thinking we earlier surveyed emanating from the 'radical' milieu" (190). That said, *Milton and the Idea of the Fall* tries to press into one space what could easily be considered two separate topics, each worthy of book-length study and dependent upon one another only to a limited extent. On the other hand, Poole's position that the "reading of Genesis 1-3 was one of the defining acts of early-modernity" (195) justifies the linking of Milton and his contemporaries yet shifts the argumentative axis of the book as a whole. Structural issues aside, readers will appreciate Poole's sensitivity to radical theologies and to the "paparazzi" which documented these positions, as well as his acute demonstration of Milton's construction of the elusive causality of evil.

Philip Schwyzer. *Literature, Nationalism, and Memory in Early Modern England and Wales*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. xi + 194 pp. \$75.00.
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Philip Schwyzer's fascinating account of British nationalism in early modern England offers historians and literary critics a range of insights about how English identity is predicated on the legacy of a deeply embedded cultural relationship with Wales. Arguing that Englishness is not self-generated but relational instead (3), Schwyzer describes national consciousness in Tudor England as "British" as opposed to "English" in order to expand the parameters of what counts as nationalism during the early modern period. While serving English interests, "Britishness" (6), or British nationalism, "took most

of its facts, many of its tropes, and even much of its tone from Welsh sources" (6).

While a sense of English national identity may have served the needs of the Tudor political and religious establishments during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the desire to define what counted as English was, at its core, more psychological, according to Schwyzer: the desire that "the past may be recaptured, that what is forever lost may be found, that the dead may in some sense live again" (10). This longing for the English to re-animate the past was made more difficult, however, because they had no self-evident link to the ancient people of pre-Anglo-Saxon-Britain, while the Welsh were "still speaking the same language, practicing the same customs, and inhabiting the same land" (7). Schwyzer's book, then, is an account of how English intellectuals ranging from Edmund Spenser to James I, from Robert Aske to John Bale, and from William Baldwin to William Shakespeare bridged that gap.

While *Literature, Nationalism, and Memory* examines major English authors in its interrogation of the difficult process of shaping a British national consciousness, Schwyzer suggests in chapter three that the challenge for the Welsh to forge its own link with its ancient past was daunting. To sixteenth-century Welsh scholars, their country's history had suffered "a succession of bibliocausts" (81) that made reassembling the nation's bibliographic heritage more difficult "than that facing the English after the Reformation" (80). Chapter three concerns itself with the efforts of antiquarian John Prise and Bishop Richard Davies to recover the lost records of ancient Welsh history. Without written accounts of an authentic Welsh past—particularly in the form of the vernacular British Bible and the ancient account of British history *vetustissimus liber*—"the Welsh past would remain irrecoverable" (84) and the "nostalgic longing constitutive of nationalism" (84) would persist. According to Schwyzer, the lost books "facilitated the English appropriation of British antiquity" (84), as men such as Prise and Davies provided the "raw materials" (84) for the construction of a Britishness "hostile to a separate sense of Welshness" (84). Schwyzer's insight into this act of appropriation is that within the hostile rewriting of Welsh history, however, a uniquely Welsh identity survived and resisted appropriation.

Edmund Spenser is a central figure in Schwyzer's account of the development of a unified Britishness that served English interests more than the Welsh. The book's first chapter argues that Spenser was the inheritor of the

spirit that animated Welsh prophetic poetry. By tracing images of fire and blood that appear in Welsh verse that celebrates ancient bloodlines, Schwyzer shows how an anti-English sentiment in Welsh prophetic poetry became by the fifteenth century a link between English kingship and ancient Welsh history that legitimized Tudor claims to the throne. By the time Henry VIII broke with Rome, what was a vague espousal of a link to ancient British history “took on an aggressive ideological form” (31). Schwyzer contends that the violent upheavals in the 1530s and 1540s—the Reformation, the union of Wales and England, and the battles for Scotland—“were represented as a restoration of ancient (British) rights and privileges” (31). Book III, canto iii of Spenser’s *Faerie Queene* poetically re-imagines the Welsh prophetic flame promising a British ascendancy, turning it into a “spark of fire” (l. 48) that, although coming from a Welsh source, is “quintessentially English” (43). In Spenser’s vision of ancient history and national identity, England and Britain “turn out to be coextensive and coterminous” (44). Schwyzer claims that Spenser’s insistence that ethnic difference be subsumed under an English-centered Britishness is what motivates *View of the Present State of Ireland*.

Spenser appears again in chapter four, which argues that Britain became haunted by ghosts that were essential to its development. Ghosts that lingered as part of religious tradition before the Reformation were relocated after the Chantries Act of 1547 and “re-infiltrated Tudor literature and life . . . in the guise of distinctively national spirits” (99) emanating from the “long-vanished nation of Britain” (99). Schwyzer details the psychological and social ramifications of eliminating Purgatory and claims that the authors of *A Mirror for Magistrates*, John Bale, and Edmund Spenser provided new space for the banished ghosts to exert their influence. In the case of Spenser, for example, his *Ruins of Time* explicitly links ghostly possession and possession of the British past. The chapter’s striking observation about the shifting status of the literary spirits after the Reformation is that they “grow ever more ancient, more British, and more nationally-minded,” as Purgatory is “reconceived as the space of the nation” (125).

John Bale is another prominent figure who, according to Schwyzer, shaped how the English related to its British past. Chapter two sets Bale’s representations of British nationalism against those of Robert Aske, a lawyer, military figure, and ideological leader of the Pilgrimage of Grace. Bale, an advocate of post-Reformation British nationalism, praised the nation in texts such as

The Laboryouse Journey in Petrarchan terms. The British nation that Bale encouraged his readers to love “was not a land anyone could inhabit in the sixteenth century” (51). Instead, it belonged to the distant “pre-Saxon past” (51) that was “founded in the unfulfillable longing for the irrevocably object” (75). According to Schwyzer, Bale’s sense of British history most resembles modern forms of national nostalgia. Aske, on the other hand, was the first “English patriot” (50) to mourn to loss of medieval England. Chapter two claims that because of Aske’s intense affiliation with Yorkshire regionalism, his vision of the British nation—though glancing and often unfavorable—was nonetheless “unmistakably and quintessentially English” (51).

A major strength of *Literature, Nationalism, and Memory* is that it combines literary history with incisive literary criticism. Two chapters on Shakespeare demonstrate most vividly Schwyzer’s abilities as a literary critic. Both chapters—one on the various forms of nostalgia in *Henry V* and the other on the rapid disappearance of British nationalism from *King Lear* to *Cymbeline*—are significant achievements, offering new insights into the plays and their relationship to a dynamic and evolving English identity. According to Schwyzer, “the move from *Henry V* to *Lear* is the move from a community united by longing for what has been lost to a communion within the moment of loss itself” (169). By the time of *Cymbeline*, however, Shakespeare had rejected the idea of the nation—its poetic appeal diminished by the very real sense of “national consummation” (174) taking place under James I. The threat that Britain was “in danger of becoming a place on the modern map” (174) caused Shakespeare to make England strange again, setting two of his late plays in ancient Britain almost completely disregarding his historical sources.

Literature, Nationalism, and Memory will appeal to early modern historians and literary critics alike. For a book that accomplishes so much, its slender size—under two-hundred pages—belies its complexity and nuance. With his detailed literary history of the Welsh contribution to English national identity, Schwyzer compels us to reconsider what counts as English nationalism during the Renaissance.

Beth Lynch. *John Bunyan and the Language of Conviction*. Studies in Renaissance Literature, Volume 15. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2004. xiii + 183 pp. \$75.00. Review by CHRISTOPHER E. GARRETT, TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY.