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# Winston Churchill's *Divi Britannici* (1675) and Archipelagic Royalism

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**Abstract:** *Divi Britannici* (1675) is a major restoration history that deserves to be more widely known. The work's author, Sir Winston Churchill (1620–1688), is certainly less well-known than his celebrated descendant of the same name. Seldom mentioned in discussions of seventeenth-century historiography, *Divi Britannici* can be read alongside contemporary histories, including John Milton's *History of Britain* (1670). If British historians have generally overlooked *Divi Britannici* then Churchill's work did come to the notice of Michel Foucault, who recognized its arguments around conquest, rights and sovereignty as crucial to the development of political thought in the period. In this essay we excavate Churchill's arguments, sift through the scattered critical legacy, and locate *Divi Britannici* both within the context of Restoration histories, with their warring interpretations of England and Britain's past, and within a tradition of British historiography that associates monarchical rule with national stability. What scholars have missed, however, is the propensity of Churchill to align the restored Stuart monarchy with a form of ethnic co-operation between Scotland, Ireland and England, designed to counter the perceived divisions which were exacerbated by the policies of Cromwell and the parliamentarians.

**Keywords:** Winston Churchill; Restoration; British history; archipelagic; royalist; Empire; seventeenth century



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## 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Few people know that there are two Sir Winston Churchills. One was a member of the not-quite-aristocracy who made significant political inroads as an MP, spent a portion of his life in Ireland, and wrote a well-known history of Britain after a period of global warfare. He lived, however, in the seventeenth-century, a time before cigars, spitfires, and other props of modernity had helped transform his descendant into an icon of twentieth-century history. In this article, we suggest some ways in which engagement with the early modern Churchill's work of British history, *Divi Britannici* (Churchill 1675), might contribute to a more thorough understanding of archipelagic nationhood in the Restoration period. As a Royalist historiography which aims to outline "*a Patern of Duty from the Ancients*" (sig.A1v), Churchill's text is more attuned to the political and ideological fluctuations of its own time than readers tend to acknowledge, competing with alternative constructions of Britishness by writers such as Richard Baker, John Milton, and Edward Hyde, 1st Earl of Clarendon.<sup>2</sup> These figures—more celebrated historians than Churchill, both in the Renaissance and subsequently—were producing chronologies of varying factional stripes, each aiming to wrest control of a national narrative disrupted by prolonged civil warfare, archipelagic tensions, and the decade of complex Republican rule. By homing in on *Divi Britannici* we can gain fresh insights into seventeenth-century representations of nationhood and the early reception history of Restoration historiographical scholarship.<sup>3</sup> The terminus point of English history for Churchill is a Scottish dynasty which is "*both English and Saxon . . . Britain and Norman*" (p. 328), offering a more ethnically heterogenous model of national identity than readers approaching the text for the first time might think. Churchill's history

appeared in the same year as *Britannia*, the pioneering road atlas that was the culmination of research by Scottish geographer and royal cosmographer John Ogilby.<sup>4</sup> Like Ogilby's work, *Divi Britannici* promoted the restored monarchy as a salve to heal the archipelagic and ethnic wounds which had been opened up during the Interregnum.

## 2. Biography

Winston Churchill was born in 1620 to a minor gentry family in Dorset. Like many young men from his background, he was educated at Oxford before studying law at Lincoln's Inn. Churchill was a royalist in the conflict between the three kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland in the 1640s, although he did not appear to distinguish himself enough to attract the ire of parliament; in 1651 he was fined a relatively modest sum, which he paid off quickly. After the Restoration, Churchill's loyalty to the crown was rewarded when he was elected Member of Parliament for Weymouth, in 1661. Other benefits soon followed, including the granting of armigerous status in 1662, and a knighthood in 1663. He was elected MP for Lyme Regis in 1685. As a paid-up Stuart loyalist Churchill's fortunes were immeasurably enhanced by the patronage of James, Duke of York, who fostered the military career of Churchill's son, John, later Duke of Marlborough, as well as supporting his other sons, Charles and George, in their endeavours. The link between the two men became familial as well as political. Churchill's daughter Arabella was the mistress of the Duke of York from the mid-1660s. Churchill's extended family, therefore, benefited from its close public and private ties with James, sharing his rise and political misfortunes, and aligning their own dynastic prospects to his royal career. Churchill died on 26 March 1688. He did not live to see James II's low-key deposition during the Williamite takeover of royal authority in what has come to be known as the Glorious Revolution, and the subsequent oscillation in his children's fortunes.<sup>5</sup>

In terms of his politics, it is clear that Churchill was a highly committed royalist, supporting the Stuart family, to whom he was tied to by blood, throughout the early decades of the Restoration. *Divi Britannici* is broadly commensurate with this ideological view, seeking to validate the constitutional legitimacy of kingship in the English state. It is thus a Restoration history in a way that neither Baker's nor Milton's can claim to be, as both were written predominantly in the 1640s, before the decade-long rule of parliament.<sup>6</sup> In the dedication to Charles II which opens *Divi Britannici*, Churchill defines the history genre as a "Restorative", in which the monarch as ideal reader is able to extract political wisdom from the examples of his forebears. Reading historiography is a process "by which some Princes have recover'd the Health of their Bodies, others the Distempers of their Mind, many have learn'd to settle, and most to preserve the Weal of their Estates" (A1r). Churchill's preface interprets the fluctuations of national life through the teleological endpoint of the restored crown. It also establishes a framework in which the general reader is slid into a position of implied subjecthood, aligning their national identity, as an enthusiast of English history, with the political health of the monarchy.

Churchill adds substance to his model of royalist historiography by alluding to the imagery of Stuart genealogical portraits and prints. Charles II is described as "not unlike those Pictures of some Illustrious Personages, which containing divers Figures, do one way shew the Faces of sundry of their Ancestors, but another way that of their own only, in the Circumference whereof all the former are very plainly comprehended" (A1v). The ekphrastic imagery aligns *Divi Britannici* with other representative media in seventeenth-century culture which are designed to craft a benevolent portrait of Charles and his court, the most notable of which is arguably Dryden's panegyric *Astraea Redux* (Dryden 1660).<sup>7</sup> As an embodied culmination of the virtues of his "Ancestors", Churchill suggests that Charles can draw on a reserve of historical exemplars in order to shape his future political conduct. As this stock is unavailable to other political leaders, such as a parliamentarian representative like Cromwell, a small cabal of elected officials, or even a rival claimant, historiography becomes an ideologically loaded resource, one which can reinforce a view of Royalism as politically desirable because it has proven to be durable. By contrast, portraits

of Cromwell are fleeting. As Laura Lunger Knoppers remarks in relation to one portrait of the Lord Protector: “Some time in the 1650s, an unknown engraver executed a double portrait of Oliver Cromwell and his wife, Elizabeth [...] What any student of art history recognizes [...] is that this engraving is based on earlier paintings, not of Oliver Cromwell, but of Charles I.”<sup>8</sup> This is one way in which Churchill’s *Divi Britannici* attempts to stake a claim over the development of British history in the mid-1670s: by using the medium of historiography to exemplify the hefty backstory of its chief recipient, Charles II, and shape the national identity of England in the image of his near in-laws, the Stuarts.

### 3. The Norman Conquest Unyoked

*Divi Britannici* is in part the story of the make-up of Britain, so that we learn “there hath been just 6 Dynasties of 6 several Nations; that is to say, Britains, Romans, Saxons, Danes, Normans, Scots” (p. 48). The breadth of the book has meant it could be drawn on for a variety of purposes, with its ethnographic excavations of particular interest both to contemporaries and later commentators. Michel Foucault turned to *Divi Britannici*, for example, in a discussion of right and sovereignty, coining the term “Normanism” to capture the process whereby the supposed indigenous liberties of the Saxon English were usurped by the quasi-absolutist ideology of the invading Norman regime:

When the lower courts insisted on enforcing the “common law” in the face of royal statutes, they were enforcing the rights of Parliament, which was the true heir to the Saxon tradition, and resisting the abuses of power committed by the Norman monarchy and the “Normanism” that had developed after Hastings and the coming of William. The contemporary struggle, that of the seventeenth century, was also an ongoing struggle against Normanism.<sup>9</sup>

A notable feature of Churchill’s narrative is his refusal of the Norman Yoke as marking the absolute subjection of the English people. The anonymous political pamphlet *Argumentum Anti-Normannicum* (1682) identified Churchill as an authority in this regard. Thus “the Opinion of Sir Winston Churchill” is offered to demonstrate that “King William did not Cancel and Abolish all the English Laws”; rather, he “[guarded] his Prerogative within that Citadel of the Burrough Law (as they called it) from whence, as often as they began to mutiny, he battered them with their own Ordnance” (pp. 48–49).<sup>10</sup> In Churchill’s view, the monarch worked within the parameters of the laws of his new nation, using maneuvers which “look’d like Absolute” (pp. 48–49) to bind the populace by the rules they themselves had instituted. Churchill’s business-as-usual view of the Norman not-quite-Conquest could of course be interpreted in two ways, republican, or royalist. Churchill’s account of a Norman accommodation to the English common law, however, manages to offer a synthesis of these approaches which is evidently palatable to a Restoration readership, subject to varying accounts of the post-war political inheritance. It also suggests that Churchill’s historiography is not only a contemporary authority for the archipelagic political situation in the 1670s, but one which nuances an implied opposition to a parliamentary vision of intrinsic English sovereignty.<sup>11</sup>

At several points in *Divi Britannici*, James VI and I of Scotland and England is praised for possessing an unusually confluent bloodline which mixes several different ethnicities. The Stuarts lay claim to British indigeneity via their commingling with the Scots and their return North from Normandy as ethnic Britons. The ethnographic structure of *Divi Britannici* is therefore an attempt to champion the cumulative political and nationalistic role of the Stuarts, who embody multiple strands of indigenous and migratory imperialism at various points in the history of Britain. As a dynasty which is ethnically storied, the Stuarts are coterminous with a Restoration model of archipelagic nationhood which is ethnically porous rather than pure:

The Normans (so call’d by the French, in respect of the Northern Clime from whence they came, heretofore call’d Scandia, since Norway) were another Branch of the antient Cimbri, seated near the frozen Sea, whose Country being too barren

to nourish so fruitful a People, they disonerated their Multitudes, wheresoever force could make way for them. (p. 189)

Although the Normans are described as taking their new territories by “force”, there is also a sense that their arrival in England is closer to an ethnic return than a colonial invasion. This is one key aspect in which Churchill’s take on English ethnography dovetails with that of John Milton in the *History of Britain*, published five years before *Divi Britannici* in 1670: “But if the Saxons [...] came most of them from Jutland and Anglen, a part of Denmarke, as Danish Writers affirm, and that Danes and Normans are the same; then in this invasion, Danes drove out Danes, thir own posterity. And Normans afterwards, none but antienter Normans”.<sup>12</sup> What for Milton marks the persistence of tyranny, for Churchill denotes the staying power of monarchy, particularly the recently restored Stuarts. Churchill’s phrase “Northern Clime” is evocative of Scotland as much as “Norway” and even Yorkshire, given the upbringing in Temple Newsam of James’s father Henry, Lord Darnley.<sup>13</sup> Likewise, the “frozen Sea” could refer to the punishing climate north of the English border. Churchill depicts the Norman regime change in broadly welcoming terms, stating that “it cannot be thought that the English lost any honour, by mingling blood with men of that Quality and Condition” (p. 190). Indeed, the reference to the Normans as derived from the “antient Cimbri” is another type of ethnic return, as Churchill uses the “Common Name of Cimbri” (p. 103) to refer to the Angles, who are broadly analogous in this description to the English. The internecine process of English colonisation is ameliorated by “mingling blood”, which is almost a re-mingling when the different groups who arrive in the British Isles are traced back to their territorial source. Churchill’s conceptualisation of the Normans as the forebears of the Stuarts, therefore, is a subtle technique in positioning Charles II as more racially variegated than the disaffected parliamentarians whom he has replaced. It also implies that the Stuart monarchy is best positioned to provide a basis for political consensus in the volatile archipelagic context of post-Interregnum Ireland, Scotland and England. In relation to the Normanist flavour of much of the narrative of *Divi Britannici*, we can see that the current royal dynasty emerges from within a nascent territorial Britain and, as Britons and Germanic Cimbri, effect the control of the laws. This accounts for the synthesis of the crown with the trope of parliamentary indigeneity which evidently caught the attention of the anonymous scholar who wrote *Argumentum Anti-Normannicum*, published about seven years after Churchill’s historiography first appeared in print.

Although the Stuarts had Germanic heritage through the Norman-Cimbri line, Churchill is dismissive and even scathing about the Anglo-Saxons. This should not surprise early modernists who are aware of the anti-Saxonism of figures such as Spenser and Milton.<sup>14</sup> The Anglo-Saxons, with their “dull Phlegmatick Complexions” (p. 192) and isolationist tendencies, are loosely evocative of Protestant parliamentarians in political discourse. In 1656, for example, the anonymous author of *An Historical Discourse of Parliaments* encouraged readers to trace the current rights of the commons to “the old saxon Parliaments” of pre-Conquest England.<sup>15</sup> When describing the origin of the Anglo-Saxons, Churchill outlines an ambiguously loaded aetiology:

Successors to the Romans were the English, a People of so ancient an Extract, that he that will trace their Original, must follow it (as Berosus doth) into the Flood; for as they were ever famous by Sea, so they deduce their Pedigree from the Universal Deluge. (p. 103)

The metaphor evoked by the word “deluge” points to an aggressive expansionist tendency which is not as generative as the comingling practiced by the other peoples who have populated England; peoples “who had but a little before mingled blood in the Field, did not long after do the same in their Families, mixing names almost as soon as they had mixt Nations” (p. 74). The sea metaphor is politicised through its propensity to suggest instability: “the Ocean (the Emblem of human frailty) has its Ebbs and Flows, its Falls and Swellings, so hath it its Turnings, Tumbings, and Revolutions” (p. 149). The sea as an image for upheaval is a common political metaphor in early modern literature.

What is telling here is Churchill's use of the word "Revolutions", which recalls the events of the 1640s and 1650s. The Anglo-Saxons are marked by a commitment to the system of elective monarchy, which is unable to offer the same level of stability as hereditary monarchy; the "unnaturally natural" reign of such an elected ruler "introduced such a kind of co-equality betwixt the Kings, and those of the first rank of their Subjects, that they that were nearest to the Throne, often took the boldness to step in first" (p. 104). The vision of Anglo-Saxon or English sovereignty as susceptible to usurpation and tyranny generates a turbulent state in which a king can be replaced by his strongest rival, drawn from co-equal sovereign bodies such as parliament. The subsequent instability in the line of succession breaks familial ties, meaning that elective monarchs cannot bring the same consistency, and depth of history, to bear on governmental rule. Churchill's decision to define the Anglo-Saxons by their adherence to elective monarchy attributes to English politics two features: latent monarchical impulses, and an inability to instantiate lasting rule due to heightened competition. A more successful form of government, Churchill implies, can be found in the Stuarts, who provide the benefits of hereditary succession with a means to consolidate the tensions which have been exacerbated by parliamentary policy over the preceding decades.

#### 4. Scotland

Churchill's account of the "The Sixth Dynasty of Scots" is significant, given that he is ostensibly a champion of the Stuart monarchy, and that the dedicatee of his history is Charles II. The Scots are placed as the final dynasty in the ethnic structural pattern which shapes the historiography of *Divi Britannici*. Churchill's description of the origins of the Scottish people can shed useful light on his conceptualisation of the British nation in a post-Restoration context:

THE Scots would be thought a Branch of the antique Scythian Stock, as well as all other cold Countries, and they have this colour above many others, that as their Ancestors are entituled to as ancient Barbarity as those of any other Nation whatever, so like those rude Scythes, they have always been given to prey upon their Neighbours, and live without themselves, the very sound of their Name giving some semblable Testimony to the certainty of their Genealogy; for the Scythians were heretofore commonly call'd Scolots, which by contraction (not to say corruption) might easily be turn'd into Scots. (p. 323)

The Scots are described as a "mix'd People" who "disburthen'd themselves into the upper part of Albania, now call'd the High-lands" (p. 324). Churchill informs us that the name "Gayothels"—phonetically similar to Gaul—is used to denote ethnic mingling, and "the Irish to this day call the Scotch Tongue Gaidelack, which signifies a Language gather'd out of all Tongues" (p. 324). Churchill repeats his strategy here of associating ethnic groups linked to Stuart heritage with consanguinity and migratory interbreeding. Like the Normans, the Scots are depicted as an aggregated people, emphasised by Churchill when he states that the word Scot as used by the Saxons "signifi'd a Body aggregated out of many Particulars into one" (p. 324). Traits associated with this ethnic identity could be applied to the archipelagic situation in England in the 1660s and 1670s, albeit from a royalist perspective. After the decade-long rule of parliament, archipelagic relations were extremely fractious. Cromwell's brutal policy in Ireland had penalised royalists and confederates alike, a situation which was echoed in Scotland through the defeat of the Catholic Highlanders during the earl of Glencairn's rising (pp. 1653–54). The lingering political tensions between disaffected royalists and their affiliated groups, such as the Scottish Covenanters and the Irish confederates, had pressed the urgency of reconciliation for the Stuarts, whose cause had been covertly championed.<sup>16</sup> Churchill's vision of a heterogenous Stuart bloodline ruling the new, post-Cromwellian nation was not simply a restoration of a royal house, but a model of future political co-operation, in which disparate groups could be reconciled by the monarch, in principle, along sectarian and ethnic lines.

Churchill's depiction of the origin of the Scots leads quickly into an assessment of their recent past and the part they played in the execution of Charles I. The Scots are painted as opportunists who were punished by the "regicides" when they "sold" (p. 326) the king to the English. As a consequence of attempting to solidify their own polity by trading in royalty, the Scots are effectively betrayed by an untrustworthy partner, and compromise their own national integrity as a result:

The *Genius* of the whole Nation of *Scotland* feeling a just reverberation of Divine Vengeance, in being rendred afterward no Kingdom, I might say no People [ . . . ] but a miserable subjected Province to the Republicans of *England*. (p. 326)

Churchill's use of the word "Province" suggests that a kingless Scotland—or a Scotland which measures its fealty by exchange value—is a de facto colony of England. The insular ideology of the Parliamentary state means that a co-operation between nations cannot be facilitated, and indeed is not on the national agenda; rather, Scotland is subsumed. Churchill's political strategy here is quite complex. First, it suggests that Scotland cannot function outside of a monarchical structure. It is either a subordinate "Province" with no autonomy, or it is "crush'd under the ruins of so ill-grounded a Democracy" (p. 357) when attempting to initiate a similar form of government to that of England. Secondly, the pitfalls of an eroded state can be avoided when a Stuart monarch is placed on the throne. Not only will Charles ensure that Scottish sovereignty is respected, but his shared ethnic heritage with the Scots can also facilitate a co-operative model of diplomacy; one opposed to the quasi-colonial policies of the aggressive Cromwellian regime. Churchill's vision of what might be termed "archipelagic royalism" is therefore indicative of a model of nationhood which uses the shared tie of an ethnically diverse monarchy to foster closer bonds.<sup>17</sup> Panegyrics to Charles II in the Restoration period tend to focus on the familial bloodline of the Stuarts and his unimpeachable hereditary claim. The pseudonymous S.P. Philopolites in *Jus gentium, or, Englands birth-right* (1660), for instance, proclaims that "our most gracious Sovereign Charles the second (being descended of the chiefest blood royal of that ancient race) is by the grace of God restored" (p. 8).<sup>18</sup> Churchill's strategy when promoting the Stuarts in *Divi Britannici* is to shift attention away from dynastic blood-right and more toward the family's racial heritage. The shared affiliation with a swathe of peoples throughout the archipelago is a method of signaling a nascent form of national solidarity, in opposition to the divisive archipelagic interventions of the previous regime.

## 5. Ireland

Churchill's exploration of the archipelagic situation in Britain was not confined to Scotland and England alone. He also engaged in subtle ways with the political status and culture of Ireland. As an influential Member of Parliament, Churchill was a key player in the Act of Settlement in 1662, spending seven years in that country from its inception to 1669. His Irish service was controversial, to say the least, but according to William Coxe: "He is praised by the Irish historians, for the share he took in tranquillizing that country, then in a state of commotion".<sup>19</sup> Ireland was in a complex position post-Restoration, having been subject to the earlier 1652 Act of Settlement, which punitively seized the land of Catholic royalists and the "Old English" in order to reward the loyalty of pro-Parliamentarian settlers.<sup>20</sup> Churchill draws on tropes of Irish colonisation when conceptualising his own historiographical project in *Divi Britannici*:

Neither can it reasonably be supposed, that I should further go into the Wild of this History, then I find *vetustatis & veritatis vestigia*; the tract of some that have gone before me: since we have no Land-Marks to guide us, but what have been set up by Strangers, whilst all the Natives have kept themselves out of sight. (p. 41)

The idea of history as untamed territory which, in light of a lack of local knowledge, needs to be navigated with care is evocative of the experiences of English settlers during the Irish settlement, as is the pejorative reference to the "Natives" who keep "themselves

out of sight". The antiquary William Camden, one of Churchill's sources, notably described "Ireland" as "the native country indeed of the wild Irish, and those that be right Scots", painting a picture of a "savage" wasteland in which people "drinke bloud out of the wounds of men slaine".<sup>21</sup> To the historically literate reader, Churchill's phrase "mix'd people" when discussing the Irish would recall the ethnic elision with the Scots as Scythians, as described by writers such as Bacon, Spenser, Holinshed, and their sources Gildas and Tacitus.<sup>22</sup> The representational elision between the two nations through the metaphor of mixing is a further strategy which positions the Stuarts, as representatives of "The Sixth Dynasty of Scots" in the wider structure of *Divi Britannici*, in opposition to Cromwell and his aggressive policies. There are other contemporary allusions to Ireland. An earlier section of *Divi Britannici*, which describes the Romans heterogeneously as "a People mixt Party per Pale, half Latins, and half Sabins" (p. 69), is a fairly clear reference to the Pale, the region of Ireland around Dublin which was traditionally under the control of the crown and was inhabited by a mixture of English Protestant colonists (both parliamentarian and royalist), intermixed "Old English", Scots lowlanders, and the indigenous Irish. Britain is further described by Churchill as "the darling Plantation" (p. 74), establishing a subtle parallel between the socio-ethnic fluidity of Ireland as a cultural space, and a model of English nationhood with the Stuarts at its head: "To say truth this was the darling plantation, and that which therefore they would have call'd Romania i.e., [...] the Roman Island, as the Spaniards since have had their nova Hispania, the French their nova Francia, and We Our new England" (p. 74). The association of Ireland with colonial expansion is even present in the description of the mythical island of Ui Breasail as "*O Brazil*, beyond the Isles of *Arran* (so often discovered and lost again)" (p. 44). As Michael J. Lennon notes, Churchill's interest in the country earned him the nickname "MacChurchill", coined during the debate on the Act of Explanation in the Irish House of Commons.<sup>23</sup> Evidently his contemporaries noted an identification with Ireland and its colonial status in a manner which was markedly different to Protestant ideologues such as Milton.

Churchill does not promote a uniformly tolerant view of Irish culture throughout *Divi Britannici*. There are moments which draw on topoi associated with Hibernophobic rhetoric since at least the sixteenth century. When discussing the Nine Years' War during the reign of Elizabeth, for example, Churchill describes the Irish as "Fleas" and "Vermine" (p. 318) and castigates the "Province of Ulster" as "the sink of Rebellion" (p. 338). Such imagery recalls the dismissive view of the Irish in much literature of the period. The description of the indigenous British as "languish[ing] under the oppression of their boundless liberty" (p. 92) after the withdrawal of Rome also draws on pejorative tropes which were used to justify the brutal process of conquest and settlement in Ireland. In 1664, a third and updated edition of Sir John Davies' *Discoverie of the True Causes why Ireland was never entirely subdued* was published, which outlined a method for colonizing the country, primarily through violence. Davies' recommendation that "a barbarous Country must be first broken by a war, before it will be capable of good Government" testifies to the English belief that the Irish could not rule themselves, despite numerous references throughout the book to Brehon law.<sup>24</sup> The Stuart attitude to the Irish in the 1670s was more complex than it was during the earlier part of the seventeenth-century. In a post-Restoration landscape, Ireland in some sense served as a test-case for the potential of the monarchy to placate the disaffected loyalists throughout the archipelago. Through the 1660s Churchill spent extended periods of time in Ireland as one of the commissioners to oversee the 1662 Act of Settlement. This was a policy whereby the king and privy council addressed the seizure of land by parliamentarian settlers as a result of the earlier settlement bill in 1652. The royalist Act of Settlement, and its successor the Act of Explanation in 1665, aimed to restore the land of those who were loyal to the crown during the period of republican rule.<sup>25</sup> Cromwellian settlers were not necessarily asked to leave but were compelled to give up a third of their land; conversely, dispossessed Catholics had their land returned, in the first instance, if a parcel of the same size could be located elsewhere in the country. This was a contentious policy which led to several years of disruption, particularly as the earlier Act effected only a

partial repeal for those who had lost their land. In turn, the negotiated transactions tended to favour wealthy Catholic royalists, who could afford to pay the fees required to facilitate the displacement of the new settlers.

Churchill's depiction of Ireland can be best understood when placed within this complex political context. For Churchill, Ireland is a contested space, and his elision of the country with colonised global spaces, and deployment of pejorative tropes, suggests that it should be yoked (or re-yoked) to the English crown, in line with the 1541 Act of Kingly Title, which changed a Catholic lordship into a reformed crown colony. It is possible to read the recurring emphasis on the political benefits of miscegenation and comingling throughout the ethnography of *Divi Britannici* as a royalist corollary for Irish politics in the 1660s, including the Acts of Settlement and Explanation, which Churchill worked to reinforce. The aggregated situation in Ireland evidences a pro-Stuart view of archipelagic nationhood, in which the articulation of cross-ethnic fealty is an important feature of the discourse of sectarian reconciliation. When Churchill states that the "rude Natures" and "dull Phlegmatick Complexions" of indigenous groups become "ruddy" (p. 192) through inter-breeding, for example, or that "mixing names almost as soon as they had mixt Nations" leads to a "reciprocality of affection betwixt the Conquerours and the Conquered" (p. 74), or that "inoculated Grafts prove better than those which spring out of the Stock" (p. 104), or "it cannot be thought that the English lost any honour, by mingling blood with men of that Quality and Condition" (p. 190), contemporary readers were likely to have recalled the Irish situation, which was increasingly splintered along cultural, political and religious lines after the successive regime changes of the 1650s and 1660s. We can see an ideology at work here which insists on the dilution of Irish autonomy. Whether in the form of a colonial republic or an imperial monarchy, Ireland remains subject to Anglo-British politics. However, in factoring the necessity for the archipelago to account for its different groups—headed by the royal representative of a race of a "mix'd People" (p. 324)—Churchill offers a different view of nationalism. The cosmopolitan ideology is an extension of royalist control over its immediate neighbours; however, the stress on the value of commingling throughout *Divi Britannici*, as opposed to stark subjugation, acknowledges ethnic heterogeneity as a crucial element in wider national identity in the late seventeenth-century, albeit one which would continue to be fraught for many years.

Churchill is scathing about the Ulster uprising in 1641, particularly the forged declaration from Charles I which was used to galvanise moderate Anglo-Catholics into action:

This Declaration of theirs was written with a Pen of Iron in Letters of Blood, as believing that no Rebels in the World had more to say for themselves then they; at least, that they had much more matter of Justification then either the *Scots* or *English* could pretend to, who justified themselves by feigning only to suspect, what t'other really suffer'd under. Neither perhaps had the World so condemned them (all Circumstances considered) had there not appear'd a Self-condemnation within themselves, by counterfeiting a Commission from the King to justify this their Arming, falsly bragging that the Queen was with them, and that the King would very shortly come to them. (pp. 346–47)

Churchill's central criticism here is of the falsification of the king's assent. This evidently compromises the prerogative of the monarch when handling Irish policy, in ways that subtly allude to a covert Catholic influence; the imagery of counterfeiting, for example, evokes a form of icon-making which is indicative of idolatry.<sup>26</sup> If Churchill resents the Irish rebels' appropriation of the king's name, then he discerns political opportunism in the English anti-monarchists' reaction to the rebellion, making Ireland a pawn in any future political settlement by establishing a bridgehead in that country. The description of the rebels effecting a "Self-condemnation within themselves" is not too dissimilar to the failure of Scotland to establish a "Democracy" (p. 357) after turning Charles over to the parliamentarians. Both nations are placed by Churchill between a rock and a hard place. Either they slide into anarchy, or they are reduced to being a "Province" (p. 326) of Republican England. It is only by recognising their fealty to the Stuarts, Churchill



suggests, over other factions of varying political stripes—the Catholic aristocracy, the Scots Presbyterians, the parliamentarian profiteers—that Scotland and Ireland can flourish. Churchill’s criticism is largely aimed at the dealings of parliament, who accused the king of having “under-hand promoted the Irish Rebellion”. That the Irish Catholics had been party to this accusation made Churchill furious (p. 349). In his *Observations Upon the Articles of Peace* (p. 1649), Milton detected an underlying complicity between the old English and the Belfast Presbytery against the English parliament, stating of the latter that their “unexampl’d virulence hath wrapt them into the same guilt, made them accomplices and assistants to the abhorred Irish Rebels”.<sup>27</sup> In contrast, Churchill sees the collusion of apparent enemies across ideological lines working together to drag down the king. A form of national co-operation would be best achieved, it is implied, by recognising the potential for ethnic concord offered by the restored Stuart monarchy.

## 6. Conclusions

This article has argued that Churchill’s royalist historiography is highly attuned to issues of archipelagic nationhood in the post-Restoration settlement in quite subtle ways. Such a position challenges a long-standing critical assumption that such interests are more commonly found in the tradition of Whig liberalism.<sup>28</sup> Recent scholarship has reassessed royalist interest in Irish, Scottish and Welsh culture, including Helmer J. Helmers, who argues that “Royalism was never a monolithic ideology” and had different national iterations in Scotland and Ireland.<sup>29</sup> Such interests are manifested in a range of royalist textual and literary forms in the period, including works of British history such as *Divi Britannici*; indeed, historical texts are arguably the most responsive to the minute vibrations of archipelagic influence, given their propensity to construct images of nationhood out of variegated and cross-cultural sources. Historiography is a non-neutral discipline, and individual historians used their readings of the past to promote a distinct range of factional and ideological agendas. For Churchill, as we have shown, the ethnographical structure of *Divi Britannici* is part of a wider project to promote the Stuarts as a viable alternative to the English parliamentarians during a time of significant political change.

The evidence we have outlined—particularly the recurring imagery of ethnic comingling and miscegenation—is not part of a project of devolution or enhanced co-operation, however. There are limits to the political assumptions this article seeks to revise. As a centralized political regime, the Stuart monarchy is clearly invested in exerting control over its several monarchies. What we see in pro-royalist outputs such as *Divi Britannici* is an adaptive polemical strategy, in which a “three-kingdoms” narrative is supplanted by a broader focus on England as a centrifugal power within an archipelagic collation. The ethnically inflected discourse, co-opted by Churchill, demonstrates the pliability of the rhetoric adopted by the supporters of the Stuart monarchy, in order to serve the vision of a centralized state. The strategy is primarily designed to curb the potential for Scottish and Irish nationalism gaining local traction, particularly in a post-Interregnum context when tensions were riding high. A concomitant effect of this process, though, is a blurring of ideological and cultural lines. Divisions are obscured at the point they are invoked. The attempt to shore up royalist prestige reveals a dependency on the very cultural and ethnic identities which are being harnessed. *Divi Britannici* is therefore a more interesting political historiography than its current status as something of a Churchillian curio would suggest. It captures a vital moment in which archipelagic relations were entering a new state of urgency, and sheds crucial light on the increasing porousness of national identities in the late seventeenth-century. It also reinforces the sense that Restoration historians always had one eye on the present, and that their histories were allegories as well as arguments for change or stability.<sup>30</sup>

The relative neglect of criticism on major historiographical texts such as *Divi Britannici* marks a lacuna in seventeenth-century studies. Churchill’s work has been overlooked due to his own minor status as a historical figure. One reason that major undertakings like those of John Milton and Isaac Newton remain equally obscure is partly down to the fact

that few scholars possess the cross-period expertise or grasp of global politics that their ambitious enterprises demand. Milton's history ends with the Norman Conquest, and early modernists lack the familiarity with Anglo-Saxon and early medieval sources to follow his arguments, even if they are aware that Milton is drawing comparisons in particular between the fifth and seventeenth-centuries. Milton's dislike of monks and monarchs made his early medieval history a rather strange concoction, since he had neither the necessary expertise in Anglo-Saxon nor the interest in antiquarianism required for the task—indeed, Milton's method has been characterised as “anti-antiquarianism”.<sup>31</sup> Likewise, Newton applied his mathematical mind to ancient history and the mythical past in order to probe from a scientific perspective various patterns and parallels. Newton's conclusion neatly sums up his approach: “And whilst all these nations have magnified their Antiquities so exceedingly, we need not wonder that the *Greeks* and *Latines* have made their first Kings a little older than the truth”.<sup>32</sup> In trying to extract truth from myth Newton was demonstrating the degree to which prehistory contained shapes and shifts worthy of analysis.

Churchill's contemporary, Robert Brady, is another example of a writer whose ample history of the Anglo-British monarchy remains a relatively untilled field.<sup>33</sup> Brady's defence of the Stuart succession began with a brief chronicle entitled *A True and Exact History of the Succession of the Crown of England* (Brady 1681) and was developed at considerable length in *A Complete History of England* (Brady 1685), dedicated to James II.<sup>34</sup> *Divi Britannici* needs to be read alongside such contemporary histories, documents which complicate our sense of the past as a site of simple oppositions. The fact that seventeenth-century historians draw on the deep past in order to illuminate the present, to engage in polemics, or to argue for particular policies or forms of government invites us to consider the ways in which we too might address ourselves to their works, now themselves part of a history through which their authors lived but which is as distant to us as the various periods into which they delved in their own time. In Churchill's case, his descendant, the much better-known modern Sir Winston, also wrote major histories, including a biography of the earlier Winston's son, and a voluminous and ambitious account of his nation's story from Roman colony to the British Empire.<sup>35</sup> Such a “presentist” approach has its critics, but the preface to *Divi Britannici*, in its encomium to Charles II, urges us to look around and forwards as well as back.<sup>36</sup> We hope we have done enough in this initial foray into Churchill's neglected text to suggest that both a contextual approach and a reading rooted in presentism would afford future fruitful engagement.

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<sup>2</sup> Churchill (1675), *Divi Britannici*. All subsequent citations are by page number in the text.

<sup>3</sup> On nationhood and seventeenth-century historiography, see von Maltzahn (1996), *Milton's History of Britain*; MacGillivray (1974), *Restoration Historians and the English Civil War*; Parry (1995), *The Trophies of Time*; Brownley (1989), “Sir Richard Baker's Chronicle (1660) and Later Seventeenth-Century English Historiography”. Isaac Newton's posthumously published *The chronology of ancient kingdoms amended* (1728) “remains an opaque oddity”, yet it too can be viewed as part of a series of eccentric antiquarian exercises delving into the deep past as a means of understanding recent events. According to Kenneth Knoespel: “Newton's *Chronology* [ . . . ] belongs to an established scholarly genre of Renaissance historiography and mythography that demonstrated

that the prehistory of the ancient world could be sorted through and arranged systematically through the skeptical hermeneutics provided by euhemerism". Knoespel (1989b), "Newton in the School of Time", 19. See also Knoespel (1989a), "Milton and the Hermeneutics of Time".

4 Ogilby (1675), *Britannia*.

5 "Winston Churchill (bap. 1620, d. 1688)", Seaward (2008), *Dictionary of National Biography* (2004). For further biographical information, see also Eccles (1982), "Winston Churchill"; A.L. Rowse (1956), *The Early Churchills*; Hay (1934), *Winston Churchill and James II*; and F.W. H. (1910), "Winston Churchill the First".

6 On Milton's historical method and the context in which his history emerged, see Parry (1996), "Milton's *History of Britain* and the Seventeenth-Century Antiquarian Scene."

7 See McRae (2019), "Welcoming the King"; Munns (2006), "Accounting for Providence".

8 See Knoppers (1998), "The Politics of Portraiture", p. 1283.

9 Foucault (2003), "Society Must Be Defended" p. 105. See also Jenkins (1999), "Shrugging off the Norman Yoke"; Seaberg (2009), "The Norman Conquest and the Common Law".

10 See Atwood (1682), *Argumentum Anti-Normannicum* xxxvii, xlvii-xlix, li-lii. Reprinted when it was in season again in 1689, attributed to another author. See Cooke (1689), *A Seasonable Treatise*. On the uses of Anglo-Saxon history in the seventeenth-century see McCrady (1999), "Breaking the Norman Yoke"; Niles (2015), "Puritan Anglo-Saxonism"; Schoeck (1958), "Early Anglo-Saxon Studies and Legal Scholarship in the Renaissance"; and Walshe (2018), "John Streater and the Saxon Republic."

11 John Kerrigan's pioneering study of seventeenth-century archipelagic literature draws attention to "the intricacy of a multiple monarchy that included not just ancient kingdoms which had themselves been composite (the British tribes reported by the Romans, the Anglo-Saxon Heptarchy, Scots and Picts to the north), but the anomalous kingdom/colony of Ireland, the principality or dominion of Wales, the palatinates of the north and in Ireland, and the scattering of insular lordships and debatable lands that ran from Orkney and Shetland, through the Solway Firth and Man to the Scillies and Channel Islands". Kerrigan (2008), *Archipelagic English*, p. 31. This is the context in which Churchill's vision of the Stuart composite monarchy is mapped out, marked throughout by an awareness of the changing topography of the multiple kingdoms now held together by a single dynasty.

12 Milton (1670), *The History of Britain*, pp. 222–23. See von Maltzahn's chapter, "Milton and the Saxons", in *Milton's History of Britain*, pp. 166–97. See also Maley (2016), "Saxon Agonistes"; Stelzer (2019), "Saxon Rites in Late Stuart Drama"; and MacDougall (1982), *Racial Myth in English History*.

13 "James VI and I (1566–1625), king of Scotland, England, and Ireland", Wormald (2004), *Dictionary of National Biography* (2004).

14 On Spenser's critical attitude to Saxons in British history see Bolton (2008), "Anglo-Saxons in Faerie Land?".

15 Anon, *An Historical Discourse of Parliaments*, p. 34.

16 For Cromwell's Irish and Scottish policies, see Cunningham (2010, 2014), "Oliver Cromwell and the 'Cromwellian' Settlement of Ireland"; and "Divided Conquerors"; Dow (1979), *Cromwellian Scotland, 1651–1660*. For a succinct view of Scotland's political position during the Restoration, see Buckroyd (1987), "Bridging the Gap"; and Kennedy (2013), "Reducing That Barbarous Country".

17 Churchill's vision of an imperial monarchy, albeit more Anglocentric than he envisaged, came to pass. As John Morrill observes, "by 1700 a single ruler was recognised by almost all the inhabitants of the archipelago. Even that minority who refused to recognise William III as their king recognised the exiled James II as ruler of the whole archipelago—i.e., all Jacobites believed in a pan-archipelagic monarchy". Morrill (1996), "The British Problem, c. 1534–1707", p. 3.

18 S.P. Philopolites (1660), *Jus gentium, or, Englands birth-right*.

19 Coxe (1818), *Memoirs of John, Duke of Marlborough*, I, p. xliii.

20 See Ó Siochrú (2007), "Atrocity, Codes of Conduct and the Irish in the British Civil Wars 1641–1653".

21 Camden (1637), *Britain*, p. 122. See also Canny (2001), *Making Ireland British, 1580–1650*; Young (1997), ed., *Celtic Dimensions of the British Civil Wars*.

22 See Maley (1996), "Spenser and Scotland"; Hadfield (2009), "The Idea of the North". For an earlier exploration of Scythian origins see Hadfield (1993), "Briton and Scythian".

23 Lennon (1990), "Winston Churchill, Dublin, 1662–1668", p. 106.

24 John Davies (1664), *Discoverie*, p. 5.

25 On Churchill's Irish experiences see Lennon (1990), "Winston Churchill, Dublin, 1662–1668"; McNamara (2012), ed., *The Churchills in Ireland, 1660–1965*.

26 See Cunningham (2021), "Who Framed Charles I?". On the rising and its archipelagic implications see Ó Siochrú and Ohlmeyer (2013) (eds.), *Ireland 1641*; Redmond (2021), "Religion, Civility and the British of Ireland in the 1641 Irish Rebellion"; Shagan (1997), "Constructing Discord".

27 Milton, *Observations Upon the Articles of Peace*, p. 47. See also Corns (1990), "Milton's *Observations upon the Articles of Peace*"; Sauer, *Milton, Toleration, and Nationhood*, pp. 48–73; Barnaby (1993), "'Another Rome in the West?': Milton and the Imperial Republic, 1654–1670"; and Raymond (2004), "Complications of Interest: Milton, Scotland, Ireland, and National Identity in 1649". Part

of the problem in reading seventeenth-century histories is the extent to which they are fighting old battles as well as staging fresh struggles. If the republican Milton discerned a complication of interests between Ulster Presbyterians and Irish Catholics then royalist contemporaries likewise detected an underlying complicity between Catholic and Calvinist critics of monarchy. See Jacqueline Rose (2007), "Robert Brady's Intellectual History and Royalist Antipopery in Restoration England."

- 28 See Stevens (1995), "Archipelagic Criticism and Its Limits". One of the paradoxes that emerges from our reading of Churchill is that the Whig historiographical tradition that privileges republican writers like Milton over his royalist counterparts effectively promotes an Anglocentric rather an archipelagic view. It is to royalists like Churchill that we ought to look for evidence of a distinct and devolved multiple kingdom perspective that is at once outward-looking, European and international. For two recent studies that build on this broader royalist outlook see Cronin (2021), *Women, Royalisms and Exiles 1640–1669*; and Lockey (2016), *Early Modern Catholics, Royalists, and Cosmopolitans*. For an intriguing discussion of the entanglement of seventeenth-century archipelagic history and Whiggish values in the subterranean history of Thomas Chatterton see Groom (2018), "Catachthonic Romanticism": "For Chatterton, catachthonic history entails the mix and mangle of his Dacyannes, Scythyanes, Saxonnies, Brutons, Welsh, and Normannes" (p. 129).
- 29 Helmers (2015), *The Royalist Republic*, p. 8.
- 30 See Parry (2000), "Ancient Britons and Early Stuarts".
- 31 See Baker (2009), "'Dealt with at his owne weapon'".
- 32 Newton (1728), *The chronology of ancient kingdoms amended*, p. 376.
- 33 See Pocock (1951), "Robert Brady, 1627–1700"; Weston (1972), "Legal Sovereignty in the Brady Controversy."
- 34 A continuation of the latter, taking the narrative down to 1400, was published by Awnsham and John Churchill, two bookseller brothers, radical Whigs who bore the name of Sir Winston, and were in fact distant relations of John, Duke of Marlborough. The Churchill brothers' first joint publication had been John Locke's *Second Letter Concerning Toleration* (1690).
- 35 See Churchill (1947), *Marlborough: His Life and Times*; Churchill (1956–1958), *A History of the English Speaking Peoples*.
- 36 See Welch (2017), "Presentism and the Renaissance and Early Modern Historian".

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