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Sommario/riassunto

Inspired by debates among political scientists over the strength and depth of the pre-modern roots of nationalism, this study attempts to gauge the status of ethnic identities in an era whose dominant loyalties and modes of political argument were confessional, institutional and juridical. Colin Kidd's point of departure is the widely shared orthodox belief that the whole world had been peopled by the offspring of Noah. In addition, Kidd probes inconsistencies in national myths of origin and ancient constitutional claims, and considers points of contact which existed in the early modern era between ethnic identities which are now viewed as antithetical, including those of Celts and Saxons. He also argues that Gothicism qualified the notorious Francophobia of eighteenth-century Britons. A wide-ranging example of the new British history, this study draws upon evidence from England, Scotland, Ireland and America, while remaining alert to European comparisons and influences.
