



When the Waves Ruled Britannia: Geography and Political Identities, 1500-1800

Jonathan Scott

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How did a rural and agrarian English society transform itself into a mercantile and maritime state? What role was played by war and the need for military security? How did geographical ideas inform the construction of English - and then British - political identities? Focusing upon the deployment of geographical imagery and arguments for political purposes, Jonathan Scott's ambitious and interdisciplinary study traces the development of the idea of Britain as an island nation, state and then empire from 1500 to 1800, through literature, philosophy, history, geography and travel writing. One argument advanced in the process concerns the maritime origins, nature and consequences of the English revolution. This is the first general study to examine changing geographical languages in early modern British politics, in an imperial, European and global context. Offering a new perspective on the nature of early modern Britain, it will be essential reading for students and scholars of the period.

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