

much more impressionistic study of what it was like to *be, think and feel* Roman Catholic in the period after Trent. Moreover, I can think of few scholars better qualified than Ulrich Lehner to undertake such a task. Working back from the date of publication of the book under review (October 2022), it must have been mostly written (and even researched) in the time of Covid, with the associated closure of libraries and archives. So it would be unfair of me to criticise the book for failing to use manuscript sources. However, Lehner was unwise to claim that he has somehow accessed ‘the inner life’ of Catholic Reform without using them. Putting down this book after I had finished reading it, I felt rather like someone who had been asked to guess what a ready meal actually tastes like simply from reading the list of ingredients on the outside packaging.

University of York

Simon Ditchfield

Mary Ann Lyons and Brian Mac Cuarta eds, *The Jesuit Mission in Early Modern Ireland, 1560-1760*, Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2022, pp. 272, £50.00, ISBN: 978-1801510257

This is a heavyweight collection of 11 essays and a scholarly introduction that examines the Jesuit Mission in Early Modern Ireland. The contributions range widely in theme as well as chronologically although the centre of gravity of the volume is the seventeenth-century with only one chapter, Liam Chambers’s fine examination of the Irish Jesuit College in Poitiers, concentrating in any great detail on the period after 1700.

As the editors note, throughout this period the Jesuits were numerically quite insignificant in comparison to the Franciscan order, the diocesan clergy and indeed their colleagues in the English mission (elevated to a province in 1623). But their level of education during a long formation on the continent and their preponderantly Old English membership acted to amplify their influence, particularly among the older colonial community. The first two Jesuit missions in the 1540s and 1560s enjoyed only limited success but the third maintained a consistent presence in Ireland from 1599 down to the Society’s suppression in 1773. This second mission is the focus of the first essay in the book, by Alexander DeWitt and a doyen of English-language Jesuit historiography, Thomas McCoog. Their contribution makes use of the correspondence of the English Jesuit, William Good, and explores his peripatetic struggles to establish a Jesuit school in Ireland, in the face of the worried Nicodemism of the patricians of the main centre in Limerick, and despite knowing no Irish (indeed, as Colm Lennon’s piece indicates, while nursing strong ethnic hostility towards Gaelic Ireland). It provides a revealing window into the religious plasticity of the early Elizabethan period in Ireland when figures

such as Sir Thomas Cusack and Sir Henry Sidney could act favourably towards Jesuits. Nevertheless, two of the three Jesuits on the mission ultimately fell foul of the authorities, with one imprisoned and another eventually executed.

Colm Lennon's characteristically taut and informative contribution examines the urban mission of the Jesuits (the majority of Irish members of the Society were townsmen) down to the 1650s, emphasizing their role in promoting outright recusancy, in regulating marital difficulties and familial conflicts, and in promoting a new form of devotional culture, not least through the development of distinctive sodalities. The article traces also the spread of the Society which by the 1630s had permanent residences (all directing sodalities) in each of the major cities and in many larger towns. Lennon's essay is complemented in particular by Bernadette Cunningham's analysis of Jesuit preaching, viewed by the Society as a form of Christian charity, that amplified their influence outside the towns by means of peripatetic missions of considerable emotional intensity and which also allowed them to devote attention to cultivating spiritual fervour within the families that hosted them. Preaching was supplemented by often very basic religious instruction and devotional items such as *Agnus Dei*, rosary beads and relics. These essays dovetail extremely well also with Mary Ann Lyons's investigation of women and Jesuit ministry. In the neighbouring English province, it seems clear that intense Jesuit cultivation of female devotionism was a critical factor in shaping the culture of English Catholicism. The salient role played by women in households there (as well as the very large number who embraced religious life on the continent) has been explored extensively in the English historiography. By contrast, Irish Catholic women seem to have left a much slighter footprint not only in the available sources but in historical analyses, despite the recent pioneering work of Bronagh McShane. Lyons's essay demonstrates the vital role of the dowager countess of Kildare as 'the mother' of the society in Ireland: she represented the outstanding but not unique exemplar of female patronage of the Society. Jesuit sodalities also featured large numbers of women and much of the Society's work was gender-inflected in terms of providing devotional support for the particular dangers of childbirth, and the protection of chastity.

One of the highlights of the collection, for this reader, is Jason Harris's superb linguistic analysis of the Irish *Litterae Annuae Societatis Jesu*. This not only provides an excellent contextualization of the elements which combined to influence the stylistic production of individual Jesuit authors but offers insight into the compositional process of Christopher Holywood and brings to light an important indication of the influence which Robert Nugent may have had on the drafting of the annual letter from 1610.

The latter half of the volume features a number of essays which concentrate in detail on more specific elements of the Jesuit presence, including Raymond Gillespie's exploration of the Jesuits and music, and Brian Mac Cuarta's chapter on conversion which is closely focused on the 1630s. Similarly, Alma O'Donnell examines the topic of exorcism. Gillespie's original essay shows that at least two Irish Jesuits, William Bathe and Robert Nugent, seem to have had an unusual degree of musical proficiency but the Irish mission was hampered in the application to Ireland of the musical liturgical tradition of contemporary European Catholicism by the clandestine nature of the confession. The 1640s seem to have allowed for a more ambitious approach but this was sharply curtailed after 1649. In a para-liturgical context, hymn singing certainly became an important aspect of the Jesuit repertoire and music was enlisted to assist in the memorization of catechism although, in common with other aspects of the clerical establishment, the struggle against the tradition of the keen seems to have experienced only indifferent success. Mac Cuarta's contribution traces the domino effect of conversions within the Slingsby family and explores the complex familial, political and gender tensions around confessional change in the 1630s. Alma O'Donnell's essay examines the thirty-eight cases of exorcism recorded in the Jesuit annual letters, preponderantly from the earlier seventeenth century and revealing an unusual gender distribution—unlike most of contemporary Europe in Ireland the bulk of these cases involved men, not women. The evidence indicates that exorcism formed part of the basic package of pastoral care provided by Jesuits. Matrin Foerster uncovers the evidence for a wide network of Jesuit schools which reappeared in Ireland with surprising speed from the Restoration of 1660 down to the collapse of Jacobean Ireland in the 1690s. His essay ranges significantly wider than the three post-Restoration decades mentioned in its title. It contains a highly original section on Jesuit theatre in Ireland which brings material from the 1640s into focus. The essay emphasizes the surprising degree to which the Society's theatre in Ireland conformed to its practices elsewhere, despite the anomalous conditions in the island. Jesuit schooling enjoyed an extremely high reputation which resulted not merely in Protestant willingness to tolerate the presence of establishments but a high rate of enrolment in the Society's academies. In Drogheda, 40 of the 150 pupils at one stage seem to have been Protestants attracted by the excellent (and free) education on offer.

Brian Jackson's chapter on religious controversy is also far more wide-ranging than its title suggests, not least in its vigorous assertion that much of the historiography of the Irish Reformations fails to focus on the central aspects of faith and belief. His essay explores both the European and archipelagic context of religious controversy and the whole arc of Henry FitzSimon's literary career, before offering a fresh

and fascinating analysis of key manuscript materials that the Irish Jesuit produced in the latter and less known aspect of his controversial career.

Liam Chambers's investigation of Irish college in Poitiers concludes the volume. The foundation of the college can be understood as part of a movement of reorganization of Irish migrant communities which also saw a college founded in Nantes and Irish assumption of control of the *Collège des Lombards* in Paris. It benefitted from the existence in the town of an existing Jesuit institution, the *Grand Collège* which provided Irish students with access to classes, with the college itself only providing a small number of external tutors for subjects such as dance, music and mathematics. Most of the college's students were evidently of Irish provenance, although against the original intention French students were enrolled, presumably for financial reasons. The college was at the centre of a number of tensions relating to finance and the relationship with the Irish mission but it is clear that it functioned effectively as 'maison de refuge' and that it nurtured both those who ultimately returned to the Irish mission as well as connecting Irish Jesuits to the Society's wider French network.

Overall, this volume is a very welcome addition to the corpus of studies on Jesuits in Ireland, especially in the seventeenth century. The Society was not nearly as dominant a force in Irish Catholicism as in England, for instance, but it still played an important role in the overall ecology of Irish Catholicism and this collection illuminates many different aspects of its function and impact.

University College Dublin

Tadhg Ó hAnnracháin

Aidan Enright, *Charles Owen O'Connor, the O'Connor Don: Landlordism, Liberal Catholicism and Unionism in Nineteenth-Century Ireland*, Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2022, pp. 244, €50, ISBN: 978-1-80151-040-0.

Biographies tend to focus on one of two types of subjects – first, the figure who definitively shaped a political, social, religious, or cultural period and thus merits examination to explore how they influenced history; or, second, the figure who is representative of a wider phenomenon whose study allows the author to say something more broadly about the milieu. Aidan Enright's *Charles Owen O'Connor, the O'Connor Don: Landlordism, Liberal Catholicism and Unionism in Nineteenth-Century Ireland* conforms to neither approach, but instead offers a portrait of a prominent Catholic landlord and political figure whose idiosyncrasies and increasingly unpopular views demonstrate the changing nature of Irish society in the second half of the nineteenth century, and what an alternative Ireland might have looked like. In so doing, Enright reminds his reader that identities and ideologies are not easily reducible, which should challenge us to reconsider